

**THE CAREER PLANNING NEEDS OF SENIOR  
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS IN  
GABORONE, BOTSWANA.**

by

**NNANANYANA K E MEKGWE**  
**BA, PGDE, BEd**

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**PROMOTER: DR ALMERO KOK**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Nnananyana K E Mkgwe, hereby declare that the Career Planning Needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education in School Guidance to the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). All the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Nnananyana K E Mkgwe

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my late cousin, Mama Elizabeth Seole Segokgo-Keganne. May her soul progress faster towards perfection.

## **SUMMARY**

**Key Words:** school guidance and counselling programme, school career guidance, career/vocational/occupational planning needs, senior high school/secondary school learners, school career guidance and counselling programme in Botswana, adolescents, adolescent career development.

Career choice is one of the most daunting decisions one has to make, since it has implications that affect a variety of aspects in one's life. For adolescents, career decision-making is even more challenging because it is done at a time when adolescents are going through a period of identity formation, and when their core personalities have not yet been fully formed. It is therefore essential to provide systematic career guidance programmes that will assist adolescents in their career development in order to empower them to make realistic career choices.

The school, as a place where adolescents spend most of their time, can be used as a vehicle to promote meaningful career development amongst adolescent learners. However, the contribution by adolescents themselves in determining the appropriate content and career guidance services/activities that will best address their needs is vital.

Senior secondary school learners, in particular, are in a position to articulate their career planning needs and to identify the deficits in existing career guidance programmes.

The situation in Botswana where career guidance forms only a quarter of the public secondary school guidance and counselling programme, which, with all its four components, is allocated only one 40 minute-period per week deserves special attention. Hence, this study set out to determine:

- the career planning needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana as articulated by the learners themselves;
- the extent to which the current career guidance programme in Senior Public Secondary Schools meets the needs of the learners.

A mixed methods design, consisting of the use of a questionnaire to collect the quantitative data and a qualitative method in the form of focus-group interviews, was used to collect the data for the study.

The findings of the study highlight several challenges which hamper the provision of a systematic career guidance programme to the learners, which include limited time, lack of trained personnel and less than optimal career service delivery practices. The lack of key career exploration activities in schools, such as the use of internet resource materials and career video/audio tapes, job-shadowing, career field-trips/excursions and, in some cases, career talks, results in learners experiencing unmet career needs. This situation affects the extent to which the curriculum in place addresses the career planning needs of the learners. No significant differences were noted in the needs of the learners according to gender.

The study reveals that the Career Guidance Programme provides the relevant theoretical frame-work for providing the necessary assistance to learners to make informed career decisions. However, the actual implementation of the programme in the different schools leaves a lot to be desired, with several

learning outcomes for the career guidance programme in both Form 4 and Form 5 not being achieved. The effectiveness of the annual career fair as a major method of disseminating career information to learners also came into question since most learners expressed having gained minimal benefit from it.

## OPSOMMING

**Sleutelwoorde:** (skool)begeleiding- en voorligtingsprogram, (skool) beroepsvoorligting, loopbaan/beroepsbehoefte, senior hoërskool/sekondêre skoolleerders, (skool)loopbaanbegeleiding- en voorligtingsprogram in Botswana, adolessente, adolessent loopbaanontwikkeling.

Om 'n beroeps- of loopbaankeuse te maak kan een van die mees ontmoedigende besluite wees om te neem, aangesien die implikasies daarvan verskeie aspekte van 'n mens se lewe kan beïnvloed. Vir adolessente is loopbaankeuses nog meer uitdagend, aangesien hierdie besluite dikwels geneem word tydens 'n tydperk van identiteitsformasie, wanneer hul kern persoonlikhede nog nie ten volle ontwikkel is nie. Daarom is dit van kardinale belang dat sistemiese beroepsvoorligtingsprogramme verskaf word wat adolessente kan help in terme van die ontwikkeling van hul beroepe of loopbane, en hul kan bemagtig om realistiese loopbaan besluite te neem.

Adolessente spandeer die meeste van hul tyd op skool, en daarom kan die skool as 'n medium gebruik word om betekenisvolle beroeps-/loopbaanontwikkeling onder adolessente aan te moedig. Die bydrae wat adolessente egter self maak in terme van die bepaling van die mees geskikte inhoud en loopbaanvoorligtingsdienste/-aktiwiteite wat hul behoeftes kan bevredig, is onontbeerlik.

Senior, sekondêre skoolleerders is veral daartoe in staat om hul loopbaanbeplanningsbehoefte te artikuleer, en om die tekortkominge in bestaande loopbaan- of beroepsvoorligtingsprogramme te kan identifiseer.

Die situasie in Botswana, waar beroeps- of loopbaanvoorligting slegs 'n kwart van die publieke sekondêre skool se begeleidings- en voorligtingsprogram beslaan, wat al vier die komponente daarvan insluit, en

waar slegs een 40 minute periode per week toegestaan word, behoort veral spesiale aandag te geniet. Gevolglik poog hierdie studie om:

- te bepaal wat die loopbaanbeplanningsbehoefte van senior publieke sekondêre skoolleerders in Gabarone, Botswana is, soos die leerders dit self artikuleer,
- te bepaal tot watter mate die huidige beroepskeuse- of loopbaanbegeleidingsprogram in senior publieke sekondêre skole aan die behoeftes van die leerders voldoen

'n Gemengde-metode ontwerp, wat bestaan het uit 'n vraelys om die kwantitatiewe data in te samel en 'n kwalitatiewe metode in die vorm van fokus-groep onderhoude, was gebruik om die data vir die studie in te samel.

Die bevindinge van die studie toon verskeie uitdagings wat die voorsiening van 'n sistematiese beroepskeuse- of loopbaanvoorligtingsprogram aan leerders belemmer, insluitende beperkte tyd, gebrek aan opgeleide personeel en nie-optimale loopbaandienslewingspraktyke. Die gebrek aan sleutel loopbaan ondersoekingsaktiwiteite in skole, soos die gebruik van internethulpbronnemateriaal en loopbaan video-/audiobande, het tot gevolg dat die leerders voel dat daar nie aan hul loopbaanbehoefte voorsien word nie. Hierdie situasie beïnvloed die mate waartoe die betrokke kurrikulum die loopbaanbeplanningsbehoefte van die leerders aanspreek. Daar was geen betekenisvolle verskille tussen studente in terme van geslag nie.

Die studie onthul dat die beroepskeuse- of loopbaanvoorligtingsprogram die relevante teoretiese raamwerk verskaf om leerders die noodsaaklike ondersteuning te gee om ingeligte loopbaankeuses te maak. Die werklike implimentering van die program in die verskillende skole laat egter veel te wense oor, aangesien verskeie leeruitkomstes vir die loopbaanvoorligtingsprogram in beide Vorm 4 en Vorm 5 nie bereik word nie. Die

effektiwiteit van die jaarlikse loopbaanuitstalling, as die vernaamste metode vir die verspreiding van loopbaaninligting aan leerders, was ook bevraagteken aangesien die meeste van die leerders aangedui het dat hul minimale voordeel daaruit trek.

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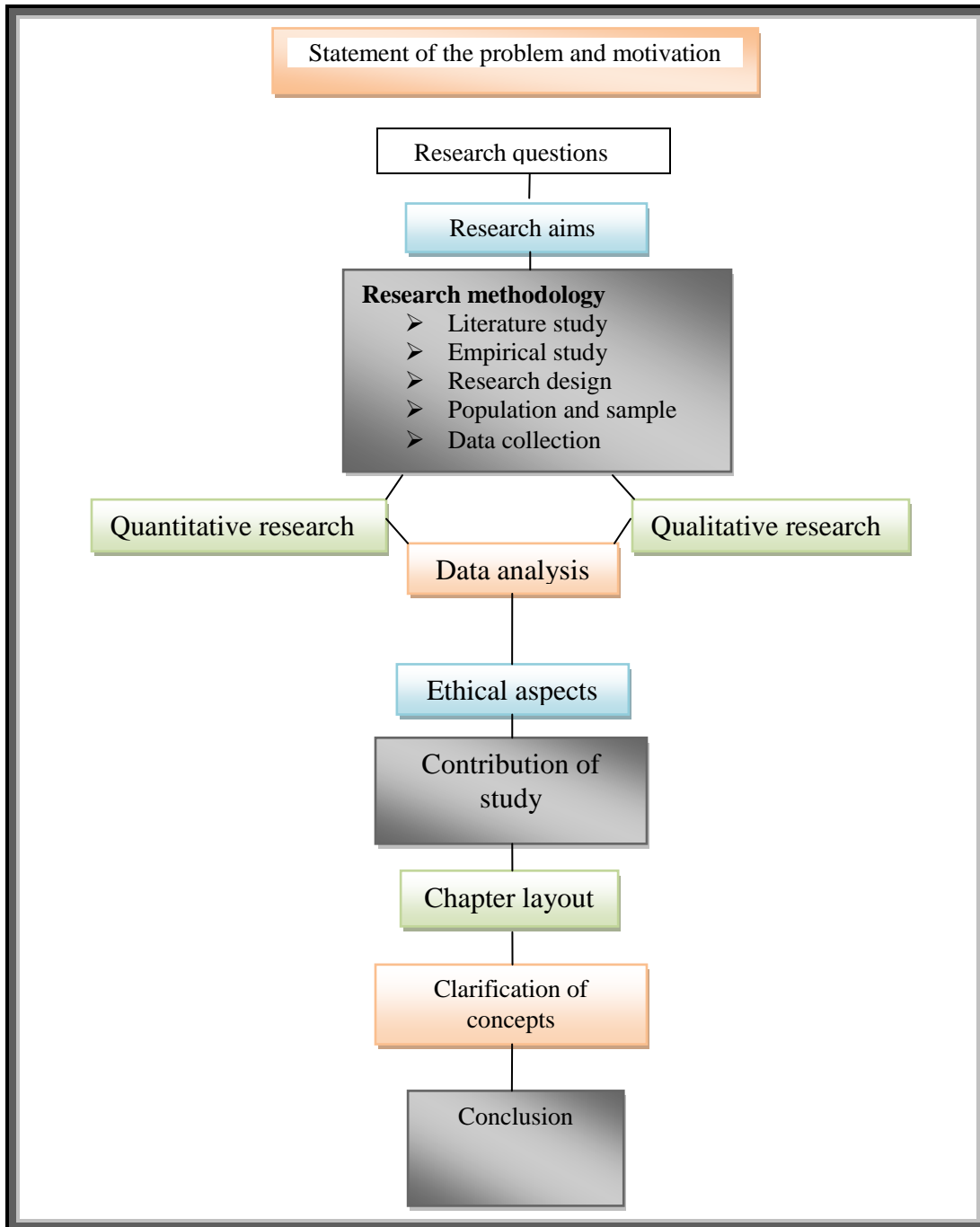
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# CHAPTER 1

## ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



## **1.2 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the outline of the research study which investigates the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana and determines the extent to which the school career guidance programme in place meets the needs of the learners. The chapter starts off with a discussion of the problem statement and the motivation for the study, followed by the research questions and aims. An explanation and justification of the research methods employed in the study is explained and an outline of the chapter division is given.

## **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND MOTIVATION**

A major turning point in adolescents' lives involves the career choice that they have to make while in secondary school. Frequently it is viewed by family and community as a mere start to work-place readiness; however, this decision plays a major role in placing learners on a career path that opens as well as closes opportunities (Ferry, 2006:1).

Career planning becomes significant during late adolescence and early adulthood. During this time, senior secondary school learners enter a period in their lives when seeking career information and becoming aware of their career or occupational interests are major developmental tasks (Witko, Bernes, Magnusson & Bardick, 2005:34).

In a study conducted by Hutchinson and Bottorff, it was found that 89% of secondary school learners reported career counselling to be a priority (Witko *et al.*, 2005:35). Similarly, Fourie (2006:293) found that career-related requests were received most frequently from secondary school learners in South Africa.

The process of career decision-making causes considerable stress for adolescents, and this may affect various aspects of their daily life. According to Gati and Saka (2001:331) such decisions may have lifelong consequences for the individual's vocational future, psychological well-being, health and social acceptance. Indeed, Gati and Saka (2001:331) report that fairly high levels of stress are associated with career exploration and decision-making activities in general.

According to the Senior Secondary School Guidance and Counselling Curriculum Guidelines in Botswana (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:7) one of the aims of the school guidance programme in Botswana is to address the career guidance needs of learners. In particular, the school career guidance programme aims not only at facilitating the career decision-making process, but also helps to minimise if not to overcome the difficulties learners encounter during the career decision-making process.

In Botswana (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:3) career guidance is offered in public schools as a component of guidance and counselling, which is a core subject in the senior secondary school curriculum. The scope and objectives of the career guidance programme in Botswana (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:22) include the following:

- Providing learners with an opportunity to gather career information as well as to get the advice required to make informed and wise career decisions;
- providing learners with knowledge about the world of work, employment trends, the labour market and the demands of their environment;
- assisting learners to become more realistic in their aspirations and expectations as well as giving them the needed coping skills; and
- bridging the gap between what is learnt in class and the world of work, thus making learners appreciate the link between what is taught in class and what the world outside offers.

Furthermore, the Revised National Policy on Education in Botswana (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:3) advocates that learners should be effectively prepared for life, citizenship and the world of work. Education must offer learners a life-long opportunity to develop themselves and to make their country competitive globally. Ultimately, the aim of Education must be to prepare learners for life. One of the central roles of the school curriculum must thus be adequate preparation for the world of work.

Similarly, Botswana's Vision 2016 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 6) envisages that by the year 2016 Botswana will have an education system that creates the finest producers of goods and services, and generates entrepreneurs who will create jobs by establishing new businesses. The education system must therefore aim at producing self-reliant and innovative individuals.

The Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana's Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:23) indicates that career guidance should be part of the educational, vocational and personal guidance that should be offered to all learners from an early age to adult life. The programme should help to develop the necessary skills that would enhance career awareness, career exploration and career decision-making among learners at various levels of education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:27).

According to Hiebert, Collins and Robinson (2001:11), the development of an effective and comprehensive guidance and counselling programme begins with a comprehensive assessment of learners' needs. An accurate needs assessment is crucial because it ensures that the focus will be on the most salient needs and based on the reality of the learners as the service recipients (Hiebert *et al.*, 2001:13). Needs assessment therefore becomes an integral part of any guidance curriculum development and it helps to determine the link between what the guidance programme offers and what the learners actually need (Euvrard, 1996).

A direct solicitation approach of learners' needs assumes that the learners are capable of determining what they need and of articulating those needs. It also reflects the reality that the learners face as seen through their own eyes (Hiebert *et al.*, 2001:13). Hearing directly from the learners, rather than inferring what it is they need, not only helps to make the process more relevant to the learners, but also makes it more possible that the learners' actual needs are met.

According to Hiebert *et al.* (2001:14) it is important when designing guidance programmes to be responsive to the needs of the learners as reported by the learners themselves. The views of the learners should be obtained directly and the learners should be made partners in programme development. In this way the learners will not only value the programmes meant for them, but also assume personal ownership of the programmes (Dalzell, 2005:3).

Similarly, Alao (1998:22) maintains that since learners are the beneficiaries of the career activities and services offered by the school career guidance and counselling programme, the degree of satisfaction reported by the learners not only offers an opportunity to evaluate the services, but also provides an opportunity to indicate areas where the service rendered needs to be upgraded. Hence, learners as the service recipients are the ones who can better express their career guidance needs.

Research (Hiebert *et al.*, 2001:15) shows that a learner-centred model where issues are chosen by the learners themselves indicates a marked increase in activities, enhancing psychological and social health. Learner involvement encourages interest in, commitment to and ownership of the programme. On the other hand non-involvement in the programme-development process reinforces negative self-images rather than facilitating a sense of empowerment.

However, using the results of learners' needs assessment is not a common practice in the development of many programmes (Witko *et al.*, 2005:37; Euvrard, 1996). Most existing programmes are based on input from parents, teachers, counsellors or college learners' *retrospective* reports regarding their secondary school experience (Gibbons, Borders & Davis, 2006:3).

Ultimately learners are in a position of relatively little power in schools because the decision-making power usually rests with adults, that is, administrators, teachers and school counsellors (Hiebert *et al.*, 2001:131).

The perspectives of the learners have been rarely reported and adult perceptions have been found to lack meaning for learners. When adults determine learners' needs by proxy, under the guise of preparing them for the real world, the message is that the learners' world is not real or less real and less meaningful than the adult world (Hiebert *et al.*, 2001:15). Thus a needs assessment with learners seen as partners in the process provides a more accurate idea of the type of programme needed, and has numerous academic and social benefits. It is therefore crucial to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners as reported by them in order to implement appropriate career planning services and support for them.

A needs assessment study has not been previously conducted on the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Botswana. Alao (1998:16) conducted a feasibility study on the Establishment of Career Resource Centres in Botswana, in which he included an assessment of the level of satisfaction that senior public secondary school learners had with the career activities provided in their schools. However, the study focused on learners throughout the formal public education system in Botswana, from primary school to tertiary level, and was not specifically aimed at determining the career planning needs of senior secondary school learners.

Maokaneng (2005) conducted a study on the Career World from the Perspectives of Learners from Maun Senior Secondary School in Botswana but this study was limited to the learners' perceptions of what a career is and evaluated the career needs of the learners to a very small extent. Mmusinyane (2006) carried out a study on the role of the school in facilitating students' career decision-making skills with particular reference to Junior Secondary Schools in the Letlhakane area but the study specifically targeted junior secondary school learners.

Other studies (Montsi *et al.*, 2000; Mokgolodi, 2001) have focused on evaluating the school guidance and counselling programme as a whole.

The study by Montsi *et al.* (2000) devoted little attention to career guidance since it forms only a quarter of the school guidance and counselling programme in Botswana. The study by Mokgolodi (2001) made no specific mention of career guidance or any other specific component of the school guidance and counselling programme in Botswana.

It is therefore important to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Botswana as reported by them.

This research study therefore aims to

- investigate the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana;
- determine the extent to which these needs are being met by the current school career guidance programme in Botswana; and
- discuss the implications of the findings for the school career guidance programme in Botswana.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The main research question that the research study sought to answer is:

What are the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana as expressed by the learners themselves?

The following sub-questions emerged from the main research question:

- Do the career planning needs of the senior public secondary school learners differ according to gender?
- What is the conceptual understanding of adolescent career development?
- What factors play a significant role in the career aspirations of adolescents?
- What key elements can facilitate optimal career decision-making in adolescents?
- What is the nature of adolescent career decision-making?
- What are the scopes and objectives of the career guidance programme in public schools in Botswana?
- What extent does the current school career guidance curriculum in Botswana meet the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners?
- What are the implications of the findings of the study for the school career guidance programme in Botswana?

## **1.5 RESEARCH AIMS**

The main aim of the study is to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana.

The specific aims derived from the central aim of the study are to

- investigate the differences in the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana according to gender;
- explore the conceptual understanding of adolescent career development;
- determine the key factors that influence the career aspirations of adolescents;

- determine the key factors that can promote optimal career decision-making in adolescents;
- examine the nature of adolescent career decision-making;
- discuss the nature and scope of the career guidance programme currently in place in public schools in Botswana with particular reference to senior secondary schools;
- investigate the extent to which the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners are being met by the school career guidance curriculum in place in Botswana; and
- discuss the implications of the findings of the study for the school career guidance programme in Botswana.

## **1.6. METHODOLOGY**

The method of study consists of a review of the literature related to the study and an empirical investigation.

### **1.6.1 The literature study**

A study of literature related to the current study served as the foundation for the investigation as it provided information from previous studies on the topic of research and also guided the formulation of the questions used in the empirical part of the study, thereby facilitating relevance. The literature search also aided in creating distinct categories of the career planning needs of the learners.

The literature study of the career planning needs of learners was undertaken through a search on EBSCO-Host, Google Scholar, Science Direct and the Internet.

The following key-words guided the literature search: school guidance and counselling, school career guidance, career/occupational/vocational planning needs, secondary school learners/senior high school learners, adolescents, adolescent career development, school guidance and counselling/career guidance programme in Botswana.

Owing to the scarcity of internet materials/literature on the career guidance programme in Botswana, the researcher also had to visit the Career Guidance Services Unit in the Curriculum

and Evaluation Division, within the Ministry of Education, as well the University of Botswana library and the university's career guidance department to obtain materials for the study.

### **1.6.2 The empirical study**

A mixed methods approach, which combined the descriptive quantitative and qualitative research methods, was used.

According to Gay and Airasian (2000:11) quantitative descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions about the current status of the subject or topic of study, making it very suitable for investigating the career planning needs of the learners as they currently are.

In addition, quantitative research helps to obtain information about the preferences, practices, concerns and interests of some groups of people. The descriptive quantitative approach was found appropriate to investigate the current career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, as well as to determine the extent to which the school career guidance curriculum in Botswana meets the needs of the learners.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:134) indicate that qualitative research is exploratory in nature. Hence, a qualitative method would help to clearly depict the range of career planning needs experienced by senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, from the learners' own perspective. Both research methods were therefore regarded as having the potential to adequately investigate the opinions, perceptions and experiences of the learners on

- the nature of the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana; and
- the extent to which the current school career guidance curriculum in Botswana meets the needs of the learners.

The findings of the study would no doubt make a meaningful contribution to career guidance curriculum development in Botswana and fill the information void that exists, since the study evaluates service delivery from the point of view of the recipients who, in this case, are the learners.

### **1.6.2.1 Research design**

A mixed methods design was used to collect the data for the study. The quantitative part of the study employed a close-ended questionnaire, which was more predetermined, and the qualitative part used focus-group interviews which utilised open-ended questions.

The combination of the quantitative and qualitative methods in the study served to eliminate some of the potential bias inherent in each of the methods. The more precise data obtained with a questionnaire could act as a control for the data obtained from the interviews, while the interviews could assist in the interpretation of the quantitative data (Karstens, 2006:12).

The researcher visited the concerned schools three times to collect the data for the study. The data collection process started with the first focus-group interviews in April 2008, followed by the conducting of the questionnaire between June and August 2008. The second focus-group interviews followed soon after conducting the questionnaires at each of the schools and were conducted between June and August 2008 (see 4.5.1.8).

### **1.6.2.2 Population and sample**

The whole population in senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana consists of Form 4 and 5 learners. The present study specifically drew a sample from amongst the Form 5 learners since they were graduating from senior public secondary school in December 2008 and would have to either seek employment or choose a career field for which to undergo training at tertiary level the following year.

Making a career decision becomes a priority for adolescents during the last year of senior secondary school (Hijazi, Tatar, & Gati, 2004:64). It is also part of the curriculum to receive formal career guidance in public schools in Botswana. Therefore, being in Form 5 which is the last year of senior secondary school it is expected of the learners to be in the process of selecting career fields for training at tertiary level or, alternatively, make an exit to join Botswana's work force, and would therefore most likely be in a good position to indicate their career planning needs.

All together there were approximately 3 000 Form 5 learners in all four senior public secondary

schools in Gaborone, with each school having approximately 750 Form 5 learners.

For the quantitative study a random sample of 331 learners filled in the questionnaires used in the study.

For the qualitative study, focus groups of eight learners per school were randomly selected and interviewed (see 4.5.1.4).

### **1.6.2.3 Data collection**

A questionnaire consisting of close-ended questions was used to collect the quantitative data. The questionnaire was conducted with 331 Form 5 (senior year) learners from senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana, with the assistance of the Senior Teacher Grade 1 for Guidance and Counselling. Data collection was done from April 2008 to August 2008 by which time the learners had presumably received a considerable amount of career guidance from their respective schools.

The questions used in the questionnaires were mainly selected from the Spanish career education questionnaire developed by Gonzalez (1997). To a small extent questions were also drawn from the comprehensive career needs survey questionnaire developed by Magnusson and Bernes (2002). The questions were adapted to suit the set-up in Botswana and finally merged into one questionnaire.

Written permission was sought from Gonzalez and Magnusson to use their questionnaires.

Both questionnaires were selected based on a combination of factors which included their relative currency as compared to those which were outdated, and the fact that they were designed to specifically assess the needs of secondary school learners.

The questionnaires also fit the career education concept well because they examine the following dimensions which are central to assessing learners' career needs, and hence would adequately investigate the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana:

- help needed in making career plans
- self-assessment information needs
- educational /occupational information needs
- current occupational preferences
- participation in career development/planning
- job finding/seeking/getting and keeping skills
- career exploration activities
- the accessibility of career resources/ services

To obtain the qualitative data, interviews were conducted with focus groups consisting of eight learners in each of the concerned senior public schools. The focus-group interviews served to complement the use of the questionnaire, and to provide adequate and comprehensive data regarding the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana.

The focus-group interviews were also selected because they would allow the learners to freely express themselves without being constrained by questions with predetermined answers, in a setting where they could consider their own views in the context of others' views, while at the same time providing the researcher with an opportunity to obtain data from several people in a short period of time (Euvrard, 1996).

Through the use of the focus-group interviews the learners were afforded an opportunity to describe their needs from their own perspective, introducing their own categories and themes in their own words without being constrained by the researcher's views (Euvrard, 1996).

The focus-groups employed open-ended questions relating to the learners' own perceptions regarding their career planning needs and their responses were recorded by means of an audio tape.

The researcher wrote her comments, reflections and memos during the data collection process. This approach helped to organise and focus the data analysis and to identify emerging patterns, thereby facilitating data analysis (Gay & Airasian, 2000:238).

The study consisted of 4 phases as indicated below:

- First focus-group interviews
- School career fair programme
- Questionnaire administration
- Second focus-group interviews

#### **1.6.2.4 Quantitative data**

The questionnaire used to collect the quantitative data was conducted between June and August 2008, following the annual Career Fair programme organised for all the completing learners in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. Prior to this, the first focus-group interviews were conducted (see 4.5.1.7), and therefore the administration of the questionnaire marked the second step of data collection in the study.

After liaising with the different senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, a suitable time and method was decided by which the questionnaire would be conducted. The researcher was allowed to use the guidance and counselling lessons to administer the questionnaire to two classes, one being a separate/pure science class and the other being a double science class. The learners completed the questionnaire in approximately 40 minutes.

Having the researcher administer the questionnaire herself during the 40 minute guidance and counselling lesson provided the following benefits:

- The learners did not discuss the questions among themselves, guaranteeing individual input;
- the researcher was present to give instructions and to clarify any uncertainties;
- it warranted a 100% return rate of the questionnaires since the questionnaires were filled out in the presence of the researcher and collected by the researcher immediately after each learner had finished.

### **1.6.2.5 Qualitative data**

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:304) the purpose of a focus group is to depict the feelings or thoughts of a group of people about something. Almost every facet of a focus group depends on who the participants are. Taking this consideration into account, the researcher purposefully selected 16 learners per school from the completing classes (Form 5) in the 4 senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana to take part in the focus-group interviews.

Learners from the completing classes were targeted because it was believed that, during the period of data collection, they were deeply involved in the process of career planning.

The participants were randomly selected from the first two classes that had guidance lessons on the day of the interviews. Class registers were used for the selection of the participants and every third name was picked.

The researcher picked one pure science class and one double science class to ensure that there was no bias towards a certain type of class and to provide data that would be representative of a large number of learners' needs.

The conducted interviews lasted an hour.

#### **1.6.2.5.1 Size of the focus groups.**

De Vos *et al.* (2005:305) maintain that focus groups usually consist of six to ten participants. Groups of this size ensure full contribution by all the participants, while at the same time eliciting an array of responses. The researcher selected eight learners for each of the two focus-group interviews held in each school.

In total eight focus groups were conducted.

## **1.6.2.6 Data analysis**

### **1.6.2.6.1 Statistical techniques**

The Statistical Consultancy Services of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) were used to analyse and interpret the quantitative data collected. The SAS, SPSS and statistical computer programmes were used to process the data. The following statistical processes were followed

- indicating the means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages for the responses;
- performing a t-test to determine if there are any differences in the needs of the learners according to gender; and
- carrying out an investigation of the practical significance of the differences in the learners' needs according to gender by means of effect sizes (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:51).

### **1.6.2.6.2 Qualitative data**

The analysis of the qualitative data started with a transcription of the entire interview word for word, in order to get a full record of the discussions and to facilitate analysis of the data. Thereafter the whole transcribed text and field notes were read to analyse the content of the discussions and to look for trends and patterns that appeared within single focus groups and among various focus groups. Where the Setswana language had been used, the transcripts were carefully translated into English.

## **1.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS**

In conformity with ethical research requirements, permission was sought from the Regional Education office in Gaborone, Botswana and from the headmasters of the four identified senior public secondary schools to conduct the study. This was done by means of a letter, which was hand-delivered by the researcher to the Regional Education office as well as to the identified schools.

The learners' participation in the study was voluntary and they were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The learners were reached through the schools during school hours and were therefore easily accessible.

The headmasters of all the schools involved were consulted about the times for the focus-group discussions and the conducting of the questionnaire for which they gave their permission.

## **1.8 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of the school guidance programme is to address the needs of the learners. Dalzell (2005:3) contends that it is crucial to consult with learners to provide them with an opportunity to indicate their needs, in order to facilitate greater appreciation of the programme. This will promote personal ownership of the programme by the learners.

However, learners' views have hardly been recorded when it comes to programme planning (Witko *et al.*, 2005:37; Euvrard, 1996). Often administrators, teachers and parents tend to play a major role as sources of information and as key influencers even when it comes to adolescent career planning (Gibbons *et al.*, 2006:3).

Contrary to common practice, this study determines the specific career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners, in Gaborone, Botswana as identified by the learners themselves. The study also investigates the perceptions of the learners regarding the usefulness of the current career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools in Botswana.

The findings of the study will, without doubt, give the relevant feed-back from the learners regarding the usefulness of the current career guidance curriculum and contribute towards proper and relevant programme planning in Botswana. Besides providing a clearer understanding of learners' career planning needs, the study will also help increase efficiency and learner participation in the programme.

## **1.9 CHAPTER LAYOUT**

The structure of the dissertation is made up of six chapters as indicated below:

Chapter 1 : Introduction, research problem, aims and plan of the research

Chapter 2 : Adolescent career development

Chapter 3 : The school career guidance programme in Botswana

Chapter 4 : Methodology, research design and data presentation

Chapter 5 : Data analysis

Chapter 6: Summary, limitations of study, recommendations for future research and recommendations to the Curriculum and Evaluation Department in the Guidance and Counselling Division.

## **1.10 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.10.1 Adolescence**

Adolescence is a developmental period of psychosocial transition between childhood and adulthood (Koenigs, 2001). Theory differs on the age demarcation that marks the period of adolescence, more especially the time when it ends. While some theorists (Koenigs, 2001) believe that adolescence begins at 10 years and ends at around age 22, others (King, 2004) maintain that adolescence begins at about 12 years of age and ends between 18 and 21 years.

One thing that theory agrees on, however, is that adolescence is the period when important developmental decisions including vocational/career or occupational development start to gain prominence.

### **1.10.2 Career planning**

Career planning is a four step process which helps the individual learn about himself/herself, conduct research on different careers, and make a potential fit between his/her personality and a particular career and ultimately engage in the process of job-seeking (Lorreto, 2009).

An evaluation of one's interests, abilities, aptitudes and values often referred to as self-exploration marks the first step in career planning. Second follows research on the different careers, known as career exploration, which is mainly a broad investigation of the different careers. Career exploration is followed by an integration of self-assessment knowledge and career knowledge and making a decision as to whether to undergo training in preparation for one's chosen career or to straightaway look for a job after senior secondary school (Lorreto, 2009). The fourth and final step known as job search is when the individual starts looking for prospective jobs (Lorreto, 2009).

### **1.10.3 Career guidance**

Career guidance refers to the range of services and activities intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational training and occupational choices and to manage their careers (Institute of Career Guidance, 2009).

In a school setting, career guidance can be defined as the process through which teachers guide and assist the individual learners systematically and continuously, to an extent where they can develop their own potential to choose or plan future careers, secure jobs or pursue post-secondary education, and adapt themselves to, or make progress in their subsequent lives by taking full advantage of lifetime personal data, career information, enlightening experiences, and counselling (Asian Regional Association for Career Development, 2001).

The education system in Botswana offers career guidance as part of a broader core subject referred to as the school guidance and counselling programme. The aims of the school career guidance programme include, amongst others, raising awareness among learners about the opportunities for further training as well as helping them to relate such opportunities to career choice (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2007).

### **1.10.4 Senior public secondary school**

A senior public secondary school is a school which is intermediate in level between junior public secondary school and higher education. Public refers to the fact that the school is government owned.

Admission to senior public secondary school is subject to passing a public junior secondary leaving examination, and senior public secondary schools offer general academic curricula (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:9).

Largely based on the British Education system, the senior public secondary school in Botswana generally starts at ages 15 -18, lasts for two years (Form 4 and 5), and marks the end of compulsory education. The end of senior public secondary school concludes with a nationally graded examination referred to as the *Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education*, the passing of which is a pre-requisite for further education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:9). This study will use the term *senior public secondary school* interchangeably with *senior secondary school*, and the term *junior public secondary school* interchangeably with *junior secondary school*.

### **1.10.5 Gaborone**

Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana, attained city status in 1986. The city has an area of 90km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of close to 300,000 people (Campbell & Main, 2003:84-85).

### **1.10.6 Pure/separate science class**

Upon arrival in senior public secondary school, learners are streamed into two science groups based on their performance in junior public secondary school Mathematics and Science. The best learners in Mathematics and Science take up triple/separate/pure science according to Weeks (as quoted by Lauglo & MacLean, 2005:97). Hence, pure/separate/triple science classes will be made up of learners with an aptitude for Science and Mathematics.

### **1.10.7 Double science class**

Weeks (as quoted by Lauglo & Maclean, 2005:97) maintains that those learners who, according to Junior Certificate examination results, do not have an aptitude for Math and Science make up the double science classes.

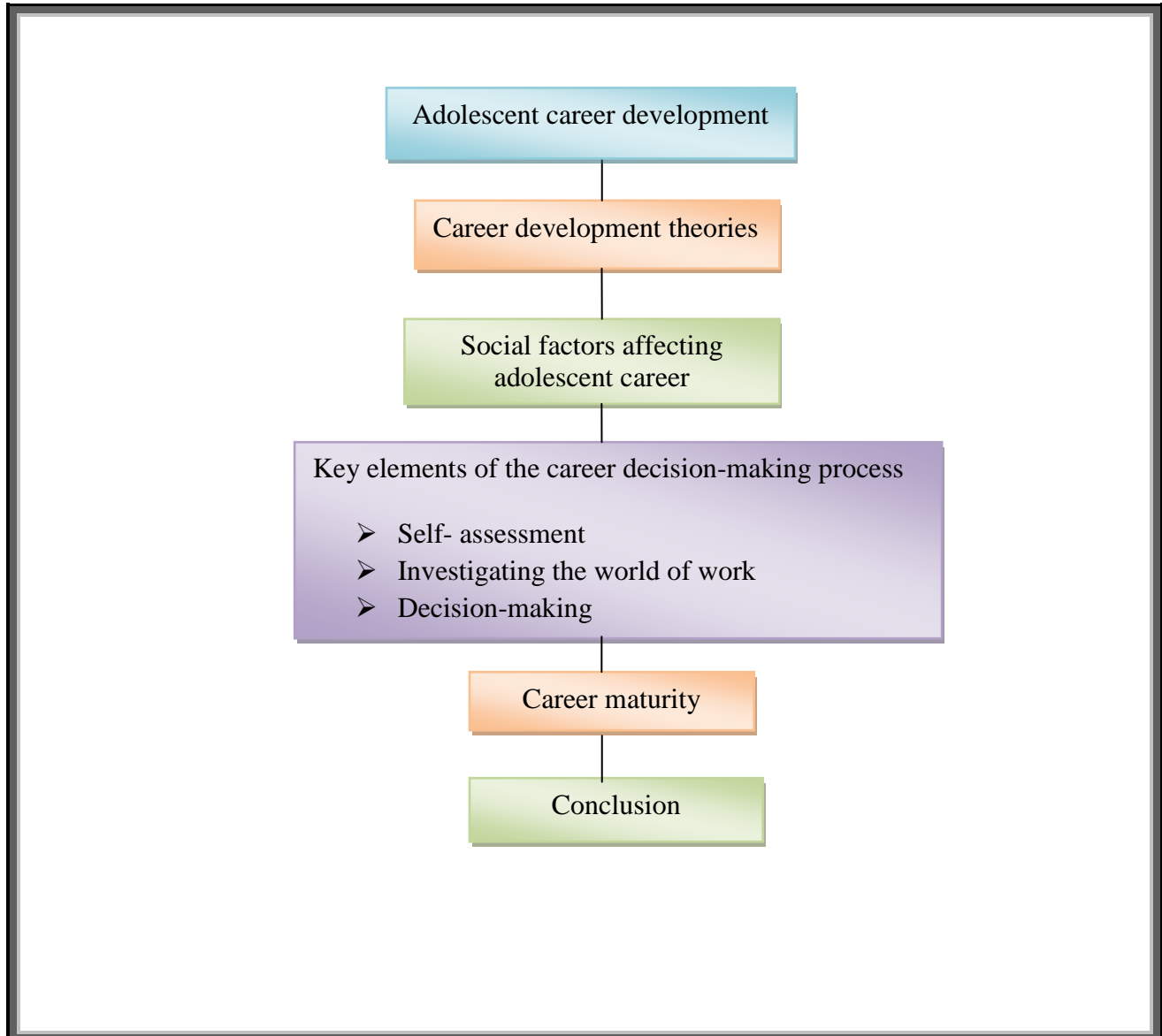
## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

In this first chapter the problem statement and the motivation for the study were discussed. The research questions and aims of the study, and the methodology which was followed to collect the data for the study were outlined. The following chapter reviews the literature related to adolescent career development.

## CHAPTER 2

### ADOLESCENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

#### 2.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



## 2.2 INTRODUCTION

Many career development theories have paid much attention to adolescence, as it is the time when educational commitment to career choices is made (Sharf, 2006:174). According to Piaget (quoted by Sharf, 2006:174), adolescents start a gradual process of developing their ability to solve problems and to make future career plans. Abstract thinking greatly assists adolescents in career planning.

With age, planning becomes more structured, permitting adolescents to go through a process of introspection and to imagine themselves in a variety of situations. It is at this point that adolescents can more accurately imagine themselves working in careers than they could a few years earlier (Sharf, 2006:174). This is the time when adolescents begin to make preparations for and eventually train themselves for a future career (Code & Bernes, 2006).

Erikson (quoted by Sharf, 2006:174) concurs with Piaget that career planning gains prominence in adolescence. As early as junior secondary school, adolescents need to decide on the career path they want to follow.

Career theorists have studied those aspects of adolescent development that are pertinent to the career choice process, such as interests, capacities and values (Sharf, 2006:174).

Furthermore, research has been done on the social factors that influence adolescent career development, as social influences appear to permeate practically every part of career development (Lent, Brown, Brenner, Chopra, Davis, Talleyrand & Suthakaran, 2001:474). Social influences can be seen, for instance, in gender role socialisation practices that prescribe certain activities as more or less appropriate for a particular gender and not another, and even in the messages that parents, peers and teachers convey to adolescents about their efficacy at different tasks (Lent *et al.*, 2001:474).

When discussing the career development of adolescents it is also essential to discuss the key elements that are pertinent to the career decision-making process as well as the career maturity or career choice readiness of adolescents.

This chapter therefore addresses the following fundamental questions:

- How do the career development theories of Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma (Sharf, 2006:175-178; Auger *et al.*, 2005; Anon; Patton & McMahon, 1999:37 - 39; Zunker, 2006:418), Donald Super (Hurley-Hanson, 2006:7; Sharf, 2006:46; Patton & McMahon, 1999:37; South Carolina Career Guidance Model, 2002:551; Zunker, 2006:54; Brown (2007:172-176) and Gottfredson (Sharf, 2006:156,158,& 160; Patton & McMahon, 1999:52-53; Brown *et al.*, 2002:95-101; Brown & Lent, 2005:15-82; Zunker, 2006:62-64; 95-100) account for the changes that adolescents go through during the career development process?
- Which social factors significantly influence the career development and aspirations of adolescents?
- Which key elements optimise career decision-making in adolescence?
- What is the conceptual understanding of adolescent career maturity?

### **2.3 CAREER DEVELOPMENT THEORIES**

Career development theories provide parameters within which we can understand and hypothesise about career behaviour and choice (Stead & Watson, 2006:13). They provide a better understanding of counselling approaches and strategies; helping counsellors on how to make use of them, when to use them and why they are used (Auger, Blackhurst & Wahl, 2005).

In a school setting, career development theories provide school counsellors with the guidelines for assisting learners to attain their career goals. Knowledge of career development theory allows school counsellors to identify, understand and respond to learners' career questions in a systematic and timely manner (Auger *et al.*, 2005). As such, career counselling requires a thorough knowledge of career development theory (Auger *et al.*, 2005). Hence it is important to consider career development theories in this chapter, with particular reference to developmental theories.

Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma's tentative and realistic career stages as well as Super's exploration stage and Gottfredson's orientation to social valuation and the internal unique self, will require more explanation since they focus on adolescent career development, and are therefore considered relevant to this discussion.

### **2.3.1 Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma's tentative and realistic stages of adolescent career development**

Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma (1951) conceptualised a multistage career development model, which indicates that occupational choice is not a once-off decision, but a developmental process occurring as several stages and sub-stages. As they interviewed adolescents and children, Ginzberg *et al.* (Sharf, 2006:175) identified three periods in the choice process, namely *the fantasy stage, tentative stage, and realistic stage which characterise the career development of adolescents.*

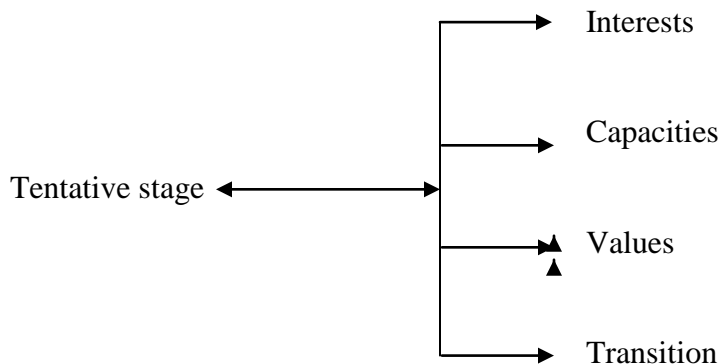
The *fantasy stage* which occurs in childhood up to the age of eleven years, involves play and imagination about the world of work (Sharf, 2006:175). Children in this stage base their career choices on *fantasy* and, therefore, believe that they can do virtually anything without any reference to their abilities, education and training requirements or the economy (Auger *et al.*, 2005).

#### **2.3.1.1. The tentative stage**

Following the fantasy stage is the *tentative stage* which occurs between the ages of eleven and about seventeen years. During this period, development involves the stages of interests, when adolescents can say "*I like this*"; values, where they can say "*This is important to me*"; and *tentative choices*, where they can say "*I think I want to move in this direction*" (Anon). Starting from this point, adolescents gradually change to making more realistic choices which is marked by the development of interests, capacities and values.

The tentative stage of career development according to Ginzberg *et al.* is illustrated in figure 2.1 below:

**Figure 2.1: Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma's tentative stage of career development**



#### **2.3.1.1.1 Development of interests**

Ginzberg *et al.* (Sharf, 2006:175) believe that, at eleven years of age, adolescents stop to make *fantasy choices* and start to base their career choices on interests. At this point of development, adolescents make more definite career choices based on their likes and dislikes (Zunker, 2006:418).

In particular Sharf (2006:175) indicates that many choices of adolescent boys are linked in some way to their fathers' careers. Based on their present interests, adolescents would comment about whether they would like to be in an occupation like their fathers' or not.

Adolescents would be aware that their interests might change over time and that they might make different choices but they would be unclear and not concerned, about alternative options. Their capability to assess their competences would be limited and rather insignificant to them (Sharf, 2006:176).

#### **2.3.1.1.2 Development of capacities**

Ginzberg *et al.* (1951) indicate that the *capacity period* covers the ages of thirteen and fourteen years. During this period, adolescents are more likely to accurately assess their own abilities in

relation to career aspirations, than they would have been able two years before (Sharf, 2006:176). For instance, adolescents may be able to say “*I am not sure I could ever be an engineer like my father, you have to know so much difficult math.*” (Sharf, 2006:176).

The educational process gains major significance for adolescents in their preparation for work, whereas, two years earlier, that process would have been of less significance to them. The time perspective of adolescents also improves and they are able to have a more realistic view of themselves and their future (Sharf, 2006:176). Hence, adolescents are able to make the link between their career choices and the necessary educational requirements that would help them attain their career aspirations.

#### **2.3.1.1.3 Development of values**

At the ages of fifteen and sixteen years, adolescents are able to take their goals and values into account when making career choices. They may not have the means to evaluate their interests, capacities and values, but they have the requisite framework for making career choices (Sharf, 2006:176).

Sharf (2006:176) contends that during this period, adolescents become conscious of the fact that they must make career choices so that they fit into a complex world. Their developed cognitive capabilities make it possible for them to consider such abstract questions as *Is it better to make money or to help others?* as they go through a process of defining their values. Making a contribution to and being a credit to society are factors that may now gain significance (Sharf, 2006:176).

#### **2.3.1.1.4 Transition period**

The cumulative effect of the tentative stage is the transition process in which the adolescent begins the career choice process and becomes aware of the implications of the choice made. Reality begins to play a major role in career choice (Sharf, 2006:177). This stage typically occurs in the last year of senior secondary school at seventeen or eighteen years of age (Sharf, 2006:178).

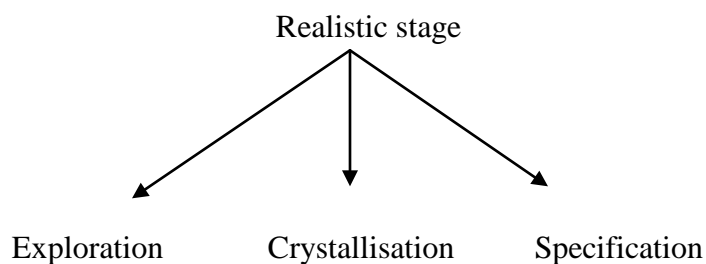
According to Sharf (2006:176), at this point adolescents begin to consider such questions as whether they should go to college and, if college is the choice, then questions about what majors to choose become real and pertinent. Adolescents become aware that they need to pay attention to issues that they may not have considered two years before, such as job availability, consideration of salary, the education required and working conditions, in their quest to prepare for their career life (Sharf, 2006:177).

### 2.3.1.1.5 The realistic career stage

The third and final stage, the *realistic career stage*, which is illustrated in figure 2.2 below, spans from the ages of seventeen years to young adulthood. During this period, adolescents start to merge their likes and dislikes with their capabilities and to evaluate these variables in relation to societal and personal values (Patton & McMahon, 1999:39). Adolescents start to execute their *tentative* occupational choices and to evaluate feedback on their occupational behaviour (Patton & McMahon, 1999:39).

Making up the realistic stage are the three sub-stages of *exploration*, *crystallisation*, and *specification* (Zunker: 2006:418).

**Figure 2.2: Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma's realistic career stage**



### 2.3.1.1.6 Exploration

In the first sub-stage, *exploration*, adolescents narrow their career choices to two or three options based on likes, skills and abilities. The exploration stage is generally characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty. Nevertheless, career focus narrows in scope (Zunker, 2006: 418).

### **2.3.1.1.7 Crystallisation**

In the *crystallisation* sub-stage the commitment to a specific career field is made. Here some adolescents may alter their career options through a process referred to as *pseudo-crystallisation* (Zunker, 2006: 418).

### **2.3.1.1.8 Specification**

The final stage, *specification*, is when the adolescent selects a job or professional training for a specific career, such as deciding to go to university (Zunker, 2006:418). The process of career development is concluded with this sub-stage, according to Patton and McMahon (1999:37).

### **2.3.1.2 Donald Super's career exploration stage**

Donald Super (1990) also proposed a multistage career development model, progressing through five stages. Preceding the exploration stage is the *growth stage*. The *exploration stage* spans from approximately 11 to 25 years of age. *This is the time when career choices are narrowed but not finalised* (Sharf, 2006:46). The next stage, known as *establishment*, stretches from approximately twenty-five to forty-five years of age and is characterised by trial experiences and stabilisation through work experience.

*Maintenance* occurs from approximately forty-five years to sixty-four years and is characterised by a continual adjustment process to improve working position and situation. Last is the *disengagement stage*, which occurs after the age of sixty-five. This period is marked by pre-retirement deliberations, a probable decrease in workload and eventual retirement (Sharf, 2006:46; Zunker, 2006:54).

#### **2.3.1.2.1. The exploration stage**

The South Carolina Career Guidance Model (2002:551) asserts that the *exploratory stage* is characteristic of the secondary school learner. Consistent with its name, the key developmental task of this stage is occupational exploration, that is, attempts by adolescents to acquire specific information about occupations in order to make the necessary choices that construct a career (Brown, 2007:172).

The stereotypes learned in the growth stage are modified as adolescents gain more information about the world of work and more accurate information is obtained about specific occupations (Hurley-Hanson, 2006:7). Adolescents then integrate information about their interests and capabilities with the occupational information they have acquired in an attempt to implement their self-concept at work and in other life roles (Hurley-Hanson, 2006:7).

The information-seeking behaviour employed in the *exploration stage* offers the experiences and expertise for dealing with the three occupational developmental tasks that move an individual from *occupational day-dreams*, to *employment in a job*, namely *crystallisation*, *specification* and *actualisation or implementation* of a career choice (Brown, 2007:172).

### **2.3.1.2.2. Crystallisation**

*Crystallisation* is the first task of the *exploration stage*, a cognitive process whereby adolescents formulate general occupational goals based on occupational information and the understanding of traits such as interests and values (Patton & McMahon, 1999:46). *Crystallisation* allows adolescents to form tentative ideas about where they fit in society (Brown, 2007:172).

Occupational *exploration* starts off a process of *differentiation* by which adolescents conceptualise new distinctions about role-related self-attributes (Brown, 2007:172). Through *differentiation*, the adolescent classifies a range of occupations based on their requirements, routines and rewards. Once the various occupations have been *differentiated* satisfactorily, the adolescent integrates the different occupations into a cognitive map of occupations, usually articulated according to interest or levels of capability (Brown, 2007: 173).

### **2.3.1.2.3. Specification**

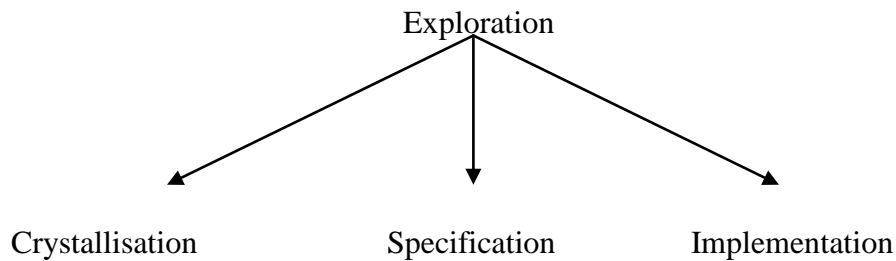
#### **2.3.1.2.3.1 Implementation/actualisation**

The third and final task of the exploration stage, which is *implementation* or *actualisation* of a career choice, necessitates that the adolescent fulfil a choice by taking the necessary action to turn it into reality (Brown, 2007:176). Patton and McMahon (1999:46) maintain that implementation

of career choices by adolescents involves training for specifically selected occupations and beginning employment upon completion of the required training.

Super's career exploration stage is illustrated in figure 2.3 below:

**Figure 2.3: Donald Super's career exploration stage**



### **2.3.2 Gottfredson's orientation to social valuation and the internal unique self**

Like Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma and Super, Gottfredson (1996) believes that career choice is a developmental process beginning in childhood. Gottfredson has presented a life stage theory of development in childhood and adolescence that emphasises the important role played by gender and prestige in making career choices (Sharf: 2006:156). This theory of circumscription and compromise not only addresses the individuals' concepts of themselves, but also how they see their world, and build up a cognitive map of occupations (Sharf: 2006:156).

Gottfredson proposed a model consisting of four stages, beginning in early childhood and ending in late adolescence. As individuals gain greater self-awareness with their progress through these stages, they narrow down or *circumscribe* their occupational choices by eliminating those that are no longer suitable to them, in a process called *circumscription* (Patton & McMahon, 1999:52). The stages indicate the various levels of mental development and the amount of self-knowledge acquired by the individual (Patton, & McMahon, 1999:52).

#### **2.3.2.1 Stage 1: Orientation to size and power**

The first stage in the process of *circumscription* is *orientation to size and power*, which occurs from approximately age three to five (Zunker, 2006:62; Sharf, 2006:158; Gottfredson, 2005:77).

At this stage children begin to classify people in the simplest terms, such as big and powerful versus little and weak. They also begin to recognise occupations as adult roles and stop indicating that they would like to be animals, fantasy characters or inanimate objects (Gottfredson, 2005:77). They may be aware of objects that are used in specific occupations like bulldozers, shovels, blackboards, saws and so forth.

### **2.3.2.2 Stage 2: Orientation to sex roles**

The second stage is *orientation to sex roles*, which occurs from approximately age six to eight. Orientation to sex roles is the stage when children begin to identify common and highly visible occupations, *either because of frequent personal contact such as with teachers, or because their incumbents wear uniform, drive big trucks and otherwise draw a child's attention in one way or another* (Gottfredson, 2005:77).

During the orientation to sex roles stage, children also begin to recognise gender roles and are likely to see occupations as either appropriate or inappropriate for their gender (Sharf, 2006:158). They also may view their own sex as superior and be inclined to view sex-appropriate behaviour as vital. Although children's views of people and jobs will become more subtle and complex, their naïve early understandings have already turned them towards some possible futures and away from others (Gottfredson, 2005:78). At this stage of career development children are therefore able to classify occupations according to gender.

### **2.3.2.3 Stage 3: Orientation to social valuation**

*Orientation to social valuation* occurs at approximately ages nine to thirteen (Gottfredson, 2005:79; Patton & McMahon, 1999:53; Sharf, 2006:160). Children at this stage are able to think more abstractly and identify a larger number of occupations than before because they can now conceptualise activities they cannot see. For instance, children are able to realise that people who sit at desks, answer phones and write things on the computer may actually be performing quite different economic functions, such as secretaries, journalists, etc. (Gottfredson, 2005:79).

By age thirteen most adolescents can classify occupations by prestige in much the same way as adults (Sharf, 2006:160). Occupations are now categorised in two ways, namely, according to prestige level and sex type. Whereas adolescents had previously desired high status and low status jobs alike, they begin to reject jobs that they view as low-status. They begin to comprehend the strong link between income, education and occupation. Adolescents now realise that there is an occupational hierarchy that influences how people live their lives and are regarded by others, that is, they recognise the different levels of prestige associated with the different occupations (Gottfredson, 2002:97).

Adolescents and the important adults in their lives have now also formed perceptions of the adolescent's own general level of intelligence compared to that of schoolmates, and consequently of their competitiveness for more challenging and desirable occupations. At this stage, adolescents also know which occupations their own families and communities would reject as unacceptable and low in social standing (Gottfredson, 2002:97; Gottfredson, 2005:79).

Gottfredson (2005:79) maintains that at this point *adolescents have therefore begun to identify floors and ceilings for their career aspirations*. As they integrate consideration of social class and ability into their self-concepts, adolescents reject occupational alternatives which they deem incongruent with these newly acquired elements of self. In particular, they eliminate those career options that are of unacceptably low status in their social reference group, thus establishing a *tolerable level boundary* which, as a matter of social class, they cannot willingly transgress (Gottfredson, 2002:98).

Higher social class families exert a greater *tolerable-level boundary* for acceptability, which means that for those adolescents from higher social class families the ceiling for career aspirations becomes higher. On the contrary, children rarely aim for the highest-level occupations but instead rule out occupations that are too difficult for them to enter with reasonable ease or that pose too high a threat of failure if they try. They base this *tolerable-level boundary* mainly on their academic ability and not social class *per se* (Gottfredson, 2005:79).

By the end of stage 3, adolescents have narrowed their career options based on sex type, prestige, or being unacceptably difficult. The area remaining in the map marks the adolescent's zone of acceptable options or *social space* (Gottfredson, 2005:79).

Occupational choice, thus far, seems to be mainly a matter of wanting to belong, being respected and living a comfortable life according to the demands of one's reference group. Occupational choice is, therefore, not based on getting personal fulfilment and meaning from one's job but on the good life guaranteed by one's job.

The job sectors deemed as inappropriate become closed paths, at least psychologically, even when those occupations match adolescents' personal interests. Only when compelled to do so, will the adolescents seek out or pay attention to information about the choices they have rejected (Gottfredson, 2005:81).

While *circumscription* greatly alleviates the cognitive load of occupational choice for adolescents, it can shut out the experiences essential for knowing whether one might, in fact, have the interest and ability for such work. To the extent that individual's *tolerable effort* and *tolerable level* boundaries reflect expectations set by their *birth niche*, irrespective of their own traits, they are less likely to pursue options as far from their origins or as close to their own interests as they might otherwise do (Gottfredson, 2005:81). As a result, the occupations that might have been congruent with the adolescent's personality, interest and ability are excluded and not explored.

#### **2.3.2.4 Stage 4: Orientation to the internal, unique self**

The last stage in Gottfredson's circumscription model is *orientation to the internal, unique self*, which occurs from approximately age fourteen and is often referred to as the "*adolescent identity crisis*" (Patton & McMahon, 1999:53). In the preceding stages, the method mainly employed to eliminate occupations was pre-conscious, but at this stage the elimination process becomes much more conscious (Gottfredson, 2005:79).

Adolescents begin thinking about which careers would be congruent with their more personal, psychological selves (Gottfredson, 2005:81). The focus shifts from basing career choices on external factors (such as sex type and prestige level) to basing them on internal personal factors (such as abilities and values).

Continued cognitive growth has enabled adolescents to grasp better the abstract, internal, distinctive aspects of individuals and occupations, such as the interests, abilities and values applied while performing different tasks. They are therefore able to identify the different fields of work, and know that both worker personalities and economic functions differ from one field to another (Gottfredson, 2005:81).

At this stage, adolescents must begin taking into account non-occupational goals and requirements that will affect career planning. Many adolescent girls will think about how to strike a balance between home and work life, and many boys how to achieve sufficient financial support and security for a family. In addition, many adolescents still struggle to accurately assess their specific vocational interests, abilities and goals, partly because many of their vocationally relevant personal qualities are not yet fully developed (Gottfredson, 2005:82).

Making vocationally related decisions, such as which courses to take or training to pursue, generate considerable amounts of anxiety to adolescents. At this point they must now consider the actual tasks performed by different types of workers on the job, the relevant qualifications, and how to attain those qualifications (Gottfredson, 2005:82).

Occupational exploration is restricted to the scope of acceptable options *circumscribed* at earlier stages for adolescents. It now centres specifically on fields or work within that space that seems most compatible with the more internal, unique sense of self that the individual adolescent wants to implement and portray (Gottfredson, 2002:100).

If prompted, most adolescents can name their favourite occupational choice and their idealistic ambition. However, the occupations they prefer may not be the most readily available. They may have little preference for the realistic aspirations but still view them as acceptable occupations that they think they could actually get. The difference between idealistic and realistic occupational aspirations is that the realistic aspirations have been modulated by their perceived accessibility as opposed to the idealistic options which are in reality not accessible.

Both the idealistic and realistic career aspirations often change as the adolescent learns more about how compatible and how accessible different occupations might really be. Therefore, any series of expressed aspirations, whether idealistic or realistic, is really just a sampling of the

occupations from the adolescent's social space. Even those identified spontaneously as the least suitable, tend to be drawn from and indicate the adolescent's social space (Gottfredson, 2005:82).

One concern at this stage of development is that adolescents have not obtained (or will not obtain) enough experience for testing their vocational interests and abilities, especially for occupations they have long before excluded from their social space. It is also highly likely that adolescents may commit themselves to specific career choices before they really know the options open to them in terms of accessibility, mainly because of external pressure, ignorance, anxiety, or inaction on their part (Gottfredson, 2005:82).

### **2.3.2.5 Compromise of aspirations**

Gottfredson (quoted by Zunker, 2006:64) maintains that *individuals often discover when the time comes that they will be unable to implement their most preferred choices*. Compromise is a process by which adolescents come to settle for good career choices but not the most preferred ones, as they realise that some of their preferred choices are in reality inaccessible to them. The need to accommodate external factors compels adolescents to modify their career aspirations (Zunker, 2006:64).

Anticipatory compromise takes effect when adolescents begin to measure their career ambitions or assessment of compatibility against their perceptions of reality or assessments of accessibility. As they do this, the career aspirations they express will shift from the ideal toward the expected. Experiential compromise on the other hand takes place when adolescents encounter obstacles in implementing their most envisaged career choices and are therefore compelled to shift towards more realistic options (Gottfredson, 2005:82).

The obstacles and prospects in implementing different career aspirations include, for example, the local availability of specific types of education and employment, hiring practices and family commitments. Such obstacles also extend to factors such as incongruence between sex type, social status and occupational interest and what the labour market offers (Gottfredson, 2002:101).

## 2.4 SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING ADOLESCENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### 2.4.1 Gender

Career preferences are formed early in adolescence and are very much influenced for both boys and girls by gender-role socialisation, which is clearly one of the earliest and therefore most powerful types of socialisation (Watson, Quatman & Edler, 2002:232; Domenico & Jones, 2006:3). The strength of this socialisation often creates a narrow, gender-based scope of career options, resulting in the elimination of certain types of occupational choices, deemed as incompatible with the individuals' sex-role identity (Mc Mahon & Patson quoted by Watson *et al.*, 2002:323).

According to Gottfredson's (1981) circumscription model of career development, career choices have already been narrowed by the time of adolescence, to those that are considered befitting of one's gender (Watson *et al.*, 2002:324).

Empirical evidence (Mahmoudi, 2005:491) also indicates the likelihood that pressures to behave in sex-appropriate ways gain prominence in adolescence. This means that at adolescence both boys and girls have developed more interest in careers that employ more members of their own sex. As boys and girls mature, they continuously *circumscribe* their career aspirations in ways they view as gender-appropriate, thereby limiting later academic and vocational opportunities (Gottfredson, in Brown & Lent, 2005:77).

In the past, fewer occupational choices were accessible to women owing to factors such as sexism, discrimination and the little education possessed by women. Studies on gender and career aspirations in the 1970s reveal that girls had more limited career aspirations compared to boys and frequently settled for a narrow range of educational categories (Domenico & Jones, 2006:3). Furthermore, families often encouraged the educational and career aspirations of male children and not those of female children.

Thus, not only did sex differences become apparent early in childhood, but through socialisation girls also seemed to learn quickly that only certain adult statuses were accessible to them, indicating societal sex-role stereotyping (Domenico & Jones, 2006:3). As a result, by the time

they reached adolescence, girls would already have formed a narrower range of occupational options and developed lower expectations of occupational achievement than boys, resulting in their conforming to these societal sex-role stereotypes.

In the 1980s it was clear that adolescent girls' career preferences had widened, yet their expectations for career achievement still remained low particularly for high status, conventionally male sex-typed careers (Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000:369). Furthermore it was clear that adolescent girls continued to encounter restrictions in their career aspirations as they were found to prepare to work only until they got married, and then to stop doing paid employment in order to become house-wives and mothers, or to assume the role of secondary breadwinners (Francis, 2002:83).

In the 21st century, many of the obstacles to career choice among women have decreased (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:96). Notwithstanding this, women continue to be underrepresented in high-pay, high-status professions, such as engineering, the natural sciences and law (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:96). For instance, in spite of female enrolments at primary and secondary school and university having exceeded 50% of the total enrolments by 1994, opportunities for girls and women remain comparatively low in Botswana (Vlaardingerbroek, 2001).

Many people believe that the under-representation of women in high-pay, high-status professions is a result of the persistent gender-role stereotyping of careers, which in no way escapes the attention of adolescent girls, and ultimately influences their career aspirations (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:96). For instance, like in the past, children learn from a young age that secretaries are female, while business executives are male. Examples of men in positions of authority and women in ancillary roles abound in children's books, movies, television programming and children's real-life experiences (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:97; Sharf, 2006:193).

In particular, the media has been found to perpetuate images that influence adolescent girls to become more concerned about their appearance and popularity, downplaying their academic ability and capability, particularly in mathematics and science, with the resultant underachievement and avoidance of science-related careers (Wilgosh, 2003:239).

Consequently, this inadequate exposure to women in non-conventional careers narrows the occupational aspirations of even gifted adolescent girls who have the potential to pursue education leading to prestigious careers, but may not view such careers to be within their sphere of options (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:97).

In Botswana, gender disparity seems to have been influenced by cultural practices (Baryeh, 2001). Although women are known to handle arduous and strenuous jobs, there has been a belief that a man must fulfil the role of breadwinner, while the woman must remain a housewife, resulting in women choosing less rewarding jobs and studying courses predominantly viewed as female areas of study (Baryeh, 2001).

For instance, despite the fact that the educational policy provides equal opportunities for the enrolment of women in all fields of study and that, demographically, women outnumber men in Botswana women are underrepresented in all engineering programmes at the University of Botswana (Baryeh, 2001).

Even though adolescent girls are now less rigid in transcending traditional gender positions than in the past, it is interesting to note that there seems to be a gendered dichotomy in the choices of occupations. Most girls select jobs characterised by creative or caring components, whereas most boys tend to choose jobs utilising technical/scientific and business skills, indicating subtle traits characteristic of the occupational gender-role stereotyping that both adolescent boys and girls come to acquire (Francis, 2002:77).

Such choices and preferences indicate the way in which "the sciences", including subjects such as maths, science and information technology and excluding biological sciences, have traditionally been perceived as a masculine territory, while on the other hand "the arts", including art, languages, and humanities subjects such as history, have been delineated as feminine (Francis, 2002:83).

According to Francis (2002:83), a hierarchy exists in relation to this existing gender-role based dichotomy. "The sciences" have traditionally been awarded a higher status in society than the "arts" since they are linked with high-status qualities such as rationality and objectivity, while "the arts" are associated with emotion and subjectivity and are therefore linked with lower status.

These traits themselves are gendered, as indicated in the binary dichotomy illustrated in table 2.1 below:

**Table 2.1: Binary dichotomy indicating differences in the status accorded scientific and artistic careers** (Francis, 2002:38)

Male	Female
'The Sciences'	'The Arts'
Objectivity	Subjectivity
Science	Nature
"Hard"	"Soft"
Rationality	Emotion

This dichotomy emphasizes a prevailing perception of masculinity and femininity, which people *draw on, resist and engage* with throughout their lives in their constructions of identity. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that many adolescent girls continue to choose jobs, which reflect traditionally feminine aspects, and that many adolescent boys choose jobs, which reflect traits traditionally deemed masculine.

It is worth noting that the two sides of the dichotomy mentioned above are not equal in terms of power and status. The traits categorised as feminine are associated with weakness and being sub-standard; while those classified masculine are associated with power and high-status, hence "the sciences" have traditionally been seen as more important, and more difficult than "the arts" (Francis, 2002:83).

Interestingly, it has been found that few adolescent girls are opting for technical, business or scientific jobs, which incidentally are associated with masculinity, despite the increased diversity of choice and greater aspiration concerning their future aspirations (Francis, 2002:84). Li and Kerpelmann (2007:106) indicate that adolescent girls tend to value relations between self and the world and desire careers in fields linked to people and relationships, such as medicine and the health sciences.

More adolescent girls than boys have been found to choose mostly jobs with a caring side such as social work, counselling, teaching, nursing, psychology, dietetics and a creative side, such as beauty therapy, and fashion-designing (Francis, 2002:82). In contrast, more adolescent boys than girls have been found to choose jobs with a largely scientific or technical component such as, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and a business component such as banking, company directing and stock-broking (Francis, 2002:82).

The vast majority of the studies investigating influences on adolescent career development have concentrated on females and their choice of traditional female or traditional male occupations. Males are noticeably absent from research on the gender-role stereo-typing of occupational options, but the few studies done indicate that there is more pressure on adolescent boys than girls to stick to conventional gender-role stereotyped behaviour in choosing careers (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:97; Francis, 2002:84).

The pressure on adolescent males to stick to conventional male occupations seems to be somewhat linked to the fact that masculine behaviours, preferences and interests are socially cherished. Without doubt, with regard to careers, those that are the highest in earning power and status are male-dominated. Thus it makes sense that adolescent girls would be more attracted to male dominated careers than their male counter-parts would be to female-dominated careers (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:97). But then, the question arises as to whether some adolescent boys might be missing out on fulfilling occupational opportunities because they have ruled them out based on their sex-type (Raffaele-Mendez & Crawford, 2002:106).

#### **2.4.2 Parental influence**

Parents play a major role in the occupational aspirations and career goal development of their adolescent children (Taylor, Harris & Taylor, 2003:4; Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000; Bardick, Bernes, Magnusson & Witko, 2005:152). In fact, Ferry (2003:4) regards parents as key influencers in their adolescent children's career choices. Many parents of adolescents are in a position to influence their adolescent child's career development because they have observed their child's development, have known their interests and strengths, have developed a trusting relationship

with them (Bardick, *et al.*, 2004:106) and are often the most likely to interact with them during their career planning process (Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000).

Witko *et al.* (2005:36) express parents' belief that they have an important role to play in their adolescent children's career planning. Parents have viewed their role as being informative; providing career-related information, educative; teaching values, and supportive; providing support during their children's career planning process (Bardick *et al.*, 2005:153). Many adolescents themselves acknowledge the significant role that parents have to play in their career development and thus, expect parental influence and most likely ask for parental advice on their occupational development (Bryant, Zvonkovic & Reynolds, 2005:151).

Parent-adolescent factors such as feeling a high sense of closeness and attachment to parents have been found to be valuable for adolescent career development (Witko *et al.*, 2005:36). In addition, experiencing a warm, supportive parent-child relationship and higher levels of emotional support and attachment to parents have been associated with greater career maturity and progress towards committing to a career among school and college learners (Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles & Sameroff, 2001:1248).

Contrary, to these positive influences parental influences may prove less beneficial to adolescent career exploration and decision-making when it is characterised by non-involvement, indifference or negative involvement. In addition, parental encouragement though well meaning may be restricted to only a scope of options acceptable to the parent and may narrow an adolescent's career exploration and career choice, therefore proving to be detrimental to the adolescent's career development (Bardick *et al.*, 2004:107).

Adolescents themselves may become overly dependant on their parents' contribution and narrow or eliminate potential career possibilities because of too much dependence on their parents (Bardick *et al.*, 2004:107). Thus, engaging in healthy separation from one's parents during adolescence may be valuable for career development (Witko *et al.*, 2005:36).

### **2.4.2.1 Parents as primary sources of knowledge, beliefs and values**

According to Wahl and Blackhurst (2000), adolescents seem to approach their parents more than any other source for answers to their career-related questions. Eighty percent of the adolescents in a study conducted by Otto (2000:111) to investigate perceptions on parental career influence, amongst school learners in North Carolina, USA, were found with ideas similar to their parents' about the preparation needed for occupations, suggesting that parents are a major source of knowledge and beliefs about occupations.

Although some adolescents base their knowledge of adult work on direct observations of their parents at work, most adolescents' knowledge of adult work is obtained indirectly by overhearing conversations about work. However, the messages obtained from these conversations seem to provide a subjective impression of adult work and incomplete knowledge of how parents feel about their jobs (Bryant *et al.*, 2005:155).

### **2.4.2.2 Accessibility of parents**

Parents differ in matters of accessibility, including physical availability, approachability and communication skills, all of which have a direct impact on how well parents are able to act as resources for the career development of their children. Parents, who have a relationship with their children that is characterised by relative ease in communication on general issues, can serve as a viable source of information about occupations (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:153).

Studies that have independently investigated the influences of each parent on the career choices of their adolescent children, have however reported that mothers frequently have more influence on the career aspirations of their children than fathers (Taylor *et al.*, 2004:2). For instance, Otto (2000:113) found that adolescents indicated that they discussed their career plans most seriously with their mothers than their fathers. The study by Otto (2000:113) reported that 75% of adolescents rated their mothers as more helpful than fathers, school counsellors, adult relatives, schoolmates and adult friends when it came to making occupational plans that included attaining their educational needs, indicating the significant role that mothers play in their adolescent children's career development compared to fathers.

It would seem that the role played by parents in their adolescent children's career development is also determined by the parents' marital status, though contrasting views have been presented on this. Bryant *et al.* (2006:155) contend that mothers are found to play an important role in giving career advice to adolescents in both always-married and divorced families. In contrast, Tucker *et al.* (quoted by Bryant *et al.*, 2006:155) found that adolescents had a tendency to rely on their fathers and siblings, instead of their mothers, more often in always-married than divorced families.

*One possible explanation for the finding that mothers exert greater influence than fathers on their adolescents' career aspirations is that adolescents of all ages spend proportionally less time with their fathers than with their mothers and most of their time with their fathers occurs in the presence of mothers (Bryant et al., 2006:155). Again from a young age, children spend more time in their mothers' care and also engage in direct interaction with mothers than fathers (Bryant et al., 2005:155).*

The nature of the activities that adolescent children engage in with their fathers may also have an impact on why children do not seek out fathers for career planning advice. The most common activities that fathers have with their school-aged children are television viewing and doing homework, and in 17% of the families studied, fathers, spent no dyadic time at all with their children (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156). Therefore, the nature of time, in addition to the amount of time spent with fathers may explain why adolescents find mothers to be more helpful in making career goals.

The accessibility of fathers needs to be assigned great thought taking into account that some adolescents do not live with their fathers or with a person they consider to be their father figure, reflecting the high incidence of divorce and decreased contact with fathers (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156). This may have a more adverse impact on sons, considering that fathers have been found to have greater influence on the career development of sons than daughters (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156).

### **2.4.2.3 Impact of work schedules and economic stress**

Work schedules and economic stress have a huge impact on parental accessibility (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156). Those parents who work non-standard workdays such as weekends and those whose work schedules keep changing have been found to spend less time with their children. Only parents who have flexibility in determining their work schedules seem to avoid the negative effect of non-standard work schedules. Furthermore, work overload and being motivated by profit negatively affects the amount of time parents spend with their children as well as the quality of interaction between parents and their children (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156).

Poor mothers who do physically exhausting work that also comes with inflexible work hours find it a challenge to interact in a meaningful way with their children. Single parent mothers who work lengthy hours for little pay have been found challenged to afford focused time with their children (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156).

Evidently, having parents with limited financial resources may increase the likelihood of rushed and inadequate shared parent-child time, and this in all probability affects the messages children use to learn about work from their parents (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:156).

Parents' work schedules, including working extended hours, work schedules that conflict with their children's schedules, the demanding nature of work, level of parental exhaustion after work, all lead to rushed time with children. This has led to many adolescents feeling that their time with either parent is hurried and therefore unfulfilling (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:157).

Material conditions and resources at home as well as parental aspirations for children influence the relationship between social class and adolescent educational attainment, occupational aspirations and in the end occupational attainment (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:164). For instance, parents in wealthy communities have been found to offer valuable learning experiences through their own role models and supporting activities that help their adolescent children in exploring career interests as well as teaching those skills that result in better understanding of the options open to the adolescents, contributing to career choice. Consequently, these adolescents have been found to explore a broader range of career options (Ferry, 2003:4).

Middle class parents as a group have been found to harbour aspirations for their children to develop initiative and self-direction, whereas working class parents emphasize conformity and external authority. This kind of difference shows that the kind and degree of material resources used to foster children's development, determines the skills developed and in the end, the types of work children will ultimately carry out (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:164).

#### **2.4.2.4 Parental education attainment knowledge**

The data regarding the impact of parents' educational background on the career aspirations of their adolescent children is inconclusive. Taylor *et al.* (2004:1) purport that parental education has an impact on adolescent career aspirations. Bryant *et al.* (2006:164) on the other hand deny the correlation between parental education and adolescent career development but do, however, maintain that parental education does interfere with the educational aspirations essential for higher occupational achievement.

Parents' level of educational attainment is related to their belief that they can influence their child's academic progress (Bandura, quoted by Bryant *et al.*, 2006:165) such that the higher the education of the parents, the more equipped they are, as a group, to play an active part in their child's academic activities and planning.

If parents think they can influence their children's academic advancement and they possess actual experience of high educational achievement that comes with knowledge from higher education, they are more likely to attend college and help their children plan for meeting college entrance requirements, (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:166) and ultimately to pursue a specific career.

For parents of low educational achievement, parental educational involvement positively affects their child's academic and occupational aspirations but fails to sustain the academic achievement needed to attain their high status occupational aspirations (Bryant *et al.*, 2006: 166). This might be because parents with limited formal education, with low English language proficiency or who do not speak English at all have a hard time understanding and taking part in decisions about their adolescents' course placements.

Insufficient knowledge of the workings of the school system can also make it difficult for such parents to help their adolescent children choose courses in secondary school that would boost their chances of attending colleges and universities (Kumar & Hruda, 2001:5).

In addition, adolescents who experience discontinuity between home and school because of their awareness of their parents' difficulty in communicating with school personnel, often end up not approaching their parents for help with school related problems. Consequently, these learners are denied the emotional support from parents that would otherwise promote their career exploration, something that would negatively affect their career development, taking into account that parental education has been reported to be the variable that has the most influence on educational plans and occupational aspirations (Lankard, 1995).

Indeed, De Ridder (as quoted by Lankard, 1995), indicates that lower levels of parental education can impede adolescent career development as it lowers the chances of going to college or attaining a professional occupational goal and essentially predetermines the child's likely vocational choice.

#### **2.4.2.5 Parents' self-efficacy beliefs**

Parental self-efficacy is one of the variables that have been found to influence career development (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:163). Parents who strongly believe they can influence their adolescent children's educational progress often act in ways that reinforce their children's academic self-efficacy beliefs, raise their children's aspirations and promote scholastic achievement. This in turn will lead to high status careers, needing higher levels of education (Bandura, quoted by Bryant *et al.*, 2006:163).

On the other hand, parents' inefficacy can prevent them from offering the necessary support to their adolescent children. Such parents would find it a challenge to work together with or deal with their children's teachers and, therefore, leave the responsibility of educating their children to teachers, maintaining little involvement with the school and their children's work (Kumar & Hruda, 2001:5). Such non-involvement by parents in the academic lives of their adolescent children results in non-involvement in the children's career development as well.

#### **2.4.2.6 Parental experience with work**

Parents' own employment experiences influence adolescent career development. In particular, a parent's occupation provides first hand experience in helping an adolescent to refine their understanding of what a particular occupation entails (Hairston, 2001:11). *Parents' attitudes towards their own and others' occupations affect the information they pass on to their children* (Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000). For instance, parents who get satisfaction from their work and share this enjoyment with their children, help them to learn positive work ethics (Bardick *et al.*, 2005:153).

Unemployment among low income families has generally shown a negative correlation to children's academic or career aspirations and achievement. In addition, when women are employed but are concerned about work taking them away from home, or do low-paying or routine jobs, their children's academic or career aspirations and achievements frequently suffer. A possible explanation for this development could be that mothers have been found to play a key role in their children's career development (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:167).

Unemployment has also been associated with adolescent expectations for their own future job success (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:167). As already indicated, work circumstances can make parental involvement difficult as has been seen with those parents whose job routines are rigid, those who are paid hourly and those possessing minimal education.

Adolescents' negative perceptions of their parents' work experience, particularly those whose parents' work grants little autonomy, experience more conflict with parents and develop more negative attitudes toward school. Conflicts between fathers and adolescents in particular, mediate the high correlation between negative spill-over from fathers' work-related conditions such as tiredness and bad mood after work, and adolescents' negative attitude towards school – a development that is regrettable, since education is the basis for greater job opportunities (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:168).

Adolescents' perceptions of their parents' job security also seem to influence school performance. This is important because school performance in as early as 9<sup>th</sup> grade and even more so by the 12<sup>th</sup> grade has been found to predict career success thirty-five years later. How parents view their own

job insecurity has been linked to their children's academic achievement and self-efficacy in making plans and doing what it takes to complete the plans. Harsh parenting and negative work spill-over have also been associated with lower grades (Bryant *et al.*, 2006:168), which makes getting high status and well-paying jobs difficult, if not impossible.

### **2.4.3 Peer influence**

Although peers play a significant role in the development of individuals' career development, theory has usually neglected this social context (Kracke, 2000:27). As adolescents develop, their relationship focus shifts, with more emphasis and emotional attachment devoted to peers and close friends. Josselson (as quoted by Felsman & Blustein, 1999:281) conceptualised the ability to maintain close peer relationships as an extension of the *separation-individuation* process from parental figures, one of the key tasks that occur during the process of identity development.

Peers then start to offer the sense of security that parents had provided as adolescents engage in healthy separation from their families. As a result, an adolescent with strong peer relationships may feel freer to explore in more depth, and may also commit to career choices more easily than adolescents who have not formed close peer relationships (Felsman & Blustein, 1999:281-282).

Felsman and Blustein (1999:282) maintain that the logic underlying this proposed relationship is based on two ideas about the way in which close relationships strengthen developmental progress. First, close relationships help adolescents learn more about themselves, thereby offering one of the major channels through which people define themselves.

Within the context of close, mutual relationships, adolescents can discover their similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes. Peers appear to be especially helpful in respect to career self-exploration. By talking with age-mates, adolescents can practice new patterns of thinking and develop ideas about the future that relate to their future career lives, thereby refining their ideas about their career goals (Kracke, 2002:21).

Second, the sense of connection offered by strong peer relationships may provide security and psychological support to the adolescent explorer, which promotes commitment to a career plan.

As such, the comfort provided by close friends may foster the wide-ranging exploration, risk taking and social mastery that are inherent to career decision-making (Felsman & Blustein, 1999:282).

Bardick *et al.* (2004:106) contend that peer relationships provide emotional and personal support as well as job-related and personal feedback in career decision-making. Adolescents with close peer relationships are more likely to explore different career options and commit to career choices because of their strong support system. In addition, Kracke (2002:27) maintains that close relations with peers, focusing on career-related issues are not only linked to more information-seeking behaviour, but also contribute to the explanation of change in career exploration.

Felsman and Blustein (1999:291) further maintain that anchoring, which is the process whereby adolescents separate from their parents and develop adaptive ties with more age-appropriate figures, may be particularly important in the current climate of uncertainty that defines modern-day career development. Gelatt, ( as quoted by Felsman & Blustein, 1999:291) describes the current climate as one whereby *the past is not always what it was thought to be, the future is no longer predictable and the present is changing as never before.*

For adolescents, planning for the future and making decisions that will affect the rest of their lives may produce much anxiety. Hence, adolescents may rely on peer relationships for support and perhaps to buffer some of the anxiety that is inherent in making decisions for a future that is increasingly difficult to predict (Felsman & Blustein, 1999: 291).

#### **2.4.4 Mentor and role model influence**

The significance of mentors on the career development of adolescents has increasingly received attention in the literature over the past decade (Flores & Obasi, 2005:146). In particular, the presence of a mentor has been hypothesised to be influential in the career development of individuals from minority groups, within an educational setting or career field, such as various racial and ethnic groups (Flores & Obasi, 2005:146). Similarly, the part played by role models on the career development of adolescents has been indicated as equally important (Flouri & Buchanan, 2002:37).

Flouri and Buchanan (2002:36) further maintain that adolescents can benefit much from adults who are successful in their areas of interest. These adults may be present in adolescents' lives as mentors or role models, and can include parents, siblings, teachers and career counsellors (Flores & Obasi, 2005:147).

Having a strong mentoring relationship can afford adolescent learners an environment that accepts, confirms and promotes their abilities, and may consequently increase the learners' personal and professional identities (Flores & Obasi, 2005:147).

Empirical evidence (Flores & Obasi, 2005:147) suggests that racial and gender similarities in a mentoring relationship can have substantial benefits. For instance, Ensher and Murphy (as quoted by Flores & Obasi, 2005:147) reported that the quality of the mentoring relationship improved when mentees viewed themselves as a lot similar to their mentors. In addition, mentors liked their mentees when they were paired with a same race mentee, and having a mentor of the same race was linked to higher ratings of career support.

In another study, Koberg, Boss and Goodman (as quoted by Flores & Obasi, 2005:147) indicated that mentees in same-gender mentoring relationships reported greater psychosocial support than mentees in cross-gender mentoring relationships.

Similarly, Constantine, Kindaichi and Miville (2006:261) indicate that mentors who are similar in terms of race, ethnicity or gender may influence black and Latino secondary school learners. Adolescents of colour note the presence or absence of others who are similar to them in these regards and formulate beliefs about their available career opportunities, by seeing people similar to them in professional positions.

This means that adolescents of colour get motivated when they see people similar to them in terms of race, ethnicity or gender holding high professional positions. This generates in them the belief that they too can hold such positions if people similar to them can hold the positions. Similarly, gender and race-matched role models may create in adolescents of colour a sense of belonging and the belief that they have a place of value in college settings, or in professional work positions (Constantine *et al.*, 2006:261).

Flores and Obasi (2005:147-148) found in their study that potential mentors for Mexican American secondary school learners tended to be parents, extended family members, and teachers. In the study, mothers particularly were identified by most learners as their mentors. Teachers were identified as the highest reported mentors outside the home and were identified more often than siblings and extended family members (Flores & Obasi, 2005:159-160). This, however, contrasts with what was found by Gillock and Reyes (as quoted by Flores & Obasi, 2005:149) where teachers were rated as playing a less significant role than siblings and peers.

Flores and Obasi (2005:160) further indicate that adolescents learn vicariously through their mentors. The learners in their study indicated that seeing the struggles that their mentors endured in their life affected them as they made decisions about their future careers. On the other hand, seeing mentors who were doing well and who achieved, also influenced the learners' career goals (Flores & Obasi, 2005:160).

Providing verbal encouragement for learners' educational or career goals was found to be particularly helpful. Clearly, feeling supported by their mentors, both through verbal comments or by their willingness to be available when needed, stands out as particularly useful as adolescents make decisions about their future careers (Flores & Obasi, 2005:160).

As indicated before, just like with mentors, there is a relationship between role model influence and a variety of career-related outcomes, which include, among others, career maturity, career aspirations, career indecision, career salience and career choice (Quimby & De Santis, 2006:297). The construct of role models has often been confused with that of mentors, even though the two are different (Gibson, 2004:143). While mentors can offer support and advice or direct help to a protégé through an interactive relationship, it would not be possible for role models observed from a distance to provide this service. Unlike mentors, role models are therefore not restricted by distance and role modelling can entail only one-way awareness by the individual (Gibson, 2004:143).

Whereas mentoring works most effectively with proximal others who have a deep knowledge of the individual, the impact of role models is not necessarily dependant upon their physical presence. Hence celebrities, fictional characters and historical figures may be considered by

individuals to be role models (Gibson, 2004:142). Though availability is vital to finding satisfactory role models, contextual boundaries are more malleable (Gibson, 2004:142).

According to Tjas and Nelsen (1996) alumni may be credible role models to secondary school learners. This is because the educational and the career paths of alumni provide reference points as adolescents judge their own current circumstances, abilities, performances and opportunities and as they develop their own goals and aspirations for the future.

Through personal interactions with alumni, learners discover how their predecessors have dealt with challenges, persevered and obtained rewards for hard work. Furthermore, if learners perceive commonalities between themselves and successful alumni, their expectations, motivation and aspirations for their own futures may be improved (Tjas & Nelsen, 1996).

Tjas and Nelsen (1996) indicate that the adolescents in their study saw the lives of alumni as similar to their own, and identified with alumni. The accomplishments of alumni represented the potentialities of other learners from the school and as such created motivation in the adolescents about their own educational and career success.

#### **2.4.5 School guidance–counsellor influence**

Although guidance counsellors are expected to be able to provide learners with career advice and information, considering that they possess the necessary expertise to deliver comprehensive school counselling programmes, encouraging among others, learners' career development (O'Donnell & Logan, 2007:1), only a small number of learners may seek and receive such services (Bardick *et al.*, 2004:106). As already indicated learners tend to discuss their career plans, mostly with their parents (Pyne, Bernes, Magnusson & Poulsen, 2002; O'Donnell & Logan; Alexitch, Kobussen & Stookey, 2004), with peers and, less frequently, with school guidance counsellors (O'Donnell & Logan; Alexitch *et al.*, 2004).

Perrone, Sedlacek & Alexander (as quoted by Gibbons, Borders, Wiles, Stephan & Davis, 2006) indicate that African-American and Hispanic learners are less likely to seek help or services from school guidance counsellors.

Similarly, in a study conducted on secondary school learners' decisions to pursue university, Alexitch *et al.* (2004) found that only 45% of the learners indicated that they had met with a school guidance counsellor to discuss post-secondary options. A few learners reported that their school guidance counsellor had given them little or no information at all about post-secondary education. Consequently, many learners reported feeling ill-equipped to carry out their goals and not being fully informed about the demands of university life.

Furthermore, O'Donnell and Logan (2007:5) found out in a different study that many college freshmen felt that they had been inadequately equipped to enter college, owing to a lack of guidance from their secondary school guidance counsellors. Participants in the study felt that their secondary school guidance counsellors not only failed to influence their choice of major, but also failed to provide them with the necessary resources. More male than female learners reported that their values and goals concerning their potential careers were not taken into consideration by their school guidance counsellors (O'Donnell & Logan, 2007:6).

According to Alexitch *et al.* (2004), the reasons why adolescents may feel that they get inadequate assistance from school guidance counsellors are many and varied. One possibility is that school guidance counsellors may have little time for personalised advising due to work overload and may resort to conveying information about post-secondary options in group settings. For instance, Hartung (2005) indicates that in schools in Botswana information giving and advising are the predominant modes used in career guidance classes and that there is very little individual counselling offered to learners on career-related matters.

Learners may also be dissatisfied with the type of advice they receive from school guidance counsellors because it is not tailored to address their specific needs, abilities and interests (Alexitch *et al.*, 2004) or they may believe that other people such as parents, peers and subject teachers can provide them with more useful information than school guidance counsellors.

## **2.5 KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CAREER DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

### **2.5.1 Self-assessment**

Career planning calls for learning about oneself. The first step that adolescents need to take in planning their careers is to identify their skills, abilities, interests, needs and personality characteristics. This starts with an inner exploration to help one understand the basic elements that will facilitate a connection to their work in a meaningful manner (North Western University, 2006).

According to Herr, Cramer and Niles (2004:5), adolescents need to come to terms with who they are, what kinds of commitment they are willing to make, what their values, interests, skills and aptitudes are, and how competent or confident they feel. Knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, preferences and goals provides an evaluative foundation on which any action or option can be based to determine its relevance. This base of information also helps one to establish what information one has, what one needs, and what should be secured (Herr *et al.*, 2004:52).

Similarly, Zunker (2006:215) maintains that accurate self-knowledge increases one's chances of finding congruence with a work environment. In addition, King and Cartwright (2003) maintain that the most successful job seekers are those that can help an employer understand exactly how they will fit into the employer's organisation. An in-depth assessment of one's abilities, interests, values and personality is therefore crucial to match an appropriate work environment (Zunker: 2006:215).

### **2.5.2 Investigating the world of work**

The second step in the career planning process allows one to explore the world of work (King & Cartwright, 2003). Adolescents need to investigate the world of work for a number of reasons, the most important being to find out what occupations and jobs best match their skills, interests, values and personality (King & Cartwright, 2003).

Other important reasons why adolescents need to investigate the world of work are so that they can

- have an idea of what classes or courses to pursue or get to know the education and training required for specific jobs;
- learn how and where to apply for jobs;
- identify work industries that can use their skills and the ones that really interest them;
- gain confidence by becoming familiar with the language and concerns of the world of work, which is an important quality in any job search;
- learn about recent job trends, the fastest growing jobs and other information that can affect their career planning; and
- learn about specific careers and what kind of work is involved in these jobs (King & Cartwright, 2003).

Adolescents can explore the vast world of work opportunities in a variety of ways. These include informational interviews, library or online searches, obtaining information from the school career centre, reading the newspaper business section and business journals. Practical work experience can be obtained through job shadowing, volunteer work and holiday jobs to obtain further information about various occupations (King & Cartwright, 2003; University of Wisconsin Madison Continuing Studies, 2007).

### **2.5.3 Decision making**

According to King & Cartwright (2003), the next step in the career planning process, after self-assessment and investigating the world of work, is to review information about the self, personal circumstances and various occupations. This means that adolescents now need to look at the best fit between personal characteristics, abilities and interests and the occupations researched, and how well they satisfy their needs and interests.

A link needs to be made between what the adolescent knows about each career and what is known about the self. It is important to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each option, in order to make an informed career decision. Thereafter it is crucial to develop a plan of action based on any further training that will be required and which majors should be selected (King & Cartwright, 2003).

## **2.6 CAREER MATURITY**

The career decision-making process is one of the major developmental tasks in adolescence. The development of career maturity is essential for this task (Sharf, 2006:181). Defined broadly, *career maturity refers to the ability and readiness of an individual to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and cope with career development tasks* (Creed & Patton, 2001:336).

Throughout the extensive research that Super and colleagues have done with adolescents, they have been concerned with the readiness of individuals to make good choices (Sharf, 2006:181). Super *et al.* do not assume that, just because a learner has reached a certain grade or a certain age, he or she is ready to plan his or her future career. Not only do they see differences in career maturity among individuals, but they are also able to identify various components of career maturity (Sharf, 2006:181).

### **2.6.1 Career decision-making in adolescence**

Career decision-making generally begins to gain importance in late adolescence. It is during this stage that adolescents become fully aware of the social expectation that they should make some plans for their lives after completing senior secondary school. This is the stage when they normally explore their abilities and values in preparation for career exploration (Gati & Saka, 2001).

Akos, Konold and Miles (2004:53) indicate that even though learners are typically not ready to commit to career choices in junior secondary school, they are, however, expected to make curriculum choices that may narrow future career options. This initial choice juncture has significant implications for the learners' future education and career plans as it may lead to foreclosure on options.

In senior secondary school adolescents often have to make decisions relating to their majors that constrict their educational and vocational opportunities even further (Gati & Saka, 2001:331). Throughout the secondary school years, adolescents are required to make career-related decisions,

which involve curricular choices that greatly affect their future career plans. Consequently, career theorists caution against early commitment to a career choice (Watson, Creed & Patton, 2003).

According to Gati and Saka (2001:332), the significant developmental processes that take place during adolescence result in increased cognitive abilities, which strengthen decision-making abilities. Piaget and Inhelder (1996), as quoted by Gati and Saka (2001:332), describe such improvements in terms of the transition from concrete cognitive processes to abstract ones, and from subjective to objective thinking, as conditions which put adolescents in a better position to start making career choices.

There is a correlation between adolescents' age and decision-making capabilities (Gati & Saka, 2001:332). This includes increased awareness of the risks and implications involved in decision-making, seeking more advice from adults or peers, and awareness of the implications of receiving advice from someone with vested interests.

Other studies (Gati & Saka 2001:332) have found that cognitive changes, such as improvement in memory, organisation of cognitive processes, and the ability to better process information and apply knowledge, have assisted adolescents to make decisions. Consequently, adolescents develop the ability to think of the universe of possibilities, to frame the alternatives, and to think in abstract terms (Gati & Saka, 2001:332). Thus, as the **need** to make significant decisions arises during adolescence, the **capacity** to make them develops as well. In addition, research has shown that it is possible to improve adolescents' decision-making skills (Gati & Saka, 2001:332).

### **2.6.2 Career maturity and age**

The available literature is very conflicting on the presence of differences on scores of career maturity based on age and gender (Creed & Patton, 2001:49). Creed and Patton, (2001:337) indicate that research into career maturity has investigated various aspects of the construct, paying attention to a number of variables, including age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity and intelligence or grade point average.

Early work with the career development inventory established huge differences in career maturity results between grades 9 and 10, between grades 9 and 11, and between grades 9 and 12 (Creed, & Patton, 2001:337).

Creed and Patton (2001:337) further indicate that early work with the career maturity inventory showed an increase in career maturity from grades 9 to 12.

While other work, according to Creed and Patton (2001:337), has also shown that learners in higher grades have higher career maturity scores than those in lower grades, a 1988 US study by Fouad (Creed & Patton, 2001:337) reported that grade 9 learners did not score lower than learners in grade 12. In this same study, Fouad reported an increase across grades in an Israeli sample. These findings have also been reported in studies in Australia, Canada, South Africa, Nigeria and Lebanon.

According to Creed and Patton (2001:337), some researchers have suggested that career maturity may be more usefully differentiated by grade rather than age. This is due to the influence of the educational milieu as the principal mediator of the development of career behaviour and the grade-related career decisions learners are required to make.

More recently, however, a 1998 study by Powell and Luzzo (as quoted by Creed & Patton, 2001:337) demonstrated no relationship between age or grade of participants and their levels of career maturity. Creed and Patton (2001:337) suggest that this may have been due to a uniform programme of career development activities at school or contextual factors, such as perceived occupational opportunity and exposure to occupational alternatives that may be more influential in career development than age or class.

### **2.6.3 Career maturity and gender**

Creed and Patton (2001:338) have indicated that research findings investigating the impact of gender on career maturity are varied. Most studies conducted over two decades have found that females score higher than males on career maturity measures. In some studies, such as a 1988 study by Fouad (Creed & Patton, 2001:338), females scored higher than males on some sub-

scales only. However, a 1982 study by Achebe in Nigeria (Creed & Patton, 2001:338) reported that males scored higher than females in career maturity.

#### **2.6.4 Career decision status**

A more explicit aspect of career maturity is career decision status, defined by the career decision scale as certainty or indecision (Creed & Patton, 2001:338). While much attention has been focused on the individual's acquisition of mature career decision-making attitudes and competencies, there has also been focus on individuals who have not yet mastered one of the major career decision-making tasks or who experience career indecision.

#### **2.6.5 Career decision status and age**

Cross-sectional research that has been carried out on career decisional status and school grade or age has produced results that have differed according to the populations studied and revealed no consistent monotonic pattern across age and school grade levels (Watson *et al.*, 2003). Earlier research (Watson *et al.*, 2003) on South African adolescents identified greater career indecision in grades where educational decisions were needed, that is, grades 9 and 11, than in higher school grades.

According to Watson *et al.* (2003), subsequent longitudinal research by Watson and Stead (1994) on South African adolescents confirmed these initial findings, leading the authors to conclude that school grade exerts a moderating contextual impact on the career decision behaviour of adolescents.

Other South African career decision research (Watson *et al.*, 2003) suggests that learners who have been previously exposed to better career education services at secondary school level may display more career decidedness at tertiary educational level than more disadvantaged learners.

#### **2.6.6 Career decision status and gender**

Gender is another correlate that has been studied in connection with the career decision behaviour of adolescents (Watson *et al.*, 2003). Such studies have produced varied results, with several studies failing to establish whether gender differences in career decision status were statistically

note-worthy. While some studies have reported greater certainty about girls' career choices, other studies have established no gender differences (Watson *et al.*, 2003; Creed & Patton, 2001:339).

More recent South African studies (Watson *et al.*, 2003) have, however, found that female adolescents in grades 8 to 12 demonstrated a more linear progression of greater decidedness than males, both cross-sectionally and longitudinally.

It is apparent that, to date, the possible influence of gender on the career decision status of adolescents remains unclear and calls for more research (Watson *et al.*, 2003).

### **2.6.7 Types of career indecision**

According to Super (as quoted by Feldman, 2003), early career indecision among young adults, including adolescents, is due to both the nature of the situation they face and the nature of their own personal development. Part of the indecision results from having to make complex professional decisions about which university degree to pursue, which career path to follow, which jobs to accept, and decisions about leaving home, which all have to be made at the same time (Ployhart *et al.*, as quoted by Feldman, 2003).

In addition to identifying a potential career, learners also begin to prepare for the career they are considering and to evaluate the post-secondary options linked to their choice (Feldman, 2003). All these decisions are being made when adolescents' core personalities are not yet fully formed and when they have minimal experience in making major decisions, resulting in a high incidence of career indecision.

In an attempt to categorise the different types of career indecision, researchers have made a distinction between developmental indecision and chronic indecision (Gordon & Meyer, 2002:32).

#### **2.6.7.1 Developmental indecision**

According to Creed, Prideaux and Patton (2005), the experience of career indecision should be seen as a normal part of growth during a time when secondary school learners are obliged to make

numerous career related decisions. In this sense, career indecision is a developmentally appropriate phenomenon that fluctuates, due to a number of factors such as the need for career related information or a low level of career decision-making self efficacy (Creed *et al.*, 2005).

Feldman (2003) concurs with Creed *et al.* (2005) that developmental indecision occurs when adolescents lack career information. In general, developmental indecision is viewed as less worrisome and has been found to lessen with time as adolescents gain more self-insight and feedback from the environment (Feldman, 2003). In fact, Gordon and Meyer (2002:41) indicate that developmental indecision amongst learners is seen as a wholesome state, encouraging the adolescent to engage in improved exploration and goal setting.

Developmental indecision has been reported as mainly cognitive in nature (Feldman, 2003). The cognitive element includes such factors as lack of any career goals at all, lack of career directions except in the vaguest terms, lack of information about self and lack of information about the environment.

#### **2.6.7.2 Chronic indecision**

Chronic indecision reflects a more lasting inability to make a career decision (Gordon & Meyer, 2002:32). Driven by constant anxiety and fear of commitment, chronic indecision tends to be lasting within individuals and is largely affective in nature (Feldman, 2003).

The affective component of early career indecision includes such facets as anxiety, ambivalence, feelings of lack of control and frustration at the discontinuity between current job opportunities and long-term career aspirations (Feldman, 2003).

According to Creed *et al.* (2005) those adolescents who suffer from chronic indecision may be worse off than others who are developmentally indecisive.

## **2.7 CONCLUSION**

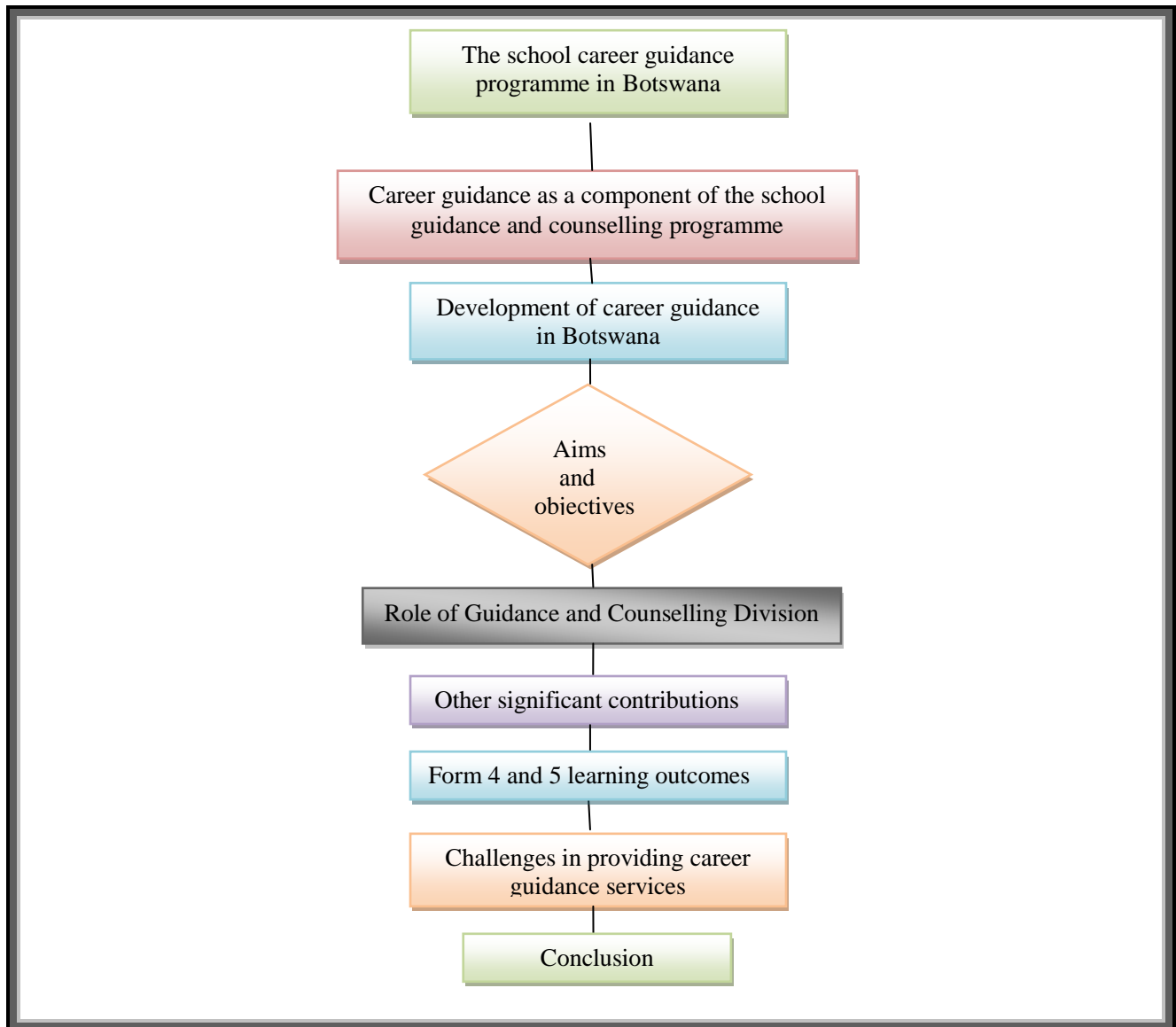
Career decision-making is one of the key developmental milestones that adolescents have to reach. It is a developmental task that brings with it many challenges and uncertainties, necessitating an understanding of the myriad experiences that adolescents go through during the career development process as well as the factors that may have an impact on the career aspirations of adolescents, affecting their career maturity in one way or another.

Career development theories facilitate a lot of understanding of the changes that adolescents go through during the career decision-making process and provide strategies that will help address the obstacles adolescents encounter during the career decision-making process. These career development theories can be utilised by school guidance counsellors to assist learners to make realistic career choices.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE SCHOOL CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME IN BOTSWANA

#### 3.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



### 3.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the efforts made by the Ministry of Education in Botswana to provide career guidance to learners within public schools. As previously indicated (see 1.3), the career guidance needs of learners are often articulated by parents and curriculum developers (Witko *et al.*, 2005:37; Euvrard, 1996). In contrast, this study sets out to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, as articulated by the learners themselves.

The career planning needs of the learners cannot be investigated within a vacuum—a yardstick needs to be used to guide the scope within which the needs of the learners can be assessed. Hence this chapter will not only assess the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana and therefore address the first aim of the study, but will also evaluate the learners’ needs against what the ministry of Education in Botswana offers in terms of career guidance. Thus the chapter is also aimed at helping to achieve the second research objective, namely to determine the extent to which the career guidance programme in place in senior public secondary schools in Botswana addresses the needs of the learners. The literature gathered in this chapter will therefore assist in addressing the aims of the study which are to investigate

- the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana; and
- the extent to which the current career guidance curriculum in Botswana addresses the needs of the learners.

Owing to the scarcity of scholarly literature on career guidance in Botswana, this chapter relies heavily on literature of the Ministry of Education itself and, therefore, might seem to be devoid of a critical analysis of the school career guidance programme in Botswana.

A few studies have been done to evaluate the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana schools (Montsi, Umakwe, Maphakwane, Lekoko, Mphele & Montsi, 2000; Mabote, Mokgolodi, & Maroba, 2007; Maokaneng, 2005; Mmusinyane, 2006), some of which made an assessment of the effort made to provide career guidance to learners. To date, however, no study has been

conducted to specifically establish the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners.

The closest effort that has been made to establish the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Botswana was a feasibility study on the Establishment of Career Resource Centres in Botswana by Alao (1998). The study, however, assessed the satisfaction of learners with the career activities/services offered from primary school through to tertiary institutions and did not dwell much on the career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools.

Maokaneng (2005) conducted a study on The Career World From the Perspective of Learners from Maun Senior Secondary School in Botswana but this study was limited to the learners' perceptions of what a career is and evaluated the career needs of the learners to a very small extent. Mmusinyane (2006) carried out a study on The Role of the School in Facilitating Students' Career Decision-Making Skills with particular reference to Junior Secondary Schools in the Letlhakane area but the study specifically targeted junior secondary school learners.

This chapter addresses the following central questions:

- What is the scope of the career guidance programme in public schools in Botswana?
- How has the career guidance programme developed over the years?
- What are the aims and objectives of the career guidance curriculum?
- What is the role of the Guidance and Counselling Division as the key leader in career development in Botswana?
- Who are the other significant contributors in terms of promoting career development amongst learners in Botswana?
- What activities form the core of the school career guidance programme?
- What is the content of the senior public secondary school career guidance curriculum?
- What are the challenges encountered in offering career guidance in public schools in Botswana?

### **3.3 CAREER GUIDANCE AS A COMPONENT OF THE SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PROGRAMME**

Career guidance forms part of the school guidance and counselling programme in Botswana. Guidance and counselling is offered as a core time-tabled school subject for all the classes (Montsi *et al.*, 2000:11). The secondary school curriculum includes one 40-minute period weekly per class, a quarter of which is devoted to career guidance (Vlaardingerbroek, 2001). This is in line with the objectives of the Policy Guidelines for the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana's Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:14) which stipulate that a formal curriculum with time-tabled guidance activities for all the classes from primary to tertiary institutions, shall centre on the provision of personal, social, educational and career guidance.

Notwithstanding the above, concern has been raised about the quality of service learners derive from the school career guidance programme, taking into account the amount of time allotted to guidance and counselling with all of its four components (40 minutes per week), the lack of fully-qualified personnel to teach career guidance, and the fact that guidance and counselling, though offered as a core subject, is taught for enrichment purposes only and is not examinable (Vlaardingerbroek, 2001; Maroba *et al.*, 2007).

A study by Montsi *et al.* (2000) to evaluate the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana's education system, found that only 15% of the senior public secondary school learners in the study acknowledged career guidance as a subject they were taught, inviting questions as to whether public schools and, in particular, senior public secondary schools offered career guidance to learners. Similarly, Mmusinyane (2006:71) found that the majority (72%) of the junior secondary school learners in her study indicated that they were not offered career guidance in their schools. It was reported by 83% of the learners that guidance and counselling was not included on their school time-table.

Though the findings by Mmusinyane (2006:71) were based on the situation at junior public secondary school, these have huge implications for the senior public secondary school career guidance programme, since those learners who successfully complete their junior secondary education graduate to senior public secondary school. The assumption in senior public secondary

school is that such learners received some sort of career guidance from their junior secondary schools and that the senior public secondary school career guidance curriculum therefore serves to augment the knowledge acquired.

### **3.4 DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER GUIDANCE IN BOTSWANA**

The beginning of a formal career guidance programme in Botswana can be traced back to 1963, when selected teachers were trained to serve as careers' masters, providing occupational information to learners in their secondary schools. Such a move pioneered the efforts to provide support services to learners (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:55; Alao, 1998:1; Montsi *et al.*, 2000:11).

In 1984 a workshop, organised in Gaborone for careers' masters, achieved the following:

- Looked at the draft objectives of the secondary school guidance programme.
- Re-assessed the duties of careers' masters.
- Re-assessed the career guidance programme so that it could be incorporated into a syllabus in the school curriculum (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:55).

Several developments took place in 1985 that enhanced the status of the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana. These developments included

- a policy direction seminar aimed at appraising the scope of the programme as it currently is (Alao, 1998:2). *This seminar marked the beginning of the development of a fully-fledged guidance and counselling programme in Botswana's education system* (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:56);
- the commissioning of a study by Sally Navin on the Guidance and Counselling Programme development in Botswana. The consultancy conducted a needs assessment survey that identified, among others, learners', teachers' and administrative needs in schools. *These needs determined the nature of the proposed counsellor-teacher role. The needs were also synthesized and formed the basis for the proposed guidelines for the Guidance and Counselling programme in Botswana* (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:57);

- the National Development Plan 6 (NDP 6) which emphasised the development of a wide-ranging career guidance and counselling service, closely linked with employment service, and social and community services. The nine-year basic education programme within this plan made recommendations for a curriculum that would help learners to assess their achievements and capabilities in pursuit of appropriate employment and/or further education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:60).

Two years later Mapp-Robinson submitted a report that provided the blue-print for the present structure and activities of the programme during the evaluation period (Montsi *et al.*, 2000:11). The report introduced a new dimension to the provision of career services in general, as it focused on the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana schools and helped to establish the Guidance and Counselling Division within the Ministry of Education which oversees the provision of guidance and counselling services in schools.

A major development in the provision of career guidance services was the development of the occupational Interest Inventory by Danton Mkandawire in 1990 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:62). Mkandawire made a conceptual framework for career guidance in Botswana which included the following recommendations:

- That a deliberate attempt be made to conceptualise the direction of career guidance to form the basis for the development and implementation of a programme, specific to Botswana;
- that the career guidance programme be developed along similar lines as the curriculum in each subject area;
- that the curriculum should specify all learning objectives and materials which would lend themselves to regular assessment; and
- that career guidance instructional objectives should be embedded in every subject area.

The 1994 Revised National Policy on Education, (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:21-22) made a number of recommendations regarding the development and delivery of the guidance and counselling services which included:

- Emphasising on the pre-vocational preparation of learners through career guidance and counselling to enhance the employability and further training of the junior secondary school learners;
- giving the career guidance teachers at the school level the specific responsibility for coordination of the programme as part of their job description;
- including career classes in the school time-table;
- encouraging learners to consider a wide range of occupational choices through the career guidance they receive in schools.

### **3.5 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME**

According to the Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana's Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:22-24) career guidance, as it is currently offered in Botswana schools, is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To form the core of the learning process by providing learners with the required knowledge, skills, values and appropriate attitudes towards all work;
- to provide learners with an opportunity to gather career information as well as to get the advice required to make informed and wise career decisions, based on the changes in both the economic and the human resource needs of the country;
- to bridge the gap between what is learned in class and the world of work, thus helping learners to appreciate the link between what they learn in class and what the outside world offers;
- to help learners to be familiar with the occupational opportunities open to them when they leave school;
- to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and experiences to enable them to adequately cope with the challenges and problems of the world of work;
- to create the self-knowledge that will assist learners in making rational decisions and setting realistic aspirations that may help them realise their potential;
- to emphasise the correlation between academic achievement, post-secondary options, and knowledge of the various occupations in Botswana. It is imperative to provide learners

with career/occupational information in the early years of schooling, rather than waiting until after completion of their secondary education;

- to emphasise the dignity of “blue collar” or manual labour and/or careers that require mainly the use of hands, especially in the technical fields, which could be realised through providing learning experiences and activities that require the use of one’s hands or require technical skills;
- to assist learners to consider a broad range of occupational choices.

### **3.6 THE ROLE OF THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING DIVISION**

The Guidance and Counselling Division of the Ministry of Education is the key leader in career development in Botswana (Mabote, Mokgolodi & Maroba, 2007:45). Guided by the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994), which is the policy that currently directs Botswana’s education, the division was established in 1987 to coordinate guidance and counselling activities, a duty which includes developing career guidance materials (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:45).

The aim of the Guidance and Counselling Division is to offer career services through the curriculum from primary to tertiary levels of education. Some of the activities organised by the division include classroom teaching, career fairs and a programme called “*Take a Child to Work*” (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:46).

#### **3.6.1 Activities provided at different levels of the education system**

Over and above the career guidance and education offered during classroom teaching, the Career Guidance Services Unit of the Guidance and Counselling Division in Botswana annually organises various activities to equip learners with career information and to facilitate career exploration, development and decision-making in learners.

Activities organised at different levels include the following:

### **3.6.1.1 Primary school level**

Activities at this level include the following:

### **3.6.1.2 Take-A-Child-To-Work**

Since the introduction of the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana's Education System in 1963, there has been some bias in offering career guidance, with career guidance services targeting only secondary school learners, to the exclusion of primary school learners (Rathedi, 2007:4). Regardless of the fact that career development is supposed to start at a very early age, there have been no clear guidelines as to what kind of activities could be offered to primary school learners to foster and enhance their career development.

Hence, the *Take-A-Child-To-Work* programme was introduced to facilitate career development in primary school going learners. Seen as a prelude to the job shadowing programme offered to learners at secondary school, the programme draws from the concepts of *Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work* and *Big Brothers and Big Sisters International* (Botswana Ministry of Education).

*Take-A-Child-To-Work* is an activity whereby parents take their primary school going learners to their work places, with the view to

- provide learners with opportunities to get exposure to the different job sectors at an early stage of development. This exposes learners to a variety of jobs, motivates and encourages them to take their learning seriously, since this could assist them to see their learning as a meaningful activity aimed at a particular purpose (Rathedi, 2007:4);
- provide learners with world of work information as early as possible in order to enhance their decision-making skills, so that they start to make informed decisions on the types of careers they may desire to pursue when they grow up (Rathedi, 2007:4);

- strive to build character which helps learners to know about some work cultures and ethics that could challenge and encourage them to work on positive character building, overcome negative attitudes towards work, and have respect for people and value for infrastructure (Rathedi, 2007:4). This will hopefully prepare them well in advance for work, so that they will find it easy to fit well in the world of work;
- help learners to appreciate different jobs as encouraged by the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education (Rathedi, 2007:4). This can be done through promoting respect for different careers and fostering self-understanding as well as realising the logistics of choosing a career by taking into account one's abilities, potential, aptitudes and interests.

### **3.6.2 Secondary school level**

Activities organised at secondary school level include the following:

#### **3.6.2.1 Girls in the Science Programme**

The 1994 Revised National Policy on education recommends that special measures should be taken to increase participation in and to improve the performance of girls in science, mathematics and technology (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:2). In most parts of the developing and developed world women are under-represented in most areas of science—and Botswana is no exception (Clegg, 2007).

In an increasingly technologically and scientifically advanced world, education is not only the key to scientific progress, but is also crucial to involvement in scientific pursuit. Gaining access to a scientific career requires certain levels of education, and this means that young people cannot study at further or higher education level in science, engineering or technology without the pre-requisite senior secondary school level preparation (Clegg, 2007).

For instance, it is not possible to study for a science degree at university level without a background in senior secondary school mathematics and science (Clegg, 2007). Hence, a programme called *Girls in Science Programme* has been introduced at senior public secondary

school level in Botswana to prepare more and more girls to pursue science-related careers at tertiary level (Botswana Ministry of Education).

Annual workshops are conducted for Form 4 female learners selected from all the senior public secondary schools in Botswana. After participating in the workshops, the learners are expected to host workshops in their senior secondary schools to create awareness and to encourage other female learners to pursue science-related courses at tertiary level (Botswana Ministry of Education).

### **3.6.2.2 Career Fair**

The Career Fair is an annual activity that is hosted for all the completing (Form 5) learners in senior public secondary schools and, to a lesser extent, for completing junior public secondary school or Form 3 learners in Botswana (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:46).

Introduced by the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation in 1998, the Career Fair is a career exploration activity that brings together various public, parastatal and private sector employees to disseminate career information to learners (Vlaardingerbroek, 2001). This helps to create awareness in learners of the career opportunities that are available to them.

Maokaneng (2005:61-62) reports that the learners in his study did not seem to view the annual Career Fair as a significant source of career information, raising concern about the effectiveness of the fair as a career exploration activity. Of particular concern is the fact that the Career Fair is an initiative of the Career Guidance Services Unit in the Curriculum and Evaluation Department (Ministry of Education) which is aimed at enhancing the efforts made by the schools to facilitate career exploration in learners.

Considering the fact that the Career Fair is a key career exploration activity, major effort should go into making adequate preparations to afford learners the optimal benefit that befits the Career Fair. Adequate time and resources should be dedicated to assist learners to understand well the purpose of the Career Fair (Maokaneng, 2005:61-62).

### 3.6.2.3 Job shadowing

Proposed by UNICEF in 1997 as an approach to strengthen the provision of career guidance services to the youth, job-shadowing addresses recommendation 33 (d) of the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education, which calls for the encouragement of learners to consider a broad range of occupational choices (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008b:4).

Job shadowing is also a response to the government of Botswana's vision 2016 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008b:4), which advocates for greater partnership between the private sector and the Ministry of Education to effectively prepare learners for work life.

Job-shadowing is offered to completing Form 5 learners in senior public secondary school and it gives learners an opportunity to explore specific jobs, and career or industry sectors that might be of interest to them. It also exposes learners to the realities and demands of the work-world as well as to the demands of employers (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008b:4), thereby helping them to make realistic career choices.

Job-shadowing aims to expose learners to a broad range of potential careers, over and above the commonly recognised professional types, with the view to promote technical, vocational and skill-based careers which learners generally have little regard for (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008b:8).

Not only is job-shadowing meant to benefit learners, but it also provides teachers with the following benefits:

- Direct or indirect exposure to workplace experiences.
- Greater access to more teaching materials.
- Strengthening the provision of career guidance service delivery (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008b:11).

Senior public secondary school learners (66.3%) have decried the lack of job-shadowing as a career exploration activity in their schools (Alao, 1998:28). Similar findings have been reported by Maokaneng (2005:67) who found that the learners in his study expressed a high need for

practical work experience in their envisaged career fields in order to obtain as much specific occupational information as possible.

#### **3.6.2.4 Other significant contributors**

To achieve its objectives, the Guidance and Counselling Division works closely with critical stake-holders, such as the following, in the provision of career guidance services to learners:

##### **3.6.2.4.1 The Department of Student Placement and Welfare**

The Department of Student Placement and Welfare falls within the Ministry of Education and makes available financial sponsorship and career guidance to prospective pre-service beneficiaries, who are mainly senior secondary school graduates (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008a:4-5).

##### **3.6.2.4.2 School personnel**

The school is the forum where learners can be easily accessed and be offered career guidance, since they spend a considerable amount of time there. Consequently, the responsibility for the provision of career guidance or education for learners rests primarily with schools (Shafe, Arthur, Woodruff, King, Morgan, Buckner, Shaye, Porterfield & Hutcheson, 2007). Schools therefore need to have comprehensive career guidance programmes with competent teachers who can effectively offer career guidance, education and counselling to learners

There are different personnel levels in schools (as indicated below) who are tasked with various career education responsibilities:

###### **3.6.2.4.2.1 Senior Teacher/School Guidance Counsellor**

In Botswana, all schools have a teacher designated Senior Teacher for Guidance and Counselling to coordinate the implementation of the guidance and counselling programme. The Senior Teacher works with a school guidance team and has to fulfil the following responsibilities:

- To provide learners with information about educational opportunities.

- To conduct guidance activities in the class-room such as career development, self-awareness and decision-making.
- To help teachers plan and implement teaching units where materials and concepts are related to guidance, e.g. career development.
- To coordinate school career conferences.
- To help learners relate education to careers.
- To conduct group guidance sessions for learners in résumé writing, completing job applications, job interviewing skills and job application follow-up strategies.
- To assist learners to make education plans for the future, such as selecting a career or a training programme.
- To help resolve family conflicts related to career and educational choices between learners and their parents (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:32-34).

#### **3.6.2.4.2.2 Class teacher**

The class teacher needs to work closely with the senior teacher to perform the following duties:

- provide learners with relevant information and assist them with self-knowledge;
- integrate guidance and/or occupational, vocational or educational information into his/her regular subject; and
- show interest in learners' career aspirations and aid them in acquiring relevant career information (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996: 36-38).

### **3.6.3 Outside school/community support**

#### **3.6.3.1 Parents**

Parental involvement is critical when it comes to planning learners' career lives. The responsibility for helping learners make the right career choices should not rest solely with the school, but should also involve parents – even more so because the career and educational choices the learners make will have serious consequences. Systematic approaches to involve parents in learners' career and post-secondary planning must be put in place (Shafe *et al.*, 2007).

Parents know their children better than anyone: they have seen them grow, and thus understand their personalities, strengths and weaknesses, abilities and interests. Therefore they can be of great benefit in the career development of their children. Among other things, parents can

- assist by providing background information of their children and also help in analysing their children's strengths and limitations;
- work with teachers to instil the right attitudes in learners, such as a positive attitude towards all work, including "blue-collar" jobs and self-employment (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996: 44).

The study by Mmusinyane (2006:75) found that learners themselves report that they depend much on their parents for assistance during the career planning process. Fifty-three percent of the learners in Mmusinyane's (2006:75) study reported that they sought assistance from their parents in choosing careers, compared to only 14% who said they approached teachers for help.

### **3.6.3.2 Junior Achievement Botswana**

This is an organisation that focuses on equipping learners in and out of school with entrepreneurial skills (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:46). It makes available material resources required to supplement the traditional curricular with business and economic related skills and concepts. Their focus is based on the premise that an understanding of business is essential for all and not just those interested in a career in business (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996: 46).

### **3.6.3.3 University of Botswana**

The University of Botswana visits senior secondary schools to disseminate educational information pertaining to the programmes offered at the university. Information given on the different programmes includes the entry requirements, and duration of the programmes (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:46).

### **3.6.3.4 Debswana Mining Company**

Debswana Mining Company offers scholarships for tertiary education, apprenticeship programmes and makes presentations on the mining sector at various career fairs hosted for Form 5 learners (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:46).

### **3.6.3.5 Industry/employers**

The 1994 Revised National Policy on Education Recommendation 123 indicates that the Guidance and Counselling Division should annually engage in consultations with the industries and employers in order to produce simple and up-to-date descriptive information and projections on job and training opportunities for school leavers.

The industries and employers are also expected to provide support directly or indirectly to the schools through

- attachment of teachers and learners to work places, participating in Career Fairs, talks and orientation seminars;
- providing short learning programmes for teachers to expose them to the industries;
- providing feed-back to the Guidance and Counselling Division on the impact of the guidance and counselling programme, especially on the attitudes of the learners attached to them. (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:47-48).

## **3.7 THE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE SENIOR PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL CAREER GUIDANCE PROGRAMME**

At senior public secondary school level, learners are supposed to be offered career guidance from Form 4, which is their first year in senior public secondary school. In fact, the bulk of the career guidance programme is supposed to be covered in Form 4 to allow learners to obtain as much career information as possible and to seek career guidance and counselling while there is still time.

The guidance and counselling curriculum guidelines (Vlaardingerbroek, 2001) specify that a needs analysis should be used to determine the content of the career guidance programme.

Discontent has, however, been expressed about the quality of guidance services/activities, including career services/activities offered to learners in public schools in Botswana (Montsi *et al.*, 2000; Mokgolodi, 2001; Maokaneng 2005; Maroba *et al.*, 2005). In some instances the dissatisfaction with career guidance services/activities has been expressed by the learners themselves (Alao, 1998; Maokaneng, 2005; Mmusinyane, 2006).

Maroba *et al.* (2007) maintain that career guidance only receives lip-service in public schools in Botswana because both teachers and learners regard it as insignificant and concentrate more on examinable subjects. Similarly, Mokgolodi (2001:80) contends that many schools experience difficulties in implementing guidance and counselling, despite numerous workshops having been organised for teacher counsellors and many consultancies being commissioned by the Ministry of Education.

Of all four components of the school guidance and counselling programme in Botswana, career guidance activities/services have been found to be particularly below standard. Alao (1998:27) maintains that, compared to junior public secondary schools, senior public secondary schools have been found to lack more career activities/services. In contrast, Mmusinyane (2006:71) found that junior public secondary school learners in the Letlhakane area (81%) indicated they did not have career guidance teachers in their schools. This suggests that junior public secondary schools are affected by the problem as much as senior public secondary schools.

In a different study, Maokaneng (2005:60) found that some of the learners in the study he conducted on the career world from Botswana senior public secondary school learners' perspectives, reported a lack of career guidance lessons in their school and that some teachers were not even willing to help learners with their career guidance needs.

Below follows a discussion on the learning outcomes for the career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. Some of the learning objectives are for personal guidance and educational guidance but are included in this discussion as they are closely related to career guidance.

The learning outcomes for career guidance in the senior secondary school phase, as espoused by the senior public secondary school curriculum guidelines for Guidance and Counselling (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:22 & 35-40), include the following:

### **3.7.1 Form 4 learning outcomes**

#### **Learning outcome 1:**

♠ Learning outcome 1 asserts that *learners should relate their interests, personality and aptitude to their subject selection and the world of work.*

Maokaneng (2005:65-66) maintains that learners are often challenged to match their subject combinations with prospective career choices. Learners are expected to choose subject combinations in junior public secondary school at a time when they are still young and may not understand the implications of their choices on career aspirations – even worse, they may not know why they have to make the subject selections. The subject selection narrows the range of careers open to the learners.

Upon arrival in senior public secondary school, the learners are expected to make subject selections, particularly pertaining to the sciences and optional subjects, which further foreclose on the learners' career options. By the time the learners become aware of the different careers, some of which they may aspire for, they have been limited by their subject combinations and may even lose out on fulfilling and financially rewarding careers (Maokaneng, 2005:66).

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 1 when they are able to meet the following assessment standards:

- match their values, abilities, interests and personalities to the different subjects that they are taking;
- do role plays of the characteristics of some of the jobs for which they are suited;
- list some of the personal circumstances and social conditions that may force them into careers which do not suit their personality.

Research by Alao (1998:27) indicates that learners may not be getting adequate help in self-assessment. Only 37% of the senior public secondary school learners in a study conducted by Alao (1998) to establish the feasibility of establishing career resource centres in Botswana reported being satisfied with the skills they acquired from their career guidance classes in relation to self-knowledge. The importance of an adequate understanding of skills, interests and personality traits as the basis for sound career decision-making cannot be emphasised enough (Mmusinyane, 2006:37).

Mmusinyane (2006:37) further maintains that for learners to make informed career decisions, they must be assisted to know their strengths, weaknesses, abilities and personalities. Having insight into their individual personal structures will help learners to select career fields that will satisfy them. This emphasises the importance of assisting learners to gain adequate self-information for education and career decision-making, without which a realistic career choice will not be possible.

A study by Peng (2004:136) to establish a Taiwanese junior college learners' need for and perceptions of a career planning course, ranked the understanding of one's personality and clarifying personal career beliefs amongst the ten highest data needs of college learners.

McMahon and Watson (2005:245), however, found in a different study that only a small percentage of participants needed information on interests and personal characteristics. Nevertheless, the facilitation of learners' awareness of self still needs to be addressed as an important aim in career education as it assists learners to make rational career choices.

## **Learning outcome 2:**

*♠Learners should be fully informed of the opportunities for further study and training.*

Being fully informed of the opportunities for further study and training will assist learners to know the scope of opportunities available to them and, as such, help them know what options to choose and what not to choose, which will in turn help them not to waste time on opportunities that are not available to them.

Furthermore, awareness of further study and training opportunities will assist learners to know that training is not only fundamental to job satisfaction and a better standard of living, but also makes them understand the importance of ascertaining their compatibility with specific career paths before embarking on studies relevant to those career paths (Ryan, Turley, Vergnani & Wegner, 2006:94).

Bhusumane (2001:76) censures the limited number of post-secondary institutions and facilities in Botswana which do not meet the demands the high number of senior secondary school graduates. Ultimately only those learners with higher grades are admitted for post-secondary studies, leaving those who do not qualifying to seek employment or supplement their grades. Hence, it is essential to make learners at senior secondary school aware of their limited chances of gaining entry into tertiary institutions.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 2 when they are able to meet the following assessment standards:

- rank order levels of further education in Botswana and abroad;
- give five advantages of further training;
- list the ways of continuing their education in the event that their Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education results are poor;
- compile a table detailing tertiary institutions, programme of interest, the duration of such programmes and the requirements for entry into such programmes.

### **Learning outcome 3**

♠*Learners should know the details of the government's grant/loan scheme.*

To ensure the admission of candidates who qualify for tertiary level education, regardless of economic status, the Government of Botswana has established a grant/loan scheme so that learners of priority subjects (which include the sciences, applied sciences, engineering and technology and science teaching) are awarded grants, while those of lesser priority disciplines are awarded loans on a sliding scale. So far this scheme has made a significant and positive impact on the quality and quantity of learners admitted to the Faculties of Science and Engineering and Technology in particular (UNESCO, 1998).

Obtaining information on the grant/loan scheme will not only help learners to know where and how to secure sponsorship after their senior secondary education, but will also inform them of the options available to them and the conditions associated with their option. Bhusumane (2004:76), however, laments the stiff competition faced by senior secondary schools leavers in securing sponsorship to tertiary institutions because of the high number of learners graduating from senior secondary schools.

Regrettably, senior public secondary school leavers are the worst affected since their parents cannot afford to fund their tertiary education studies, unlike the learners in private senior schools. For this reason it should be mandatory for career guidance teachers in senior public schools to make learners aware of their huge responsibility to make certain they work hard and secure sponsorship to tertiary institutions.

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 3 when they are able to:

- follow the procedure for applying to tertiary institutions and will list the consequent procedures for obtaining sponsorship;
- discuss the implications of the grant/loan scheme on their subject choice and future career.

## **Learning outcome 4**

♠*Learners should know how to research career opportunities.*

Research (Witko, *et al.*, 2005:44; Gordon & Meyer, 2002:32) has indicated that learners who perceive unmet career information needs are likely to experience career indecision. Stead and Watson (2006:102) specifically point out that lack of career information has been identified as a source of developmental career indecision. Hence, being able to research career opportunities and to obtain occupational information will help learners secure the information necessary for making realistic choices, as lack of this information will hamper the process of career decision-making and may lead to career indecision.

Similarly, Mmusinyane (2006:40) contends that in addition to self-information, career choice strongly rests on adequate career information. Learners who can access abundant career information have more options than those who have limited career information. Those learners who lack career information will make poor decisions and may enter college to find that their career goals are unobtainable or unsuitable, whereas those who have adequate career information will make better decisions (Gaffner & Hazler, 2002:230).

Regrettably, Mmusinyane (2006:73) found that 70% of the learners in her study displayed no knowledge of the careers available in Botswana, indicating that learners were not always equipped with the skills to research different careers.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 4 when they are able to:

- identify sources of information about career prospects in Botswana;
- use the library effectively to obtain career related information;
- visit employment agencies and career advisory centres to discuss career opportunities; and
- seek the information necessary to make an informed career choice.

## **Learning outcome 5**

♠*Learners should know how to apply for jobs.*

Being able to follow the right procedure for applying for jobs will increase the learners' chances for securing employment.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 5 when they are able to:

- write a letter of application for a job;
- role play at least one interview for a job;
- prepare a curriculum vitae (CV); and
- identify employment agencies that help people to find jobs.

Fortunately, learners do seem to recognise the need for assistance in job-seeking skills for they place a high priority on skills like résumé writing and how to write an application letter for a job (Borgen & Hiebert, 2006:394; Peng, 2004:136). The learners in Botswana senior public secondary schools may, however, not be getting adequate preparation for job-seeking.

Only 57.9% of the learners in Alao's study (1998:28) expressed satisfaction with the skills they acquired in writing application letters, 26.4% expressed dissatisfaction with the service and 15.8% reported it was not available to them at all. The learners also reported low satisfaction levels with CV/résumé writing (37%) and noted the absence of mock job interviews (64.2%), according to Alao (1998:28).

Close to eighty percent (79%) of the learners in Mmusinyane's (2006:72) study reported lack of knowledge about where to apply for jobs.

## **Learning outcome 6**

*♠Learners should know how to find and keep a job.*

Knowing and using the right job-seeking skills will enhance the probability of the learners to secure jobs and job-seeking skills will help them to avoid losing their jobs. Bhusumane (2004:86) maintains that young people generally lack the skills to look for, secure and maintain jobs because they lack the appropriate behaviour and work ethics.

Career education courses that comprise general skills of employability and decision-making strategy have been found to increase learners' career decidedness and can assist learners in seeking and keeping jobs (Peng, 2004:132).

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 6 when they are able to:

- list the characteristics of a successful job-seeker;
- state the qualities and skills that make one successful in the work place; and
- discuss and demonstrate positive attitudes towards work and a sense of commitment in what they do.

## **Learning outcome 7**

*♠Learners should be enlightened about the employment market.*

It is crucial that learners know what the work world has to offer them, so that they set realistic goals about their employment and also know where to look for jobs, and where and how they will fit into the employment market. Learners can only fit into the employment market when they are psychologically prepared for it.

This activity will enlighten learners about present job trends, obsolete jobs and encourage them to consider the prospects and availability of work, both now and in future in the career fields of their choice (Ryan *et al.*, 2006:107).

The situation in Botswana, specifically, warrants that learners be made aware of the increasingly high number of senior secondary school graduates that cannot match the limited jobs available in the country (Bhusumane, 2001:2). The high unemployment rate in the country over the past seven years affects learners from public schools in particular and makes it crucial for such learners to be made to understand the situation while they still have time to make the necessary changes in their lives.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 7 when they are able to:

- identify and discuss changes in the world of work in the country; and
- state and discuss the consequences of unemployment.

### **Learning outcome 8**

♠*Learners should be able to appreciate self-employment as a career option.*

As more and more people graduate from secondary school and tertiary institutions, it becomes difficult for them to be absorbed into an already saturated job market. Instead of adding to the high numbers of unemployed, it would be worthwhile for the learners to explore self-employment as a career option.

Those who become self-employed will not only contribute to diversifying the economy of the country, but will also (possibly) create employment for other people.

Ryan *et al.* (2006:96) maintain that jobs are scarce in modern life. In Botswana many graduates, either from senior public schools or tertiary institutions, rely on the government for employment and few are keen to search for jobs elsewhere, including outside Botswana (Bhusumane, 2001:2). In these hard times entrepreneurial skills make it possible for those with such skills to become self-employed – particularly those learners who fail their BGCSE examination and neither qualify for neither tertiary education nor have the means to supplement their grades (Ryan *et al.*, 2006:96).

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 8 when they are able to:

- outline the skills required for self-employment;
- list the self-employment activities and projects they are interested in;
- explain the importance of self-employment for an individual and for the economic development of the nation;
- list the personal characteristic of entrepreneurs; and
- give the basic requirements of the financial institutions that provide financial assistance for self-employment.

### **Learning outcome 9**

♠*Learners should know all the conditions of service of all the careers in which they are interested.*

Once employed, learners will know what employers expect of them, what they should expect of employers and know the right conduct at work which helps them keep and grow in their jobs. Realising that there is a total lack of activities that could make it easy for learners to know the conditions of service of different jobs, such as job-shadowing and field-trips/excursions (Alao, 1998; Maokaneng, 2005:60), one wonders if it is feasible for this learning outcome to be achieved.

Bhusumane (2001:10) maintains that over the past decade employer expectations have changed in Botswana. Over and above the good qualifications that employers want from potential employees, getting jobs largely depends on personality traits too. Sadly, senior public secondary school leavers do not meet most of the expectations of the employers. Consequently, it becomes imperative to make learners aware of the expectations of future potential employers.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 9 when they are able to:

- identify at least three careers they would like to pursue;
- realise the relative importance of the factors which influence career choice;
- list the conditions of service for each of the careers they have identified;
- state the obligations of an employer to an employee;
- state the obligations of an employee to an employer; and
- explain what is meant by conditions of service.

## **Learning outcome 10**

♠*Learners should know the significance of formal and informal career lives.*

This learning outcome will make it possible for learners to appreciate self-employment. Even though Botswana has a high unemployment rate, many young people are reluctant to start their own businesses and be job-creators. In spite of the entrepreneurial skills acquired through programmes such as Junior Achievement, many school leavers still depend on the government and companies for employment. Thus it is clear that learners need to appreciate formal and informal career lives and not detest self-employment (Bhusumane, 2004:65).

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 10 when they are able to:

- give the details of apprenticeship schemes and match the careers to which the schemes lead to their interests;
- obtain or simulate job descriptions and relate their requirements to personal interests and skills;
- explain what is meant by career progression; and
- discuss the factors which influence the development of a person's career.

## **Learning outcome 11**

♠*Learners should know the factors that influence career choice.*

Generally, senior public secondary school leavers base their career choice exclusively on the results they obtain in their BGCSE examination, instead of integrating the results with personality traits and the occupational knowledge they have acquired about different jobs to facilitate a good fit between the self and the choice of career.

Self-awareness has been found to be the key to making realistic career choices (Bhusumane, 2004:3). Other factors, such as employment opportunities, salary and promotion prospects, need to be taken into account too when making career choices. Senior public secondary school learners need to be made aware of the various factors that influence career choice so that they can start incorporating all the factors into the career decision-making process to facilitate informed decision-making.

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 11 when they are able to:

- list the factors that influence career choice; and
- explain the relative importance of the factors which influence career choice.

#### **3.7.2 Form 5 learning outcomes**

The learning outcomes for Form 5, which is the last year of senior public secondary school, are meant to complement what was learned in Form 4. Form 5 is a critical time for learners: they are expected to refine their career choices in anticipation of pursuing a specific career path or starting further training in relation to that career a year later or even seek employment. Senior public secondary school learners themselves have indicated that Form 5 is the best time for finalising career decisions (Maokaneng, 2005:57).

The results that the learners obtain in their Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education examination, which they write at the end of Form 5, are pivotal in deciding the career path the individual learners pursue after leaving senior secondary school.

The learning outcomes and the assessment standards for career guidance in Form 5 are as follows:

## **Learning outcome 1**

*♠Learners should be provided with adequate information on different careers.*

Maokaneng (2005:57) indicates that the learners in his study displayed a narrow knowledge of different careers. This was restricted only to knowledge of conventional careers such as teaching, nursing and the armed forces, indicating a definite need to expose learners to as many careers as possible. This is important, particularly in today's world of work which is complex and has resulted in many occupations being removed from public view (Brown, 2007:196).

Subsequently, most learners have little or no opportunity at all to go behind the scenes and actually see how and where certain types of work are performed. The learners' perceptions may have developed from limited information and consequently may prove to be unrealistic (Brown, 2007:196). Hence, direct work experiences through activities such as job-shadowing, field-trips or industry tours may provide learners with an opportunity to have direct contact with the world of work and to acquire information about specific jobs. This has many benefits for learners such as

- helping them to explore both the world of work and their own plans;
- providing maximum opportunity to a variety of aspects of specific jobs ; and
- offering insight into career fields which learners are interested in such as the working conditions, the actual work processes and opportunities for advancement.

It is disconcerting to find that studies in Botswana (Alao, 1998:28; Maokaneng, 2005:60) indicate that job-shadowing services and field-trips/excursions are lacking in senior public secondary schools. In Alao's study (1998:28) 66.3% of the learners involved indicated that job-shadowing activities were not organised for them by their schools, and 72.6% reported the absence of field-trips/excursions as career exploration services organised by their schools.

The learners in Maokaneng's study (2005:60) indicated a total absence of job-shadowing and field-trips/excursions in their schools as career exploration activities.

### *Assessment standard*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 1 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- match their interests to several career possibilities.

### **Learning outcome 2**

♠*Learners should make a career choice and explore it.*

This will further help each learner to see which career choice is compatible with his/her interests, abilities and skills.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 2 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- make a detailed study of their expectations of at least one career;
- compare and contrast the opportunities presented by different careers;
- list and discuss the expectations of their potential future employers; and
- outline the steps that they could take to meet the expectations of their potential future employers

### **Learning outcome 3**

♠*Learners should be provided with information on training opportunities and scholarship prospects.*

Making decisions in a vacuum would most likely waste the learners' time and resources: providing them with information will help them realise which options are open to them so that they can assess the options in relation to their personality traits and career choices, and know what financial assistance is available to them. This would hopefully direct their studies, as their focus will be on working hard to meet the entry requirements to tertiary institutions of their choice as well as scholarship requirements.

Since 2001 (Bhusumane, 2004:81) it has been becoming increasingly difficult for senior secondary school leavers in Botswana to gain admission to tertiary institutions and to get sponsorship for post-secondary education, unless they have very good BGCSE grades. This situation makes it necessary to educate learners about the challenges that await them in gaining entry into tertiary institutions and securing sponsorship.

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 3 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- explain how and when to apply for a bursary;
- outline the requirements that make one eligible for a bursary;
- state the courses that are offered and the entry requirements at tertiary institutions in Botswana;
- explain the terms of the government's grant loan scheme and of private sector scholarships; and
- explain the role of the department of student placement and welfare in administering the grant loan scheme.

#### **Learning outcome 4**

♠*Learners should be equipped with job-hunting skills.*

Having the skills to look for jobs will, without doubt, help the learners to utilise effective ways of job-hunting, such as presenting a good curriculum vitae. This, in turn, will increase their chances of securing jobs. This applies particularly to learners who will opt to seek employment after completing their senior secondary education.

Alao (1998:25) found that 45.3% of the senior public secondary school learners involved in his study indicated that they had not been shown how to write a CV. Only 37.8% of the learners expressed satisfaction with the service offered by their schools in teaching them how to write Curriculum Vitae.

Over half (57.9%) of the learners in the study, however, rated the guidance they got from their schools in writing application letters as satisfactory.

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 4 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- write an application for a job;
- discuss the steps in writing a resume or CV;
- discuss the importance of each section of a CV;
- find through research which jobs they are likely to get, review their findings and discuss the jobs in terms of their entry requirements, pay conditions of services, skills requirements and expectations; and
- complete job application forms.

#### **Learning outcome 5**

*♠Learners should be knowledgeable about the employment agencies and career advisory services in Botswana and other countries.*

So far Botswana does not have any career advisory/resource centres. Alao (1998) conducted a study that explored the possibility of establishing such centres in the country. He expressed a critical need for the establishment of such centres as the lack of such centres presents a challenge to those secondary school graduates who seek employment and do not have the faintest idea how to go about it.

#### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 5 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- list employment agencies and career advice centres;
- explain how job placement is actually done at each agency;
- explain what help can be obtained from career advice centres; and
- describe the functions of a recruitment agency.

## **Learning outcome 6**

*♠Learners should gain the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare for an interview.*

Senior public secondary schools seem to lack this service as 64.2% of the learners reported the service as not existing in their schools, according to Alao (1998:28). This does not augur well for learners, in particular for those who will opt to seek employment upon completion of their senior secondary education.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 6 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- explain the purpose of an interview;
- describe the most common types of interviews and discuss the interviewee's response to each of the common types;
- state the essential characteristics of a job interview;
- describe the items that an interviewer may seek to establish during a job interview;
- state the skills required by a successful interviewee;
- discuss and role-play a job interview; and
- state and describe different job interview techniques such as punctuality.

## **Learning outcome 7**

*♠Learners should be able to know where to get technical assistance and skills training when trying to start a business.*

Ryan *et al.* (2006:96) maintain that in today's world where jobs are globally found to be scarce, entrepreneurial skills offer a much-needed career option. Getting technical assistance and skills training will assist learners to find alternative means of earning a living when faced with unemployment.

### *Assessment standards*

Learners will have achieved learning outcome 7 for Form 5 when they are able to:

- state the agencies that give technical assistance to start a business, e.g. commercial banks;
- explain the ways in which these agencies assist entrepreneurs; and
- fill in sample application forms for financial assistance.

## **3.8 CHALLENGES IN PROVIDING CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

It is evident that career guidance service delivery is far below standard in Botswana public schools. Research (Mokgolodi, 2005; Maroba *et al.*, 2007) indicates that the challenges experienced in the delivery of career guidance services start right from implementation level and affect the school guidance programme as a whole and as such affect the career guidance component.

### **3.8.1 The current state of guidance and counselling in senior public secondary schools in Botswana.**

It is important to discuss the current state of the school guidance and counselling programme, since career guidance forms a quarter of the content of the guidance and counselling programme in public schools in Botswana (see 3.3).

Mokgolodi (2005:1) maintains that, in spite of numerous efforts to get the guidance programme off the ground, many schools still experience challenges at implementation level. The efforts that have been made include countless workshops organised specifically for teachers, meetings with learners, and consultancies commissioned for the Guidance and Counselling Division regarding guidance and counselling for programme development—and yet a myriad of problems are still experienced in implementing the programme.

The poor implementation of guidance and counselling in public schools inevitably leads to the inaccessibility of services to learners, and even results in a lack of awareness about the role of the

school guidance counsellor (Montsi *et al.*, 2000:58). A shortage of trained personnel is the main obstacle to programme implementation, with some teachers having absolutely no idea as to how to approach certain topics (Mokgolodi, 2005:48).

Guidance and counselling is offered in varying degrees at schools, with some schools not offering the subject at all, and others offering the subject to completing learners only, either at junior secondary school or senior secondary school (Montsi *et al.*, 2000:58). Mokgolodi (2005:4) maintains that the problem runs across schools and there are no significant differences in the services based on geographical location, namely whether the schools are in urban, peri-urban, rural or remote areas.

Regrettably, the Guidance and Counselling Division which is mandated with overseeing the provision of guidance activities in schools is not proactive in offering schools the necessary support. Mokgolodi (2005:51) asserts that the division does not effectively monitor the efforts made to provide guidance and counselling services to secondary schools. In the few instances where authorities from the Guidance and Counselling Division actually visit schools, no feedback is ever given to such schools after the visits.

Regional Education offices seem to lack the personnel to take care of the needs of the schools in their regions. The few officers based at the Guidance and Counselling Division have to oversee the activities offered countrywide—from primary school through to tertiary level—causing them to be overstretched and thus adversely affecting the quality of service offered to learners (Mokgolodi, 2005:56).

It is not surprising to find that career guidance services are far below the required standard in Botswana public schools. Obviously the problems in implementing guidance and counselling automatically spill over to career guidance as a component of the school guidance and counselling programme. Added to this is the fact that career development is, generally, not a priority at policy level in Botswana (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:48).

Even though the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:8-9) calls for a comprehensive school career guidance programme, Botswana still lacks a national policy for career development (Maroba, Mokgolodi & Tidimane, 2006).

The minimal career guidance available to public schools in Botswana is afforded inadequate time and few resources (Mabote *et al.*, 2007:48). The 40 minutes allocated to each class once in a week is far too little. This is particularly true when one considers that guidance and counselling consists of four different components, and that career guidance forms only a quarter of the content to be covered in the guidance and counselling curriculum (see 3.3).

Mabote *et al.* (2007:49) claim that schools in urban centres fare somewhat better in the provision of career guidance to learners since they get support from employers towards activities such as the Career Fair, job-shadowing and the provision of other career development programmes. In contrast, Mokgolodi (2005:1) states that schools in urban and peri-urban centres are no better off than schools in the rural and remote areas in terms of guidance and counselling service delivery, which inevitably affects career guidance services.

Hartung (2005) classifies the challenges in providing career guidance in Botswana into two broad categories: counsellor training and human resource, and career service delivery practices.

### **3.8.2 Counsellor training and human resources**

Botswana relies almost exclusively on para-professionals for the provision of career education and guidance services to learners (Hartung, 2005). This is because there are few professionally trained teachers to offer guidance and counselling services, which include providing career guidance services to learners (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:34; Mokgolodi 2005:1). Mokgolodi (2005:1) contends that the lack of trained personnel to offer guidance and counselling to learners hampers the proper implementation of the guidance and counselling programme in schools, and this includes career guidance.

At worst, a teacher without the necessary guidance and counselling training may be chosen by the school headmaster to provide career education and guidance services to learners (Rollin, 1990:1). Career guidance teachers also have to cope with huge work-loads (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:34).

The para-professionals and those without proper training have the added pressure of such limited or no training, which in turn overwhelms and demoralises them, since they lack appropriate support and direction (Hartung, 2005). Some teachers have no idea at all of how to approach

certain topics or are not even interested in trying, with the resultant low benefits for learners (Mokgolodi, 2005: 48).

Unfortunately, Botswana does not have career counsellors in private practice to assist learners to supplement the limited career guidance offered in schools (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:31).

### **3.8.3 Career service delivery practices**

Other challenges in the provision of a systematic public school career guidance programme in Botswana concern the area of career service delivery practices. Here there is very limited and, in some cases, no access to computer-based career education services such as the use of the internet and CD-ROM (Hartung, 2005; Mokgolodi, 2005:51). Alao (1998:35) established that all the senior public schools he visited reported a lack of computerised career guidance/exploration materials. Consequently, learners are being denied the opportunity to enhance their career exploration through the use of computers.

Even within the education system career guidance is not afforded the importance it deserves because guidance and counselling, of which career guidance is a component, is offered for enrichment purposes only, which means that it is not examinable. As a result both teachers and learners tend to concentrate on examinable subjects and only pay lip service to career guidance (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:34).

Furthermore, as indicated at the beginning of this chapter (see 3.3), career guidance forms only a quarter of the school guidance and counselling curriculum, and guidance and counselling as a subject is allocated only 40 minutes per week. Owing to the limited time allocated to career guidance, the work overload of the career guidance teachers and the limited training they receive (or lack thereof), learners are afforded minimal or no individual career counselling at all (Hartung, 2005). Merely giving information and advising are the main methods used to offer career guidance to learners (Hartung, 2005).

Additional to the issue of the limited time allocated to career guidance is the fact that schools are not well resourced to adequately offer career guidance to learners, leaving learners with little or no career knowledge (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:30). Mokgolodi (2005:56) contends that, unlike

examinable subjects, guidance and counselling does not have a financial vote and this makes it difficult to buy the necessary materials such as computers and career audio/video tapes.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

Evidently much needs to be done to improve the quality of the career guidance programme offered in public schools in Botswana. The different role players, starting with the Ministry of Education to parents and employers, need to play an active role to ensure that learners are offered services that are up to standard.

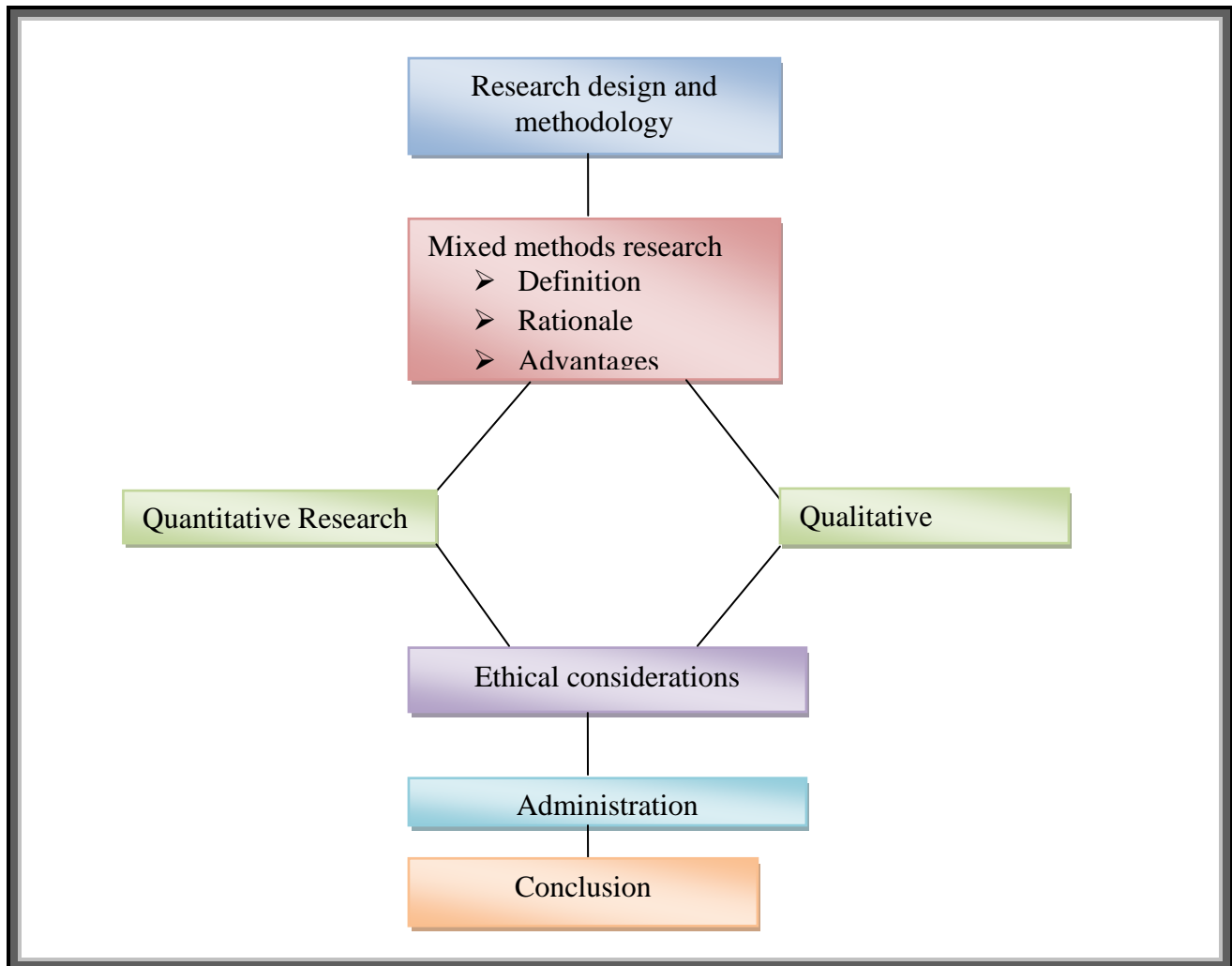
Competent and sufficient staff needs to be employed by the ministry to facilitate adequate support for the programme. This should be done particularly at regional level, in order to make it easy to closely monitor the programme and facilitate frequent and effective monitoring in schools. Teachers also need to be trained adequately so that they can competently assist learners.

The next chapter discusses the empirical part of the study, the research design, methodologies, the instrumentation and the data analysis procedures which facilitated data collection and analysis of the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

#### 4.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



## 4.2 INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

Churchill and Brown (2007) define a research design as the framework or plan for a study that directs the collection and analysis of the data. Similarly, Burns and Grove (2001:223) maintain that the research design is the blueprint for conducting the study, that maximises control over factors that could get in the way of the validity of the findings, and guides the researcher in planning and implementing the study in a way that is most likely to realise the intended goal of the study.

The empirical part of the study is discussed in this chapter. The researcher presents a detailed description of the research design used in the study as well as the research methodologies used, the questionnaire that was used as the measuring instrument to obtain the quantitative data, the methods and processes of data analysis that were employed in the study, and the administrative and ethical obligations that had to be met in the study.

The aim of this study is then to

- determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana as articulated by the learners themselves;
- determine the extent to which the current school career guidance programme in Botswana meets the needs of the learners; and
- discuss the implications of the study for the development of the career guidance curriculum in Botswana.

Also included in this chapter is a detailed description of the mixed methods research design, which was used in this study.

The guiding questions in this chapter are the following:

- What is the research design employed to collect the data for the current study?
- What is the rationale for the methodology and techniques employed in the study?
- Which methods of data analysis were utilised in the study?
- Who comprised the study population?

- What ethical obligations and administrative techniques were met in order to conduct the study?

## **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **4.3.1 Mixed methods research**

A mixed methods design consisting of both the quantitative and the qualitative approach was used in the study. A questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data, and focus-group interviews were used to collect the qualitative data.

#### **4.3.1.1 Definition of mixed methods research**

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2003:17) define mixed methods research as the type of research where quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language are used in a single study. Similarly, Moon and Moon (2004) define mixed methods research as research where comparisons between qualitative data are made.

Some of the terms which have been used over the past 50 years by researchers in their quest to define mixed methods research include *integrated* or *combined* which implies that two types of data have been blended together; *qualitative* and *quantitative methods* which imply that the approach is essentially a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods; *hybrids* and *methodological triangulation* which acknowledge the juxtaposition of qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007).

#### **4.3.1.2 Rationale for mixed methods research**

For many years the proponents of quantitative and qualitative research paradigms have engaged in debates about which method is better. Quantitative researchers have maintained that the quantitative method is better because it allows the researcher to be objective, emotionally detached from the objects of study and to eradicate bias in the research process (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14).

Quantitative researchers have conventionally advocated rhetorical neutrality, engaging a formal writing style using the impersonal passive voice and technical terminology (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14). In this view is generally supported by the positivist or scientific paradigm, which holds that the world is made of observable, quantifiable facts. In contrast, qualitative methods are generally supported by the interpretivist paradigm, which portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, intricate and increasingly changing (Murray Thomas, 2003:7).

Qualitative researchers have rejected the term *positivism* and have, when advocating qualitative methods (which they view as innovative and socially responsible), criticised quantitative methods as tenaciously conservative and narrow-minded (Murray Thomas, 2003:6; Moon & Moon, 2004; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:6).

Qualitative researchers have an aversion to a detached and passive style of writing and rather prefer comprehensive, rich and thick emphatic descriptions written directly and somewhat informally (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14).

Mixed methods research has been identified as the third paradigm that will heal the rift between quantitative and qualitative research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:15). The underlying premise for mixed methods research is that both qualitative and quantitative research is important and useful. The aim is not to replace any method but rather to benefit from the strengths of both in single research studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:15). Consequently, most researchers today see qualitative and quantitative methods as complementary and not antagonistic (Murray Thomas, 2003:6).

#### **4.3.1.3 Advantages of mixed methods research**

Proponents of mixed methods research have associated the method with a number of advantages, such as the following:

- Mixed methods research is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting one. As such, mixed methods research is inclusive, pluralistic and complementary, allowing researchers to adopt an eclectic approach to method selection (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:17).

- Since mixed methods research permits the use of different strategies, approaches and methods to obtain multiple data, the researcher is likely to generate a study that is superior to mono-method studies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14)
- Mixed methods research provides better or stronger inferences. Several authors, according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2003:16), have maintained that using mixed methods can offset the disadvantages that certain of the methods have by themselves.
- The opportunity for presenting a greater diversity of divergent views is provided by mixed methods research. Divergent findings are valuable in that they lead to a re-examination of the conceptual frame-works and assumptions underlying each of the two methods.
- Mixed methods research can answer research questions that other methodologies cannot answer (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:15). This makes it possible for researchers to simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions, and thus verify and generate theory in the same study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:15).

Taking into account the advantages that have been associated with mixed methods research, the researcher opted to use both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative method made use of a close-ended questionnaire, and the qualitative approach utilised focus-group interviews.

The quantitative method guaranteed that reliability and validity were determined more objectively and allowed for comparative analyses of the needs of the learners, based on gender (Jones, 1997). This would prove challenging with the use of the qualitative approach.

On the other hand, the face-to-face interviews conducted in the schools allowed the researcher to establish rapport with the participants, which is not possible with the questionnaire used in the quantitative portion of the study (Young and Hargety, 2007). The focus-group interviews also permitted the researcher to see and hear the participants, thereby permitting augmented information to contribute to interpretation, which allowed the researcher to experience the affective and cognitive aspects of responses (Young & Hargety, 2007).

#### 4.4 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:179), descriptive research examines a situation as it is. It does not involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation, nor is it intended to determine cause and effect relationships (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:179).

For the purpose of this study, descriptive research was used to

- investigate the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, as expressed by the learners themselves;
- determine the extent to which the current school career guidance curriculum meets the needs of the learners; and
- discuss the implications of the findings for career guidance curriculum development in Botswana.

The quantitative part of the study employed a structured questionnaire which was more predetermined, whereas the focus-group interviews used open-ended questions. The use of the two methods could eliminate some of the potential bias inherent in each of the methods. The more precise data obtained with a questionnaire could act as a control for the data obtained from the interviews, while the interviews could assist in the interpretation of the quantitative data (Karstens, 2006:12).

Blending the quantitative and qualitative methods in a mixed methods research would help achieve triangulation, which means combining the results of the two methods to gain a deeper understanding of the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana.

In addition, complementary results will be obtained by using the strengths of one method to augment the other (Metzler & Davis, 2000).

#### **4.4.1 The questionnaire as a research instrument**

The questionnaire is a widely used and valuable instrument for collecting data. It can yield structural and numerical data. Questionnaires with closed questions offer a range of responses from which the respondent may choose an option. Highly structured closed questions not only produce frequencies open to statistical treatments and analysis, but also make it possible for comparisons to be made across groups in the sample (Oppenheim as quoted by Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:321).

In addition, closed questions are faster to code up and analyse than word-based data. In addition, they are often precisely to the point and deliberately more focused than open-ended questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:321).

Hence, a questionnaire consisting of closed questions was used to collect the quantitative data in this study. The questionnaire employed a 4 point Likert-type scale.

The questions used in the questionnaire were largely selected from the Spanish career education questionnaire, developed by Gonzales (1997). The rest of the questions were selected from the comprehensive career needs questionnaire developed by Magnusson and Bernes (2002). The questions were adapted to suit the set-up in Botswana and eventually merged into one questionnaire.

#### **4.4.2 Pilot study**

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007:341), piloting a questionnaire before it is ready for field work is vital to its success. A pilot has several functions, which are mainly to increase the reliability, validity and the practicality of the questions. Thus, five Form 5 learners from two senior public secondary schools in Gaborone were used as a pilot group to check, amongst other things, the following:

- The clarity of the instructions and questionnaire items.
- Ambiguities or difficulties in wording.
- Readability levels for the target respondents.
- Time taken to complete the questionnaire.

- Items which are too easy, too difficult, too complex or too remote for the respondents' experience.
- Omissions, redundancies and irrelevant items.
- Whether the questionnaire is too long or too short, too easy or too difficult (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:321).

The pilot group was asked to complete the questionnaire and then to make comments and recommendations, which were used to make the necessary amendments. The final questionnaire was then compiled.

The group of respondents used in the pilot study were drawn from the population but were not part of the study population that received the final revised questionnaire (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:321).

#### **4.4.3 Conducting the questionnaire**

After liaising with the different senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, a suitable time and method was decided for conducting the questionnaire. The researcher was allowed to use the guidance and counselling lessons to conduct the questionnaire with two classes, one being a separate/pure science class and the other a double science class. The learners completed the questionnaire in approximately 40 minutes.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:180) caution about the low return rate that is often associated with questionnaires. Hence, the researcher decided to conduct the questionnaire herself in order to optimise the return rate of the questionnaire. Having the researcher conduct the questionnaire herself during the 40 minute guidance and counselling lesson provided the following benefits:

- The learners did not discuss the questions among themselves, ensuring individual input.
- The researcher was present to give instructions and to elucidate any uncertainties.
- Having the researcher conduct the questionnaire herself guaranteed a 100% return rate of the questionnaires, since the questionnaires were filled out in the presence of the researcher and collected by the researcher immediately after each learner had finished.

The questionnaire was conducted between June 2008 and August 2008 after the annual Career Fair programme organised for all the completing learners in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. Prior to this, the first focus-group interviews were held, with conducting the questionnaire being the second phase of data collection in the study.

#### **4.4.4 Study population**

Owing to time and financial constraints, the four senior public secondary schools in Gaborone were selected because of their accessibility (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:219). All the schools are government schools, which put them in a comparable category as almost all the learners are from working class families. The learners in these schools are predominantly Setswana-speaking.

The cluster sampling method was used whereby the first two Form 5 classes, one pure/separate science and one double science, had guidance and counselling lesson on the day the researcher went to each school to conduct the questionnaire.

#### **4.4.5 Response**

331 questionnaires were completed and returned. The 100% return rate of the questionnaires was attributed to the fact that the questionnaires were filled in during the guidance and counselling lesson and submitted to the researcher immediately upon completion.

#### **4.4.6 Statistical techniques**

The Statistical Consultancy Services of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) were used to analyse and interpret the quantitative data. The SAS, SPSS and statistical computer programmes were used to process the data. The following statistical processes were performed:

- Indicating the means, standard deviations, simple frequencies and percentage scores for the responses.
- Doing a t-test to determine if there are any differences in the needs of the learners according to gender.
- Carrying out an investigation of the practical significance of the differences in the respondents' needs according to gender by means of effect sizes.

Cohen's D-value (shown below) was used to calculate the practical significance of the data where statistical differences according to gender were noted:

$$d = \frac{|\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2|}{S_{max}}$$

The formula involved the standardised difference between the means of the two applicable groups  $|\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2|$ , divided by the standard deviation ( $S_{max}$ ) of the two groups (Van Vuuren, 2008:202).

The following guidelines for the interpretation of the practical significance of the results provided by Cohen (as quoted by Van Vuuren, 2008:202) were used:

- small effect:  $d < 0.2$
- medium effect:  $d > 0.2 - < 0.8$
- large effect:  $d > 0.8$

**Table: 4.1 Cohen's D-value indicating practical significance of statistical differences (The G\* Power Analysis, quoted by Dalzell, 2005:146)**

d-value	Size effect	Conclusion
<0.2	Small effect	Practical effect is of very little significance
>0.5<0.8	Medium effect	Practical effect is noticeable but not significant.
> 0.8	Large effect	Practical effect is significant.

The results obtained from the questionnaire and focus-group interviews were used to address the research questions which were to

- determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana; and

- determine the extent to which the current school career guidance and counselling curriculum meets the career guidance needs of learners in senior public secondary schools in Botswana.

## **4.5 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH**

A qualitative research method in the form of focus-group interviews was used in addition to the quantitative component of the empirical study.

### **4.5.1 Focus-group interviews**

Focus-group interviews utilise in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, though not necessarily representative, sample of a particular population, with attention paid to a given topic (Rabiee, 2004:655). Participants are selected because they have some characteristics in common (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:299).

Participant selection is not only based on the fact that the participants would have something to say on the topic, but also that they are within the same age-range, have similar socio-characteristics and would be comfortable talking to the interviewer and to each other (Rabiee, 2004:655).

#### **4.5.1.1 Rationale for using focus-group interviews**

Thomas (as quoted by Rabiee, 2004:655) contends that a unique feature of focus-group interviews is its group dynamics, which guarantee that the kind and scope of data generated through the social interaction of the group are often deeper and richer than those obtained from one to one interviews. Similarly, Nyamathi and Shuler (quoted by De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 300) indicate that focus groups allow the researcher to explore a number of perceptions in a given area of interest within a short period of time.

De Vos *et al.* (2005:300) further quote Krueger and Casey as maintaining that focus groups make it possible to know what people really think and feel.

Focus-group interviews were therefore used in the study in order to:

- obtain data and insights that would otherwise not have been possible without the interaction found in a group; and
- investigate various perceptions, opinions and feelings within a short period of time.

The purpose of the focus-group interviews was to obtain elaborate and comprehensive data to complement the quantitative data. This was crucial because the focus groups made it possible for the researcher to capture the personal views of the learners regarding their career planning needs.

#### **4.5.1.2 Pilot study**

A pilot study was conducted in April 2008 with a Grade 12 class (which is equivalent to Form 5 in Botswana) at Boikhutso High School in Potchefstroom, South Africa, to determine whether the questions were suitable and comprehensible to completing senior secondary school learners. The researcher felt that it was sensible to use Grade 12 learners from a public school as their career planning needs would most probably parallel those of Form 5 learners in senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana.

#### **4.5.1.3 Participant selection**

According to De Vos *et al.* (2005:304), the purpose of a focus group is to depict the feelings or thoughts of a group of people about something. Almost every facet of a focus group depends on who the participants are. Taking this into consideration, the researcher purposefully selected 16 learners per school from the completing classes in the four senior public secondary schools in Gaborone to take part in the focus-group interviews. Learners from the completing classes were targeted because it was believed that they were at the time of the study deeply involved in the process of career planning.

The participants were randomly selected from the first two classes that had guidance lessons on the day of the interviews. Class registers were used for the selection of the participants and every third name was picked.

The researcher picked one pure science class and one double science class to ensure that there was no bias towards a certain type of class and to provide data that would be representative of a large number of learners' needs.

The conducted group interviews lasted an hour.

#### **4.5.1.4 Size of the focus groups.**

De Vos *et al.* (2005:305) maintain that focus groups usually consist of six to ten participants. Groups of this size afford everyone the chance to contribute, while at the same time eliciting an array of responses. The researcher selected eight learners for each of the two focus-group interviews conducted in each school.

In total eight focus groups were interviewed.

#### **4.5.1.5 Conducting the focus-group interviews**

The focus-group interviews were started with a brief introduction, which included the following:

- The researcher introducing herself and the assistant researcher to the group.
- The researcher gave a welcoming address.
- A brief overview was given of the research topic and aims.

An assistant researcher was present during the discussion and she performed the following tasks:

- Operated the tape-recorder used to record the data collected.
- Made observations and took notes.
- Gave the participants snacks and handled the logistics.

De Vos *et al.* (2005:310) indicate that making small talk is essential just before the group discussion begins. The researcher and the assistant engaged in informal conversation with the participants and snacks were provided to create a warm, comfortable and relaxed environment

and to establish rapport, which, according to De Vos *et al.* (2005:310), are fundamental to the success of focus-group interviews.

The focus-group interviews were conducted in Setswana and English to allow the participants to use the language they felt comfortable with. In some instances the participants used a mixture of both Setswana and English.

At the end of each focus-group session, the researcher made a brief summary of the main points, sought corroboration where necessary and expressed gratitude to the participants for having taken part in the study (Nyamathi & Shuler, quoted by De Vos *et al.*, 2005:311).

Morgan and Krueger (as quoted by De Vos *et al.*, 2005:311) contend that the facilitator and the assistant should do debriefing by discussing the focus group as soon as the participants have left. The discussion between the researcher and the assistant researcher should include aspects such as themes which became apparent, whether the group provided what was anticipated, what information should form part of the report, whether there were any unanticipated findings, and if anything should be done differently for the next group (Morgan & Krueger, quoted by De Vos *et al.*, 2005:311).

Morgan and Krueger's debriefing recommendations were followed by the researcher: following each focus-group session, the researcher and the assistant researcher briefly discussed the results to see if any thematic patterns became apparent, whether the data collected was relevant to the topic, to decide what should form the content of the report and what should be done differently for the groups that followed.

#### **4.5.1.6 Field notes**

De Vos *et al.* (2005:311) suggest that the assistant researcher should take in-depth notes during the focus-group session, and that the researcher should take notes as well. The researcher and the assistant researcher can then discuss and compare their notes.

In view of the advice offered by De Vos *et al.* (2005:311), both the researcher and the assistant researcher took detailed and comprehensive notes, which they later discussed and compared.

The notes gave a detailed description of the following aspects:

➤ Seating arrangement

In all the groups interviewed, the participants sat in a horse-shoe formation, with the researcher seated in the middle facing the participants and the assistant researcher moving round to hand the tape recorder to the participants.

➤ Non-verbal behaviour

The participants were smiling a lot, sometimes communicating with their eyes, rubbing their hands a lot, especially when answering questions. Generally the participants were not afraid to make eye contact with either the facilitator or with each other.

There were many jokes and sometimes the participants whispered among themselves. There was a lot of interaction amongst the participants.

➤ The order in which the participants spoke.

To ensure that all the participants took an active part in the interview, each participant was given an opportunity to answer each question asked, starting from the right hand side of the researcher to the left hand side. Participants who wanted to make comments on the contribution made by the other participants were allowed to do so immediately after the comment have been made.

#### **4.5.1.7 First focus-group interviews**

The first focus-group interviews were conducted in May 2008. The following questions guided the discussion during the first interviews:

1. Tell me about the career/occupational goals you are planning to pursue after completing your senior secondary education.
2. If you have not set any career/occupational goal(s), who/what would help you to set a career/occupational goal?

3. Who/what can help you achieve your career/occupational goal(s)?
4. Who/what has been the greatest influence in your choice of an occupational goal(s)?
5. What have you done so far to make your career/occupational goal(s) attainable?
6. What may hinder you from achieving your career/occupational goal(s)?
7. What are you most encouraged about when you think of your potential career?
8. What are you most discouraged about when you think of your potential career?
9. Which/what do you think is your greatest career/occupational need?

#### **4.5.1.8 Second focus-group interviews**

The second focus-group interviews were conducted between June 2008 and August 2008. The interviews at each of the schools followed after the school Career Fair programme facilitated by the Career Guidance Services Unit in the Guidance and Counselling Division (see 3.6.2.2). A questionnaire which sought to collect quantitative data was completed prior to the second focus-group interviews (see 4.4.3). The following questions were asked to guide the discussion during the second focus-group interviews:

1. When did you start receiving career guidance at this school? How did you benefit? What have you learned?
2. After having attended the Career Fair, what would you say are your career needs at present? Do you now feel more competent in making a career choice? Please explain.
3. Who do you think can help you address your future career and (further) study needs, i.e. in terms of teachers, parents, and professionals? How do you think these needs can be addressed?

#### **4.5.1.9 Data analysis**

Focus-group interviews create large amounts of data, which tend to overwhelm even experienced researchers. A major aim of data analysis, therefore, is to reduce data (Rabiee, 2004:656). The act of analysis involves the deconstruction of the textual data into manageable categories, patterns and relationships (Mouton, quoted by Van Vuuren, 2008:210).

#### **4.5.9.1 Transcription**

The information obtained from focus-group interviews is raw data. The responsibility of the researcher is to prepare a statement regarding the collected data (Lewis, 2000). In this study, the first step was to transcribe the entire interview verbatim, in order to get a complete record of the discussions and to facilitate analysis of the data. Then the whole transcribed text and field notes were read to analyse the content of the discussion and to search for trends and patterns that appear within single focus groups and among various focus groups. Where Setswana language had been used, the transcripts were carefully translated into English.

#### **4.5.9.2 Coding**

Coding helps the researcher to identify emerging themes (Henning, quoted by Van Vuuren, 2008:211). Following the research questions as guides, every line was coded for relevant themes. As the themes developed, the researcher assigned a working definition to each code. Going through the transcripts, the definition was continually challenged, and sometimes new codes were developed.

The following three steps of analysing qualitative data were used to break down the data, conceptualise it, and put it back together:

- Open coding

Broad themes were allowed to emerge from the transcripts. Different categories of themes were identified and named (Graves & Smith, 2004).

- Axial coding

Similar themes that emerged from the open coding were classified into subcategories, and explicit links were made between categories and sub-categories. The researcher sought to explain and understand relationships between categories in order to understand the phenomenon to which they relate (Graves & Smith, 2004).

- Selective coding

Selective coding was used to alter, refine and integrate categories (Graves & Smith, 2004).

An independent coder was identified to follow the same process that the researcher had followed in analysing the qualitative data. The results obtained by the independent coder were compared with those obtained by the researcher, followed by a discussion aimed at reaching consensus on the results to facilitate reliability.

#### **4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Research is often concerned with collecting data from people. Collecting such data undoubtedly raises questions about the manner in which the people who provide the data should be treated by researchers. Such questions are often ethical in nature. The research community is becoming increasingly more sophisticated in the manner in which it views such ethical issues, and there appears to be mounting concern with the ethical element of planning and implementing research (Olivien, 2003:3).

Olivien (2003:15) indicates that among the things that researchers should do to avoid transgressing ethical research obligations is to fully inform the participants about all significant aspects of the research in question. In addition, participants should be informed about the confidentiality of the data provided. In particular, the anonymity of the respondents, in any final research report, should be clarified with the participants. In view of the suggestions offered by Olivien (2003:15), the following steps were taken by the researcher to meet the ethical requirements necessitated by the study:

- Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous.
- The aims of the study were explained in detail to the participants.
- All records from the study were treated with the highest level of confidentiality.
- Permission to conduct the study was obtained from all relevant authorities (see appendix).
- For the participants below the age of 18, consent was sought from their parents/guardians for them to take part in the study.

Permission was also sought from the ethical committee of the North- West University (Potchefstroom Campus) to conduct the study.

#### **4.7 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Permission was sought from the Regional Education Officer for the South Central Region, in Gaborone, Botswana, to conduct the study in the schools under his jurisdiction and also from the headmasters of all the schools concerned. The researcher went in person to seek permission and to arrange for a suitable time to conduct the study.

The researcher conducted the questionnaire used to collect the quantitative data to 331 learners. The Senior Teacher Grade 1 for Guidance and Counselling at each school was present to ensure that the administrative procedure was fair, without bias, and that ethical requirements were met. All the questionnaires were submitted to the researcher immediately upon completion.

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

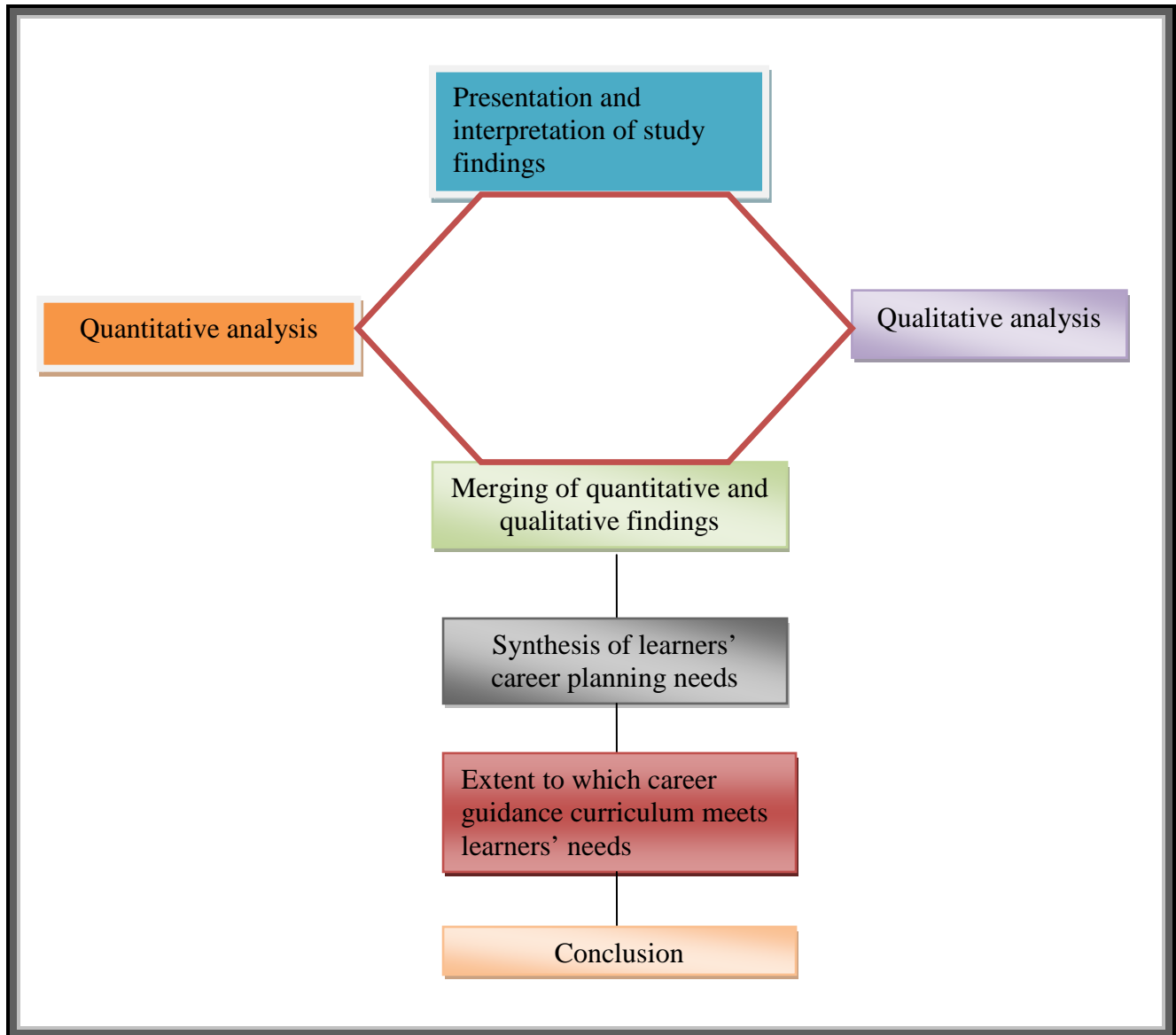
This chapter addressed the research design as well as the justification for the research methods, the development of the measuring instrument for the quantitative part, sampling, and the administrative procedures and statistical techniques for interpreting the data.

In the next chapter, the results obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative data are presented and interpreted.

## CHAPTER 5

### PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF STUDY FINDINGS

#### 5.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



## 5.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative research. The data collected from this learner career planning needs assessment will be used to address the aims of the study.

The primary aim of the needs assessment is to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, as expressed by the learners themselves. The secondary aim is to investigate the extent to which the current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meets the career planning needs of the learners. Finally, the implications for the Botswana Ministry of Education's Curriculum and Evaluation department (Career Guidance Unit) will be discussed.

This chapter therefore addresses the following key questions:

1. What are the career planning needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana?
2. Do the career planning needs of the learners differ according to gender?
3. To what extent does the current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meet the needs of the learners?

As indicated in Chapter 4 (see 4.4), a closed questionnaire was used as the primary tool to collect the data for the study. Focus-group interviews were also used to supplement the data collected from the quantitative research.

The data captured from the study is presented in three phases, starting with the quantitative data collected by means of a closed questionnaire, followed by the data collected from the first focus-group interviews and finally the data collected from the second focus-group interviews. The data from the quantitative and qualitative sections are thereafter merged into a comprehensive whole to facilitate comparison of the results obtained and to synthesise the findings of the study.

### **5.3 QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS**

The quantitative data refers to the data from the closed questionnaire and will be presented according to the various sub-scales of the questionnaire. The questionnaire used in the study employed a four-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire was so designed as to extract information about 10 aspects which are central to assessing learners' career planning needs. Questions were bundled up to form sub-scales based on the 10 central aspects namely; *importance of career planning, post-secondary plans, help required in making career plans, availability and use of career exploration resources/services, level of optimism regarding future career plans, self-assessment information needs, educational/occupational information needs, current occupational preferences, participation in career development/planning, and knowledge of job-finding/seeking/getting/keeping skills.*

The quantitative data for the study was collected from a population of approximately 1500 learners in the four senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana. The sample included 331 learners who were randomly selected to take part in the quantitative study.

Owing to the huge amount of data collected through the use of the questionnaire and the complementary data from the focus-group interviews the quantitative data will be presented only in percentage scores.

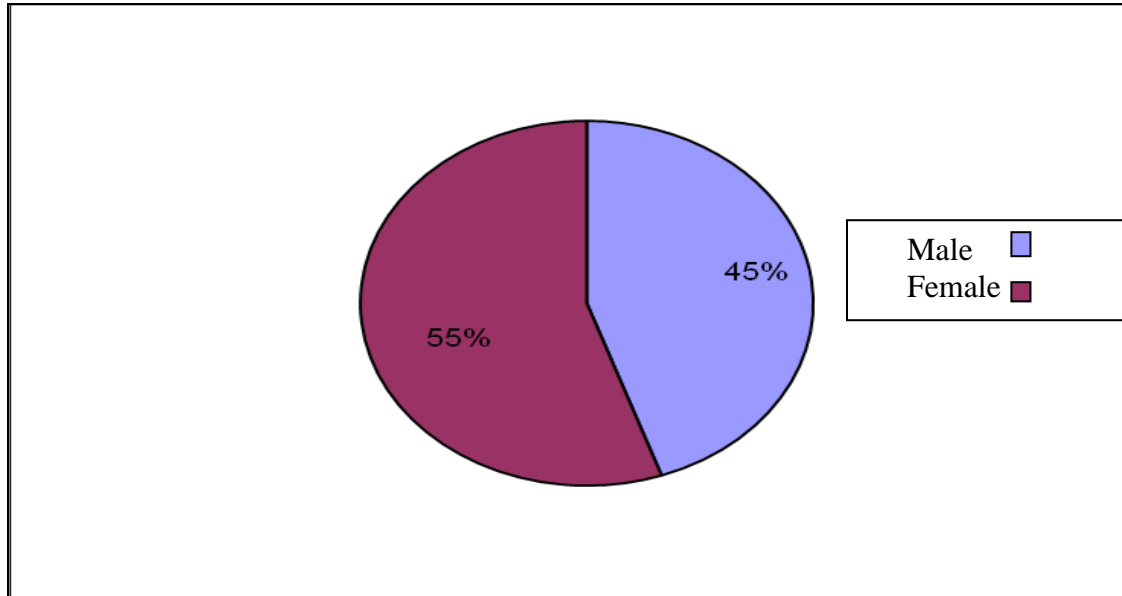
The demographic data of the respondents is presented on the next page.

#### **5.3.1 Demographic frequencies**

The following demographic frequencies were investigated, namely gender and age of respondents.

### 5.3.1.1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by gender

Figure 5.1: Percentage distribution of respondents by gender



The figure shows that 45% (N=146) of the respondents were male and 55% (N=181) were female. This information was used to determine if there are any differences in the needs of the respondents according to gender.

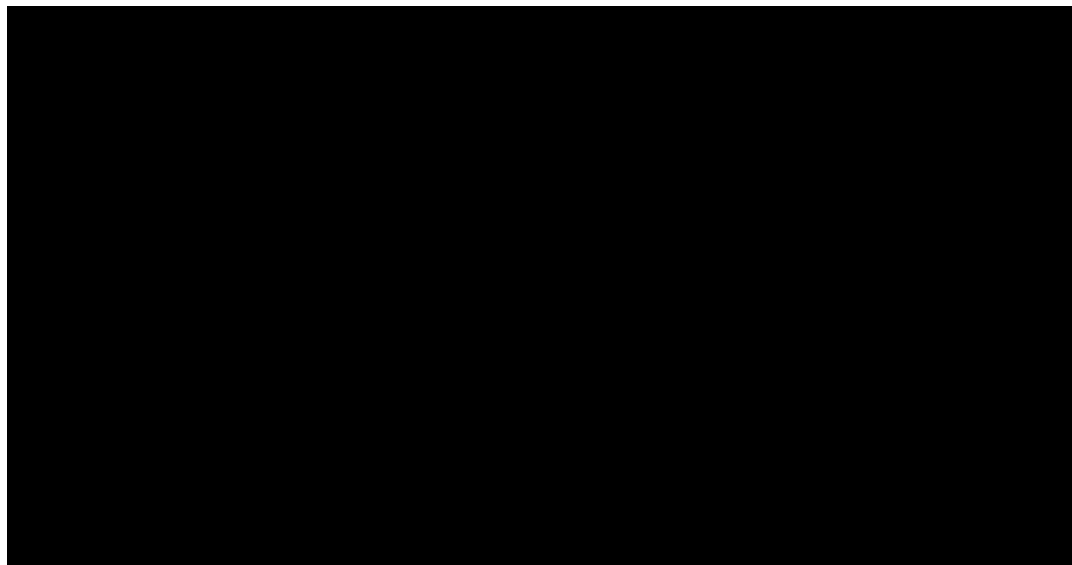
Four (1.2%) of the respondents did not indicate their gender.

### 5.3.1.2 Percentage distribution of the respondents by age

The modal age was 18 years which constituted 52.9% of the respondents. Those below 18 years constituted 32.9% of the respondents, and those above 18 years constituted 13%. The remaining 1.2% of the respondents did not indicate their age.

The frequency distribution of the respondents by age is illustrated in graph 5.1 below:

**Graph 5.1: Frequency distribution of respondents by age**



### 5.3.2 Career plans

#### 5.3.2.1 Importance of career planning

**Table 5.1: Percentage distribution of importance of career planning**

**How important is career planning to you at this point in your life?**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
3	How important is career planning to you at this point in your life?	Most definitely important	Definitely	A little/somewhat	Not at all
		64.9	25.5	8.4	1.2

Question 3 was aimed at determining the importance of career planning to the respondents. It was considered essential to know how important career planning was to the respondents, taking into account that they were doing their last year of senior secondary school and were expected to execute their career plans the following year, either by pursuing tertiary education in line with their envisaged careers or seeking employment.

A total of 98.8% of the respondents valued the importance of career planning, with 64.9% saying that career planning was *most definitely* important to them, 25.5% reporting that career planning

was *definitely* important to them and 8.4% of the respondents viewing career planning as *somewhat* important to them.

It can be noticed that close to 100% of the respondents valued the need for career planning to some extent and considered Form 5 to be the best time for them to be thinking about career planning. The finding is consistent with literature according to Witko *et al.* (2005:34) who indicate that career planning gains prominence during late adolescence and early adulthood.

Similarly, Maokaneng (2005:57) found that the learners in his study felt that Form 5 is the best time for one to make a career choice, which further supports the findings.

### 5.3.2.2 Post-secondary plans

**Table 5.2: Percentage distribution of post-secondary plans**

**Which of the following best describes your plans regarding what you will be doing after completing senior secondary school?**

Ques. no.	Question	Percentage Distribution
4	I know exactly what I will be doing.	15.9
5	I am trying to decide between a couple of different plans.	57.0
6	I am not sure what I want to do, but I have started working on it	25.6
7	I don't know what I want to do and it does not worry me	1.5

Questions 4-7 were meant to investigate the extent to which the respondents had worked to formulate their post-secondary plans.

Of the respondents 15.9% knew exactly what they would be doing after completing their senior secondary education. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they had some idea of what they would be doing, though they had not made definite plans about what exactly they would be doing. Slightly more than a quarter (25.6%) of the respondents expressed uncertainty about what they would be doing, though they had started planning for their post-secondary life.

Table 5.2 indicates that a cumulative percentage of 98.5% of the respondents indicated that they were concerned about what they would be doing in future, and that only 1.5% of the respondents reported not knowing exactly what they would be doing and also not being worried about it.

The high percentage recorded for the respondents who recognised the importance of career planning implies great awareness about the need for career planning. However, only a small percentage (15.9%) of the respondents had definite plans about what they would be doing after senior secondary school, highlighting a need to guide the respondents to make concrete career plans.

Being in Form 5, which is the last year of senior secondary school, means that the respondents would be required to execute their plans, to either find employment or pursue the necessary training in preparation for their envisaged careers a year later, which necessitates formulating concrete career plans by the respondents.

### 5.3.2.3 Help required in making career plans

**Table 5.3: Percentage distribution of help required to make career plans**

**There are a number of things that people find useful for career planning. What would you find helpful at this point in your life?**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very helpful	Helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
8	Understanding my interests and abilities.	78.1	20.3	1.3	0.3
9	Information about different kinds of occupations.	58.2	34.0	6.5	1.3
10	Help with choosing between two or more occupational options.	32.2	38.5	24.7	4.6
11	Information about post-secondary institutions, e.g. colleges of education	53.8	28.2	14.8	3.2
12	Information about the grant/loan scheme/sponsorship for continuing my education.	66.2	22.3	9.6	1.9
13	Other	22.8	25.3	17.7	34.2

Questions 8-13 were meant to determine the help the respondents needed in making career plans.

The understanding of personal interest and ability was rated the most important factor that would help with career planning, with 78.1% of the respondents indicating a definite need for help in this regard. It is, however, disconcerting to find such a high percentage of respondents expressing this type of need a few months before they write their senior secondary school leaving examination. This finding indicates that learning outcome 1 in Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of

Education, 1998:11) which advocates for the facilitation of self-understanding in learners in order to help them relate their interests, abilities and talents to their subject selection and the world of work, was not achieved.

The fact that this is the first learning outcome in the senior public secondary school career guidance curriculum (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23) underscores the importance of self-exploration as the most important step in making a realistic career choice (Mmusinyane, 2006:37).

Information about the grant/loan scheme/sponsorship for continuing one's education was rated second most important (66.2%). This finding not only indicates a need for information about the government of Botswana's grant/loan scheme, but also suggests that learning outcome 3 in Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23) was not achieved.

Just over half (58.2%) of the respondents indicated that they would find information about different kinds of occupations useful. This percentage is high considering that learning outcome 4 in Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:24) indicates that learners should be equipped with the skills to research career opportunities, and strongly indicates that the outcome was not achieved.

Furthermore, research (Mmusinyane, 2006:40) indicates that occupational information is the second most important factor on which realistic career choices rest. It is, therefore, worrying that more than half the respondents indicated a need for this information well into their last year of senior secondary school when the content was supposed to have been covered in Form 4.

A cumulative percentage of 70.7% of the respondents (32.2%, for *very well* and 38.5% for *well*), indicated a need for help between choosing two or more occupational options, thus expressing a definite need for assistance in this area. This finding is not surprising, considering that incidents of career indecision are to be expected, particularly during this period when the respondents are going through the process of career exploration and trying to sift through the range of occupations available to them (Feldman,2003).

Information about post-secondary options was highlighted as particularly important by 53.8% of the respondents. As with the other learning outcomes mentioned above, the high percentage scored for this question indicates that learning outcome 2 in Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23) which requires the provision of information on the opportunities for further training to learners, was not achieved. It highlights the fact that this information is of crucial importance to facilitate career planning.

#### 5.3.2.4 Availability of career services/resources and whether they were used or not

**Table 5.4: Percentage distribution of availability of key career exploration resources/activities/services and whether the respondents used them or not**

Ques. no.	Career exploration resource/activity/service	Degree of availability				Was it used or not	
		HA	A	SA	NA	Yes	No
14	Career Audio/ Video Tapes	2.6	13.3	28.1	56.0	29.2	70.8
15	School career information centre/library	30.5	43.3	22.4	3.8	79.0	21.0
16	School guidance counsellor	43.2	36.8	15.8	4.2	65.2	34.8
17	Other teachers	25.7	39.0	25.8	9.5	66.9	33.1
18	Written career guidance/education materials	39.9	34.7	21.2	4.2	82.4	17.6
19	Career fair	33.8	36.0	28.3	1.9	92.9	7.1
20	Internet	18.2	18.8	23.4	39.6	44.9	55.1
21	Job-shadowing	3.7	10.4	19.0	66.9	16.0	84.0
22	Parents	57.4	25.5	12.1	5.0	86.9	13.1
23	Other family members	27.3	32.3	26.7	13.7	77.7	22.3
24	Your friends	25.2	40.1	24.5	10.2	80.7	19.3
25	Visits to tertiary institutions	11.6	14.7	18.8	54.9	26.0	74.0
26	School/career talks	17.5	24.4	27.1	31.0	57.4	42.6
27	Different school subjects	44	32.7	10.8	12.5	81.0	19.0
28	Observations of individuals at work	17.3	25.0	25.3	32.4	55.6	44.4
29	Discussions with workers in different jobs	12.8	16.4	20.1	50.7	39.4	60.6

**KEY:**

HA = Highly available  
A = Available  
SA = Somewhat available  
NA = Not available

Questions 14-29 determined the degree of availability of key career exploration services/activities to the respondents and whether the respondents utilised the services/activities or not. The first column is question numbers; the 2<sup>nd</sup> column is resources/services; the 3<sup>rd</sup> indicates the degree of availability of the different resources/services, and the last (4<sup>th</sup>) one was meant to determine whether each service/activity/resource was used by the respondents or not.

Only 2.6% of the respondents reported that career audio/video tapes were *highly available* to them, 13.3% reported that they were *available* to them and 28.1% said they were *somewhat available* to them. More than half the respondents (56%) said the resource was *not available* to them at all.

Career audio/video tapes were reportedly used by only 29.2% of the respondents, whereas 70.8% of the respondents did not use them at all. The high percentage of respondents who reported that they had no access to career audio/video tapes (56%) and those who indicated low degrees of availability of the resource (28.1%), and the subsequent high percentage of respondents (70.8%) who did not use the resource during career planning, suggest that generally schools did not use the resource as teaching aids. Possibly the small percentage (29.2%) of the respondents who accessed the resource did so from outside school, such as from home.

The above finding is not surprising, considering that a study by Alao (1998:23) reported low usage of career audio/visual tapes by schools. Only 16.9% of the learners involved in Alao's study (1998:23) expressed satisfaction with the use of career audio/video tapes as a career exploration resource by their senior public secondary schools, indicating a high possibility that schools did not use the resource.

The finding points to a gap in the facilitation of in-depth career exploration among the respondents. A definite need is also expressed for the use of career audio/video tapes to enhance career exploration and, consequently, meaningful career development among the respondents.

The school library/career resource centre was found *highly available* by 30.5% of the respondents, *available* by 43.3%, *somewhat available* by 22.4% and *not available* by 3.8% of the respondents. Close to eighty percent (79%) of the respondents indicated that they had used materials from their school libraries during career planning, compared to 21% who did not use the materials at all.

It is encouraging to find that the respondents made good use of their school libraries (79%) as resources that were *highly available* to them because of their accessibility. This finding calls for the provision of up-to-date career guidance/education materials in the form of books, magazines and brochures to enhance career exploration among learners, particularly as an individual initiative, since this has been found to be lacking among the respondents.

The school guidance counsellor was reported to have been *highly available* by 43.2% of the respondents, *available* by 36.8%, *somewhat available* by 15.8% and was *not available* to 4.2% of the respondents. The overall percentage of the respondents who found the school guidance counsellor accessible is very high (95.8%) which is to be expected, considering that the school counsellor is based at the school where the respondents spent most of their time.

The percentage of the respondents who actually utilised the services of the school guidance counsellor (65.2%) is low considering the accessibility of the counsellor to the respondents. The finding also causes concern when taking into account the fact that the respondents were doing their last year of senior secondary school and were expected to be highly in need of the assistance of the school counsellor in terms of seeking assistance with career planning.

The above finding is consistent with the findings reported by previous studies (Alexitch *et al.*, 2004; Bardick *et al.*, 2004:106; O'Donnell & Logan) which have established that only a small percentage of learners utilise the services of the school guidance counsellor. Similarly, Maokaneng (2005:60) found that many learners show reluctance to approach school guidance counsellors for assistance during career planning. According to Maokaneng (2005:60) the learners

in his study felt that teachers possess minimal and in some cases no career knowledge at all and are therefore ill-equipped to offer career guidance to them.

Other teachers in the school were rated as *highly available* (25.7%), *available* (39%), *somewhat available* (25.8%) and *not available* for career guidance by (9.5%) of the respondents. The finding raises questions about infusing career guidance into the individual subjects offered by the teachers; who spend a lot of time in the class-room with learners – far more time when compared with the school guidance counsellor, for that matter.

In addition, the Revised National Policy on Education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:10) explicitly states that the world of work relevance of every subject should be drawn out in the curriculum by all subject teachers; underscoring the importance of infusing career guidance into the various school subjects offered to learners.

More than half (66.9%) of the respondents reported that they approached other teachers for guidance during career planning. The remaining 33.1% of the respondents did not seek assistance from this career resource during career planning.

The above finding is consistent with research according to Maokaneng (2005:60) and Mokgolodi (2001:48) who found that some teachers show reluctance to teach guidance and counselling as a subject and, in particular, to assist learners during the career planning process.

A definite need is expressed for teachers to create awareness among learners about the significance of the subjects they offer to the learners in relation to their relevance when it comes to the learners' career path objectives.

Written career guidance/education materials were easily accessible to 39.9% of the respondents, and available to 34.7%. Slightly over a fifth (21.2%) of the respondents reported that written career guidance materials were *somewhat available* to them. The remaining 4.2% of the respondents indicated that the materials were *not available* to them at all.

A high percentage of respondents (82.4%) indicated that they had used written materials during career planning. This finding highlights a need for the regular up-dating and provision of printed

career education materials, such as brochures and books, to schools by the Career Guidance services of the department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation in Botswana, and by tertiary institutions.

Only 33.8% of the respondents found the Career Fair *highly available* and 36% found it *available*. Just over a quarter (28.3%) of the respondents found the career fair *somewhat available* and 1.9% found it *not available* at all.

The Career Fair is a career exploration activity which is held annually within the different senior public secondary schools for completing learners, i.e. Form 5 learners (see 3.6.2.2).

It must be noted that, owing to their large numbers, the respondents could not be addressed all at once at each of the schools during the one day Career Fair at their schools. Clusters were formed consisting of different Form 5 classes, with each class being addressed at a time. As a result the classes were addressed at different times, resulting in the respondents experiencing different levels of access to the facilitators from the different professions and tertiary institutions. This resulted in different satisfaction levels.

Almost all the respondents (92.9%) attended the Career Fair and the remainder (7.1%) possibly refers to the percentage of respondents who missed school on the day of the career fair.

Alao (1998:23) found that the senior public secondary school learners in his study reported low satisfaction levels with the Career Fair (32.6%). Similarly, Maokaneng (2005:61-62) indicates that the learners in his study did not regard the annual Career Fair as a major source of career information for them, suggesting that learners may not be getting optimal benefit from the Career Fair. Possibly the time allocated to each school during the Career Fair is inadequate and results in some learners gaining little from it.

Of the respondents, 18.2% found the internet as a career exploration resource *highly available* and 18.8% found it *available*. Almost a quarter (23.4%) found the internet *somewhat available* and 39.6% reported it as *not available* to them during career planning. The percentage of the respondents, who reported low levels of availability of the internet as a career resource material

together with those who indicated that they had not used the internet at all (55.1%), indicates some passivity on the part of the respondents to independently seek out career planning materials. This finding indicates a need to promote the use of the internet for individual career exploration during career planning, as resources such as computers are generally scarce in schools in Botswana (Hartung, 2005). It is most likely that the percentage (44.9%) of respondents who used the internet during career planning did so, on their own initiative.

The small percentage of the respondents who used the internet during career planning is disappointing, considering that technology and the use of computers have created many new jobs, and rendered some jobs obsolete. In addition, a lot of career planning materials such as self-assessment quizzes and specific career/occupational information can be easily sourced from the internet, making it imperative for learners to utilise the resource to obtain such materials. Learners therefore need to be encouraged to use the internet for career exploration as computers have become indispensable during the information age.

Research (Alao, 1998:35, Mokgolodi, 2005:50) indicates that none of the senior public secondary schools in Botswana uses computer resource materials for career guidance.

Hartung (2005) concurs with Alao that the use of internet resources as a career exploration mechanism is non-existent in Botswana public schools and that senior public secondary schools are no less affected by this development than other public schools. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that the majority (55.1%) of the respondents did not use the internet as a career exploration resource.

Job-shadowing as a career exploration activity was found *highly available* by 3.7% of the respondents, *available* by 10.4%, *somewhat available* by 19% and *not available* at all by 66.9%. The high percentage (66.9%) recorded for the lack of availability of job-shadowing suggests that schools did not organise the activity for the respondents. Possibly the respondents who accessed the activity did so through their own personal initiative or through the help of their families. This possibility is supported by the small percentage of (16%) of the respondents who reported having used the service.

This finding is supported by literature, according to Alao (1998:27) who reported that 66.3% of the learners in a study he conducted to evaluate the satisfaction levels of senior public secondary schools learners with the career services provided in their schools in Botswana, reported that their schools did not organise job-shadowing for them.

A definite need is expressed for senior public secondary schools to organise job-shadowing experiences for learners as a strategy to complement the benefits obtained from other career exploration activities such as the Career Fair.

The respondents reported high accessibility levels (57.4%) of their parents during career planning. A quarter (25.5%) of the respondents further indicated that their parents were accessible to them, and 12.1% said their parents were *somewhat available* to them. Only 5% of the respondents reported a lack of availability of parents during career planning.

Consistent with literature, according to Wahl & Blackhurst (2000); Bardick *et al.*, (2005:152); and Otto (2000:111), which regards parents as the key influencers in their adolescent children's career development, 86.9% of the respondents reported having approached their parents for career advice during career planning.

Other family members were rated as *highly available* by 27.3% of the respondents, *available* by 32.3%, *somewhat available* by 26.7% and *not available* by 13.7%.

A large proportion (77.7%) of the respondents reported having consulted other family members during career planning, and 22.3% indicated that they had utilised this resource during career planning.

Friends were rated as *highly available* by 25.2% of the respondents, *available* by 40.1%, *somewhat available* by 24.5% and *not available* at all by 10.2% of the respondents. The overall high percentage scored for the degree of availability of friends (89.8%) is consistent with literature, according to Felsman and Blustein (1999:281-282) and Kracke (2002:21) who acknowledge the important role played by peers in the career development of adolescents, particularly in a time that they become independent from their parents.

Visits to tertiary institutions recorded an insignificant cumulative percentage of 26.3% for *highly available* and *available*, indicating a vital need to promote individual effort among the respondents to obtain educational guidance materials from such institutions.

Most of the respondents (74%) indicated that they had not made the effort to visit tertiary institutions as part of their career exploration. This is a finding which is disappointing when one takes into account the abundance and easy accessibility of these institutions to the respondents as learners in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana.

School talks by various representatives from the world of work recorded above average ratings (69%) in terms of availability. However, the percentage of 57.4% recorded for actual usage of the school talks raises questions about how proactive employers are in facilitating career talks in schools in order to disseminate career/occupational information to learners. Similar findings were reported by Alao (1998:35) with 53.7% of the learners in his study indicating that they found career talks useful.

A cumulative percentage of 76.7% of the respondents rated various school subjects as at least available in terms of their relevance to career planning. Evidently teachers need to do a lot to explain the relevance of different school subjects to the respondents' career lives.

Observations of workers performing different tasks recorded 17.3% for *highly available*, 25% for *available*, 25.3% for somewhat available and 32.4% for *not available*. Slightly more than half (55.6%) of the respondents reported having used the resource, and the remaining 44.4% indicated they had not used the resource.

Nevertheless, the cumulative percentage of 42.3% for *highly available* and *available* points to a possibility that schools did not organise career field-trips /excursions for the respondents.

Half of the respondents (49.3%) reported some degree of availability regarding discussions with workers in different jobs. The remaining 60.6% of the respondents indicated they had not had discussions with workers in different jobs. This situation definitely limited the opportunities to acquire information about the different jobs in the market for the large percentage of learners who did not have discussions with workers in different jobs.

The above findings highlight a need to encourage the respondents to make use of independent career exploration to acquire specific information about the different kinds of occupations, such as the kind of work done, working conditions as well as salary and promotion prospects.

From the results the non-availability of key career exploration activities such as visits to tertiary institutions, job-shadowing and discussions with workers in different jobs became evident with percentages of 66.9%, 54.9% and 50.7% respectively.

### 5.3.2.5 Level of optimism regarding future career plans

**Table 5.5: Percentage distribution of level of optimism regarding future career plans**

**When you think about the next few years of your life, how confident are you about the following?**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very likely	Likely	Somewhat unlikely	Not likely at all
30	I will be able to find an occupation that I love	36.0	48.3	12.6	3.1
31	I will be able to get the training or education that I need	39.9	49.2	9.0	1.9
32	I will be able to find work/get a job in the occupation I have chosen	30.8	46.5	18.6	4.1

Questions 30-32 sought to determine how confident the respondents were that they would attain their career plans.

On average 83.6% of the learners were at least moderately optimistic about attaining their future career plans. This is evidenced by the cumulative percentages of 84.3% for *very likely* and *likely* regarding certainty about finding the occupations the respondents loved, 89.1% for certainty about getting the necessary training/education, and 77.3% for finding work/getting a job in the envisaged occupation.

The high level of optimism expressed by the participants in terms of attaining their future career plans is surprising when one takes into account the areas highlighted by the respondents as key areas in which they needed assistance with making career plans (see 5.3.2.3). For instance, a cumulative percentage of 92.9% of the respondents reported *information about different kinds of occupations* as *very helpful* and *helpful* (question 9) and yet a large percentage of the respondents

went on to express optimism in being able to find the occupations they love for question 30 (see table 5.5).

Similarly, a cumulative percentage of 82% of the respondents indicated that they would find information about post-secondary institutions *helpful* according to table 5.3 (question 11) and yet a high percentage (89.1%) of the respondents expressed optimism about getting the training/education they needed in table 5.5 (question 31).

More than three quarters (77.3%) of the respondents expressed certainty about *finding work/getting jobs in the occupations they had chosen* (question 32), and yet 70% of the respondents reported that they required *help with choosing between two or more occupational options* in question 10 (see 5.3.2.3) .

### 5.3.3 Self-assessment information needs

#### 5.3.3.1 Percentage distribution of self-assessment needs

**Indicate how well you think you know/understand the following about yourself:**

**Table 5.6: Percentage distribution of self-assessment needs**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
33	Your personality	60.5	31.4	7.5	0.6
34	Your good and bad habits	50.5	36.7	12.8	0.0
35	Your interests and personal taste in different activities	52.2	30.9	15.3	1.6
36	Your abilities and talents	33.9	37.3	26.3	2.5
37	The kind of work that matches your ability	28.5	32.6	33.2	5.7
38	What is important to you in work	40.6	35.9	19.7	3.8

Questions 33-38 were meant to establish the self-assessment information needs of the respondents as self-assessment is indispensable to making realistic career choices. A high percentage (91.9%) of the respondents knew their personalities with certainty. All the respondents indicated to varying degrees that they knew their good and bad habits, with the respondents indicating good knowledge of these. This finding is encouraging when one considers that the respondents have to take into account both their strengths and weaknesses when making career choices.

A cumulative percentage (83.1%) of the respondents reported good knowledge of their interests and personal taste in different activities. Another indicator of good development in terms of self-assessment was that slightly over 71.2% of the respondents indicated that they knew their talents and abilities very well.

A percentage score of 33.2% of the respondents indicated that they did not possess good knowledge of the work that matches their abilities and 5.7% indicated complete ignorance of such. The findings are worrying considering that knowledge of one's ability and the integration of such knowledge with career information is basic to career decision-making. The worrying aspect is that the respondents were in their last year of senior secondary school, after which they would be required to either find employment or pursue training relevant to the career paths they had chosen.

However, the above finding is not surprising when one considers that senior public secondary school leavers in Botswana have been found to generally base their career choices on their BGCSE results, to the exclusion of such important factors as self-assessment information and career information (Bhusumane, 2004:60). This finding highlights a need to educate learners about the factors that need to be taken into account when making career choices in order to facilitate informed career choices.

Most of the respondents (76.5%) reported good knowledge of what is important to them in work. This is a positive indicator that the respondents understood their values very well. This finding is consistent with research by Ginzberg *et al.* (as quoted by Sharf, 2006:176) who maintain that at ages 15 and 16 adolescents start to develop values and to understand what is important to them in work.

### 5.3.4 Educational/occupational information needs

**Table 5.7: Percentage distribution of educational/occupational information needs**

**Indicate how well you think you know the following:**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
39	The educational opportunities open to you after you complete senior secondary school	25.1	38.2	32.0	4.7
40	The education required to achieve your plans for the future	34.3	30.8	32.7	2.2
41	The occupations and jobs you find interesting	39.3	41.3	16.9	2.5
42	The occupations and jobs best suited to you	29.4	38.0	30.0	2.6
43	The educational requirements for the course/schools you might attend next year	30.8	35.2	30.5	3.5
44	Possibilities/opportunities in tertiary education following senior secondary school	19.7	43.9	32.2	4.2
45	The influence of technological changes on the market	15.8	28.9	43.2	12.1
46	The present and the future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market	6.0	21.7	51.9	20.4
47	The means to cope with unemployment	11.9	21.6	38.4	28.1

Questions 39-47 were meant to investigate the educational/occupational information needs of the respondents.

The respondents (63.3%) displayed fairly good knowledge of the educational opportunities open to them after senior secondary school. A higher percentage score was expected for this question as the study population was from the capital city of Botswana (Gaborone) where tertiary institutions can be easily accessed to obtain educational information.

In addition, just before the questionnaire was conducted, different tertiary institutions were represented at the Career Fair where they made available information to the respondents about the courses they offer and the entry requirements of each.

Of the respondents 65.1% reported good knowledge of the education required for them to achieve their future career plans. This finding is surprising, given that a high percentage of the respondents (82%) earlier reported that they would find information about post-secondary institutions helpful (see 5.3.2.3).

A high percentage (80.6%) was scored for knowledge of the occupations and jobs that the respondents found interesting, which highlights the importance of such information to the respondents. However, comparatively low levels of knowledge of the occupations and jobs the respondents were best suited to were recorded (67.4%). The finding suggests a definite need to assist the respondents in matching their interests, abilities, values and talents to different occupations.

A fairly high percentage (66%) of the respondents reported good knowledge of the educational requirements for the tertiary education courses they would pursue after completing senior secondary school. This high percentage suggests that the majority of the respondents were nurturing hopes of furthering their studies after senior secondary school, which causes reservations about the realistic nature of the career plans of the respondents.

Evidently, it needs to be impressed upon the respondents that they cannot all qualify for admission to tertiary institutions and sponsorship to such institutions; even more so when Bhusumane (2002:80) contends that there is huge competition for the few places available at different tertiary institutions and for sponsorship in Botswana.

The respondents displayed fairly good knowledge of the possibilities in tertiary education open to them following senior secondary school (63.6%). Notwithstanding this, the percentage is worrying when one considers that different tertiary education institutions made presentations about the programmes of study they offered and the duration of these programmes during the Career Fair.

The finding further suggests that learning outcome 2 for Form 4, which advocates full knowledge of the opportunities for further study and training (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23), was not achieved.

The respondents indicated low levels of knowledge (44.7% for *very well* and *well*) of the influence of technological changes on the job market. This finding is not surprising, considering the low level of availability (37% for *highly available* and *available*) recorded for internet resource materials (see table 5.4). However, the finding causes concern bearing in mind the vast technological changes that the world has been experiencing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the significance of technological search engines in providing career related materials.

Knowledge of present and future employment patterns scored a low cumulative percentage of 27.7% (for *very well* and *well*) which expressed a critical need to make available information on present and future employment patterns to the participants. This finding also raises doubts as to whether the different schools made information on the employment trends available to the respondents. Evidently learning outcome 7 for Form 4, calling for the enlightenment of learners about the employment market (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25) was not achieved.

The respondents also displayed little knowledge (33.5% for *very well* and *well*) of the means to cope with unemployment, which highlights a need for equipping the respondents with self-employment as a career option (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:26). Knowledge of different recruitment and advisory agencies (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:37), knowledge of formal and informal career lives (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:27) and the technical and financial assistance for young entrepreneurs (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998: 40) also scored low.

Bhusumane (2004:65) contends that over the years unemployment has become increasingly high in Botswana, making it imperative to equip learners with the skills to counteract unemployment. Young people in particular need to be supplied with information on the opportunities for self-employment, and securing technical and financial assistance on the schemes specifically meant for them.

### 5.3.5 Current occupational preferences

**Table 5.8: Percentage distribution of current occupational preferences**

**Please think of the kind of jobs/occupations which interest you the most and indicate how well you know them.**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
48	The kind of work/tasks performed	25.9	43.9	24.9	5.3
49	The required education or training	28.8	39.8	27.6	3.8
50	The man-power needs of the country in the future	20.1	32.0	40.1	7.8
51	The required abilities	25.2	45.2	26.5	3.1
52	The necessary interests	23.3	39.4	31.5	5.8
53	The required personal characteristics	25.7	35.4	32.3	6.6
54	The working conditions	21.6	30.7	37.3	10.4
55	The starting salary	16.5	16.1	36.7	30.7
56	The chances of progressing/advancing/being promoted	18.8	22.5	35.9	22.8

Questions 48-56 sought to establish how well the respondents knew their preferred occupations/jobs.

This part showed mixed responses. Of great significance was the respondents' lack of knowledge about the salary structures of their jobs of interest and the chances of progressing/advancing or being promoted in the same. This is evidenced by the percentages of 36.7% and 30.7% for *not very well* and *not at all* for starting salary, and 35.9% and 22.8% for *not very well* and *not at all* for progression prospects.

This finding implies that learning outcome 5 for Form 5 which has an assessment standard requiring that learners should be knowledgeable of the information on pay, conditions of services and skill requirements and employer expectations (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:27 & 37) was not achieved.

The assessment standards for learning outcome 5 for Form 5 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25) require that learners should be able to state the qualities and skills that make one

successful in the work place. Learners are also required to discuss and demonstrate positive attitudes towards work and a sense of commitment towards work (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25). The high percentage (58.7%) score of the respondents who either possessed limited information or no information about progression prospects further suggests that the assessment standards were not met.

In addition, close to half the respondents (47.9%) reported little or no knowledge of the human resource needs of the country in the future. This finding is worrisome when one takes into account the fact that secondary school leavers need guidance on the man-power needs of the country so that they can obtain training and seek jobs in areas of need.

The respondents showed that they were equipped with the knowledge of the work/tasks performed in their envisaged careers and the education or training required. This is evidenced by the small percentages (5.3% and 3.8% respectively) who said they were totally ignorant of such knowledge.

The results reveal that a lot more has to be done with regard to assisting learners to research careers, since close to half of the respondents (47.7%) were not sure of the knowledge that they have and with 10.4% being totally not sure about the working conditions of the line of jobs that interest them. This finding is worrying considering that Form 5 marks a transition into the employment market for some learners, necessitating good knowledge of the different work conditions.

### 5.3.6 Participation in career development/planning

**Table 5.9: Percentage distribution of participation in career development/planning**

Please indicate the extent to which you have done the following in order to prepare for the career you want to follow after completing senior secondary school

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
57	Finding out about as many careers as possible	25.4	33.8	30.6	10.2
58	Consulting with your guidance teacher/counsellor for information to make decisions concerning your career	11.7	19.6	22.2	46.5
59	Finding out about the tasks involved/kind of work done in the occupation/job in which you are interested	23.4	38.1	26.6	11.9
60	Trying to discover your strengths and weaknesses in your school subjects	36.8	40.6	18.7	3.9
61	Discussing your career plans with a person who knows you well	39.5	27.7	20.1	12.7
62	Trying to discover your personal tastes throughout your subjects	32.8	41.7	20.7	4.8
63	Making the link between your school results and your future career plans	44.0	32.6	18.4	5.0
64	Participating in various extra-curricular activities or out-of-school activities to get to know yourself better	23.2	21.9	26.8	28.1
65	Considering your interests or aptitudes in all your choices concerning your career	20.4	42.7	31.1	5.8
66	Considering occupations which take into account as much as possible your personal tastes, aptitudes and qualities	22.4	41.1	29.1	7.4
67	Identifying the obstacles that might prevent you from reaching your career goals	39.3	35.3	19.6	5.8
68	Being open to several alternatives when planning your future career and studies	27.7	41.9	25.2	5.2
69	Thinking of the means to overcome the obstacles encountered at the time of choosing an occupation	22.6	36.6	30.9	9.9

Questions 57-69 sought to establish the effort the respondents had made in preparing for their envisaged/future careers.

Just over half the respondents (59.2%) reported that they had satisfactorily found out about as many careers as possible. This finding is disappointing and indicates laxity on the part of the respondents when it comes to individual career exploration and also highlights a need to promote individual career exploration initiative amongst them.

Individual consultations with the school career guidance counsellor scored the lowest percentage in the sub-scale (31.3% for *very well* and *well*) supporting previous studies (Alexitch *et al.*, 2004; Bardick *et al.*, 2004:106) which maintain that only a small percentage of learners seek career guidance from school counsellors. The finding indicates the huge responsibility school guidance counsellors have to create awareness amongst learners about their role in promoting meaningful career development.

An average proportion (61.5%) of the respondents said that they had to a great extent found out about the tasks performed in their occupations of interest. This finding is surprising, when one takes into account the results for question 54 where the respondents indicated poor knowledge (47.7%) of the working conditions of their preferred occupations.

A high percentage (77.4%) was scored for attempts to discover strengths and weaknesses throughout the various subjects taken by the respondents. The high percentage scored for this question indicates that most of the respondents engaged in career self-exploration.

Of the respondents 67.2% reported that they had discussed their career plans with people who knew them well. This finding highlights the importance of using significant people such as peers and family members from whom to get feed-back during career planning.

A majority (74.5%) of the respondents reportedly made attempts to discover their personal tastes throughout their school subjects, emphasising the importance of such an activity during career planning.

A good number (76.6%) of the respondents had made a correlation between their school results and their envisaged career plans, indicating an appreciation of the important link between senior secondary school results and the requirements for post-secondary studies.

The respondents had not made much effort to investigate their attributes through participation in extra-curricular activities, as evidenced by the low cumulative percentage of 45.1% scored for *very well* and *well* for this part. A definite need is highlighted to educate the respondents about the significant role extra-mural activities can play in facilitating self-awareness in relation to career exploration.

A fairly good percentage (63.1%) of the respondents had made a good effort to consider their interests/aptitudes in all their choices concerning their careers and 63.5% had done well to consider the occupations which take into account as much as possible their personal tastes, aptitudes and qualities. This fair percentage indicates that a good number of the respondents were proactive in preparing for their future careers by identifying their personality traits and merging this information with career/occupational information.

Consistent with the above finding, literature (Brown *et al.*, 2002:175) indicates that adolescents acquire information about specific occupations through exploration and integrate this information with their interests and capabilities.

Almost three quarters (74.6%) of the respondents had to a good extent made the effort to identify the obstacles that might hinder them from reaching their career goals. This finding is encouraging when one takes into account the stiff competition for places at tertiary level and for sponsorship opportunities in Botswana (Bhusumane, 2004:80).

A good number of the respondents (69.6%) said they had considered several options when planning their future career and studies, suggesting a high level of realism in career exploration by considering several options to avoid the disappointment that comes with failed ambitions.

Of the respondents (59.2%) indicated that they had thought about the means to overcome the obstacles at the time of choosing an occupation. The low percentage scored for this question indicates a need to assist learners with strategies to counteract the challenges met in choosing specific occupations.

The findings from this sub-scale indicate that, on average, the respondents had done a lot about preparation for life after secondary school. However, the results showed that the respondents were

not interacting much with institutional organs like school guidance counsellors, which recorded the least under *very well* and *well* with percentages of 11.7% and 19.6% respectively.

Discussing career plans with people who knew the respondents well scored 67.2% for *well* and *very well*. This group included parents. The finding is consistent with literature according to Ferry (2003:4) who regards parents as key influencers of their adolescent children’s career aspirations. Parents are often the most likely to interact with their children during the career planning process (Wahl & Blackhurst, 2000) and it makes sense that they should play a pivotal role in their children’s career planning.

The respondents placed high reliance (significant positive correlation) on the impact of their academic performance on their future careers with a high percentage of 76.6% on *very well* and *well*. The respondents’ strengths, weaknesses, personal interests/tastes, and aptitudes were rated very important with a total percentage of above 60% for *well* and *very well*.

### 5.3.7 Knowledge of Job Finding/Seeking/Getting and Keeping Skills

**Table 5.10: Percentage distribution of knowledge of job finding/seeking/getting and keeping skills**

**To what extent do you have knowledge about the following?**

Ques. no.	Question	Scale			
		Quite a lot	Sufficient	Very little	Not at all
70	Where to look for a job	9.4	34.6	41.1	14.9
71	How to write an application letter for a job	25.8	38.1	30.3	5.8
72	How to write a <i>curriculum vitae</i> /CV	24.0	34.7	32.8	8.5
73	How to prepare for a job interview	16.7	28.3	35.4	19.6
74	How to present yourself at a job interview	24.0	28.2	28.9	18.9
75	How employees hire someone	6.5	19.2	40.9	33.4
76	What employers expect from new employees	14.7	26.8	31.4	27.1
77	Which personal qualities employers consider important when hiring someone	14.5	30.4	33.7	21.4
78	What can influence the success and advancement/progress of a person in a job	15.6	37.7	33.1	13.6
79	What an employee should do to keep a job	26.1	37.4	29.0	7.5

Questions 70-79 sought to determine the extent to which the respondents were equipped with knowledge of job finding/seeking/getting and keeping skills.

Less than half (41.1%) of the respondents knew little about job search and 14.9% reported total ignorance in this regard. This does not tally well with learning outcome 4 for Form 5 which states that learners should be equipped with job-hunting skills (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:37) and clearly indicates a need to equip the respondents with such skills.

The lack of job-seeking skills will certainly pose problems for the learners who do not perform well enough to gain entrance into tertiary institutions and who will opt to seek employment after completing their senior secondary education, since Form 5 definitely marks an exit point from the education system.

A cumulative percentage of 63.9% of the respondents reported that they possessed above average knowledge on how to write an application letter for a job. It is possible that the skills in letter writing were acquired from English Language lessons and not necessarily from career guidance lessons.

The percentage of 36.1% of the respondents who reported limited or no knowledge in this regard is low when one takes into account that application letters are a basic requirement for seeking employment.

It was found that more than 58.7% of the respondents knew how to write a *Curriculum Vitae*. Similar to writing application letters for jobs, it is likely that the knowledge the learners received in this regard was obtained from their English language lessons and not necessarily from career guidance. The finding is disappointing taking into account the fact that those learners who would not make it to tertiary institutions would have no choice but to seek employment and therefore be required to submit their CVs—but only a few of the learners indicated that they could write CVs.

Alao (1998:28) has previously expressed dissatisfaction with the small percentage of senior secondary learners who report being taught how to write CVs. Only 57.9% of the senior public secondary school learners in Alao's study expressed satisfaction with the assistance they got in learning how to write CVs.

Consistent with research according to Alao (1998:28) only 52.2% of the respondents indicated that they knew how to present themselves at job interviews. Alao (1998:28) indicates that simulations of job-interviews are not conducted in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. This lack of job-interview role-plays occurs despite the assessment standards for learning objective 5 for Form 4 clearly stating that learners should be able to write an application for a job, discuss the steps in writing a CV and role-play at least one job interview (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:37).

Mixed responses were obtained on the attributes of employers' expectations and employees' expected attributes for job fulfilment and progression. This suggests that the assessment standards for learning outcome 2 for Form 5 which requires learners to be able to list the expectations of potential employers, was not achieved (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:29).

The findings of the study indicate that the respondents did not know how employees hire people, with a cumulative percentage of 74.3% reporting very minimal and no knowledge at all in that regard. This finding highlights the need to equip the respondents with such knowledge.

More than half the respondents (58.5%) indicated that they possessed little or no knowledge at all about what employers expect from new employees. This finding expresses a definite need to equip the respondents with knowledge about the expectations of employers for new employees.

Slightly over half (55.1%) of the respondents reported little or no knowledge at all about the personal qualities employers consider important when hiring people. A cumulative percentage of 46.7% reported minimal and no knowledge at all in terms of what can influence the success and advancement/progress of a person in a job, indicating a huge need to equip learners with such skills. This is even more important when Bhusumane (2004:86) observes that young people in Botswana generally lack the skills for job-seeking, and securing and maintaining jobs. Seemingly schools are to blame for this negative trend.

The findings also indicate that learning outcome 9 for Form 4 and its assessment standards which require learners to list the conditions of service for at least three careers of their choice and to state the obligations of the employer to an employee have not been achieved (Botswana Ministry

of Education, 1998:29) as evidenced by the low scores of 6.5%, 14.7%, 14.5% and 15.6% respectively for items 75-78.

### **5.3.8 Practical significance of the differences in the respondents' needs according to gender**

A t-test and effect sizes were done to establish if there were any differences in the respondents' needs according to gender. Cohen (as quoted by Ellis & Steyn, 2003:3) provides the following guidelines for interpreting effect size:

-small effect size:  $d < 0.2$

-medium effect size:  $d > 0.5 < 0.8$

-large effect size:  $d > 0.8$

All the effect sizes on gender differences fall below 0.5. This means that no significant differences were found in the responses based on gender. It can therefore be concluded that there were no differences in the learners' needs according to gender.

### **5.3.9 Conclusion: quantitative findings**

The findings from the quantitative section of the study indicate that though the results were consistent with the theoretical frame-work, a lot still needs to be done to meet the learning outcomes for career guidance as stipulated by the senior secondary school career guidance curriculum guidelines for senior secondary schools (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11-40). Notable matters of concern are issues related to individual consultations with the school guidance counsellor, availability of technological resources for job search, preparation for interviews, and knowledge of job-seeking skills, available careers and the need to expose learners to the work world through job-shadowing and career field-trips/excursions.

## **5.4 QUALITATIVE FINDINGS**

Focus-group interviews were used to collect the qualitative data for the study. The rationale for using focus-group interviews was to collect cumulative and elaborate data from the participants in a short period of time (see 4.5.1). The interaction between participants during the focus-group discussions was, in contrast to the process of individual interviews, highly beneficial because of

the intricate nature of group discussions. Comments from the participants during the interviews generated further comments and discussions from other participants in the focus groups (Van Vuuren, 2008:291).

The amount of data collected during the focus-group interviews was considerably smaller than the quantitative data. Hence, tables indicating both the frequencies and percentage scores will be used to present the qualitative data.

#### **5.4.1 Analysis of pilot study questions**

De Vos *et al.* (2007:331) indicate that pilot studies are no less essential for qualitative studies than they are for quantitative research. In qualitative studies, however, the pilot study is often informal. Furthermore, a few participants possessing similar characteristics as those of the study population can be used for piloting the study to ascertain certain trends and, among others, to test the questions (De Vos *et al.*, 2007:331).

As is mandatory in scientific research, a pilot study was conducted prior to the first focus-group interviews. The pilot focus interviews took place in April 2008 with a Grade 12 class at Boikhutso High School in Potchefstroom, South Africa. The purpose of the pilot focus interviews was to determine whether the questions for the first focus-group interviews would be suited and comprehensible enough to completing senior public secondary school learners in Botswana.

Grade 12 is the equivalent of Form 5 in Botswana and the researcher felt that the career planning needs of Grade 12 learners from a public school in South Africa would more or less be the same as those of Form 5 learners from a senior public secondary school in Botswana.

The participants in the pilot study provided useful feed-back to the researcher that was utilised to make amendments to the questions in the following manner:

### **Question 1**

Alterations were made to the first question which initially was ‘What are your career plans?’ to ‘Tell me about your career plans.’ The manner in which the question was initially phrased seemed to be too direct and to catch the learners off-guard. It was found necessary to rephrase the question since it was the question that set the tone of the whole interview as the first question. It was important not to ask the question in a manner which would defeat the purpose of focus interviews which are meant to be conducted in a relaxed manner (De Vos *et al.*, 2007:310). The alteration to the question therefore made it easy for the participants to narrate their career plans in a relaxed manner.

### **Question 2**

It became clear during the pilot study that there were some participants who had not formulated career/occupational goals as yet, and this situation made it necessary to formulate a follow-up question to cater for the needs of those participants’ who had not set career/occupational goals during the first focus-group interviews.

Hence question 2 was formulated to determine the sort of help needed by those participants who had not yet formulated career/occupational goals. This additional question was, ‘Who/what would help you to make career/occupational goal(s)?’

### **Question 3**

Question 3 was changed from ‘What can help you to realise your career/occupational goal(s)?’ to ‘Who/what can help you to achieve your career/occupational goal(s)?’ It became evident during the pilot study that some of the assistance that learners need in attaining career/ occupational goals comes from other people, hence the word ‘who’ which was originally not part of the question was inserted.

The word ‘realise’ seemed to be ambiguous and to create confusion among the participants in the pilot study and was subsequently replaced with the word ‘achieve’ with which the participants felt comfortable.

### **Questions 4, 5 and 6**

No alterations were made to questions 4, 5 and 6.

### **Questions 7 and 8**

Two questions which did not originally appear were created, as indicated below:

7. What are you most encouraged about when you think of your potential career?

8. What are you most discouraged about when you think of your potential career?

### **Question 9**

No alterations were made to question 9.

### **5.4.2 First focus-group interviews analysis**

The first focus-group interviews were conducted in May 2008 and marked the first phase of the data collection process (see 4.5.1.7).

Two focus-group interviews consisting of 8 participants each were conducted in each of the four senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana. All in all eight focus-groups interviews were conducted to collect the data for the first phase of the data collection process, resulting in a sample size of 64 participants (N=64).

The participants were randomly selected from the first two classes to have guidance lessons on the day of the interviews at the respective schools. Every third name from the class register was picked until the researcher reached a total of eight participants per class.

Below follows an analysis of the data from the first focus-group interviews.

### 5.4.2.1 Description of career/occupational goals

**Table 5.11 Description of career/occupational goals**

Career field	Legal	Medical & Health sciences	Construction & Engineering	Business	Entertainment	Communication	Undecided
Freq.	15	10	7	20	3	4	5
%	23.4	15.6	10.9	31.3	4.7	6.3	7.8

The first question sought to establish the participants' career/occupational goals with the aim to understand their level of involvement in career planning.

Table 5.11 indicates that 91.5% of the participants indicated that they wanted to obtain professional qualifications from universities, either in the country or outside, upon completion of their senior secondary education. Surprisingly, other tertiary institutions in the country seemed not to be among the options the participants were considering, highlighting a need to make them aware of the significance of such institutions and the programmes they offer.

The participants may be nurturing unrealistic educational goals if they believe that they can all qualify for entry into university as this will inevitably lead to unrealistic career/occupational goals.

It is further revealed that 15.6% of the respondents reported that they aspired for careers in the medical and health sciences category; while 10.9% (7 out of 64) indicated they desired careers in construction and engineering. Twenty out of sixty-four (31.3%) of the participants indicated that they aspired for careers in the business and commercial sector. Of this group, five participants had aspirations to go into business immediately after completing their senior secondary education.

Three out of sixty-four (4.7%) of the participants reported an interest in the entertainment industry, while 6.3% (4 out of 64) showed interest in the communication cluster. 23.4% (15 out of 64) planned to pursue careers in the legal field and the remaining 7.8% (5 out of 64) indicated that they had not yet made a decision about which career paths to follow.

An important observation here is that 80% (12 out of 15) of the participants who indicated that they aspired for a career in law were female. As will be indicated later, some of the female participants indicated that their choice of career/occupational goals had been influenced by the low representation of women in certain careers. Hence, the participants' career aspirations were influenced by a desire to correct gender-imbalances in the work-place.

Consistent with the above finding Raffaele-Mendez and Crawford (2002:96) indicate that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century many females are willing to cross the gender-line and venture into career paths which used to be mainly populated by men.

It is evident that a large proportion of the participants, i.e. 92% (59 out of 64) had formulated career goals. However, the participants' descriptions of their career/occupational goals were not as information-rich as was expected considering that the participants were doing their last year of senior secondary school. The reasons given to justify the choices of career/occupational goals were also wanting in that they seemed unrealistic and not well considered e.g.

- *I just have a passion for accounts.*
- *I want to pursue a career in travel and tourism because I like to travel.*

Similar findings were reported by Euvrard in a 1996 study he conducted to establish the career needs of Grade 10 learners in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. Even though the learners in Euvrard's study had formulated career goals, the justification for their career choices left reservations about their career maturity.

An overwhelming 83% (49 out of 59) of the participants, particularly those from the double science classes, could not make a link between their occupational choices and their performance in class. The participants in this group also could not make a correlation between career aspirations and self-assessment knowledge and also seemed to lack information on the entry requirements and university cut-off points.

However, 11% of the participants, almost all from the separate/pure science classes, gave quite convincing justifications for their choice of career goals, giving an indication that they had taken into account most of the factors to be considered when formulating career/occupational goals, e.g.

*I want to become a neurologist because the human brain fascinates me, and I realize that there is a serious shortage of neurologists in the country. I also want to heed the president's call to young Batswana to consider training in areas where there is serious shortage of man-power, that is, scarce skills. I believe I possess the right qualities as I am of sober habits, patient, and have precision. I am doing very well in my sciences and Math and I believe I will obtain the maximum entry points possible. I am also willing to study for as long as it takes to become a neurologist.*

The high percentage of the participants who struggled to justify their choice of career/occupational goals suggests a need to educate the participants about the factors that need to be taken into account during the career-planning process to facilitate realistic career planning. Key factors in career decision-making such as self-exploration, as well as exploring the specific occupations and programmes of study that form the adolescent's pool of options, and integrating all this information should form the core of the guidance offered during career planning (King & Cartwright, 2003).

The high percentage obtained for the need to assist the participants with the foundation for basing career/occupational choices also points to a possibility that learning outcome 11 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:28) which indicates that learners should be made aware of the factors that influence career choice, was not achieved.

The participants, however, indicated a broad knowledge of career options, suggesting that being in the capital city of Botswana (Gaborone) served as an advantage regarding exposure to a wide range of emerging career paths. Contrary to the findings of the current study, Maokaneng (2005:57) found that the learners from Maun Senior Public Secondary School who took part in his study expressed a narrow knowledge of careers, which was mainly restricted to conventional careers such as teaching and nursing.

Consistent with life-span life-space theory it can be concluded that one's environment determines the amount of exposure to the different careers. Unlike the participants in the current study, those in Maokaneng's 2005 study came from rural areas and hence had restricted exposure to the world of work (Maokaneng, 2005:58).

#### 5.4.2.2 Help needed in formulating career/occupational goals

This question was aimed mostly at finding out what sort of help was needed by those participants who had not yet formulated their career goals. It was also meant to possibly elucidate the reasons for the lack of career/occupational goals thus far. The question was: *Who/what would help you to make a career/occupational goal?*

**Table 5.12: People who can help in formulating career/occupational goals**

Person/people who can help in formulating career/occupational goals	Self	Parents and other family members	Teachers	Ex-students
Freq.	2	1	1	1
%	40	20	20	20

Table 5.12 reveals that 80% (4 out of 5) of the participants who had not formulated any career occupational goals and had not thought about what they wanted to do after senior secondary school whatsoever expressed a general lack of motivation towards their studies. Possibly their demoralised state is what led to the participants not making any career/occupational goals.

The remaining 20% (1 out of 5) of the participants attributed her lack of career/occupational goal to the need to choose a career/occupational goal that one would like for the rest of her life and not regret at any point. As such, the participant wanted to exercise caution in making a career/occupational goal and to avoid making a hasty decision which she could live to regret.

Forty percent (2 out of 5) of the participants felt that they themselves had the primary responsibility to formulate career/occupational goals. The remaining 60% viewed the exercise as more of a collaborative effort, with 20% (1 out of 5) acknowledging the importance of family in assisting with career planning. Twenty percent (1 out of 5) of the participants reported seeing teachers as an important resource that could help facilitate the career planning process.

The remaining 20% (1 out of 5) felt that assistance from former Form 5 students could go a long way in helping them formulate career/occupational goals.

**Table 5.13: Type of help needed in formulating career/occupational goals**

Help needed	Self-assessment	Career information	Entry requirements
Freq.	2	1	2
%	40	20	40

The participants unanimously agreed that acquiring information would be instrumental in their making career/occupational goals. The information sought can be divided into the following categories:

- self-assessment information
- career information, i.e. the career options available in the world of work
- entry requirements to tertiary institutions.

Forty percent (2 out of 5) of the participants sought self-assessment information as well as career information. Another forty percent (2 out of 5) of the participants sought career information as well as information on the university cut-off points. Twenty percent (1 out of 5) sought only career information.

This critical need for information was also reported by Witko *et al.* (2005: 44) in a survey of the career planning needs of secondary school learners in South Atlanta, Canada. Though the learners in the study conducted did not require self-assessment information, they expressed great need for information regarding courses, post-secondary education and careers (Witko *et al.*, 2005:44).

Research (Witko *et al.*, 2005:44; Gordon & Meyer, 2002:32) has indicated that unmet career information needs may lead to career indecision. Furthermore, Feldman (2003) indicates that incidents of career indecision may become common when adolescents lack career information. It can therefore be deduced that the lack of career information is what largely hindered the participants from formulating career/occupational goals.

### 5.4.2.3 Help in attaining career/occupational goals

**Table 5.14: Help in attaining career/occupational goals**

Source	Self	Parents and other relatives	Guidance counsellors/ teachers	Role models	Institutions of higher learning
Freq.	40	10	4	3	2
%	67.8	16.9	6.8	5.1	3.4

The third question to the participants was: *Who/what can help you to achieve your career / occupational goals?*

The following categories emerged:

- Self
- Parents and other relatives
- Guidance counsellors/teachers
- Role models
- Institutions of higher learning

The participants primarily cited themselves as the key players in working towards attaining their career/occupational goals. Altogether 67.8% (40 out of 59) of the participants indicated that they had a huge responsibility to study hard to improve their performance (where necessary) in order to get good grades to meet the entry requirements to tertiary institutions. Similar sentiments were expressed by some of the learners in Euvrard's Eastern Cape study of 1996.

Table 5.14 reveals that 16.9% (10 out of 59) of the participants felt that their parents and other relatives could assist them in understanding themselves better and offering them support in their career development.

Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) observe that many parents of adolescent children are in a position to influence their children's career development: they have known their interests and strengths have developed a trusting relationship with them and are often the most likely to interact with them during the career planning process. Furthermore, Bryant *et al.* (2005:151) maintain that many

adolescents themselves express huge reliance on their parents for assistance during career planning.

A small number (4 out of 59 or 6.8%) of the participants indicated an acute need for guidance teachers to assist them during the career planning process. The guidance teachers were mainly seen as providers of educational information. The information required by the participants can be classified according to the following sub-categories:

- Subject-related information
- Information linked to entry requirements to various tertiary institutions
- Career information pertaining to working conditions

The participants in this category also indicated that they expected guidance teachers to facilitate the following activities:

- Career talks by various representatives from the different professions to assist learners to know what it takes to get where they are;
- organising job-shadowing experiences so that learners could acquire practical work experience;
- making career guidance part of the orientation programme at senior secondary school so that learners can realise as early as possible the importance of setting career goals and working towards attaining them right from Form 4.

It is evident from the findings that minimal attention has been given to the role of the school guidance counsellors. Previous studies by Alexitch *et al.*, (2004) and Bardick *et al.* (2004:106) have established reluctance by secondary school learners to seek career guidance from the school guidance counsellor. In the current study the low percentage of participants seeking career guidance from the school counsellor can be attributed to the possibility that the participants viewed the role of the school counsellors as one of helping them with their social problems, as suggested by the following comment:

*Posters on HIV/AIDS information are highly visible and found everywhere and it would be better if the same could be done with career guidance materials.*

A study by Montsi *et al.* (2005:58) to evaluate the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana schools suggests that poor implementation of the guidance programme could be resulting in lack of awareness about the function of the school guidance counsellor by learners. The lack of awareness of the role of the school guidance counsellor ultimately breeds ignorance about the role of the school counsellor in facilitating career development among the learners.

In addition, Mmusinyane (2006:6) maintains that school guidance counsellors are concentrating on personal and social guidance at the expense of career guidance, partly due to their work overload.

Mokgolodi (2005:18) asserts that owing to work overload coupled with the lack of relevant training guidance, counsellors find themselves not knowing how to approach certain topics. Though Mokgolodi's findings concern the school guidance programme in general it goes without saying that the situation affects career guidance as a component of the school guidance and counselling programme in Botswana.

In view of the results with the low percentage of participants that show appreciation for the role of the school guidance counsellors in facilitating adolescents' career development; it becomes crucial to inform learners about the significant role that school counsellors can play in this regard – specifically in offering career counselling. One wonders about the effort made by school counsellors to create awareness among the learner population about the important role they as counsellors have in the school guidance system, with particular reference to aiding learners in their career development. This has implications for further research.

Some participants, i.e. 3.4% (2 out of 59) expressed a need for tertiary institutions to play a more significant role in helping senior secondary school learners with career planning. The participants in this category felt that the information provided by tertiary institutions was too little and scanty, and suggested that tertiary institutions should provide brochures that contain as much basic information as possible.

When invited to conduct career talks at schools, representatives of tertiary institutions should provide as much comprehensive and detailed information as possible and not restrict it to general entry requirements to the programmes their institutions offer. Information such as the duration of the programme and the kind of work one can eventually do with each qualification obtained from the tertiary institution was highly sought by the participants.

#### 5.4.2.4 Greatest influence in formulating career/occupational goals

**Table 5.15: Greatest influence in formulating career/ motivational goals**

Influence	Mentor / Role model	Needs of the country	Good salary prospects	Good performance	Desire to balance gender inequalities	
Freq.	8	11	13	5	17	5
%	13.5	18.6	22	8.5	28.9	8.5

This question was aimed at determining what could have motivated the participants' career/occupational goals. The question was: *Who/what has been the greatest influence in your choice of a career/occupational goal?*

The following themes emerged from the responses given:

- Mentor/role model influence
- The needs of the country
- Good salary prospects
- Work experience from home
- Good performance in pre-requisite subjects
- The desire to balance gender inequalities in certain careers

Table 5.15 reveals that 13.5% (8 out of 59) of the participants indicated that they had been influenced by the success attained by role models and/or mentors in their choice of career/occupational goal, though not necessarily role models and/or mentors in their envisaged career path. World leaders and personalities seen on television, such as Nelson Mandela, were cited as some of the role models that influenced the participants' choices of career/occupational goals.

Flori and Buchanan (2002:36-37) acknowledge the significant role played by role models in the career development of adolescents, particularly those who are successful in the adolescents' area of interest.

A small percentage (8.5%, i.e. 5 out of 59) of the participants in this category indicated that they were involved in mentorship relationships which motivated their choice of career/occupational goals. Parents and other family members, particularly siblings, were cited as mentors. This finding is consistent with the views of Flores and Obasi (2005: 147) that parents and siblings represent some of the mentors in adolescents' lives, e.g.

- *My sister is an actuarial analyst and I have spent a day with her at work to see what the profession is all about.*
- *My father is a lawyer, I visit him at work to see observe him. My interest in law has motivated him to get me as much information on the law career as possible.*

The above finding indicates that the participants could benefit much from career role models/mentors. Not all learners, however, can easily access career role models or particularly mentors. Schools could possibly make such services available through job-shadowing and attachment of learners at work-places.

Eleven out of fifty-nine (18.6 %) of the participants indicated that they had formulated their career/occupational goals based on the needs of the country and the fact that they wanted to be of service to the community, e.g.

- *I want to be a sound engineer because I feel that there is a lot of talent in Botswana and I want to harness young talent and potential in music.*
- *I am not aware of the existence of any qualified local heart surgeon in Botswana and I feel that as a heart surgeon I would be able to assist people with heart problems in my country.*
- *I have done some market research and I know that there is a big need for mining engineers in the country, which is why I want to get a qualification in mining engineering.*

A majority of the Eastern Cape (South Africa) learners also reported that their choice of career goals was motivated by a deep desire to render a much-needed service to their communities (Euvrard, 1996).

A high need for information on the country's man-power resources and projections for human resources is expressed through the low percentage scored for this question (18.6 %).

While some participants indicated that they valued service to the country more than money, 22% (13 out of 59) of the participants indicated that money was more important to them than anything else, e.g.

- *I want to become a pilot because I know it pays well.*
- *I want to become a mining engineer because I know I would be guaranteed a good salary in that profession.*

Nineteen of the participants (32.2%) reported that their choice of career goals had been motivated by their good performance in certain pre-requisite subjects. This applied particularly to learners from the separate/pure science classes. A possible explanation could be that it is a well-known fact that science and mathematics related careers inherently require good performance in science and mathematics as pre-requisite subjects and this serves as an advantage to the separate/pure science classes (see 3.6.2.1), e.g.

- *I want to become a neurologist because other than wanting to be of service to my country. I am doing very well in my sciences and math. I should not have any problem meeting the entry requirements.*
- *I know that to pursue a degree in mining engineering I will need to have passed my math and sciences. Fortunately my performance is very good in those subjects and I have no doubt that I will get good grades in my BGSE exam.*
- *I am doing very well in agriculture and I want to become an agricultural engineer.*

Five of the participants (8.5%) indicated that their career/occupational goals were motivated by their desire to balance gender discrepancies in careers where they felt women were

underrepresented. This finding agrees with Francis (2002:77) who contends that girls are slowly showing willingness to transcend occupational gender barriers to pursue careers that were previously considered to be the domain of males, e.g.

*I know that currently there are no female agricultural engineers in Botswana and that is part of the reason why I want to pursue a career in that field.*

#### 5.4.2.5 Steps taken to make career/occupational goals attainable

Question 5 was aimed at determining the steps the participants had taken to make their career/occupational goals attainable. The question was: *What have you done so far to make your occupational/ career goals attainable?*

**Table 5.16: Steps taken to make career/occupational goals attainable**

Step	Study hard	Consulted tertiary institution	Got information on envisaged career	Job-shadowing	No steps taken
Freq.	46	2	3	2	7
%	76.6	3.3	5	3.3	11.7

To a large extent the participants (76.6%) indicated that they were studying hard to ensure that they did well in their BGCSE examination. The aim of this category participant was to meet the entrance requirements to tertiary institutions. This percentage included the participant who had not formulated a career/occupational goal because she was worried about making the wrong choice.

Setting targets and trying not to be demoralised when they had not done well in their studies were some of the steps the participants believed could help them in maximising their school performance.

Seven out of sixty (11.7%) of the participants reported that they had not taken any steps towards attaining their career/occupational goals. There were, however a few participants (11.7%) who displayed the ability to engage in quality research that can effectively provide useful career/further study information as indicated by the following responses:

- *I have consulted the university to obtain information on the entry requirements as well as the duration of the programme I want to study. I also constantly monitor my performance in tests and internal examinations to ensure that my performance does not go below a particular threshold.*
- *My aunt provides me with up to date information on government policies and opportunities in the market.*
- *I have visited the University of WITS several times to get information on the entry requirements for being an actuarial analyst. I have also spent a day at the office with my sister who is an actuarial analyst to find out what work actuarial analysts do.*

All the participants who indicated that they had had some exposure to job-shadowing were female. A follow-up question to establish the reasons behind this could have been fruitful. It was disconcerting to find that only a small percentage of the participants had taken positive steps towards securing information outside the school relating to their career/occupational goals. This finding expresses a definite need to create awareness among the participants about the role of the individual in career planning.

Also worrying is the fact that a large percentage of the participants (76.6%) seemed to equate career planning with studying hard and meeting the entrance requirements to tertiary institutions. This high percentage highlights a definite need to create awareness amongst learners about the distinction between career guidance and educational guidance.

As pointed out by Maroba *et al.* (2006:34) career guidance is not afforded the importance it deserves in Botswana public schools: guidance and counselling, of which career guidance forms only a quarter, is offered for enrichment purposes only. As a result, both teachers and learners tend to concentrate on examinable subjects and only pay lip service to career guidance.

Montsi *et al.* (2000:65) found that career guidance was listed by only 15% of the senior secondary learners involved in a study that evaluated the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana's Education system as a subject they were taught. This finding raises concern about the

provision of a systematic and comprehensive career guidance programme in Botswana schools and adds evidence to the findings of the current study which suggest that schools may not be doing enough in their endeavours to offer career guidance to learners.

There is a likelihood that more effort is made towards educational guidance than career guidance, with educational guidance being reduced to merely supplying information on the university and other tertiary institutions' entry requirements and cut-off points for specific programmes of study.

It appears that tertiary institutions are not doing much to visit schools to disseminate educational information to learners and the implications of their choice of educational goals for their career path objectives. This finding has implications for further research.

#### 5.4.2.6 Potential obstacles in attaining career/occupational goals

**Table 5.17: Potential obstacles in attaining career/occupational goal**

Obstacle	Poor performance	Too much parental interference	Uncertainty over national policies
Freq.	42	10	7
%	71.2	16.9	11.9

Question 6 sought to establish what the participants saw as potential threats towards the attainment of their career/occupational goals. The question was: *What may hinder you from achieving your occupational/career goals?*

The following categories emerged:

- Poor performance in BGCSE and failing to meet entry requirements set by tertiary institutions
- Too much parental interference in the participants' career goals
- Uncertainty regarding how government policies may change over time.

The participants (71.2%) showed concern that the following could impact negatively on their performance and hence affect their chances of furthering their education:

- Laziness and procrastination on the part of the learners;
- poor study skills, e.g. *I lack the motivation to study and therefore need help with effective study skills*; and
- watching too much television and spending insufficient time studying.

A further 16.9% (10 out of 59) of the participants complained of too much parental interference in their career/occupational plans. While parents play a significant role in their adolescent children's career development, they also sometimes tend not to be supportive of the career/occupational goals of their children and are seen to be imposing their preferred career choices on their children, e.g.

*My parents are discouraging me from pursuing a career in law and want me to become a doctor, instead.*

The above finding is supported by Bardick *et al.* (2004:107) who indicate that parents of adolescent children may limit their children's range of career options to only those acceptable to the parents, and therefore narrow the options available to the adolescent learners. The participants in this study expressed worry that parents, though well-meaning, may want to live their failed career aspirations through their children.

Four out of the ten participants who complained of too much parental interference in their career plans, also indicated that their parents restricted their participation in extra-curricular activities as they felt that it interfered too much with their studies, thereby denying them in-depth opportunities to explore their talents, abilities and interests. This finding suggests a lack of appreciation of the significant link between extra-curricular activities and self-exploration by parents, and it perhaps implies that schools need to create an appreciation of this important link amongst parents.

A small percentage of 11.9% (7 out of 59) of the participants were concerned that, owing to the lengthy studies they would have to pursue after senior secondary school, they would find the market saturated by the time they completed their studies. The participants also expressed worry that government policies could change over the years, and therefore affect the needs of the country and available resources, and make obsolete some of the jobs for which they had undergone training. This finding highlights a definite need to supply information on the manpower needs of the country to the participants.

#### 5.4.2.7 Sources of motivation in sustaining career/occupational goals

**Table 5.18: Sources of motivation in sustaining career/occupational goals**

Source of encouragement	Money and material things	Status	Social orientation	Personal orientation	Independence in work
<b>Freq.</b>	25	8	17	7	2
<b>%</b>	42.4	13.6	28.8	11.9	3.3

Question 7 was: *What are you most encouraged about when you think of your potential career?* The question was aimed at determining the sources of encouragement in the learners' career/occupational goals.

The responses to this question brought to the fore the learners' value systems when it came to choosing career/occupational goals. This finding is consistent with literature according to Sharf (2006:176) who indicates that between the ages of 15 and 16 adolescents are able to base their career choices on their values and are able to ask themselves questions such as *Would it be better to make money or to serve others?*

The following themes emerged from the responses given by the participants:

- Money and material things
- Status
- Social orientation
- Personal orientation
- Independence

### **Money and material things**

Table 5.19 reveals that 42.4% (25 out of 59) of the participants indicated that anticipating a comfortable life and being able to provide for their families was a source of encouragement to them. A few of the male students (8.5%) clearly articulated the fact that all they were looking for was a career that would generate as much money for them as possible, e.g.

*I want to become a mining engineer because I know that is where the money is.*

### **Status**

For some participants (13.6%) the desire to hold onto their career/occupational goals came from their desire to be recognised as important figures in society and to impress their families. A few further asserted that they had siblings who held high positions in society and they wanted to *beat them to the game*.

### **Social orientation**

Most female participants (28.8%) indicated that their career/occupational goals were driven by their altruistic spirit of wanting to be of service to the nation more than anything. This finding is consistent with literature according to Li and Kerpelmann (2007:106) who maintain that adolescent girls are inclined to opt for careers in fields linked to people and relationships or the helping professions, e.g.

*I want to become a social worker because I am interested in helping people with their problems.*

### **Personal orientation**

For some participants (11.9%) the need to become the best that they could ever be by owning their own companies and being able to create employment for others, was cited as a constant source of encouragement.

### **Independence in work**

A small percentage of 3.3 (2 out of 59) of the participants indicated that they valued more than anything the freedom to exercise flexibility in terms of determining their work hours as well as the pattern their work could take.

#### 5.4.2.8 Sources of discouragement in sustaining career/occupational goals

**Table 5.19: Sources of discouragement towards attaining career/occupational Goals**

Source of discouragement	Negative attitudes towards certain careers	Discouragement that studying towards certain careers is too challenging	Notions that certain careers are too demanding
<b>Freq.</b>	28	16	15
<b>%</b>	47.5	27.1	25.4

The question was: *What are you discouraged about when you think of your potential career?*

It was evident that all the discouragement the participants experienced emanated from negative attitudes from other people, including significant others.

The following three themes emerged:

- Negative attitudes towards certain careers
- Discouragement that studying for certain careers is too challenging.
- Notions that certain careers are too demanding

Table 5.19 reveals that 47.5% (28 out of 59) of the participants indicated that they get discouraged by people who look down on certain careers.

The negative attitude reportedly relates particularly to the artistic and creative careers, such as music and beauty therapy. This has implications for further research, e.g.

*I want to become a masseuse but I get a lot of discouragement from people who see the occupation as befitting of only old and uneducated women.*

Sixteen out of fifty-nine (27.1%) of the participants reported that they experienced much discouragement from people who felt that their career paths would entail challenging and sometimes lengthy post-secondary studies. Family members in particular, who had failed at

certain career paths and were therefore discouraging in their choice of career goals, were singled out as a source of discouragement, e.g.

*My mother and siblings failed their studies in law and consequently discourage me pursuing a career in law. They think that I could never make it at law and as such don't give me any support in my chosen career goal.*

A quarter of the respondents, i.e. 25.4% (15 out of 59), cited the demanding schedules of certain professions as being used by some to discourage them from joining such professions, e.g.

*Some people discourage me from becoming a doctor because they feel doctors have quite demanding work schedules and as such have non-existent social lives.*

#### 5.4.2.9 Greatest career/occupational need

**Table 5.20: Greatest career/occupational need**

Need	Self-assessment Information	Occupational information	Educational information	
			Scholarships/ grant/loan scheme	Specific entry requirements to tertiary institutions
<b>Frequency</b>	13	5	4	42
<b>%</b>	20.3	7.8	6.3	65.6

The last question asked during the first focus-group interviews gave learners an opportunity to highlight their greatest career/occupational need. The question asked was: *What is your greatest career need?*

The respondents expressed a crucial need for information. The following categories emerged from the responses:

- Self-assessment information
- Occupational information
- Educational information

There was consensus that there was a huge need for information. The information needed by the learners covered self-assessment information, occupational information and educational information.

### **Self-assessment information**

A need was expressed by 20.3% (13 out of 64) of the participants for self-assessment information. The participants indicated that they wanted to be helped with self-exploration so that they could understand their talents, abilities and interests, and consequently make realistic career choices. The need for self-assessment information was the second most important need highlighted by the participants.

Similar findings were reported by Peng (2004:136) who found that self-assessment information was ranked among the ten highest data needs of college learners.

### **Educational information**

The need for educational information was expressed by 71.9% (46 out of 64) of the participants; rating this type of information the greatest need expressed by the participants.

As indicated in table 5.12, 91.5% of the participants expressed a desire to further their studies after completing their senior secondary education. To be able to do this, the participants need to know the entry requirements to different tertiary institutions as this will generate in them the motivation to work hard in their studies. Hence, 65.6% of the participants felt that information on the specific entry-requirements to tertiary institutions would give them targets towards which they could work.

Four out of sixty-four (6.3%) of the participants reported a need for information on the grant/loan scheme. The participants in this category sought information relating to the different tertiary institution study programmes sponsored by the Ministry of Education, as well as the conditions applying to each of the scholarships.

The low percentage (6.3%) of respondents requiring this type of information suggests that schools did a lot to make such information available to learners.

## **Occupational Information**

Five out of fifty-nine percent (7.8%) of the participants said they needed information on the different careers available in Botswana. Learning outcome 1 for Form 5 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:29) calls for schools to provide adequate information on the different careers in order to allow learners to match their interests to several career possibilities. Possibly some schools had not provided occupational information to some of the participants, leaving the majority of the participants unaware of the important role played by occupational/career information when making realistic career choices.

### **5.4.2.10 Conclusion: first focus group interviews analysis**

The first focus-group interviews indicated that the participants expressed a high need for educational information in the form of entry requirements to tertiary institutions and financial sponsorship (information on the grant/loan scheme). The participants felt that school guidance counsellors could do a lot to provide them with educational information, while at the same time maintaining that they were the key players in attaining their occupational/career goals because of the huge responsibility they had to work hard and meet the entry-requirements of tertiary institutions.

Self-assessment information was also rated as important and parents were seen as the main people who could assist the participants to better understand their interests, abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

Regrettably, occupational/career information did not seem to be rewarded the significance it deserves in making informed career choices.

## **5.5 ANALYSIS OF SECOND FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEWS**

The second focus-group interviews were conducted between June 2008 and August 2008. The interviews took place after the Career Fair and the subsequent conducting of the close-ended questionnaire used in the quantitative study.

The second focus interviews therefore marked the last phase of the data collection process.

The focus-group interviews were conducted in each of the four senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, making a total of eight focus interviews. The interviews were conducted between June and August 2008 and, as with the first focus-group interviews, each group consisted of eight participants, resulting in a sample size of 64 participants (see 5.4.2).

The questions asked in these last focus interviews mainly targeted the provision of career guidance in senior public secondary schools and were aimed more towards determining the overall benefits gained by the participants from the senior public secondary school career guidance programme. Particular attention was paid to determine the usefulness of the annual Career Fair, organised by the Career Guidance Services Unit under the auspices of the Guidance and Counselling Division (Curriculum and Evaluation Department) in the Ministry of Education. The data collected through the second focus-group interviews will not only further elucidate the career planning needs of the learners, but will also largely address the last research aim which is to determine the extent to which the career guidance curriculum, currently offered in senior public secondary schools in Botswana, meets the needs of the learners.

The formulation of the questions for the second focus-group interviews was largely determined by the responses and comments made by the participants during the first focus-group interviews and the underlying needs expressed at the time of the first focus-group interviews. As a result, pilot focus interviews were not conducted prior to the second focus-group interviews.

### **5.5.1 Second focus-group interview questions**

The following questions guided the discussion during the second focus-group interviews:

- When did you start receiving career guidance at this school? How did you

benefit? What have you learned?

- After having attended the career fair, what would you say are your career needs at present? Do you now feel more competent to make a career decision? Please explain.
- Who do you think can help you address your future career and further study needs in terms of teachers, parents, professionals? How do you think these needs can be addressed?

### **5.5.2 Start of career guidance and benefits gained**

The first question was meant to determine the time at which the participants started receiving career guidance at senior secondary school. This question arose because it had become evident during the first group interviews that, contrary to the demands of the senior secondary school guidance and counselling curriculum guidelines (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11-40), not all the participants received career guidance starting from the stipulated period, which is at the beginning of Form 4. There were also indications that some of the participants had not received any career guidance at senior secondary school at all.

Only 37.5% (24 out of 64) of the participants reported that they started receiving career guidance in Form 4. Of this percentage, eight participants indicated that they received consistent career guidance from early in the second trimester in Form 4. This group of participants reported that they had benefited a lot from the senior public secondary school career guidance classes.

The benefits for the eight participants during the career guidance classes included doing exercises in self-exploration and a follow-up discussion on Holland's career typology which assisted the learners to determine the careers/occupations suited to them. Also discussed were the factors influencing career choice and tertiary institution cut-off points/entry requirements.

A quarter of the participants (16 out of 64) reported that they received career guidance in the last trimester of Form 4, that is, towards the end of the first year of their time in senior secondary school. Eight of these participants (12.5%) said that career guidance lessons were offered to them only three times. The total time that was devoted to the career classes offered to this group in

Form 4 was 2 hours. This group of participants reportedly did not benefit much from the career guidance classes offered to them as indicated by the following comment:

*Our teacher concentrated more on teaching us about good behaviour and would once in a while discuss the entry requirements of different universities with us. We did not benefit much in terms of career guidance.*

The remaining eight participants who started receiving career guidance in Form 4 indicated that this service was offered to them during the last trimester. They also reported having had only one lesson during that period.

*We were offered career guidance late as our teacher seemed to lack commitment to guidance and counselling. For two terms in Form 4 we discussed the school prospectus. As a result we did not benefit much from the school career guidance programme.*

Half of the participants (32 out of 64) reported that they started receiving career guidance classes in Form 5, but at different stages. A quarter of the participants (16 out of 64) indicated that they started receiving career guidance in the first trimester of the last year of senior secondary school (Form 5). The career classes offered to this group of participants had been inconsistent, sporadic and scanty, and focused on the grant/loan scheme and university entry requirements.

Eight out of sixty-four (12.5%) of the participants reported that they only started receiving career guidance during the second trimester in Form 5. The career guidance offered to this group of participants amounted to nothing more than being provided with information on the entrance-requirements to tertiary institutions, which lasted between 80 and 120 minutes. The remaining 12.5% (8 out of 64) of the participants reported that they started receiving career guidance classes towards the end of the second trimester, at the beginning of July. This group of participants had had only one career guidance lesson before the start of the mid-year examination. This category of learners had started a discussion on the entrance requirements to the university which, however, was not completed owing to limited time.

Mmusinyane (2006:2) maintains that it is not uncommon in Botswana to find senior public secondary school learners who report that they did not receive any career guidance in their

schools, and who subsequently do not have any idea at all about what career path they should follow. Consistent with literature according to Mmusinyane (2006:2), the last category was made up of eight participants (12.5%) who reported that they had not had any career guidance offered to them during their guidance and counselling lessons whatsoever.

Mmusinyane (2006:71) reports that 72% of the learners she interviewed in her study to determine the role of the school in facilitating career decision-making among learners indicated that they received no career guidance from their school.

The participants in the current study advanced a number of reasons as to why they did not receive any career guidance from their schools such as the following:

- Teachers miss guidance lessons. Guidance counsellors were reported by the participants as often abandoning classes because they had to attend to emergencies in the school, such as learners needing urgent attention or meeting with parents of learners over disciplinary issues. Consistent with this finding Mmusinyane (2006:7) contends that guidance counsellors in Botswana often find themselves overworked because they have to offer individual counselling to learners and often concentrate on addressing learners' personal and social issues.
- Some teachers use guidance lessons for their own (examinable) subjects. This happened in cases where guidance and counselling was taught by teachers lacking the necessary training in guidance and counselling who had either been conscripted into teaching the subject or who had volunteered their services. This finding is consistent with literature according to Maroba *et al.* (2006:34) who maintain that guidance and counselling as an enrichment subject is not accorded the attention it deserves as both teachers and learners concentrate on the examinable subjects.
- Teachers have an inclination to offer personal and social guidance and, to a small extent, educational guidance to the exclusion of career guidance. Mokgolodi (2005:48) maintains that, owing to a lack of training, some guidance teachers have no idea how to approach some topics. Possibly these teachers take the easy way out and concentrate only on the topics they find easy to handle and then leave out career guidance.

The participants in the first focus-group interviews revealed that more effort seems to be directed towards dealing with issues like HIV/AIDS—much to the detriment of career guidance (see 5.4.2.3). The participants specifically mentioned that visual materials, such as posters on HIV/AIDS abound in schools, whereas there are virtually none on career guidance.

Similarly, Maokaneng (2005:60) indicates that some of the learners in his study reported that they were not offered any career guidance lessons in their school and that some teachers were reluctant to assist learners with their career planning needs.

All the participants in the study and the rest of the Form 5 learners in public schools did not receive any career guidance in the last trimester of Form 5 because they were writing their senior secondary school-leaving examination.

**Table 5.21: Start of career guidance**

Start of career guidance	Form 4			Form 5			None
	1 <sup>st</sup> trimester	2 <sup>nd</sup> trimester	3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester	1 <sup>st</sup> trimester	2 <sup>nd</sup> trimester	3 <sup>rd</sup> trimester	
Freq.	-	8	16	16	16	-	8
%	-	12.5	25	25	25	-	12.5

Other than the career guidance offered in class, the Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana’s Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:47) advocates the provision of other career exploration activities such as career talks, Career Fairs, career field trips/excursions and job-shadowing.

Only 25% (8 out of 64) of the participants interviewed reported that their school had organised regular career talks for them starting from Form 4. This group is the one that benefited the most from the senior secondary school guidance programme, forming part of the 37.5% of the participants who started receiving career guidance in Form 4.

None of the participants had job-shadowing and career field trips organised for them by their respective schools. Also missing from the career guidance activities organised by the schools were CV writing, writing application letters for jobs, mock job interviews, and information and

specific occupational information, such as the working conditions for specific jobs, remuneration, prospects for advancement and the man-power needs of the country.

The findings obtained from the first question suggest that the breadth and quality of career guidance received by the participants differed from school to school. Even within the schools the quality of the service differed from teacher to teacher. It is disconcerting to find that, on the whole, the career guidance received by the participants was very minimal, if any. This finding suggests that schools were not doing enough in terms of offering career guidance to learners, despite the senior secondary school guidance and counselling curriculum guidelines calling for career guidance to start from the beginning of Form 4 through Form 5, and even indicating the content to be covered.

Previous studies have lamented the inadequate amount of career guidance offered to senior public secondary school learners in Botswana. Among these was an assessment of learners' levels of satisfaction with various career guidance activities in their schools, conducted by Alao (1998:27-28). The study not only revealed that senior public secondary schools lacked more career activities compared to junior secondary schools, but also reported that senior public secondary schools received satisfactory ratings from learners involved in the study in only two career guidance activities, namely writing application letters for jobs and career talks.

Similarly, a study by Montsi *et al.* (2000:65) to evaluate the guidance and counselling programme in Botswana's education system reported that career guidance as a subject was listed by only 15% of the senior public secondary school learners in the study as one of the subjects they studied. The finding by Montsi *et al.* (2000:65) indicates that a large proportion of the senior public secondary school learners in their study were not offered career guidance.

### **5.5.3 Current occupational/career needs**

The second question was a follow-up to the first question and was aimed at determining the career guidance needs of the participants, taking into account the amount of time the participants had spent in senior secondary school, as well as the guidelines offered by the senior secondary school guidance and counselling curriculum.

It was believed that the responses to this question would to a large extent indicate the degree to which the current career guidance curriculum meets the needs of the learners. The other objective was also to determine if the needs of participants had changed throughout the whole study from the first focus-group interviews, through the conducting of the questionnaire, up to and including the second focus-group interviews.

The career guidance needs of the participants presented in table 5.22, ranged from requiring such basic information as self-knowledge to educational information, occupational information, job-shadowing and career field trips/excursions. Possibly the differences in needs can be attributed to the type of career service delivery peculiar to each school.

Twenty-five out of sixty-four (39.1%) of the participants were found to require skills in self-assessment. It is worrying to have such a high percentage of participants requesting for help in self-exploration, four months before they sat for their senior secondary school leaving examination. This finding indicates that learning outcome 1 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11) was not achieved, suggesting that schools are not doing enough to guide learners in self-exploration techniques.

Acquiring self-assessment information is pivotal to making a career choice since it is the first step in career planning. Lindhard and Tlale (as quoted by Mmusinyane, 2006:58) have indicated that learners will not know what they can become unless they know who they are.

Learners in senior public secondary schools in Botswana have previously expressed dissatisfaction with the provision of skills in self-knowledge (Alao, 1998:23). Thirty-seven percent of the participants in Alao's study (1998:23) noted the absence of the facilitation of skills in self-knowledge in their senior secondary school career guidance classes.

Ten out of sixty-four (15.6%) of the participants sought educational information. Different sub-themes emerged from this theme: of this group three participants (4.7%) expressed a need for information on the university where they could train for specific university programmes, and three participants (4.7%) required information on the specific modules they could expect to study in their intended programmes of study, e.g.

*I want to know the specific courses I will be required to do in aviation.*

Four out of sixty-four (6.2%) of the participants required information on the Botswana government's grant/loan scheme/sponsorship for continuing one's education which included the different types of scholarships offered and the conditions applying to each.

The low percentage (14.1%) of the participants requiring educational information is understandable considering that university entry requirements and the grant/loan scheme dominated the discussions during career guidance lessons according to the responses to the first question determining the benefits the learners got from their career guidance lessons (see 5.5.2).

Twenty-nine participants (45.3%) expressed a need for occupational information, indicating a shift from focussing on educational information (as was the case in the first focus-group interviews) to career/occupational information. The sub-themes that emerged under this theme included information on the different occupations available in the country, required by 13 participants (20.3%).

Consistent with the above findings, Mmusinyane (2006:71) found that 70% of the learners in her study displayed total ignorance of the careers available in Botswana. In another research, Maokaneng (2005:57) found that the learners in his study displayed little knowledge of the different conventional careers available in Botswana. The finding by Maokaneng (2005:57) indicates that senior public secondary school learners in Botswana express a need for career/occupational information.

Information on the working conditions for specific jobs and the salary prospects for the participants' envisaged careers was sought by a quarter of the participants (16 out of 64). This finding is not surprising taking into account that only 16% of the participants indicated that they had career talks organised for them by their school(s). In the schools where career talks were not organised, the participants were obviously not given specific occupational information such as the working conditions for the different occupations.

As the second most important pillar on which realistic career choices rest, occupational information is very crucial during the career planning process which makes it very fundamental to informed career decision-making. Learning outcome 1 for Form 5 (Botswana Ministry of

Education, 1998:29) advocates the exposure of learners to the details of several careers. Evidently this learning outcome was not achieved.

**Table 5.22: Current occupational/career needs**

Self-exploration Information		Educational information			Occupational information	
Self-assessment information		Universities where to train for specific courses	Specific university modules under particular courses	Grant/loan scheme /sponsorship for continuing education	Occupations available in Botswana	Working conditions and salary prospects
<b>Freq.</b>	25	3	3	4	13	16
<b>%</b>	39.1	4.7	4.7	6.2	20.3	25

Over and above the career guidance that the participants received in class, they also unanimously expressed a crucial need for some career exploration activities. All the participants (100%) reported a need for job-shadowing as an experience that would assist them to understand clearly what they were venturing into before they could commit themselves to specific career paths.

One participant specifically sought job-shadowing in finance as he believed it would fully expose him to the kind of work done in finance. Similarly, Alao (1998:27) found that 66.3% of the learners he interviewed decried the lack of job-shadowing as a career exploration activity in senior public secondary schools, e.g.

- *I was told at junior secondary school that senior secondary schools would arrange job-shadowing for us but to my disappointment that has not happened.*
- *I am interested in pursuing a degree in finance. I have all the details concerning the profession, such as knowing there is a huge market there and that the pay is very good, except for how much work one should expect there.*

Career field trips/excursions were cited by 100% of the participants as an activity which could greatly benefit senior public secondary schools learners, but which unfortunately was not provided by schools. Alao (1998:27) indicates that 72.6% of the learners in his study cited career field trips/excursions as unavailable at senior public secondary schools, e.g.

*Field trips could benefit us a lot. When I realized that there was no professional from aviation during the career fair, I decided not to waste my time there and went to the Civil*

*Aviation department where I got a lot of information.*

All the participants indicated that career audio/video tapes were not used as teaching aids to facilitate career exploration amongst them. Alao (1998:27) found that 66.3% of the senior public secondary school learners in his study reported that their schools did not use career audio/video tapes during career guidance lessons.

The current study also revealed that computer based career exploration materials were also missing from all the senior public secondary schools visited.

#### **5.5.4 Level of competence in making career choices after attending Career Fair**

**Table 5.23 Contribution of annual Career Fair in raising career decision-making competence levels**

<b>Contribution of career fair in career decision-making competence levels</b>			
<b>High</b>		<b>Low</b>	
<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>
25	39.1	39	60.9

The Career Fair is an annual activity that brings together professionals from the world of work (Mabote *et al.*, 2007). The Career Guidance Services Unit in Guidance and Counselling Division (Ministry of Education) hosts the Career Fair in an endeavour to augment the efforts made by the individual senior public secondary schools to facilitate career development in learners.

The Career Fair takes place at each senior public secondary school on a specific day designated for that particular school. As a career exploration activity that is organised nationally, perhaps the Career Fair marks a culmination of the career services offered in senior public secondary schools.

However, only a few (39.1%) of the participants found the career fair useful. Similar findings (32.6%) were reported by Alao (1998:26). Maokaneng (2005:61-62) also expressed concern that

the learners in his study seemed not to deem the Career Fair as a major career exploration activity in terms of providing learners with career information.

A large proportion (60.9%) of the participants expressed low levels of satisfaction with the Career Fair, citing a number of reasons as to why it had not left them any more competent in making career choices. First among the reasons given, was that the career fair came too late when the participants had only a few months before they left senior secondary school. The participants unanimously expressed a need for the Career Fair to come in the last trimester of Form 4, so that learners would have enough time to make the necessary improvement in their academic performance and to integrate the information acquired from this activity, e.g.

*The career fair came in June just a few months before we start the BGCSE examination. We won't have enough time to apply the information we acquired from there.*

The participants reported that the period of one day per school allotted during the Career Fair was not enough. As a result some participants indicated that because their classes went to meet the presenters towards the end of the fair, they were rushed and therefore could not ask all the questions they had.

In addition, the participants indicated that they were addressed in large groups, according to their classes, and they would be quickly rushed off to the next stall, resulting in minimal benefit for them, e.g.

- *Our class was allowed time to go to the stalls late, just before lunch, and the presenters not only complained that they were tired but also rushed us because they wanted to go for lunch.*
- *What we got was more of a presentation to us as a class and we were therefore not afforded time to ask individual questions .As a result we did not get the specific information we were looking for.*
- *I am interested in pursuing nursing as career path but I could not visit the nurses' stall during the career fair due to limited time as our class was the last to visit the stalls.*

To a small extent the participants raised concern that the professionals who made presentations at the fair only represented conventional careers to the exclusion of professionals from the artistic

careers and, in particular, the performing arts. This finding is consistent with the findings from the first focus-group interviews in which the participants indicated that they were dissuaded from choosing artistic and creative career fields (see 5.4.2.8). Related to this was the fact that some of the participants' areas of interest were not represented at the career fair.

The Revised National Policy on Education (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1994:9) advocates that the school career guidance programme should encourage learners to consider a wide range of careers. This certainly needs to be promoted through activities such as the annual career fair. Owing to the acute unemployment in Botswana (Bhusumane, 2001:2), the market saturation peculiar to conventional career fields and the need to diversify the economy of Botswana, it becomes mandatory for learners to be encouraged to consider non-conventional career fields.

Examples from the interviews that illustrate the view are the following:

- *I am interested in pursuing a career in medicine and unfortunately that area was not represented during the career fair.*
- *I want to pursue a degree in finance, but no one was invited from that area, leaving all my questions unanswered.*
- *The Botswana Defence Force recently recruited women into the army, for the first time and we as female learners would have found it very meaningful for female army officers to address us.*

The participants also raised concern about the quality of the information disseminated during the Career Fair as they found it too general, limited and vague, and therefore inadequate to cater for their individual career planning needs, e.g.

- *Having one officer represents a whole department or institution is not beneficial because that person will restrict his/her presentation to his/her area of specialization only or at best just give a broad overview of the work done in areas unfamiliar to him/her.*
- *The University of Botswana being the only university in the country should have more stalls during the career fair and invite more of their personnel instead of having only one officer representing the whole university.*

A large proportion of the participants (60.9%) found the Career Fair unable to raise their competence levels when making career/occupational goals. Other than the fact that the Career Fair is afforded inadequate time, it is apparent that schools do not do the necessary ground work by organising as many career exploration activities as possible for learners during their time at senior secondary school. Instead, schools seem to rely only on the Career Fair to facilitate career exploration among learners.

There is obviously a need to facilitate career exploration among learners, especially in the capital city Gaborone where professionals from the work world can be easily accessed to give career talks, and learners can be attached to work places through job-shadowing.

The findings of the study also highlight a need to evaluate the usefulness of the annual Career Fair in disseminating career/occupational information to learners.

### 5.5.5 Help in addressing future career and further study needs.

**Table 5.24 Help in addressing future career and further study needs**

Source	Parents	Professionals	Mentors i.e. tertiary institution learners
Type of assistance	Assistance with self-knowledge	Dissemination of career/occupational information	Specific details of different courses and their demands
Freq.	16	40	8
%	25	62.5	12.5

The participants (25%) felt that they could benefit much from parents in the area of self-assessment. However, consistent with the findings from the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.6) the participants expressed worry that parents tend to impose their career preferences on them without any regard for their capabilities, interests and specific job requirements, e.g.

- *My father wants me to become a medical doctor despite the fact that I cannot stand the sight of blood. He is domineering and he uses his authority as a parent to force me into a medical career.*

- *My father wants me to pursue a degree in finance because he sees his colleagues who work in finance earning a lot of money and driving expensive cars. Out of pride he wants me to follow that career path without any regard for my talents, abilities, values or even interests.*

Career information and specific occupational information emerged as the major needs expressed by the participants (62.5%). The participants highlighted the need for professionals to work with teachers to provide specific occupational information which they felt teachers were lacking. The participants felt that teachers can never provide adequate and accurate information about the vast number of specific occupations available as they are limited by their training.

The participants in this category indicated that activities such as career talks, job-shadowing and field trips could benefit them a lot. Consistent with this finding Maokaneng (2005:60) found that learners feel that school guidance counsellors are ill-equipped to address all their career needs as they possess limited knowledge and are unfamiliar with some career fields.

Mentors in the form of tertiary education learners were mentioned by the participants (12.5%) as a resource that could assist senior secondary school learners in understanding the specifics of the different programmes of study as well as the demands of such programmes. This finding is consistent with literature, according to Tjas and Nelsen (1996) who contend that alumni may serve as credible mentors or role models for secondary school learners, particularly when the learners see their lives as similar to those of alumni.

#### **5.5.6 Conclusion: second focus group interviews analysis**

The findings from the second focus-group interviews indicate that a lot needs to be done by schools to address the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners. Indications are that the participants were generally not offered career guidance in their schools. This development is in direct contravention of the Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana's Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:23) which states that career guidance should form part of the educational, vocational and personal guidance that should be offered to learners from a young age to adulthood. As a result, the participants expressed great need for career/occupational information and felt that teachers

were incompetent to offer them such information. The participants felt that professionals from the work world would be better placed to disseminate career/occupational information to them.

## **5.6 MERGING OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA**

Mixed methods research design employs quantitative and qualitative research in one study. The purpose of mixing the two research methods in a single study is to obtain multiple and complementary data (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2003:14,17). Hence, the data from the quantitative data, first focus-group interviews and second focus interviews will be merged to produce comprehensive data.

A challenge inherent to the use of a questionnaire as a mechanism for collecting data is that participants could deliberately give false information, because of fear of victimisation or reprimand, even though they have been assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore, focus-group interviews were used together with the close-ended questionnaire to assist the researcher to probe the participants' responses and seek clarification where necessary. In this manner the researcher could make amplifications and obtain data that would otherwise not have been obtained through the use of the close-ended questionnaire.

The merging of the data will mainly rely on the categorisation used in the questionnaire for easy classification and reference.

### **5.6.1 Importance of career planning**

The qualitative data from the second focus-group interviews reveals that the greatest need experienced by the participants in the study is having systematic career guidance lessons organised for them, soon after they entered senior public secondary schools (in Form 4) up to the end of their stay in senior secondary school. Regrettably, less than three months before the participants left senior secondary school, 12.5% of the participants indicated during the second focus-group interviews that they had not received any career guidance whatsoever from their senior public schools, save for the one day annual Career Fair organised by the Career Guidance

Services Unit within the Guidance and Counselling Division in the Curriculum and Evaluation Department.

The quantitative results, however, indicate that the participants do value career planning, with a high cumulative percentage of 90.4% scored for definite awareness of the need for career planning. The quantitative results for the importance of post-secondary plans also tally well with the results for the value attached to career planning as 98.8% of the participants showed concern about what they would be doing in future. Furthermore, the description of the participants' career /occupational goals from the first focus-groups interviews are consistent with the quantitative results regarding the importance of career planning and concern about post-secondary plans, since 92% of the participants indicated that they have formulated career/occupational goals at the time of the first focus-group interviews.

The quantitative results indicate that the participants (78.1% for *very important*) expressed the highest need for assistance in understanding interests and abilities. Likewise, the results from the first focus-group interviews reveal that the participants indicated that assistance in self-assessment was amongst their greatest career planning needs. The findings from the second focus-group interviews further corroborate the findings from the quantitative study with 39.1% of the participant's reporting a need for assistance with career self-exploration.

### **5.6.2 Information about post-secondary institutions i.e. colleges of education, university, etc.**

A critical need was expressed for information about post-secondary institutions, with the quantitative results recording a cumulative percentage of 82% for *very important* and *important*, indicating awareness of the importance of such information. The first focus-group interviews also highlight a need (65.6%) for specific information on the entry requirements to tertiary institutions (see 5.4.2.9) and hence elaborate on the quantitative findings.

The second focus-group interviews make further elaborations on the quantitative results and indicate specific needs in the following areas:

- Universities where learners can go to train for specific programmes (4.7%)
- Specific university modules one has to study within particular programmes of study (4.7%).

### **5.6.3 Career information**

The quantitative results highlight a crucial need (92.2% for *very important* and *important*) for the participants to be assisted with career/occupational information. Similarly, the urgent need for career/occupational information is amongst those themes that run across both the first and second focus-group interviews.

In the first focus-group interviews career/occupational information is ranked amongst the four greatest needs of the participants (7.8%). The second focus-group interviews reveal that 45.3% of the participants required career/occupational information. Of this percentage, 20.3% expressed a need for information on the different occupations in Botswana, and a quarter (25%) of the participants required information on the working conditions and salary prospects for specific jobs (see table 5.22).

### **5.6.4 Information about the grant/loan scheme/sponsorship for continuing education**

The quantitative results reveal a great need for information about the grant/loan scheme (cumulative percentage of 88.5%). This type of need was also expressed by 6.2% of the participants in the second focus-group interviews (see 5.5.3).

### **5.6.5 Availability of the key career exploration services/resources and whether they were used or not**

#### **5.6.5.1 Career audio/video tapes**

The quantitative results report low availability of career audio/video tapes (cumulative percentage of 84.1% for *somewhat available* and *not available*). Almost 30% of the participants reported having used the resource during career planning and the remainder (70.8%) reported not having used the resource at all.

The participants in the second focus-group interviews reported not having had access to the resource at all during their time at senior secondary school (see 5.5.3). This finding agrees with

the quantitative findings which reported low usage of career audio/video tapes, pointing to a possibility that schools generally did not use the resource to facilitate career exploration amongst learners. The participants who accessed the resource could possibly have done so independently of their schools.

There is an apparent need for schools to use career audio/video tapes as teaching aids to expose learners to different career fields and to offer them specific occupational information.

#### **5.6.5.2 School guidance counsellor/teacher**

There is consistency between the findings for the low utilisation (65.2%) of the services of the schools' guidance counsellors from the quantitative results and the focus-group interviews. Table 5.14 reveals that only 6.8% of the participants from the first focus-group interviews expressed a need for school guidance counsellors to assist them during career planning.

The second focus-group interviews served to clarify why the participants showed reluctance to approach school guidance counsellors for assistance during career planning. The participants indicated that they felt that school guidance counsellors possessed limited career knowledge and would therefore not be able to efficiently provide all the required career/occupational information (see 5.5.5).

This finding highlights a need for school guidance counsellors to liaise with employers to obtain the relevant career guidance materials needed by the learners. There is also a need to invite the professionals to facilitate career/school talks at the different senior public secondary schools. Equally important is to invite representatives from tertiary institutions to disseminate comprehensive educational information to learners and to link the different programmes of study with the world of work and the country's man-power needs.

#### **5.6.5.3 Annual Career Fair**

Almost all the participants (92.9%) attended the Career Fair, according to the quantitative results. The second focus-group interviews, however, make it explicitly clear that the participants benefited little from the Career Fair and that it failed to increase their competence levels in making career choices (see table 5.23). The large proportion of participants (60.9%) who attained

little or no benefit from the Career Fair highlights, among others, the following obstacles which impacted negatively on the usefulness of the fair:

- The Career Fair was hosted too late when the participants had only a few months left before they started their senior secondary school leaving (BGCSE) examination in October, and hence were left with no time to put into effect what they learned from the fair.
- The duration of one day allocated to each school was too short, resulting in the participants not being able to visit some stalls and, in some cases, the stalls for the occupations in which they were really interested.
- Too much emphasis was put on conventional careers to the exclusion of artistic and creative ones.
- Presenters gave only a general overview of the career/occupational information required by the learners, since only one or two people would represent a department, organisation or tertiary institution. Consequently very minimal information was given to the participants.

The participants specifically expressed a need for the Career Fair to be hosted earlier, which is in Form 4. A need was also expressed for the duration of the fair to be increased from one day per school to three days, for more provision of facilitators from the work world, and tertiary institutions to provide varied, in-depth and specific information.

The above findings indicate that further research needs to be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the Career Fair in disseminating career information to learners.

#### **5.6.5.4 Internet**

Only 60.4% of the participants found the internet moderately available as a career exploration resource, according to the quantitative results. Furthermore, only 44.9% of the participants reported having used the resource for career planning. However, consistent with literature (Alao, 1998:14; Hartung, 2005) which indicates that none of the senior public secondary schools in Botswana use computers for career guidance classes, the second focus-group interviews revealed

that none of the senior secondary schools use the internet to facilitate career exploration among learners (see 5.5.2).

A possible explanation for the high percentage (60.4%) of participants who indicated varying degrees of availability of the internet is that the participants had accessed the resource from outside school, such as from home and/or internet cafes. This finding points to a gap in and a need to provide career exploration through the use of the internet in Botswana senior public schools.

It becomes particularly crucial to promote the use of internet resource materials for career planning when taking into account Botswana's Vision 2016 pillar which advocates the creation of an Information Working Group which will, among others, coordinate information infrastructure in the country and for information to be harnessed easily for the benefit of all citizens by the year 2016 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 6).

#### **5.6.5.5 Job-shadowing**

According to the quantitative results many of the participants (66.9%) had no access to job-shadowing. This is consistent with 6.8% of the participants in the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.3) who expressed an urgent need for teachers to organise job-shadowing activities for them to acquire practical work experience in their envisaged careers. Similarly, the participants in the second focus groups unanimously expressed a need for job-shadowing (see 5.5.2 & 5.5.3).

#### **5.6.5.6 Parents**

The quantitative results indicate that 86.9% of the participants approached their parents for assistance during career planning. The results from the first and second focus-group interviews revealed that parents were the most-utilised resource when it came to assistance with career self-exploration (see 5.4.2.3 & 5.5.5).

The above findings indicate a need for schools to find systematic ways of involving parents to assist in facilitating their children's self-exploration. It has to be acknowledged that the parents who send their children to public schools generally do not possess career knowledge and schools can not rely solely on them to offer their children career guidance (Mmusinyane, 2006:2). The

responsibility of involving parents in the career development of their children by providing up to date career information and advice therefore lies with schools.

#### **5.6.5.7 Other family members**

Slightly over three quarters (77.7%) of the participants indicated that they approached other family members to seek help during career planning, according to the quantitative findings, and the first focus-group interviews revealed that the participants (16.9%) relied on other family members to work together with parents to offer assistance with self-assessment.

#### **5.6.5.8 Visits to tertiary institutions**

The quantitative findings reveal that only 26% of the participants made the effort to visit tertiary institutions to inquire about the programmes offered, the duration of and the entry-requirements for the programmes. Likewise, the first focus-group interviews in which only 3.4% of the participants reported that they had visited tertiary institutions to obtain information about their programmes of interest (see 5.4.2.5) indicated little effort made by the participants to visit tertiary institutions.

This finding expresses a definite need for schools to promote visits to tertiary institutions. Visits by learners to tertiary institutions will offer a lot of insight into the relevance of further education in general and specific programmes of study in the individual career development of learners.

#### **5.6.5.9 School talks by various representatives of the world of work**

The quantitative findings showed that just over half (57.4%) of the participants reported that they had utilised school talks by various representatives of the world of work. However, this finding is surprising since only 16% of the participants from the second focus-group interviews (see 5.5.2) reported having had the talks organised for them by their school(s).

Possibly the quantitative findings were higher because the participants included talks from the Career Fair when filling in the questionnaires during the collection of the quantitative data.

Nevertheless, there is still an apparent need for schools to organise career/school talks to disseminate career/occupational information to learners.

#### **5.6.5.10 Observations of individuals at work**

The quantitative results indicate that 55.6% of the participants reportedly had the opportunity to observe individuals at work. The focus-group interviews, however, indicate that no formal arrangement was organised by the schools to facilitate such observations. A few of the participants (3.4%) from the first focus groups (see 5.4.2.5) indicated that they had observed family members and other relatives at work. Possibly the rest of the participants used their own informal observations such as observing teachers, nurses, shop assistants, etc. at work.

#### **5.6.5.11 Discussions with workers in different jobs**

According to the quantitative findings only 39.4% of the participants had discussions with workers in different jobs. This finding is not surprising when one considers the following observations which were made during the focus-group interview (see 5.5.2):

- No job shadowing activities and field excursions or trips were organised by any of the schools for their learners.
- Only 16% of the participants had career talks organised for them by their school(s).
- There was generally an apparent passivity by the participants in terms of doing individual career exploration.
- The time for the Career Fair was too limited and did not allow for in-depth career exploration and some of the participants' areas of interest were not catered for.

#### **5.6.6 Self-assessment information needs**

With the exception of matching the kind of work that matches their abilities, the quantitative findings revealed that the participants possessed at least good knowledge with regard to self-knowledge information as evidenced by the following cumulative percentages: personality (91.1% for *very well* and *well*); good and bad habits (87.2% for *very well* and *well*); interest and personal taste in different activities (83.1% for *very well* and *well*); abilities and talents (71.2% for *very well* and *well*); what is important at work (76.5% for *very well* and *well*). The focus-group

interviews, however, identified a higher percentage of participants expressing a need for assistance with skills in self-knowledge with the second focus groups recording 39.1% (see 5.5.3).

The quantitative findings recorded a fairly good percentage (61.1%) for the kind of work that matches the participants' ability. This percentage score is not surprising taking into account that throughout the study, particularly from the second focus interviews, the participants displayed limited and subsequently a huge need for world of work information (see table 5.22). Consequently, it can be concluded that lack of adequate career/occupational information hampered the integration of self and career/occupational knowledge among the participants.

### **5.6.7 Educational/occupational information needs**

The quantitative findings indicate that the participants displayed fairly good knowledge of the educational possibilities open to them after senior secondary school. This fairly good knowledge is indicated by the following cumulative percentages scored for *well* and *very well*: the educational opportunities open to the participants after they complete senior secondary school (63.4%); the level of education required to achieve their plans (65.1%); the educational requirements for the courses/schools they might attend the following year (65.2%); possibilities/opportunities in tertiary education following senior secondary school (63.6%).

Higher percentage scores could have been expected for this component of the sub-scale because educational guidance was covered to a certain extent during career guidance classes. However, it has to be understood that the presentation mode for guidance in senior public secondary schools in Botswana is predominantly one of *giving information*, which most likely leaves learners with little or no comprehension of the information given.

In addition, there was limited time during the annual Career Fair to offer learners educational/occupational information, which led to inadequate amounts of information being gathered or (in some cases) no information at all being obtained (see 5.5.4). Most likely amongst these were participants who did not receive any career guidance at all during their senior secondary school guidance lessons (see 5.5.2).

As can be expected the component for occupational information needs of this sub-scale scored low percentages as indicated by the cumulative percentages for possessing very good and good knowledge; the influence of technological changes on the job market (44.8%); the present and the future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market (27.7%); and the means to cope with employment (33.5%). These findings are consistent with the trend that has become evident throughout the study that indicates very limited world of work knowledge amongst the participants (see 5.4.2.9 & 5.5.3).

Most participants (80.7%) reported that they possessed at least good knowledge of the jobs and occupations they found interesting. However, the percentage score for the jobs and occupations best suited to the participants was much lower (67.4%) and calls for assistance in merging knowledge of personal characteristics with that of career information, therefore highlighting a need.

#### **5.6.8 Current occupational preferences**

This sub-scale is one of those that again highlighted the scant world of work information of the participants, and which reflected some of the lowest scores. The lowest score was for knowledge of the starting salary for the participants' preferred occupations, with an astounding cumulative percentage of 67.4% for limited and no knowledge at all. Knowledge of the chances of progressing/advancing within the participants' preferred occupations (58.7% for limited knowledge and no knowledge at all) emerged second last, followed by knowledge of the needs of the country in the future (47.9%) for limited and no knowledge at all.

There is clear evidence that the greatest need expressed by the findings in this sub-scale is that of career/occupational information. It is disconcerting to find the participants expressing a high need for occupational information considering that, without this type of information, learners can definitely not make realistic career choices.

#### **5.6.9 Participation in career development/planning**

Two fifths (40.8%) of the participants reported that they had made little or no effort to find out about as many careers as possible, according to the quantitative results. This finding is consistent with the findings from the first focus-group interviews which indicated that only a small

percentage (11.9%) of the participants had engaged in quality research which could effectively provide useful career information as a measure that could help them achieve their career/occupational goals (see 5.4.2.5).

The higher percentage for the quantitative findings could mean that a few more learners proactively sought career information between April and the time when the questionnaire was conducted.

#### **5.6.10 Individual consultations with the school guidance counsellor/teacher**

Consistent with the findings from the first focus-group interviews in which only a small percentage (6.8%) of the participants seemed to appreciate the role of the school guidance counsellor/teacher, only 31.3% of the participants in the quantitative study indicated that they had individually consulted the school guidance counsellor to solicit assistance with career planning.

A marked inconsistency (61.5%) was noticed between the quantitative findings for the participants finding out about the tasks involved/kind of work done in the occupations/jobs in which they were interested, and the qualitative findings which revealed a general passivity on the part of the participants in terms of personally acquiring career/occupational information (see 5.4.2.5).

The quantitative findings reveal that a large section (77.4%) of the participants had made the effort to try to discover their strengths and weaknesses in their different subjects. Similarly, the first focus-group interviews revealed that the biggest step that the participants (76.6%) had taken towards attaining their career/occupational goals was to study hard to improve their performance, to set themselves targets and not to be demoralised when they did not do well in their studies.

The participants (67.2%) reported that they had either discussed their career plans well or very well with people who knew them well, according to the quantitative findings. The qualitative findings (see 5.4.2.3 & 5.5.5) specifically mentioned parents and other family members as the people with whom the participants consulted during career planning, therefore adding credibility to the quantitative findings.

Quite a majority (76.6%) of the participants indicated that they had made at least a good effort to correlate their school results with their future career plans. The findings from the first focus-group interviews in which 76.6% of the participants indicated that they were studying hard (see 5.4.2.5) and those who indicated that their career goals were motivated by their good performance in the prerequisite subjects (32.2%), support the quantitative findings.

Participation in various extra-curricular activities scored low, with more than half the participants (54.9%) reporting that they had either not done that very well or not well at all according to quantitative findings. This finding is understandable, considering that the participants (10.2%) indicated during the first focus-group interviews that their parents discouraged their participation in extra-curricular activities (see 5.4.2.6). What is worrying is that by limiting participation in extra-curricular activities, parents are unknowingly limiting the opportunity for their children to explore their interests.

In identifying the obstacles that might hinder them from reaching their career goals, the participants had done quite well scoring a cumulative percentage of 74.7% for *very well* and *well* in the quantitative findings. Consistent with this finding, the participants clearly articulated during the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.6) that they perceived the following as potential obstacles in the attainment of their career/occupational goals:

- poor performance in their BGCSE exam;
- too much parental interference; and
- uncertainty about how national policies may change over the years and affect the job market.

#### **5.6.11 Knowledge of job finding /seeking /getting and keeping skills**

The quantitative findings reveal that the lowest percentages were scored in the sub-scale regarding knowledge of job findings/seeking skills, making this sub-scale the area of greatest need. This is not surprising when one takes into account that schools seemed to be concentrating more on personal and social guidance, with some attention occasionally paid to educational guidance to the exclusion of career guidance during guidance and counselling classes.

From the results of the first focus-group interviews it was evident that the participants thought of career guidance mainly in terms of studying hard to meet the entry requirements to tertiary institutions. The participants also seemed ignorant of the significance of the other factors that should influence career choice (see 5.4.2.5). It was only during the second focus-group interviews that the focus of the participants seemed to have shifted considerably towards requiring career/occupational information (see 5.5.5).

A possible explanation for this development could be that, even though the Career Fair failed to provide the participants with the required amount of career/occupational information, it did create awareness among the participants of the indispensable role played by career information in making realistic career choices.

Less than half the participants (44%) confidently indicated that they possessed knowledge of where to look for a job, according to the quantitative findings. The findings from the second focus-group interviews indicated that none of the participants were equipped with job seeking/finding skills during their career guidance classes (see 5.5.2).

Evidence from the focus-group interviews indicates that career guidance is geared more towards preparing learners for tertiary education in Botswana even though, in reality, not all the participants qualify for places at tertiary institutions. For instance, 91.5% of the participants in the first focus-group interviews expressed interest in obtaining professional qualifications from either the university of Botswana or external universities (see 5.4.2.1).

Consistent with the findings of the focus interviews, Isaacson and Brown (quoted by Mmusinyane, 2006:27) maintain that helping learners improve their academic achievement, planning for post-secondary education and promoting personal growth is commonly given priority over assisting learners with career planning in schools.

Similarly, Santrock (as quoted by Mmusinyane, 2006:27) observes that when learners talk to school guidance counsellors it is more often about high school courses than about career guidance. While it makes sense to assist learners to improve their grades since good grades at senior secondary level will guarantee them entry into tertiary institutions, it is equally important

to facilitate career development among learners because wrong career choices can have far-reaching consequences for them. Hence a balance needs to be struck amongst all the different components of guidance and counselling in schools, which involves awarding career guidance the significance it deserves.

According to the quantitative findings, more than half (63.9%) of the participants indicated that they had gained at least sufficient knowledge of how to write application letters, but the second focus-group interviews indicated that this service was not provided to the participants during their guidance lessons. A possible explanation for the inconsistency in the findings could be that the participants were taught how to write application letters in their English language lessons. The quantitative findings indicated that 58.7% of the participants were taught how to write a CV. However, the second focus-group interviews revealed that the service was not offered to the participants during their guidance lessons (see 5.5.2). As was the case with writing application letters, the service could have been offered to the participants in their English language lessons.

Less than half (45%) of the participants reported with certainty that they knew how to prepare for a job interview, while just over half (52.2%) said they certainly knew how to present themselves at a job interview. The second focus-group interviews were consistent with these findings by revealing that mock job interviews did not form part of the career guidance offered to learners in their respective schools (see 5.5.2).

According to the quantitative results only 25.2% of the participants knew with certainty how employees hire people. The findings from the focus-group interviews corroborate this result since they indicate that the participants had no interaction with work places or workers save in the few instances where such career exploration activities were arranged by the participants' families.

With the reported absence of key career exploration activities, such as job-shadowing and career field trips/excursions and the subsequent acute need expressed by the participants in the second focus-group interviews for career knowledge, it is not surprising that less than half (41.5%) of the participants reported that they possessed either sufficient or quite a lot of knowledge about what employers expect from new employees.

The same conclusion can be made about items 78 and 79, which assessed knowledge of the personal qualities employers consider important when hiring someone and aspects that influence the success and advancement/progress of a person in a job. The focus-group interviews indicated that the career guidance offered in the guidance lessons, if any, was very minimal and did not cover such topics (see 5.5.2).

The Career Fair could not be used to provide information on employer expectations as the length of time for the fair was inadequate and left the participants with reservations about the effectiveness of the fair in disseminating career/occupational information to them. It would certainly not be practical to offer in one day all the world of work information they may need to 21 Form 5 classes, with approximately 40 learners each, from one school.

To a certain extent, career talks could have made it possible to provide information on employer expectations to the participants. Regrettably, only 25% of the participants indicated that their school(s) organised regular career talks for them from the time they joined senior secondary school (see 5.5.2). Possibly the small percentage of participants who expressed with certainty knowledge of work-related information includes these learners and the few who got assistance from home.

#### **5.6.12 Conclusion: merging of quantitative and qualitative data**

The merging of the quantitative and qualitative results indicates that on the whole there were no conflicting or contradictory findings between the quantitative and qualitative findings. The combined use of the two methods in the study, without doubt, served the purpose of yielding complementary and comprehensive data.

Whereas the quantitative results yielded objective and numerical data, the qualitative data offered an opportunity to probe into the responses of the participants and to obtain amplified data.

### **5.7 A SYNTHESIS OF THE CAREER PLANNING NEEDS OF SENIOR PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS IN GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

The study reveals that the greatest need expressed by senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana, is that of a systematic career guidance programme. An overwhelming majority (87.5%) of the participants in the second focus-group interviews (see 5.5.2 ) either had

little or no career guidance offered to them during their two-year period in senior public secondary school, indicating that the participants were benefiting little from the school career guidance programme.

Evidently the 40 minute-per-week lesson allocated for guidance and counselling with all of its four components is inadequate to cater for all the needs of the learners, with career guidance being the biggest casualty, followed by educational guidance. This development is understandable considering a number of possibilities:

- Learners are plagued by a number of social problems such as the impact of HIV/AIDS and dysfunctional family systems which often lead to rampant drug and alcohol abuse by some learners and to teenage pregnancy in some instances. These problems affect learners at a personal level and become of immediate concern to the school guidance system because they threaten the well-being of the learners and therefore their performance in school.
- Materials which address the above-mentioned issues abound everywhere and are easily accessible, and this makes it easy for teachers to rather teach personal and social guidance and also to offer counselling in these areas and thus neglect career guidance because they do not feel empowered to offer the subject due to, among others, the lack of relevant materials.

The findings of the study indicate that even with this disconcerting situation of learners experiencing a dire need to be provided with a systematic school career guidance programme, they also expressed a need for career planning. It is clearly important to improve the current state of affairs by strengthening the career guidance component of guidance and counselling.

Furthermore, the participants expressed concern about what they would be doing in future and expressed a specific and crucial need for assistance in identifying their interests and abilities.

A definite need was also expressed for information about post-secondary institutions. The following were highlighted by the participants as specific areas of need:

- Specific information on the entry requirements of tertiary institutions.
- Knowledge of where to train for specific university programmes.
- Knowledge of specific modules to be studied within particular programmes of study.

Career/occupational information was rated an area of high need, with the participants clearly articulating the pertinent areas, namely:

- Information on the different occupations available in the country.
- Information on the working conditions for specific jobs.
- Salary prospects for specific jobs.

### **5.7.1 The grant/loan scheme/ sponsorship for continuing education**

The grant/loan scheme is the government of Botswana's initiative to create a pool of human resource to meet the needs of the country by providing financial assistance for pre-service post-secondary education up to tertiary level (Botswana Ministry of Education, 2008a:4).

A large percentage (88.5%) of the participants from the quantitative findings expressed a definite need for information on the grant/loan scheme. A further 6.3% of the participants from the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.9) and 6.2% from the second focus-group interviews (see table 5.22) indicated a need for information on the grant/loan scheme.

### **5.7.2 Career audio/video tapes**

An alarming 70.8% of the participants from the quantitative findings reported total absence of the use of career audio/video tapes during their career guidance lessons at senior secondary school. All the participants (100%) in the second focus-group interviews indicated that they had not used career audio/video tapes as part of their career guidance lessons (see 5.5.3). This expresses a definite need as career audio/video tapes would provide learners with a lot of career information and fill the void created by the lack of trained personnel to offer career guidance in senior schools.

### **5.7.3 Career Fair**

It emerged that the Career Fair might not be as effective as it is supposed to be in disseminating career and educational information to learners. The participants expressed a need for the number of days for the fair to be increased, particularly because it is hosted only once for learners during their two-year period at senior secondary school (see 5.5.4).

A need was also expressed for the fair to be held earlier in the year. The participants felt that it would be better if the career fair is held in the last trimester of Form 4, so that the importance of career planning can be brought home while there is still time for the knowledge derived from the fair to be used earlier.

There is also a need to shift focus from disseminating information on conventional careers to consider the emerging and upcoming careers to cater for a broad range of the learners' needs.

It was also found crucial to provide specific, clear and comprehensive information. The participants felt that comprehensive information could be better provided by competent professionals, instead of bringing fewer people who could only provide a general overview of the information required by the participants.

From the above findings it is evident that schools need to organise regular and systematic career exploration activities, starting as early as Form 4 and not merely relying on the career fair as a career exploration activity. Evidently the career fair currently only serves as a complementary activity which is used to augment other regular career guidance activities organised for the learners. It would seem that schools rely on the career fair as a primary and sometimes the sole career exploration activity, instead of using it to enhance different career exploration activities.

#### **5.7.4 Internet resource materials**

It is a fact that senior public secondary schools in Botswana are not properly resourced to offer computer-based career exploration activities (Hartung, 2005). This makes it very vital for schools, particularly in urban centres, to encourage learners to access career planning materials from the internet independently, either through the help of their families or from internet cafes.

The Curriculum and Evaluation Division, however, still needs to provide internet career resource materials as a matter of urgency to schools in order to achieve Botswana's 2016 vision of providing information to all learners – particularly to learners in senior public secondary schools.

#### **5.7.5 Job-Shadowing experiences**

Job-shadowing emerged as one of the career exploration activities for which the participants expressed great need. Close to seventy percent (66.9%) of the participants from the quantitative

findings, 6.8% from the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.3) and 100% from the second focus-group interviews reported an acute need for the experience (see 5.5.2).

### **5.7.6 Parents as a useful resource during career planning**

The participants expressed high reliance on their parents for assistance during career planning. Close to ninety percent (86.9%) of the respondents consulted their parents during career planning, according to the quantitative results. Similar findings were reported by Mmusinyane (2006:75) with 53% of the learners in her study indicating that they sought assistance from their parents in making a career choice.

The significant role that parents play in assisting their children with career planning indicates a need for school guidance counsellors to proactively collaborate with parents and to tap into their competencies to fully assist learners during career planning. The assistance of parents can be particularly useful when it comes to the learners' career self-exploration. School guidance counsellors can also play a role to discourage parents from trying to live their failed career aspirations through their children.

### **5.7.7 Visits to tertiary institutions**

A vital need was expressed for the participants to pay individual visits to tertiary institutions to obtain pertinent information about specific courses. A low percentage of participants (26% from the quantitative findings and 3.3% from the first focus groups) indicated that they had made visits to tertiary institutions to seek educational guidance.

The findings of the second focus-group interviews about the observations made by the participants about the Career Fair, revealed that tertiary institutions seemed more focused on advertising themselves than providing sufficient information to learners, which was limited to the entry requirements and the duration of the different programmes offered (see 5.5.4). This highlights the need for the individual learners to pay visits to tertiary institutions to obtain the specific educational/occupational information they need.

### **5.7.8 School/career talks**

School/career talks by the various representatives of the world of work also emerged as an area of high need. Considering the observations made about the ineffectiveness of the Career Fair to

provide adequate and up-to-date career information, career talks could provide a platform for many professionals to provide specific occupational and educational information to learners. Hence, career talks would be used by schools to augment the efforts made by the Career Guidance Services Unit in facilitating career exploration in learners.

The career talks could actually be started in Form 4 and run through Form 5. It is certain that by the time the learners complete senior secondary they would have obtained adequate career/occupational information to be able to make informed career choices.

#### **5.7.9 Observations of individuals at work and discussions with workers in different fields**

A definite need was expressed to observe individuals at work and have discussions with workers in different jobs. Both of these career exploration activities could be facilitated through career field trips/excursions and job-shadowing.

Career field trips/excursions and job-shadowing are two activities that do not require any expertise from teachers, but only require the coordination of such activities with work places – and certainly schools have no excuse not to organise such activities.

#### **5.7.10 Educational/ occupational information**

The findings from the study indicate a need for educational information, as the quantitative results displayed only fair knowledge possessed by the respondents in the areas indicated below:

- Educational possibilities after senior secondary school (63.3% for *very well* and *well*)
- Level of education required to make future career plans (65.1% for *very well* and *well*)
- Educational requirements for the course/school a learner needs for the following year (66%).

The findings from the first focus-group interviews (see 5.4.2.9) also revealed a huge need for educational information by the participants. A fairly good percentage (65.6 %) of the participants expressed a need for information on the specific entry requirements to tertiary institutions.

To a small extent in the second focus-group interviews, the participants (12.5%) expressed a need for former Form 5 learners to provide them with specific educational information in terms of

tertiary education courses and the different modules completed, as well as the demands thereof (see 5.5.5).

The quantitative findings showed a critical need for information on the influence of technological changes on the market, future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market and the means to cope with unemployment.

#### **5.7.11 Knowledge of salary structures for different jobs**

Knowledge of the salary structures for the participants' preferred careers was rated amongst the greatest need areas. A cumulative percentage of 67.4% of the respondents (from the quantitative findings) reported having limited or no knowledge at all in this regard.

#### **5.7.12 Knowledge of working conditions**

Knowledge of the working conditions for the participants' envisaged careers also emerged as one of the greatest need areas, recording 47.7% overall for limited knowledge and no knowledge at all. The second focus-group interviews also recorded this as a high need area with 25% of the participants indicating that job-shadowing could have benefited them a lot in this regard.

#### **5.7.13 Human resource needs of the country in the future**

Information on the projections of the country's future manpower needs also emerged as vital for the participants (47.9% for little knowledge and none at all) during career planning.

Slightly more than a tenth (11.9%) of the participants expressed concern during the first focus groups that their lengthy studies could lead to the job market being saturated and that the needs of the country could change over the years (see 5.4.2.6). This finding indicates the need for information on the country's man-power needs in the future.

#### **5.7.14 Chances of advancement/progress/promotion**

More than half the participants (58.7% according to the quantitative findings) expressed little or no knowledge at all of the chances of progression within their preferred occupations, indicating yet some more need for occupational information.

### **5.7.15 Finding out about as many careers as possible**

A need was expressed by the participants to find out about as many careers as possible. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings highlighted this need. Forty percent of the participants from the quantitative results indicated they possessed little or no knowledge in this regard. In the first focus-group interviews, 7.8% of the participants highlighted career/occupational information as an area of need (see 5.4.2.9).

### **5.7.16 Individual consultations with the school guidance counsellor**

The quantitative findings (31.3% for *very well* and *well*) supported the qualitative findings (6.8%) with regard to the scarcity of individual consultations with the school guidance counsellor. Evidently senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone need to be made aware of the role the school guidance counsellor can play to assist learners with individual career planning or at least to provide the relevant personnel to assist in career planning.

### **5.7.17 Participation in extra-curricular activities**

A critical need was also expressed for the participants to engage more in extra mural activities as a way of promoting the discovery of interests, talents and abilities which play a pivotal role in career self-exploration. The quantitative findings indicate that only 45.1% had either participated in extra-curricular activities well or very well, indicating that the majority of the participants had either done that minimally or not at all.

### **5.7.18 Knowledge of where to look for a job**

A definite need was expressed in terms of knowing where to look for a job, with only 44% of the participants from the quantitative study indicating with certainty that they knew where to seek jobs. The second focus-group interviews revealed that none of the participants were equipped with job-seeking skills (see 5.5.2).

### **5.7.19 How to write an application for a job**

A need was also expressed by the participants (36.1% from the quantitative findings) who indicated that they either had little or no knowledge of how to write an application letter for a job.

The quantitative findings regarding this need were supported by the second focus-group interviews, since it emerged that the service was amongst those that were not offered by the schools as part of the career guidance lessons (see 5.5.2).

#### **5.7.20 How to write a CV**

Slightly over two fifths (41.3%) of the participants indicated during the quantitative study that they required assistance with how to write a CV. The second focus-group interviews highlighted this need by revealing that this service was not offered by any of the schools as part of the career guidance programme (5.5.2).

#### **5.7.21 How to prepare for a job interview**

A high need was expressed for assistance with preparing for a job interview. The quantitative findings recorded a low cumulative percentage (45% for very well and well) for definite knowledge of how to prepare for an interview. The qualitative findings from the second focus-group interviews indicated that no mock interviews were organised by any of the schools for the participants, therefore highlighting this need (see 5.5.2).

#### **5.7.22 How employers hire people**

A critical need for creating awareness among the participants about how employers hire people was recorded. While the quantitative findings revealed that only 25.2% of the respondents reported with certainty that they possessed this knowledge, the second focus-group interviews indicated that the absence of interactions with work places or workers for almost all the learners denied the participants this information (see 5.5.2).

#### **5.7.23 What employers expect from employees**

More than half the participants (58.5%) indicated that they had little or no knowledge about what employers expect from new employees, indicating a critical need for assistance in this area.

### **5.7.24 Personal qualities employers consider important when hiring people**

Only 45% of the participants from the quantitative findings reported that they *possessed* quite a lot of information or sufficient information about the personal qualities employers require when hiring people. The finding expresses critical need for assistance in this regard.

### **5.7.25 Influences on the success and advancement/ progress of a person in a job**

Slightly over half (53.3%) of the participants reported with certainty that they knew what can influence the success and advancement of a person in a job. The high percentage of respondents (46.7%) who reported lack of knowledge of aspects that can influence success and advancement in a job indicates a need in this component of career planning.

### **5.7.26 What an employee can do to keep a job**

To a small extent the participants indicated a need (36.4% for very little or no knowledge at all) according to the quantitative findings. The qualitative findings revealed this is one of those areas that were not covered during the career guidance classes.

### **5.7.27 Conclusion: synthesis of learners' career planning needs**

The findings of the study indicate a wide range of the participants' needs. Career/occupational information emerged as the component that scored the highest needs. This situation is worrisome when one takes into account that after self assessment information, career/occupational information is the second most important pillar on which realistic career choices should be based.

## **5.8 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CURRENT SENIOR PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM MEETS THE CAREER GUIDANCE NEEDS OF SENIOR PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS IN GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

A needs assessment study makes it possible to determine the extent to which the service recipients' needs are being addressed by the programme which is in place. The extent to which

the needs of the service recipients are being met or not being met provides an idea of the effectiveness of the service being offered. Hence, the findings of the current study will be used to address the second aim of the study which is to determine the extent to which the current career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meets the needs of the learners.

The findings of the study indicate that the senior public secondary school career guidance programme in Botswana meets the needs of the learners only in so far as providing the relevant theoretical frame-work for the content to be covered is concerned. There are numerous challenges (Mokgolodi, 2001:1) which hamper the proper implementation of the career guidance programme. The challenges in programme implementation ultimately affect service delivery and, consequently, the extent to which the curriculum meets the needs of the learners.

The biggest challenge that hampers the proper provision of career guidance lessons in senior public secondary schools is that of inadequate time. The 40 minute lesson allocated to each class for guidance and counselling with all of its four components is by no means adequate. Guidance teachers end up having very little interaction with the learners, with no immediate follow-up. Ultimately, service delivery is affected and learners eventually do not benefit much from the school career guidance programme.

The limited time allocated guidance and counselling also leads to some components of guidance and counselling being neglected, with career guidance being the most affected.

The issue of a shortage of trained personnel to offer guidance and counselling and particularly career guidance in senior secondary schools also impacts negatively on the efficient delivery of career guidance services. Obviously this lack of trained personnel also results in learners' needs not being fully met (Hartung, 2005; Maroba *et al.*, 2006; Mokgolodi, 2005:1).

As indicated by Maroba *et al.* (2006) the lack of trained personnel in schools hampers the proper implementation of the career guidance programme in schools, particularly because it is assumed that anyone can teach career guidance. Even in the instances where para-professionals are used to teach career guidance, they encounter many challenges as they possess limited career guidance/education knowledge.

Career guidance teachers in senior public secondary schools also happen to be the school guidance counsellors and find themselves swamped with a lot of work since they also have to offer personal and social counselling to learners. School guidance counsellors often have to abandon lessons to attend to emergencies that arise which need their immediate attention, such as meeting with parents about discipline issues affecting their children.

The fact that guidance and counselling is offered for enrichment purposes only and is not examinable (Maroba *et al.*, 2006:34), encourages both teachers and learners not to treat it seriously (see 3.8.3). This does not bode well for the subject, leaving it to be relegated to being unimportant or even to be regarded as a free period by some learners.

The Career Guidance Services Unit within the Guidance and Counselling Division (Ministry of Education) also seems not to be doing enough to carry out its mandate of overseeing the provision of career guidance activities within senior public secondary schools (Mokgolodi, 2005:51). In the rare occasion where some kind of monitoring is done, no subsequent feed-back is given to the schools (Mokgolodi, 2005:51). Hence, career guidance teachers are left with no support from the Career Guidance Services Unit, making them feel demoralised and overwhelmed.

The findings of the study reveal that several learning outcomes for career guidance were not achieved, indicating that, in general, the career planning needs of the learners were not met.

Table 5.3, which depicts the kind of assistance required by the participants to make career plans, specifically indicates that to a large extent several learning outcomes for Form 4 were not achieved.

The cumulative high percentage (98.4%) of participants requiring assistance with the understanding of personal interests and abilities five months before they left senior secondary school indicates that learning outcome 1 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11), which requires the facilitation of self exploration in learners, was not achieved. The objective of learning outcome 1 in Form 4 is to help learners relate their interests and abilities to their subject selection and the world of work and it forms the basis for making a career choice.

In addition, the qualitative results supported the quantitative findings, with 33.4% of the participants indicating a need for assistance with career self-exploration during the first focus interviews. The second interviews reported this type of need from 39.1% of the participants.

There are also indications that learning outcome 3 for Form 4, requiring the provision of skills to research career opportunities (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:24), was not achieved. A high percentage (92.2%) of the participants from the quantitative findings indicated that they would find information on the different kinds of occupations in the country either *very helpful* or *helpful*.

The first focus-group interviews also recorded career/occupational information as one of the greatest needs of the participants (7.8%). A higher percentage score (45.3%) of the participants from the second focus groups displayed a need for information on the different kinds of occupations available in the country.

Evidently learning outcome 2 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23) advocating for the provision of information to learners on the opportunities for further training was not achieved. A cumulative percentage of 82% of the participants from the quantitative findings reported they would find this type of information as certainly helpful, highlighting an urgent need for the information.

In addition, the qualitative data reported this need for the provision of information on the opportunities for further training. A high percentage (71.8%) of the participants from the first focus-group interviews indicated a need to be provided with information on the specific entry requirements to tertiary institutions.

A further 4.7% of the participants expressed a need for information about which universities to train for specific programmes of study. During the second focus-group interviews another 4.7% of the participants expressed a need for information on the specific university modules they could expect to study in particular programmes of study.

Overall information about the grant/loan scheme was regarded by 88.5% of the participants as either *very helpful* or *helpful*, according to the quantitative findings. The qualitative findings also

reported a need for such information to a small extent. The first focus interviews indicated that the information was required by 11.9% of the participants. In the second focus-group interviews 6.2% of the participants indicated a need for information on the grant/loan scheme. These findings indicate that learning outcome 3 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:23), which advocates the provision of information on the training opportunities and scholarship prospects to senior secondary school learners, was not achieved.

The high cumulative percentage (55.3%) scored by the participants who either possessed very limited or no knowledge at all of the influence of technological changes on the job market, indicates that learning outcome 7 for Form 4 was not achieved. Similarly, learning outcome 7 for Form 4 which proposes the enlightenment of learners about the employment market was not achieved (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998: 25).

Furthermore, the assessment standards for the above learning outcome (learning outcome 7 for Form 4) were not met, because 72.3% of the participants reported little or no knowledge at all of present and future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market. This finding reveals that most of the learners would not be able to identify and possibly discuss changes in the world of work in the country.

A further 66.5% of the participants reported limited or total lack of knowledge of the means to cope with unemployment, suggesting that learners would not be able to state and discuss the consequences of unemployment as required by the assessment standard (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25).

Just over half (52.1%) of the participants reported in the quantitative study that they were *well* or *very well* aware of the country's future human resource needs, further indicating that learning outcome 7 for Form 4 ( Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25) was not achieved.

Close to half the participants (47.7%) indicated in the quantitative study that they either did not possess good knowledge of the working conditions in their preferred occupations or virtually possessed no knowledge of such. Such a high percentage indicates that learning outcome 5 for Form 5 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:29) recommending the provision of adequate information on the different careers was not achieved.

Furthermore, 25% of the participants in the second focus-group interviews expressed a need for information on the working conditions and salary structures for their envisaged careers, emphasising the non-achievement of learning objective 5 for Form 5.

Evidence from the quantitative findings also indicates that the assessment standards requiring learners to explain the term *career progression* and to discuss factors influencing the development of a person's career were not met (learning outcome 10 in Form 4). Only 41.3% of the respondents indicated with certainty that they possessed good knowledge of the chances of progressing/advancing/being promoted in their preferred careers.

A large percentage (56%) of the participants reported that they possessed very limited or no information at all about where to look for a job, suggesting that learning outcome 4 for Form 5, aimed at equipping learners with job seeking skills, was not achieved (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:37).

A small percentage of participants (45%) reported that they either had substantial or *sufficient* information about how to prepare for an interview, and only a quarter (25.7%) indicated that they knew *quite a lot* about how to present themselves at a job interview.

The second focus-group interviews also revealed that none of the schools conducted mock-interviews for the participants—a further indication that learning outcome 5 for Form 4 whose assessments standard requires that learners be able to role-play at least one interview was not met (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:24).

The assessment standards for learning outcome 2 for Form 5 set the following assessment standards for learners:

- Listing and discussing the expectations of their potential employers; and
- outlining the steps that they could take to meet the expectations of their potential future employers.

Evidently the assessment standards that require a discussion of what employers expect from new employees, what personal qualities employers consider important when hiring someone (44.9%

for *quite a lot* and *sufficient* knowledge), what can influence the success and advancement of a person in a job (53.3% for *quite a lot* and *sufficient* knowledge), were not met (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:29).

Apart from the disappointing results which highlight that several learning outcomes for both Form 4 and 5 were not achieved, and that some specific assessment standards were not met, an absence of fundamental and supplementary career exploration activities which could really assist the participants in career planning were absent. Direct work experiences through activities such as job-shadowing were reportedly absent from schools. Only 16% of the participants in the quantitative study and 3.3% of the participants from the first focus groups indicated that they had access to job-shadowing, seemingly through their families that made arrangements for them to have job-shadowing. This is contrary to the Ministry of Education (Botswana Ministry of Education 2008:2) advocating for job-shadowing not only as an activity that would assist learners to identify career interests, but also to provide them with realistic views of specific jobs and the necessary skills for such jobs.

Career audio/video tapes were only utilised by a small percentage of participants (29.2%) from the quantitative findings. The qualitative findings revealed that none of the schools used the service during career guidance lessons.

The annual Career Fair also failed to meet the participants' expected standards owing to (among others) limited time, inadequate and vague information and a limited number of professionals being invited to make presentations on the different occupations/jobs. As the sole activity that is directly organised by the Career Guidance Services Unit (Ministry of Education), much more is expected in terms of the efficiency and usefulness of the fair as a career exploration activity.

Regrettably, only 26% of the participants in the quantitative study reported that they had visited tertiary institutions. This quantitative finding is consistent with the findings of the first focus-group interviews in which only 3.3% of the participants indicated they had visited tertiary institutions. These findings are surprising taking into account that tertiary institutions, such as the University of Botswana, are mandated to visit senior secondary schools to disseminate educational information to learners (see 3.6.3.3) and therefore generate interest in the learners to acquire additional educational information from them.

School/career talks by various representatives of the world of work were reportedly organised for only 25% of the participants, according to the second focus-group interviews. In contrast, the quantitative findings indicate that more than double that percentage (57.4% of the participants) reported having used the resource during career planning. A possible explanation for the difference in percentage is that the participants may have included the talks made during the Career Fair.

However, the percentage of 42.6% for participants who had no access to the career/school talks by various representatives of the world of work is too high, considering that schools in urban centres and, particularly, in the capital city Gaborone have easy access to different industries, companies and employers.

It is clear that the requirement has not been met to have industries and employers provide support to schools, through the attachment of teachers and learners to work-places and providing short learning programmes for teachers to expose them to the work done in the industries as stipulated by the Policy Guidelines on the Implementation of Guidance and Counselling in Botswana's Education System (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996: 47-48).

Evidence from the second focus-group interviews also suggests that career field excursions/trips had not been organised for the participants, a finding that is supported by the quantitative findings for observations of individuals at work and discussions with workers in different jobs.

Slightly over half the participants (55.6%) reported that they had observed different individuals at work and a low 39.4% of the participants indicated that they had actually had discussions with workers in different jobs. The low percentage recorded for discussions with workers in different jobs suggests that the observations of different workers could have been informal, since they did not provide the participants with an opportunity to actually talk to the workers.

These findings imply a total lack of career field trips/excursions as a career exploration activity in schools.

### **5.8.1 Conclusion: extent to which current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meets needs of learners**

The findings of the study indicate that the current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meets the needs of the learners only in so far as providing the relevant conceptual frame-work is concerned. The study reveals that several learning outcomes and some specific assessment standards were not met. Furthermore, there was a marked absence of key career exploration activities, such as job-shadowing and career field trips/excursions, which could in particular provide useful specific occupational information to learner.

Evidently the 40 minutes period allocated to guidance and counselling with all its four components is also inadequate. All these developments result in the learner's experiencing unmet career planning needs. Consequently learners make less than optimal career decisions thus, creating the likelihood of a future unfulfilled and unproductive workforce.

## **5.9 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected by means of a mixed methods research model were made. Three sets of data from the empirical section were merged namely, the quantitative data from the structured questionnaire, followed by the qualitative data from the first focus group interviews and finally data from the second focus group interviews.

A worrying finding of the study is that learners in senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana, receive career guidance to varying degrees with some of the learners not receiving the service at all, during their stay at senior secondary school. Consequently, learners end up experiencing a range of career planning needs, particularly in terms of world of work information which can mainly be acquired through activities such as job-shadowing, career field trips and observations of people at work.

Individual career exploration initiative was noted as missing amongst the learners as only a few of them made the effort to seek assistance with career planning from their school guidance counsellors and to visit tertiary institutions to acquire information on post-secondary studies.

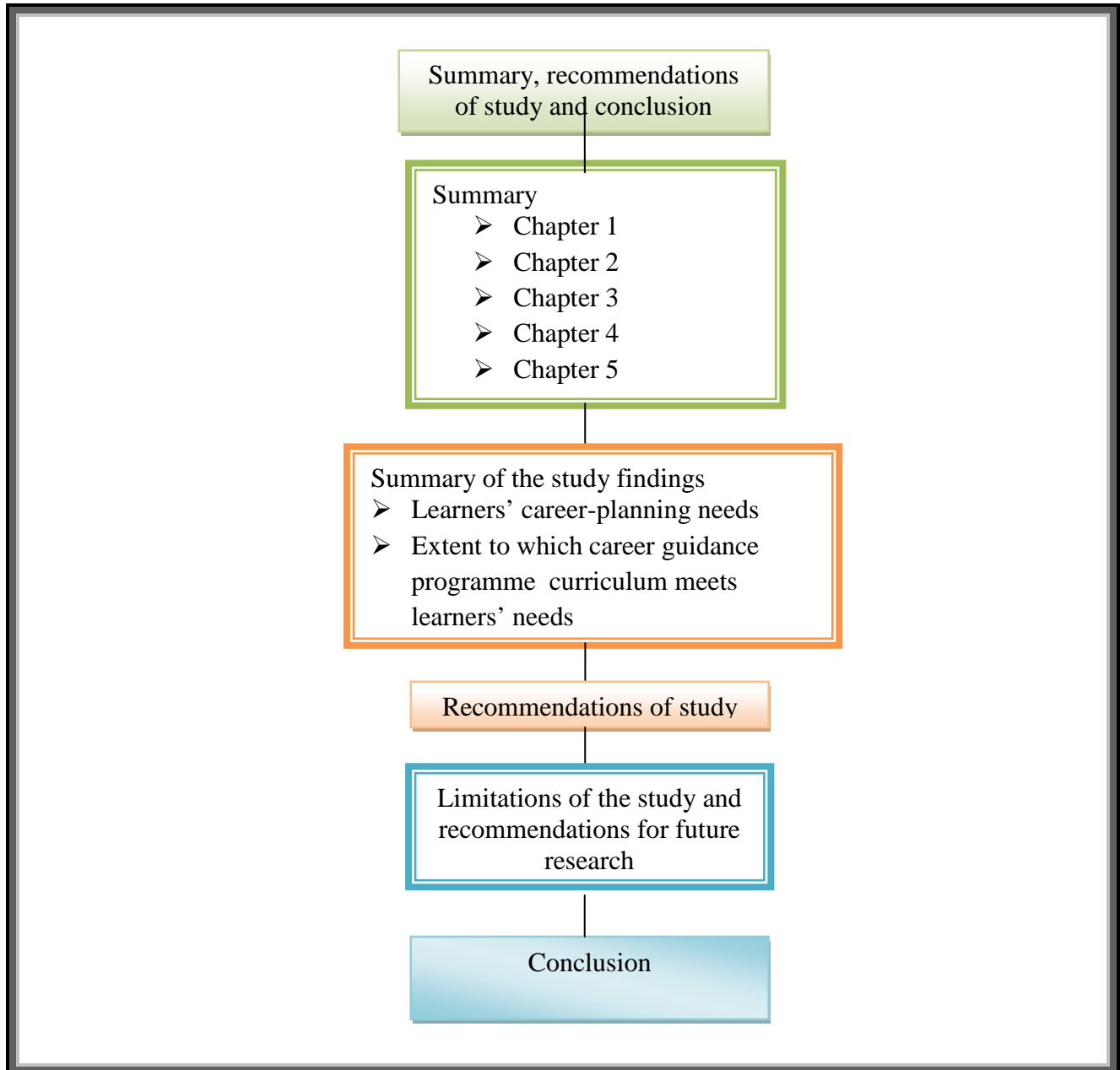
Another disappointing finding of the study was the reported ineffectiveness of the annual Career Fair in equipping learners with career/occupational information due to among others limited time and too much emphasis on conventional careers.

The study reveals that while the current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana provides the relevant conceptual frame-work to address the career planning needs of the learners, the actual implementation of the curriculum within schools falls short of the requirements of the senior secondary school career guidance curriculum guidelines (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11-40). This is evidenced by the fact that a number of learning outcomes for both Form 4 and Form 5 were not achieved, compromising the extent to which the career guidance programme in place addresses the career planning needs of the learners.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW



## **6.2 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to give a summary of the findings of the study, to outline the implications of the findings for the Guidance and Counselling Division (Career Guidance Services Unit) in Botswana within the Curriculum and Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Education, and to draw conclusions from the study.

### **6.2.1 Introduction, statement of the problem, research aims and methodology**

Chapter 1 served to outline the introduction, the orientation of the study, its research aims and the methodology.

The main aim of the study was to investigate the Career Planning Needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana as articulated by the learners themselves.

Learners' career planning needs have commonly been articulated by parents, teachers and curriculum developers, but the perception of adults have often been found to lack meaning for learners (Gibbons *et al.*, 2006:3). Regrettably, no study has been carried out in Botswana to determine the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners from their own perspective. The motivation for this study is thus to establish the Career Planning Needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana as expressed by the learners themselves. This, in turn, led to the following key aim of the study, namely

- to determine the Career Planning Needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana.

In order to determine the career planning needs of the learners, it was essential to use a standard against which to measure the learners' needs, since the learners' needs could not be investigated within a vacuum. Consequently, the Career Guidance Curriculum currently being offered to learners in Senior Public Secondary Schools in Botswana was used as a yard-stick to determine the extent to which the learners' needs were being met. From this a secondary aim of the study was formulated to determine the extent to which the current career guidance curriculum meets the needs of the learners.

The apparent shortcomings in the current provision of career guidance services made it necessary to determine the improvements that need to be made to the current status of career guidance services in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. The following, therefore, became the secondary aims of the study:

- To determine the extent to which the Current Career Guidance Curriculum in Public Schools in Botswana meets the needs of the learners; and
- to discuss the implications of the findings for career guidance curriculum development in Botswana.

The following questions guided the discussion in this chapter:

- What are the main findings of the study regarding the career planning needs of Senior Public Secondary School learners in Gaborone, Botswana?
- To what extent does the current career guidance programme in Senior Public Schools in Botswana meet the needs of the learners?
- What limitations were encountered by the researcher in conducting the current study?
- What recommendations can be made for future research?
- What are the implications of the study for career guidance development in Botswana?

### **6.2.2 Adolescent career development**

Chapter 2 focused on reviewing the literature related to adolescent career development. Three developmental theories, accounting for the various stages and processes which adolescents experience during the career development process, were discussed. These career development theories were Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma's tentative and realistic stages, Donald Super's exploration stage, and Gottfredson's orientation to social valuation and the internal unique self. The social factors influencing adolescent career development were also discussed. Understanding the factors was considered essential as this can offer insight into understanding the experiences adolescents go through during career development.

Three fundamental steps are essential for informed career decision-making: The first and most important step on which realistic career decision-making rests, is career self-exploration which requires that adolescents take time to determine their abilities, interests and talents, among others, when formulating their career path objectives. The second step is that adolescents need to investigate the array of career information that is available to them and sift through this information to determine which careers appeal to them.

The third step is to integrate the information acquired about the self with the information acquired about the requirements of the different careers that appeal to the adolescent. This is done to see if there is a good match between the self-assessment information acquired and the demands and the benefits of the envisaged career(s) which should include the relevant extent of further education/training required.

A discussion of the three key elements of the career decision-making process was found to be vital as it would offer an understanding of the primary steps that are necessary for making informed career decisions, particularly in adolescence.

Chapter 2 also discussed career decision-making in adolescence, the impact of gender and age on adolescent career maturity, and career-decision status as a construct of career maturity.

Career indecision has been found to be a common occurrence in adolescence (Creed & Patton, 2001:49). The different types of indecision that adolescents often experience during the career decision-making process, namely developmental indecision and chronic indecision, served as a conclusion to chapter 2.

### **6.2.3 The school career guidance programme in Botswana**

Chapter 3 was dedicated to discussing the efforts made by the Ministry of Education, through the Career Guidance Department (Curriculum and Evaluation Division) in Botswana, to offer career guidance to learners in public/government schools. Particular reference was made to the career guidance services offered in senior public secondary school from where the study population was drawn.

The chapter started by discussing career guidance as a component of the School Guidance and Counselling Curriculum in Botswana. Guidance and Counselling as a subject in secondary schools is allocated one forty-minute period per week per class. Career guidance accounts for a quarter of the content to be covered in the Guidance and Counselling curriculum.

It was found essential to trace the development of the School Career Guidance programme in Botswana and to discuss the objectives of the programme, as well as the role played by the Career Guidance Department as the primary leader in career development in Botswana.

The chapter also discussed the activities facilitated by the Career Guidance Department for primary and secondary schools. These activities that are meant to promote career development amongst senior public secondary school learners include the following:

- Girls in science
- The annual Career Fair
- Job-shadowing.

Chapter 3 also discussed the role played by other stakeholders in the facilitation of career development amongst senior public secondary school learners, such as

- the department of Student Placement and Welfare which provides financial support and career guidance to post-secondary candidates;
- school personnel, such as the school guidance counsellor and class-teachers; and
- outside school support through the involvement of parents, Junior Achievement Botswana, the University of Botswana, Debswana Mining Company and industries/employers.

The learning outcomes and assessment standards for the school career guidance programme in Form 4 and Form 5 were discussed. The attainment or non-attainment would not only offer insight into what needs to be done to improve the career guidance services in place, but also provide a useful yardstick to determine whether or not the learners' needs are being met. This would then address the second aim of the study which is to determine the extent to which the current career guidance curriculum in Botswana addresses the needs of the learners.

Chapter 3 would have been incomplete without discussing the challenges encountered by public schools in Botswana to provide career guidance services to learners. Counsellor training and human resources, limited time, as well as career guidance service delivery practices emerged as the key areas of concern.

#### **6.2.4 Research design and methodology**

Chapter 4 addressed the research design and methodology. Attention was paid to the definition of mixed methods research which is the design employed by the study to collect the data for the study. The rationale for using mixed methods research design was given, including the advantages of the research design.

The study combined the qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data; necessitating a discussion of the two research methods. Attention was also given to focus-group interviews which formed the qualitative component of the study. The discussion included, among others, the rationale for using focus-group interviews, pilot study, and data analysis and presentation.

The study also discussed the questionnaire which was the data-collection instrument for the quantitative part of the study. The discussion included the following:

- The piloting of the questionnaire
- Conducting the questionnaire
- The study population
- The response
- The statistical techniques used.

Chapter 4 concluded with a discussion of the ethical considerations and the administrative procedures undertaken to make the study possible.

#### **6.2.5 Summary of the career planning needs of senior public secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana.**

The main aim of the study is to establish the Career Planning Needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana. The following is a brief overview of the career planning

needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana as expressed by the learners themselves.

The study reveals that there is serious need for providing a systematic career guidance programme which will adequately address the career planning needs of Senior Public Secondary School learners in Botswana. Adequate time needs to be devoted to the career guidance component of guidance and counselling because it has emerged as the component that is most affected by the limited time allocated to guidance and counselling.

#### **6.2.5.1 Help required to make career plans**

- The greatest need was expressed in the area of understanding interests and abilities.
- A crucial need was expressed for information about the government of Botswana's grant/loan scheme.
- The study also highlighted a need for information on post-secondary institutions.
- One of the greatest needs was to obtain information about the different kinds of occupations available in the country.
- A specific need was indicated for assistance with choosing between two or more occupational options.

#### **6.2.5.2 Availability of key career planning services/resource materials**

- Key career-exploration resource materials such as career audio/video tapes and the internet need to be used to enhance in-depth career exploration among learners.
- There is urgent need to improve the sub-standard service offered by the Career Fair. It would be more beneficial to host the fair during the last trimester of Form 4; to increase the duration of the fair; to provide specific and clear information, and to cover a wide range of careers instead of only focusing on conventional careers.
- Career/occupational information emerged as one of the greatest needs. This need for career/occupational information emphasises the critical need to organise school/career

talks, field trips/excursions and job-shadowing to augment the services obtained from the Career Fair, which is a once-off activity.

- Parents who are the major influencers of their children's career aspirations and are a useful resource must be involved in the career development of learners in a systematic manner. Ways need to be found to advise parents against imposing their career aspirations on their children. Evidently there is a need for school counsellors to be proactive in resolving conflicts between learners and their parents with regard to career and educational choices (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1996:34).

### **6.2.5.3 Educational/occupational information needs**

- A definite need was also expressed for information on present and future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market. The quantitative findings recorded a cumulative percentage of 72.3% for minimal information and no information at all in this area.
- Most of the participants (66.5%) indicated they either possessed little knowledge or no knowledge at all of the means to cope with unemployment. This finding highlights a need to equip the participants with the skills to cope with unemployment, particularly when one considers the high unemployment rate in Botswana (Bhusumane, 2001:2).
- The participants expressed a huge need for information on the influence of technological changes on the job market, with 55.3% of the participants indicating that they either possessed minimal information on this area or none at all.

### **6.2.5.4 Current occupational preferences**

- According to the quantitative findings a large proportion of the participants (67.4%) reported that they needed information on the starting salary for their preferred occupations.

- The quantitative findings showed that approximately sixty percent (58.7%) of the participants reported that they had little or no information on the chances of succeeding and advancing/being promoted/progressing in their preferred occupations. This finding indicates a definite need for this information.
- Close to half the participants (47.9% from the quantitative findings) expressed a crucial need for information on the country's future man-power needs. The first focus-group interviews also highlighted this need (see 5.4.2.6).

### **6.2.5.5 Participation in career development/planning**

- Much needs to be done to promote individual career guidance/counselling, since 46.5% of the participants indicated that they had not individually consulted with the school guidance counsellor for assistance with career planning. A little over one fifth (22.2%) of the participants also indicated that they had not done that very well. This situation can possibly be attributed to the lack of fully competent career counsellors in public schools in Botswana which results in learners feeling that school guidance counsellors are ill-equipped to provide them with career guidance and counselling.

The findings of the study also indicate that the learners in the study were not aware that the role of the school counsellor extends to offering career guidance and counselling to learners, indicating a need to create awareness amongst the learners about this.

- A need was expressed for the participants (54.9%) to take part in extra-mural activities so that they could explore their interests, talents and abilities.
- Slightly over two fifths (40.8% according to the quantitative findings) of the participants indicated they had either not given enough thought to the means to cope with the obstacles encountered at the time of choosing an occupation or had not considered it at all. This finding indicates a need to assist learners to acquire the skills to deal with the obstacles met during the career choice process.

### **6.2.5.6 Knowledge of job finding/seeking/getting and keeping skills**

Knowledge of job finding/seeking/getting and keeping skills was rated the highest need area of the whole study. The qualitative findings and, in particular, the second focus-group interviews not only indicate that there is lack of a systematic career guidance programme in Botswana, but also that the participants were provided with very little career information during their time at senior secondary school, if any. It follows logically that the participants should express a critical need for career/occupational information.

- The participants expressed a high need for information on where to look for a job.
- Assistance was also sought on how to write a CV.
- A crucial need was recorded for assistance in preparing for and presenting one at a job interview.
- A critical area of need was to know how employers hire people.
- More than half the participants (58.5% for little information and no information at all according to the quantitative findings) reported a need for information on what employers expect from new employees.
- A definite need was expressed for information on the personal qualities employers consider important when hiring people.
- Participants expressed the need to have knowledge of the factors that can influence the success and advancement of an individual in a job.
- The participants reported a need for information on what an employee should do to keep a job.

### **6.2.6 The extent to which the current career guidance curriculum in senior public secondary schools in Botswana meets the needs of the learners**

The Curriculum and Evaluation Department in Botswana has to be credited for providing the necessary conceptual frame-work for the content to be covered when offering career guidance in senior public secondary schools. The curriculum covers a wide range of topics which are central to career development in adolescence. However, the standard and quality of service in schools fall short of the requirements of the curriculum, leading to learners' needs not being fully met.

A number of obstacles hamper the proper implementation of a fully-fledged career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools in Botswana. Among these is the inadequate amount of time allocated to guidance and counselling as a subject, which is allocated one forty-minute lesson per week for all four components. Lack of fully trained teachers to offer career guidance in senior public secondary schools also adversely impacts on the delivery of career guidance services both inside and outside the class-room.

Besides the fact that career guidance is offered by teachers who either totally lack the relevant qualifications or are only partially qualified to offer the subject, teachers find themselves overburdened by heavy workloads. The lack of proper monitoring and evaluation by the Guidance and Counselling Division (Career Guidance Services Unit) only serves to further lower the status of guidance and counselling which, as it is, is accorded little significance, since it is offered for enrichment purposes only and is not taken seriously by both teachers and learners.

The findings of the study indicate that a number of learning outcomes were not achieved, resulting in the learners' career planning needs not being met. The learning outcomes that were not met include the first three learning objectives that offer basic career exploration skills, which should have been covered in the first year of senior public secondary school (Form 4) as indicated below:

- The facilitation of career self-exploration in learners and the integration of the knowledge acquired thereof with the learners' subject selection and the world of work;
- the provision of research skills on career opportunities;

- the provision of information on post-secondary institutions/further training. (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:11, 23& 24).

There are also indications that the learning outcome requiring the enlightenment of learners about the job market, i.e. learning outcome 7 for Form 4 (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25), was not met. The lack of achievement for this learning outcome (7) has adverse implications for the following two assessment standards meant to evaluate it:

- Identify and discuss the changes in the world of work.
- State and discuss the consequences of unemployment.

The quantitative study indicates that none of the schools conducted mock job interviews for the learners, and this is a clear indication that the assessment standard requiring learners to conduct a role-play of at least one job interview was not achieved. The assessment standard is part of the learning outcome 5 for Form 4, together with its overlapping learning outcome 6 in Form 5, advocating for knowledge of the skills necessary to prepare for an interview (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998: 24-25).

The findings of the study further indicate that some of the learning objectives for Form 5 were not achieved. One of these is learning outcome 4 which calls for learners to be equipped with job-seeking skills (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25), together with its overlapping learning outcome 6 in Form 4, which advocates for knowledge of job-finding and keeping skills amongst learners (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:25).

Other learning outcomes for Form 5 which, according to the study, were not achieved are:

- learning outcome 5, advocating for the provision of adequate information to learners on the different careers in the country;
- learning outcome 2, requiring learners to make a career choice and to explore it, together with its overarching learning outcome 9 in Form 4 that calls for full knowledge of all the conditions of service of all the careers in which learners are interested;
- learning outcome 3, indicating that learners should be fully provided with information on training opportunities and scholarship possibilities (Botswana Ministry of Education, 1998:29 & 36)

The findings of the study also reveal the absence of major career exploration activities from schools. The key career exploration activities which could profoundly enhance career exploration among learners include the following:

- The use of career audio/video tapes and internet as teaching aids;
- visits by learners to tertiary institutions;
- school/career talks by various representatives of the world of work; and
- job-shadowing and career field trips/excursions which could provide learners with direct work experiences and assist learners to obtain specific occupational information.

Another major disappointing finding of the study is the apparent ineffectiveness of the annual career fair in providing learners with current and adequate career information due to limited time as one of the factors.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Owing to the neglect of career guidance, it should be separated from personal, social and educational guidance and form an independent subject with its own scheduled time.
- The time allocation for career guidance should then be increased from 40 minutes to 80 minutes per week.
- Career guidance should become examinable to enhance its status.
- Career guidance should be offered by fully trained and competent teachers who can effectively provide career guidance services, including counselling to learners.
- The Career Fair should be hosted at the end of Form 4 so that learners can put into effect what they learned from the fair while there is still time. The number of days for the fair should be increased to five to allow for a wide variety of professionals to be invited and for comprehensive information to be disseminated to the learners.
- Career/school talks should feature as a regular career exploration activity in schools, with a broad range of professionals from the world of work and from tertiary institutions being invited to disseminate career and educational information to learners.
- Schools should facilitate key career exploration activities such as job-shadowing and not only rely on the Career Fair as the sole career exploration activity.
- The Career Guidance Services Unit should closely monitor the provision of career guidance services/activities in schools to ascertain that schools provide meaningful

experiences to learners.

- The Career Guidance Services Unit should provide the necessary materials, including audio-visual materials, to facilitate the provision of career guidance services/activities to learners.
- Comprehensive ways must be found of involving and utilising parents in the individual career development of their children to promote individual career exploration amongst learners and to assist learners with self-exploration.
- Tertiary institutions must be encouraged to host open days to disseminate educational information to Senior Public Secondary School Learners.

#### **6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The researcher experienced the following limitations during the study:

- Owing to time and financial constraints the study was conducted with only learners from senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana. It would have been ideal to conduct the study with learners from the rural areas as well to compare comparison the career planning needs of learners in those areas with those of the learners in Gaborone.
- It would also have been beneficial to investigate the views of teachers on the challenges they face in rendering career guidance services/activities to learners and on the significance they attach to career guidance in schools.
- Literature on career guidance services in Botswana, particularly from electronic sources, is very scarce and the researcher had to rely a lot on literature from other countries.

Based on the research findings the researcher offers the following recommendations for future research:

- Research that is similar to the current study could be undertaken with learners from private senior secondary schools or those from senior public secondary schools in rural areas to facilitate a comparison of the learners' career planning needs.
- An evaluation needs to be done on the effectiveness of the school career guidance programme in terms of its status as a component of the school guidance and counselling programme.
- The effectiveness of the Career Fair in disseminating career information to learners needs to be established.
- The role of industries/employers and tertiary institutions in assisting schools to facilitate career development amongst learners must be investigated.

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

The study has revealed a number of career planning needs of learners in senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana. The absence of a systematic career guidance programme in senior public secondary schools in Gaborone, Botswana has the effect that several learning objectives are not achieved, resulting in learners' career planning needs not being met. The non-provision of primary and pivotal career exploration activities, such as job-shadowing, career field trips and school/career talks which could provide learners with specific occupational information, aggravates the situation leading to learners making less than optimal career decisions.

There is also an apparent lack of involvement by community support organs which are supposed to offer school guidance/career counsellors assistance in effectively promoting career development in learners. These organs include the following:

- The employment sector which is supposed to produce up-to-date career information for schools and to offer teachers in-service training to fully provide them with career/occupational information.
- The University of Botswana which is supposed to disseminate educational information to schools about the programmes of study offered by the university.

- Debswana Mining Company which is supposed to make presentations on the mining sector at various Career Fairs organised for Form 5 learners in senior public secondary schools.

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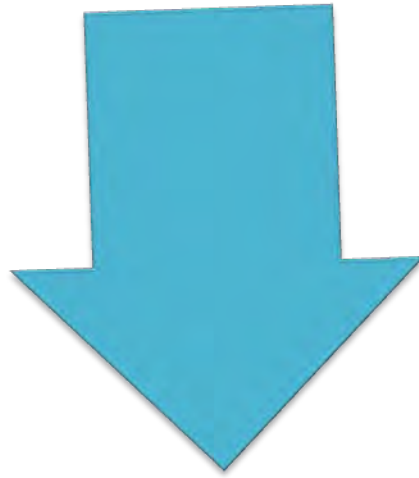
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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A



**CONSENT FROM MARIZA GONZALEZ  
TO USE HER QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Nnana:

Thank you very much for your letter. I just read your mail coming from my vacations.

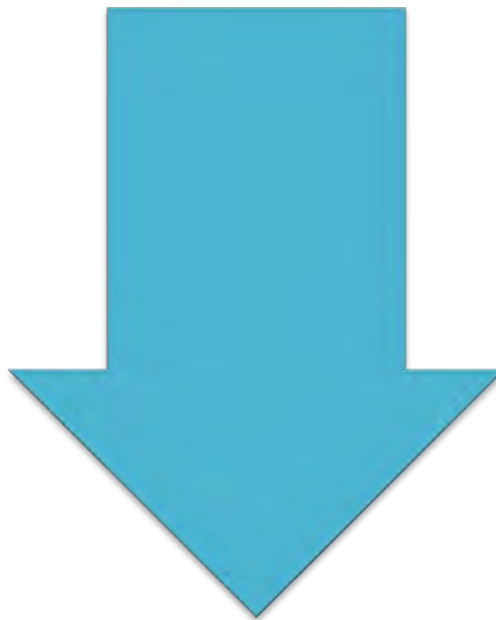
I'm very happy to know that you are going to work in career education in Botswana. Of course you can use and adapt our questionnaire. I would be very interested in knowing your results. Please stay in contact and let me know if there is something that I can do for you.

Good luck with your research!

Sincerely yours

Marisa

# APPENDIX B



**CONSENT FROM MAGNUSSON  
TO USE HIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Nnana,

Thank you for your interest in our work; by all means feel free to use and/or modify any materials as you see fit.

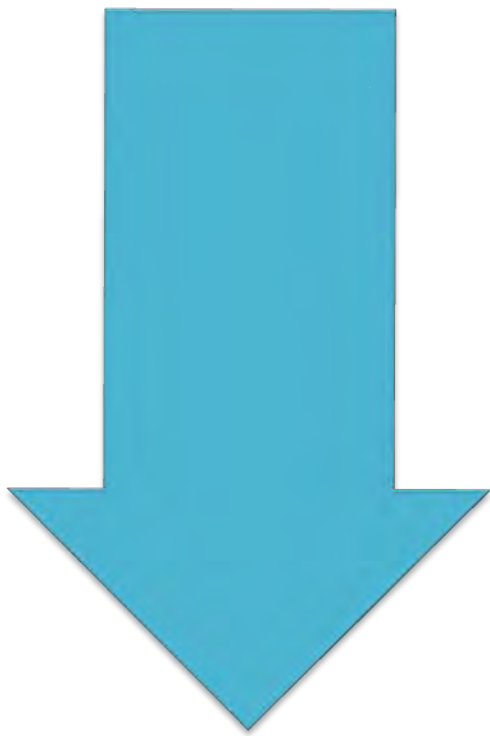
The copies I have available are pre-print drafts, but you are welcome to use them. I am sending them as a series of files; each version of the survey had slight modifications, depending on the audience. So, there is a form for Junior High School students, Senior High School students, parents, teachers, and counsellors.

I hope you find them useful and best of luck for your research!

Take care,

Kris Magnusson, Ph.D.  
Associate Vice President, Academic  
The University of Lethbridge  
4401 University Drive  
Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4  
(403) 329-2202

# APPENDIX C



**LETTER TO MINISTRY OF  
EDUCATION (BOTSWANA)**



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-1111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Tel: (018) 299 4560

[Almero.kok@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Almero.kok@nwu.ac.za)

24 April 2008

Dear Sir/ Madam

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

I am an M.Ed. student at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus under the guidance of Dr A Kok and I am conducting a study on the career planning needs of senior secondary school learners in Gaborone, Botswana.

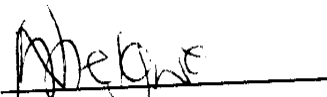
The purpose of the study is (1) to determine the career planning needs of the learners as articulated by the learners themselves and (2) to determine to what extent the current Career Guidance curriculum meets the needs of the learners.

The study will consist of 3 visits to your school by the researcher and will include the 3 phases indicated below:

- 1<sup>st</sup> focus-group interviews, in May 2008
- administration of questionnaire, at the end of June 2008
- 2<sup>nd</sup> focus-group interviews, in July 2008

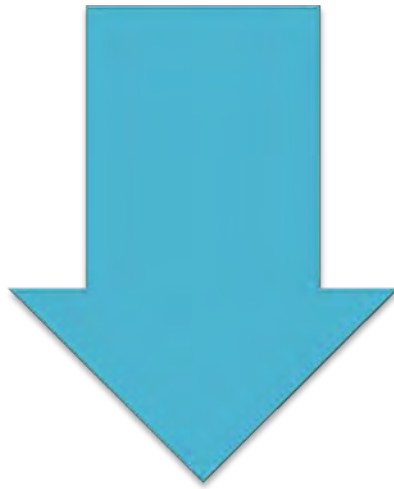
Student participation in the study is voluntary and their anonymity is guaranteed.

Your permission is therefore requested to conduct the study. Thanking you in advance.

  
Nnananyana K E Mkgwe

  
Supervisor: Dr Almero Kok

# APPENDIX D



**RESPONSE FROM  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
(BOTSWANA)**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

TELEPHONE: (267) 3901263  
FAX: (267) 3975899



Republic of Botswana

Chief Education Officer  
South Central Region  
Department of Secondary Education  
Private Bag 00343  
GABORONE  
BOTSWANA

REO: 1/15/21 (18)

29 April 2008

Head of Department of Educational Foundation  
Faculty of Education Sciences  
Private Bag X6001  
Potchefstroom  
SOUTH AFRICA  
2520

**ATTENTION:** Prof. L. W. MEYER

Dear Sir

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

We acknowledge receipt of your letter requesting permission for student **NNANA-NYANA KE MEKGWE** of students number **20 43 85 08** to conduct research in our senior schools.

Therefore this serves to grant her a permit to conduct a study using our secondary schools in fulfillment of her Master Degree.

She is therefore requested to submit a copy of her final report of the study to the division of Planning, Statistics and Research, Ministry of Education – Botswana.

Thank you.

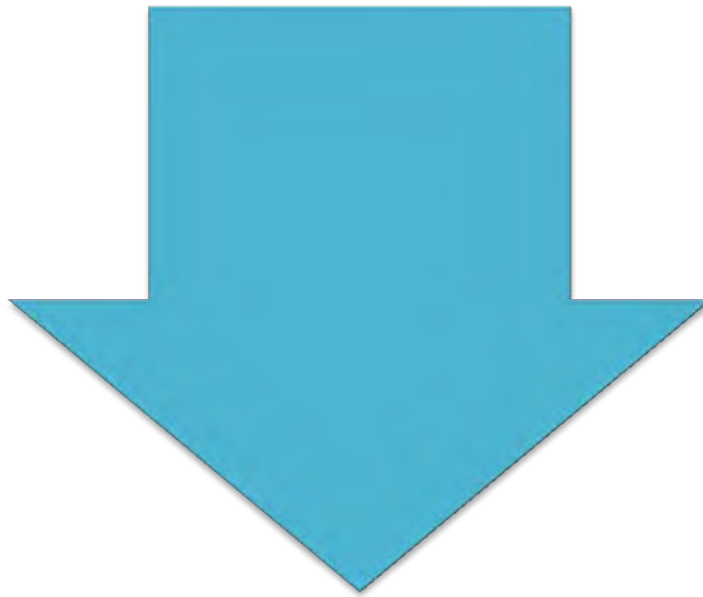
Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. B. Kelaotswe'.

M. B. Kelaotswe  
*For*/CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

/dbn.

# APPENDIX E



**LETTER TO PARENTS**

Dear parent/guardian

I am a teacher at Ledumang Senior Secondary School, currently on study leave in South Africa. As part of my degree programme at the University of North-West, Potchefstroom Campus, I am conducting a study on the career planning needs of Senior Secondary School learners in Gaborone, Botswana, as well as the extent to which the current career guidance curriculum meets the needs of the learners.

The study will consist of 3 visits to the schools and will include the following 3 phases:

1. 1<sup>st</sup> focus-group interviews
2. questionnaire administration
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> focus-group interviews

The Regional Education Office in Gaborone and the headmaster of Ledumang Senior Secondary School have given their permission for me to conduct the study.

Participation in the study is voluntary and the learners are assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Learners will not be identified in the study and any responses they give will not link them to anything that might be published.

May I kindly request consent for your son/daughter to participate in the study.

Please contact me at 71 864 164 if you have any questions.

Thanking you

N.K.E Mekgwe (Miss).

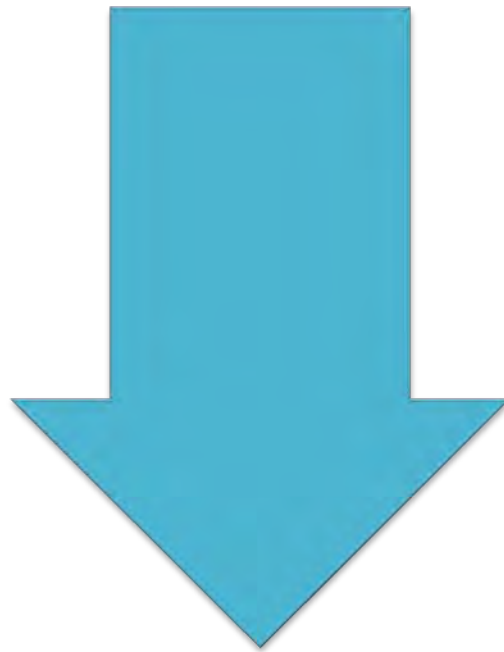
I give/do not give consent for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_  
to participate in the study.

Printed name of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX F



LETTER FROM PROF LESSING

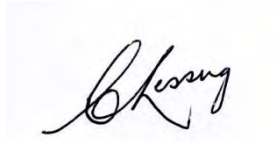
1 Gerrit Dekker Street  
POTCHEFSTROOM  
2531  
13 January 2010

Ms N Mekgwe  
NWU (Potchefstroom Campus)

### **CHECKING OF BIBLIOGRAPHY**

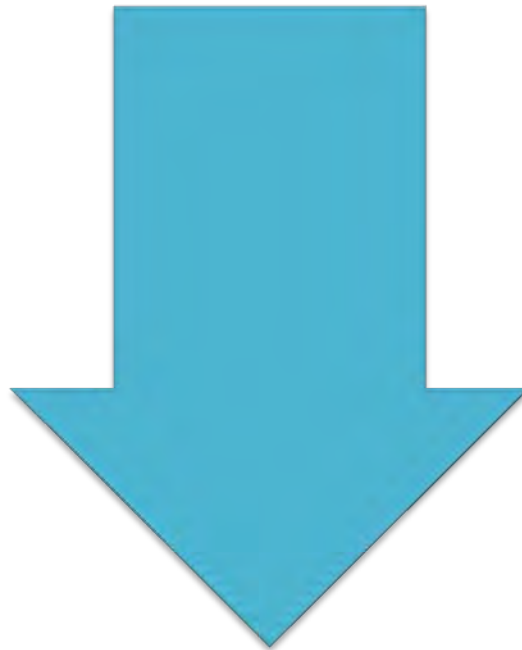
Hereby I declare that I have checked the technical correctness of the Bibliography of the MEd.-thesis of Ms N Mekgwe according to the prescribed format of the Senate of the North-West University.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CJH Lessing', is written on a light blue rectangular background.

**Prof CJH LESSING**

# APPENDIX G



LETTER FROM DR ELLIS



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
POTCHEFSTROOMKAMPUS  
Privatebag X6001 Potchefstroom 2520  
Tel (018) 299 1111 Fax (018) 299 2799  
<http://www.puk.ac.za>

**Statistical Consultation Services**  
Tel: (018) 299 2016

Fax: (018) 299 2557

19 April 2010

**To whom it may concern**

**Re: Dissertation Ms. N.K.E. Mekgwe, student number: 20438508**

We hereby confirm that the Statistical Consultation Service of the North-West University has analysed the data and assisted with the interpretation of the results.

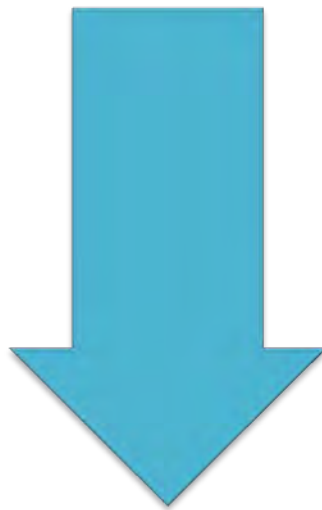
Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S M Ellis".

**DR. S M ELLIS (Pr. Sci. Nat)**

**Head Statistical Consultation Service**

# APPENDIX H



LETTER FROM Ms ELRENE VAN  
DEEMTER

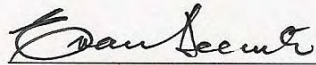
2 Suntree  
Malcolm Rd  
President Ridge  
Randburg  
25 April 2010

Ms NKE Mekgwe  
NWU (Potchefstroom Campus)

**LANGUAGE EDITING**

This serves to declare that I have checked the language usage in Ms NKE Mekgwe's thesis according to the rules of English (South Africa) and the style guide of the NWU (Potchefstroom Campus).

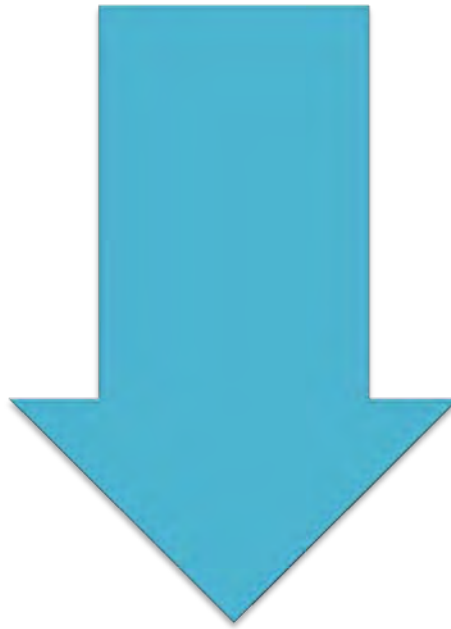
Kind regards



---

Ms Elrene van Deemter  
BA, MEd, UED

# APPENDIX H



LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

## LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to identify the career planning needs of Senior Public Secondary School Learners in Gaborone, Botswana. The researcher asks for your support in making the study a success. You are assured that the information obtained will be treated as confidential.

### SECTION A: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. SEX:  MALE  FEMALE
2. AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION B: CAREER PLANNING NEEDS

Please respond to the following questions by making a cross (x) in the appropriate box.

#### PART 1: CAREER PLANS

3	How important is career planning to you at this point in your life?	Most definitely	Definitely	A little/ somewhat	Not at all
		1	2	3	4

Which of the following best describes your plans regarding what you will be doing after completing senior secondary school? Please tick one answer only.

4	I know exactly what I will be doing.	
5	I am trying to decide between a couple of different plans.	
6	I am not sure what I want to do, but I have started working on it.	
7	I don't know what I want to do and it does not worry me.	

#### PART 2: CAREER HELP

There are a number of things that people find useful for career planning. What would you find helpful at this point in your life?

		Very helpful	Helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
8	Understanding my interests and abilities.	1	2	3	4
9	Information about different kinds of occupations.	1	2	3	4
10	Help with choosing between two or more occupational options.	1	2	3	4
11	Information about post-secondary institutions, e.g. colleges of education.	1	2	3	4
12	Information about the grant/loan scheme/sponsorship for continuing my education	1	2	3	4
13	Other (please specify).	1	2	3	4

The next question has two parts: in the first column, please rate how available each service or resource has been. In the second column, indicate whether or not you made use of the service or resource.

		DEGREE OF AVAILABILITY				YES	NO
		1-Highly available 2-Available 3-Sometimes available 4- Not at all					
14	Career Audio/Video Tapes	1	2	3	4		
15	School career information centre/school library	1	2	3	4		
16	School guidance Counsellor	1	2	3	4		
17	Other teachers	1	2	3	4		
18	Written career guidance/ education materials	1	2	3	4		
19	Career fair	1	2	3	4		
20	Internet	1	2	3	4		
21	Job-shadowing	1	2	3	4		
22	Parents	1	2	3	4		
23	Other family members	1	2	3	4		
24	Your friends	1	2	3	4		
25	Visits to tertiary institutions	1	2	3	4		
26	School/career talks by various representatives of the world of work	1	2	3	4		
27	Different school subjects	1	2	3	4		
28	Observations of individuals at work	1	2	3	4		
29	Discussions with workers in different jobs	1	2	3	4		

When you think about the next few years of your life, how confident are you about the following?

		Very likely	Likely	Somewhat unlikely	Not likely at all
30	I will be able to find an occupation that I love.	1	2	3	4
31	I will be able to get the training or education that I need.	1	2	3	4
32	I will be able to find work/get a job in the occupation I have chosen.	1	2	3	4

### PART 3: SELF-ASSESSMENT INFORMATION NEEDS

Indicate how well you think you know/understand the following about yourself.

		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
33	Your personality	1	2	3	4
34	Your good and bad habits	1	2	3	4
35	Your interests and personal taste in different activities	1	2	3	4
36	Your abilities and talents	1	2	3	4
37	The kind of work that matches your ability	1	2	3	4
38	What is important to you in work	1	2	3	4

#### **PART 4: EDUCATIONAL/OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION NEEDS**

Indicate how well you think you know the following.

		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
39	The educational opportunities open to you after you complete senior secondary school.	1	2	3	4
40	The education required to achieve your plans for the future.	1	2	3	4
41	The occupations and jobs you find interesting.	1	2	3	4
42	The occupations and jobs best suited to you.	1	2	3	4
43	The educational requirements for the course/schools you might attend next year.	1	2	3	4
44	Possibilities/opportunities in tertiary education following senior secondary school.	1	2	3	4
45	The influence of technological changes on the market.	1	2	3	4
46	The present and the future employment patterns in the different fields of the job market.	1	2	3	4
47	The means to cope with unemployment.	1	2	3	4

#### **PART 5 : CURRENT OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCES**

Please think about the kind of jobs/occupations which interest you the most and indicate how well you know them.

		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
48	The kind of work/tasks performed	1	2	3	4
49	The required education or training	1	2	3	4
50	The man-power needs of the country in the future	1	2	3	4
51	The required abilities	1	2	3	4
52	The necessary interests	1	2	3	4
53	The required personal characteristics	1	2	3	4
54	The working conditions	1	2	3	4
55	The starting salary	1	2	3	4
56	The chances of progressing/advancing/being promoted	1	2	3	4

#### **PART 6: PARTICIPATION IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING**

Please indicate the extent to which you have done the following in order to prepare for the career you want to follow after completing your senior secondary education.

		Very well	Well	Not very well	Not at all
57	Finding out about as many careers as possible.	1	2	3	4
58	Consulting with your guidance teacher/counsellor for information to make decisions concerning your career.	1	2	3	4
59	Finding out about the tasks involved/kind of work done in the occupation/job in which you are interested.	1	2	3	4
60	Trying to discover your strengths and weaknesses in your subjects.	1	2	3	4
61	Discussing your career plans with a person who knows you well.	1	2	3	4
62	Trying to discover your personal tastes throughout your subjects.	1	2	3	4
63	Making the link between your school results and your future career plans.	1	2	3	4
64	Participating in various extra-curricular activities or out-of-school activities to get to know yourself better.	1	2	3	4
65	Considering your interests or aptitudes in all your choices concerning your career.	1	2	3	4
66	Considering occupations which take into account as much as possible your personal tastes, aptitudes and qualities.	1	2	3	4
67	Identifying the obstacles that might prevent you from reaching your career goals.	1	2	3	4
68	Being open to several alternatives when planning your future career and studies.	1	2	3	4
69	Thinking of the means to overcome the obstacles encountered at the time of choosing an occupation.	1	2	3	4

## **PART 7: JOB FINDING/SEEKING/GETTING AND KEEPING SKILLS**

To what extent do you have knowledge about the following?

		Quite a lot	Sufficient	Very little	Not at all
70	Where to look for a job	1	2	3	4
71	How to write an application letter for a job	1	2	3	4
72	How to write a curriculum vitae/CV	1	2	3	4
73	How to prepare for a job interview	1	2	3	4
74	How to present yourself at a job interview	1	2	3	4
75	How employees hire someone	1	2	3	4
76	What employers expect from new employees	1	2	3	4
77	Which personal qualities employers consider important when hiring someone.	1	2	3	4
78	What can influence the success and advancement/progress of a person in a job?	1	2	3	4
79	What an employee should do to keep a job.	1	2	3	4

# APPENDIX I



**FIRST FOCUS-GROUP INTERVIEW  
QUESTIONS**

1. Tell me about the career/occupational goals you are planning to pursue after completing your senior secondary education.
2. If you have not made any career/occupational goal(s), who/what would help you to make a career/occupational goal?
3. Who/what can help you to achieve your career/occupational goal(s)?
4. Who/ what has been the greatest influence in your choice of an occupational goal(s)?
5. What have you done so far to make your occupational/career goal(s) attainable?
6. What may hinder you from achieving your occupational/career goal(s)?
7. What are you most encouraged about when you think of your potential career?
8. What are you most discouraged about when you think of your potential career?
9. Which/what do you think is your greatest career /occupational need?

# APPENDIX J



**SECOND FOCUS-GROUP  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. When did you start receiving career guidance at this school? How did you benefit/ What have you learned?
2. After having attended the career fair, what would you say are your career needs at present? Do you now feel more competent in making a career decision? Please explain.
3. Who do you think can help you address your future career and (further) study needs, i.e. in terms of teachers, parents, professional persons? How do you think these needs can be addressed?