

Editorial comment



Authors:

Janet Jarvis¹ 
Sarina de Jager² 

Affiliations:

¹Discipline of Life Orientation Education, School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pinetown, South Africa

²Department of Humanities, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Janet Jarvis,
janet.jarvis75@gmail.com

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This special issue of the *Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa* is dedicated to 'Life (dis)Orientation' and presents the work of academics in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) who teach Life Orientation (LO). The two guest editors, Dr Janet Jarvis (Academic Leader and Senior Lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education) and Dr Sarina de Jager (Lecturer in Life Orientation at the University of Pretoria), facilitated a virtual national colloquium for LO lecturers in 2020. This special issue has come into being as a result of this colloquium. The guest editors thank the contributors to this special issue, and also the reviewers and editorial team.

This special issue begins with an article by Jarvis and De Jager, who argue for the importance of collaborative conversations across HEIs. The authors contend that meaningful boundary talk can be transformative in nature and provide the platform for research ventures. This collaboration, which commenced as a community of two in conversation, led to a community of many in conversation in the form of a national colloquium that focused on LO in the Higher Education space.

Focusing on human rights in LO, and in particular, the right to religious freedom, Jarvis argues that currently held narratives of lived experience require dialogical exploration. Integrally linked to any such exploration is the identity of the explorer. Her article focuses on teacher identity and, in particular, teacher religious identity, with a view to transformed Religion Education.

In their article, De Jager and Delport de Villiers maintain that it is crucial to interrogate the LO teachers' lived experiences of facilitating courageous conversations in the LO classroom. They speak of the courage required of teachers to challenge and be challenged, and that this can result in teacher vulnerability.

Concerned about higher education undergraduate drop-out rates, Makola, Saliwe, Dube, Tabane and Mudau advocate for sound career guidance within the LO high school programme. This should include the dissemination of information on diverse careers and work experiences, and the inclusion of role models who have been successful in various careers.

Mouton and Morelli present a conceptual study that creates a theoretical framework for the integration of music and the social and personal well-being of LO learners in the intermediate phase. They contend that this integration cultivates 'moral and cultural education, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being'.

Jarvis's second article presents a teaching-learning strategy that creates the opportunity for teachers to re-story previously held narratives. This strategy serves a decolonisation agenda and adopts a transdisciplinary approach. It encourages reflection and reflexivity that can potentially transform LO classroom practice into classroom praxis.

In a similar vein, Khau uses intergroup dialogue in LO as an innovative pedagogical tool to disrupt heteropatriarchal notions of sexual consent, in the context of gender-based violence. This dialogue led to a greater understanding of sexual consent and the role played by 'shaming, blaming and silencing of victims in perpetuating gender-based violence'. She argues for intergroup dialogue as an important pedagogical tool for facilitating critical reflection and awareness.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) within LO aims to contribute positively to holistic adolescent sexual health. Koch and Weymeyer, in their systematic review, consider the development

and delivery of CSE. They contend that teaching methods should take into consideration the importance of learner's voices and cultural contexts.

Physical Education (PE), located within the LO curriculum, has been recognised as an essential tool for education. Jones and Roux argue for values-based PE that has the potential 'to

transcend diversity and achieve cohesion, promote tolerance and trust, and affirm respect between individuals and communities'.

The guest editors are hopeful that conversations can continue in the future, possibly at a second national colloquium focusing on how LO can serve a decolonisation agenda.