

**HOME ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS
OF GRADE 10 LEARNERS
IN THE OMUSATI REGION.**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF EDUCATION**

BY

PENOSHINGE I. SHILILIFA

APRIL 2006

**SUPERVISOR: DR L. MOSTERT
CO-SUPERVISOR: PROF. R.F. ZIMBA**

**HOME ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS
OF GRADE 10 LEARNERS
IN THE OMUSATI REGION.**

PENOSHINGE INAMUVULWA. SHILILIFA

APRIL 2006

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at establishing how different home environment factors influence the formation of the learners' educational and occupational aspirations. The study focused on the following home variables.

1. Socio economic background
2. Parental education
3. Parental involvement
4. Gender of Learners

To achieve the objectives, a quantitative non-experimental method was employed. The questionnaire was administered to a stratified sample of 10 schools in the Omusati region. The results of this questionnaire provided evidence that home environmental factors had an influence on the learners' educational and occupational aspirations. It was found that socio economic background, parent level of education, and parental involvement had a significant influence on the learners' educational and occupational aspirations. The variable of gender also had a significant influence on the educational and occupational aspirations of learners. No significant relationship was found with regard to the impact of father's level of education and learners' occupational aspirations. However, a significant relationship was found to exist between the father's level of education and the learners' academic performance.

This study offers support to the results of some other studies carried out both in Namibia and elsewhere. Based on the findings of this study, some recommendations are given as a

model for improving home environment factors that have an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Title page	
Abstract.....	i
Table of Contents.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Dedication.....	viii
Declaration.....	ix
List of tables.....	x
CHAPTER 1.....	1-9
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Significance of the study.....	5
1.4 Research questions.....	6
1.5 Limitations of the study.....	7
1.6 Definitions of terms.....	8
CHAPTER 2.....	10-21
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	10
2.3 The impact of socio-economic background on the learners educational and occupational aspirations.....	12

2.4	The impact of parental involvement on the learner’s educational and occupational aspirations.....	13
2.5	The impact of parental education on the learner’s educational and occupational aspirations.....	15
2.6	The effects of gender on the learners’ educational and occupational aspirations.....	17
3. CHAPTER 3.....		22-31
3.	METHODOLOGY.....	22
3.1	Introduction.....	22
3.2	Research design.....	22
3.3	Population.....	23
3.4	Sampling.....	23
3.5	Research instrument.....	26
3.6	Pilot study.....	28
3.7	Report on the Pilot Study	29
3.8	Validity and reliability of measuring instruments	29
3.9	Procedure.....	30
3.10	Data Analysis.....	31
CHAPTER 4.....		32-63
RESEARCH RESULTS		32
4.1	Results regarding the educational and occupational aspirations and performance of learners.....	32
4.2	Results related to the impact of socio economic background on learners’ educational and occupational aspirations.....	34

4.3	Results related to the impact of parental education on learners educational and occupational aspiration.....	47
4.4	The results related to the effect of gender on learners’ educational and occupational aspirations	53
4.5	Results related to the impact of parental involvement on learners’ education and occupation aspirations.....	56
4.6	Summary	63

CHAPTER 5.....64 -75

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS..... 64

5.1	Discussion of results regarding educational and occupational aspirations and performance of learners.....	64
5.2	Discussion on the impact of socio economic background on earners’ educational and occupational aspiration	65
5.3	Discussion on the impact of parental education on learners educational and occupational aspirations	67
5.4	Discussion on the effect of gender on learners’ educational and occupational aspirations	69
5.5	Discussion on the impact of parental involvement on learners’ educational and occupational aspirations	70

5.6	Implications.....	72
5.7	Recommendations	73
5.8	Conclusion.....	75
	REFERENCES	77
	APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE.....	80
	APPENDIX B: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION.....	93

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to the Ministry of Education for according me this opportunity to pursue the postgraduate degree in Master of education.

I would also like to thank my supervisors Dr. L. M. Mostert and Professor R. Zimba for advising, guiding and standing by me during the compilation of this work. Likewise I would like to thank my friend Brenda Mouton and my sisters Kaija and Kleria Shililifa for their continuous support, hospitality and dedication throughout the compilation of this work.

My gratitude goes to my brother Wycliff Shililifa for his assistance and dedication in statistically analyzing the data for this study.

Without the support, advice and knowledge sharing from my classmates together with the contribution of the experts from different fields and my professors, I could not gain much knowledge from this course, therefore I want to say thank you and God bless you in your future endeavors.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my first teachers, my parents, Heikki and Frieda Magano Shililifa who have been my pillar of strength, a source of hope and inspiration. Without their attention, love, care and guidance I would never come this far.

I also dedicate this work to my brothers, sisters and my son Heikki for being always there for me all this time. Lastly this work is dedicated to the grade 10 learners in the Omusati Education region for their valuable contributions to this study.

DECLARATIONS

I , Penoshinge I. Shililifa, declare that this is a true reflection of my own research, and has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher learning. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system , or transmitted in any form, or by any means (e.g. electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the author, or the university of Namibia in that behalf.

In presenting this thesis, I grant the University of Namibia the right to reproduce it in whole or in part, in any manner or format which the University may deem fit, for any person or institution requiring it for study and research; provided that the university shall waive this right if the whole thesis has been or is being published in a manner satisfactory to the University.

Penoshinge I. Shililifa

Date

LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE
Table 1: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to gender.....	25
Table 2: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to age.....	25
Table 3: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to school.....	26
Table 4: Academic performance of the respondents in the latest examination.....	33
Table 5: The highest level of education respondents would like to continue After complete grade 10.....	33
Table 6: Status of jobs respondents would like to do after complete school.....	34
Table 7: Whether parents/guardians had a paid job.....	35
Table 8: father/ guardian occupation.....	35
Table 9: Mother/guardian occupation.....	36
Table 10: Home economic circumstances.....	37
Table 11: Availability of facilities at home.....	37
Table 12: Having breakfast before going to school.....	38
Table 13: Time taken to get to school.....	38
Table 14: Where do you usually study or do your home work.....	39
Table 15: Responsibilities at home.....	40
Table 16: Relationship between respondents' home economic circumstances and the influence of mother on their job wishes.....	41
Table 17: Whether those who had television at home can be influenced by	

the media on their job wishes.....	42
Table 18: The relationship between specific place to study at home and the highest level of education respondents would like to obtain.....	42
Table 19: Whether reference books at home had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents.....	43
Table 20: Whether electricity at home had an influence on theacademic performance of the respondents.....	44.
Table 21: Whether having breakfast before going to school had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents.....	45
Table 22: Whether distance from home to school had an influence on learners educational aspirations.....	46
Table 23: Years of schooling father/ guardian had.....	47
Table 24: Years of schooling mother/guardian had.....	48
Table 25: Whether years of education of mother had an influence on the highest level of education respondents would like to have.....	49
Table 26: Whether years of education parents/ guardians had an influence on learners' occupational aspirations.....	50
Table 27: Whether years of education of father/ guardian had an influence on academic performance of the respondents.....	51
Table 28: Whether years of education of mother/ guardian had an influence on academic performance of the respondents.....	52
Table 29: Academic performance by gender.....	53

Table 30: Type of jobs respondents would like to after complete school by gender.....	54
Table 31: Perceptions of respondents on the status of engineering by gender.....	55
Table 32: Whether teachers gave careers information by gender.....	56
Table 33: Whether parents/guardians asked about schoolwork.....	57
Table 34: Whether parents/ guardians praise good performance.....	57
Table 35: Whether parents/guardians rewarded good performance.....	58
Table 36: How often parents / guardians discuss future education and employment plans with the respondents.....	58
Table 37: Whether parents/guardians want their children to continue after schooling after grade 10.....	59
Table 38: Whether how often parents/ guardians monitor school performance had an influence on the learners' educational aspirations.....	59
Table 39: Whether the level of education parents/ guardians wants their children to achieve had an influence on the learners' educational aspirations.....	60
Table 40: The relationship between the highest level of education parents/would like their children to have and status of job children like to do after complete school.....	61
Table 41: Whether praising children have an influence on the highest Level of education a child would like have.....	62
Table 42: The relationship between the discussion about future education	

employment and the status of medicine.....

63

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Education has continued to play a major role in Namibia's development ever since the country attained its independence in 1990. The country has been under continuous pressure to expand its educational facilities and make the education system more relevant to the needs of the majority of Namibians. The Government of the Republic of Namibia considers education to be a priority for its citizens. This is clearly stated in Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution that every person residing in Namibia shall have the right to education irrespective of their abilities and disabilities, environmental, cultural or social background (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1990).

The Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993) placed emphasis on access, equity, quality and democracy within the education system in Namibia. The underlying principle is to ensure that people not only benefit from education as their constitutional right but also from an education that is of good quality and meaningful in life. However, despite the innovations introduced and the improved facilities, in many Namibian schools many learners hardly complete their schooling and are forced out of school prematurely for one reason or another. For example the grade 10 results of 2005 revealed that about 20 465 learners did not obtain a pass mark that allow them to proceed to grade 11. According to the Ministry of Education regulations,

such learners should leave the mainstream and enroll for Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) to improve symbols (MBEC, 1993). The point is, not all learners will return to the mainstream, some learners might drop out of school and seek for jobs. The challenges in the education sector are therefore not only to increase access and quality education, but to ensure that the education system meets the needs and aspirations of young Namibians and the world of work. It is therefore extremely important that young people receive systematic and well thought out career guidance to prepare them to become productive members of society. Only then would they be able to contribute effectively and responsibly to their own as well as others' well being (Mostert, 1994).

The current concern over the state of the Namibian education system highlights the need to understand the important influences of school success and what can be done to help the learner succeed in his/her schooling and become a productive member of society. School success is viewed as an outcome of high educational aspirations, but, little attention has been paid to factors that influence the formation of these aspirations. Some researchers (Rodermund and Vondracek, 2002; Vlaardingerbroek, 2001; Marjoribanks, 1995; Gottfredson; 1991; Sukati, 1991; Maple and Stage, 1991; Ethington and Wolfe, 1988) have conducted studies on factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of learners. Their findings indicated that factors such as gender, socio economic background, intellectual ability, race, family background, academic achievement, personality, culture and religion have an influence on learners' educational and occupational aspirations.

Vlaardingerbroek (2001) argued that career choices start from kindergarten and proceed until adolescence. Throughout life individual career choices might change depending on various factors that might limit an individual's choice. Marjoribanks (1995) adds that, by the end of elementary school, children's occupational and educational aspirations are influenced by social status and intellectual ability. At this level children are aware of different occupations available and stereotypes associated with some of the occupations. This idea was supported by Gottfredson (1991) that by the end of elementary school children are aware of social and intellectual abilities among themselves and they perceive occupations differently according to prestige level (for example which job is of high or low prestige). Again they become aware of elements associated with social class such as education, occupation, incomes and place of residence. However, Gottfredson (1991) argued that, individuals perceive occupations the same way regardless of their race, cultural background, and religion.

Despite the way people perceive different occupations, Sukati (1991) adds that, an individual's existing knowledge of a specific occupation as well as his/her knowledge about entry requirements, rewards, and economic conditions of occupational opportunities influence an individual's occupational aspirations. However, the effects of social status and ability on educational attainment are mediated substantially by an adolescent's perceptions of the encouragement of others and by their own aspirations.

Studies that have been conducted in Namibia paid more attention to students' career choice than students' aspirations. For example, Mostert, Keyter and Scott (2001) conducted a study on the views of students at the University of Namibia on factors that influenced their career choice. The findings of the study showed that, parents and other family members, job availability and high salaries were some of the factors that influence students' career choice. In addition to this study, Plattner and Mbwale (2002) investigated the extent to which Namibian High school leavers were prepared to choose a career and to pursue the realization of a chosen career. The results of this investigation revealed that parents or guardians, friends and relatives have an influence on the students's career choice.

It is evident that Namibian based studies focused more on factors that influence career choice and the readiness of learners to choose a career and pursue it. There is no specific study on career aspirations of learners in Namibia, specifically in the rural area. The researcher felt that there is a need for research studies on educational and occupational aspirations of the youth of this country to be carried out and to cover as many areas as possible at all levels of education.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many learners in Namibia are faced with challenges on what to do after they finish school. These challenges are partly caused by low aspirations whereby learners are not motivated to further their studies up to the tertiary level. As a result some drop out after grade 10 and enroll for some vocational training. However, there may be

learners who have high academic potential who could pursue their studies up to the tertiary level and become doctors, engineers, scientists and the like. These learners sometimes are faced with many constraints that might prevent them from pursuing careers of their choice. One of these constraints could be that the home environment does not encourage high educational and occupational aspirations.

The lack of research on this issue led to the importance of paying attention to, and doing research on it. Specifically, factors that influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations have been examined in studies in the West and some African countries. Most of these studies have been conducted in the urban settings. This study was an attempt to initiate similar work in a rural setting, by exploring the home environmental factors that influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations in the Omusati region.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A few studies have been conducted in Namibia on factors that influence career choice and the readiness of learners to choose a career and to pursue it. These studies were conducted on students in urban areas. There was no study done in Namibia on students' educational and occupational aspirations. It was therefore important to mention that the research findings of this study might provide some understanding of home environmental factors that influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations in rural areas.

Schools, parents, curriculum designers and other educators may benefit in several ways. For example, the information may be used by life skills teachers in helping learners in determining their future occupations. Curriculum designers might find this information helpful and integrate it in school subjects that are dealing with personal development such as life skills and social studies.

By knowing the home environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations, parents might become more involved in planning their children's education and help them to choose careers depending on their abilities and personalities. Parents might also take into consideration the influence of gender on occupational choice and encourage their children to choose occupations of their choice regardless of gender influences.

The study also highlights the need to improve home conditions that seem to influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the findings of some of the studies such as Plattner and Mbwale (2002); Mostert, Keyter and Scott (2001); Vlaardingerbroek (2001); Marjoribank (1995); Gottfredson (1991) and Sukati (1991) the following research questions were addressed:

1. What impact does socio economic background have on the learners' educational and occupational aspirations?

2. What impact does parental involvement have on the learners' educational and occupational aspirations?
3. What impact does parental education have on the learner's educational and occupational aspirations?
4. What are the effects of gender on the learner's educational and occupational aspirations?

1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was faced with a number of limitations. These included the following:

Due to lack of sufficient funds to collect data from different schools and to print questionnaires, this study was only conducted in the Omusati region and not countrywide. Therefore it is not known whether the relationship found in this study can be generalized to the other educational regions in the country. Data were collected within a limited time (June and July 2005) due to the fact that the study had to be completed by the end of November 2005. Finally, some learners were not realistic in their responses to the questions. For example one learner wanted to become an engineer but her/his academic performance showed otherwise.

The study was limited to the home environmental factors that influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations. Only grade ten learners in the Omusati region were included in the study. The reason for including only grade 10 was that, some learners stop schooling after grade 10 and enroll for vocational training or Namibia College of Open Learning (NAMCOL). It was therefore assumed that these

learners were mature enough to form opinions regarding their future education and careers.

1.6 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Terms used in this study were defined as follows:

Vocational Aspiration: Refers to a single occupation named as one's best alternative at any given time. As perceptions of compatibility and accessibility change, so too may a person's assessment of which alternative is the best, even though the social space may be stable (Gottfredson, 1991: 552).

Social space: Refers to people's views of where they fit or would like to fit into the society (Gottfredson, 1991; 553).

High educational aspirations: Refers to aspirations to post- secondary school educational level. For example to further one's studies at the university level (Rodermund and Vondracek, 2002:65).

High occupational aspirations: Aspirations to joining professions of high prestige i.e jobs that require tertiary education qualification (Rodermund and Vondracek, 2002: 66). In the Namibian context professions that are perceived to be of high prestige are for example medicine, teaching, law, engineering, architecture, accountancy and media studies.

Low occupational aspirations: Aspirations to join jobs of low prestige i.e. jobs which do not necessarily require university qualifications (Gottfredson, 1991: 553). In the Namibian context, jobs that fall in this category are for example those of a clerk, receptionist and other jobs that require only grade 12.

Parental occupation: The type of employment the parents of the subjects (learners) have (Gottfredson, 1991: 566).

Parental involvement: The extent to which parents are involved in the education of the child. This can be measured by parents interest and commitment in visiting the child's school, assist with home work, attend parent's meetings, school open days and helping with school fund raising (Bureil and Cardoza, 1998: 179).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Several studies (Bureil and Cardoza, 1988; Centra, 1998; Gottfredson, 1991; Majoribanks, 1995 and Sukati, 1991) have been conducted world wide on factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of learners at different educational levels. Studies of this nature (home environment factors) have not yet been conducted in Namibia especially in the rural area. This chapter discusses the findings of different studies in order to provide a general background on the present study.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Forming occupational aspirations is a process of comparing the self image with occupations and judging the degree of match between the two (Brown, Brooks and Associates, 1996). A theory that pays attention to the student's career aspirations is the theory of Gottfredson "Circumscription and Compromise: A Developmental theory of occupational aspirations". This theory was developed in the 1980s and became expanded through extensive research over the years (Brown, et al, 1996).

According to this theory an aspiration pertains to "desired outcomes that are not limited by constraints on resources". This can be contrasted with expectations (plans) that seem to represent students' assessments of what they may realistically be able to achieve given social constraints. Aspiration can also be seen as the central element in

the status attainment process and are formed in student's social interaction. Social interactions are structured by socio economic group and aspirations develop in response to the evaluations one receives from significant others and self-assessment of one's potential based upon academic performance. Gottfredson's theory devotes much attention to factors that affect the desire or ability of individuals to establish a different social identity through work. Such factors are gender, social class, intelligence and race.

In addition to these factors, individuals can compromise their career goals wisely (or not), in coming to terms with reality, as they try to implement their aspirations. Apart from compromising career goals, aspirations can shift over time simply because individuals have reassessed their compatibility with different occupations (Brown et al, 1996). This implies that aspirations are not always static, they are dynamic and susceptible to changes, especially when a person grows older.

Gottfredson (1981) argued that people perceive jobs according to prestige and sex type ratings. For example, jobs may be perceived as masculine, feminine or gender neutral but also as jobs with low, medium or high prestige. Jobs that are perceived to be of low prestige are miner worker, construction worker, fisherman, receptionist, file clerk, hardware sale and auto mechanic. Medium prestige jobs are sales manager, real estate, insurance agent, x-ray technician, bank teller, secretary, nurse artist, writer, politician, elementary teacher and dental hygienists. The category of high prestige jobs consists of judge, physicist, geologist, veterinarian, history professor, editor,

journalist and psychologist. Gottfredson (1981) placed the above categories on what he referred to as a map of occupations. This map of occupations was designed in the American context therefore it is possible that these job categories can be perceived differently in different contexts such as the Namibian context. However, this theory can be relevant in the Namibian context especially on factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of learners.

2.3 THE IMPACT OF SOCIO- ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

Due to unemployment, many people in developing countries, Namibia included, have experienced difficulties in funding education for their children or providing their children with an enabling environment for learning. For example, some parents cannot afford to buy textbooks, computers and other educational resources. Gottfredson (1991) states that, economic status is one of the factors that influence people's way of selecting a career. For example some people might have the capability to study specific fields such as medicine and engineering, but there are no funds available. Due to these circumstances, certain individuals were indirectly forced to narrow down their choices to what was available at a time.

In addition to this, some people's choice is influenced by their social classes. For example high class people may opt for high status jobs (such as doctors, engineering, chartered accountant and the like), while lower class people just take any job as long as it pays to sustain their basic needs.

Duran and Weffer (1992) added that family economic- status was seen as influencing academic achievement and academic achievement in turn influenced aspirations and expectations. This implies that, learners whose parents are well off, have higher aspirations and expectations than those learners whose parents are poor. Learners from families where both parents are employed have access to more study resources than learners whose parents are unemployed.

Looking at these findings a conclusion can be drawn that availability of study resources might determine which career to follow. For example, some children who have all the necessary study materials might perform academically well and be admitted to higher institutions of their choice.

On the other hand, children from poor family backgrounds might find it difficult to cope and this may lead to poor academic performance. However, there might be a case whereby learners from poor family backgrounds perform well and manage to pursue careers of their choice despite the financial difficulties they might experience and visa versa.

2.4 THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

The involvement of parents in their children's education is very important because it encourages learners to work hard and perform better. Parental involvement includes visiting the child's school, attending parents' meetings and helping with school work.

Bureil and Cardoza (1998) argued that a learner whose parents are supportive and have positive attitudes towards the learner's education, encourage the learner to perform well. Such a learner acquires a sense of achievement and confidence for individual activity, he/she stands a better chance of succeeding in his/her schoolwork and he/she is capable of making his/her own decisions. Again discussions between parents and children about expectations lead to higher educational and occupational aspirations.

Contrary to this finding, Ethington and Wolfle (1988) argued that, in some cases parents tend to discourage their children, especially girls from entering fields that are more related to Maths or Science. This implies that some parents are not only supporting their children in deciding which career to follow but they (parents) decide for them. However, the study conducted by Marini and Greenerberger (1998), indicated that students identified parents as the strongest influence on their career and course decisions. For example girls reportedly changed their plans to more traditional careers if they did not receive strong support from their parents.

In another study conducted by Rodermund and Vondracek (2002) on the relationship between parents, personality and entrepreneurial orientation, the finding indicated that parents' involvement had an impact on the adolescent's occupational choices. Adolescents whose parents are self-employed are more likely to become self-employed in the future.

It is a dream of each and every parent to see her/his child succeed in the future. Some parents have high expectations for their children which might not even materialize. Jacobs, Finken and Wright (1998) conducted a study to investigate whether there is a relationship between parents' expectations and learners' educational and occupational aspirations. The findings showed that parent' expectations for their children's academic success in different school subjects and their aspirations for their children's educational attainment are related to the academic aspirations of their children. It is evident that parents have an influence on their children's educational and occupational aspirations, for example an engineering father would like to see his son follow in his footsteps. However, parents should also consider their children's decisions, since career choice is more personal and each and every child is a unique person.

2.5 THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL EDUCATION ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

Parents' level of education plays a major role in the educational and occupational aspirations of their children. Maple and Stage (1991) conducted a study in India that indicated that parents' education affected career choices indirectly by providing financial advantages, influencing pre college aspirations, and affecting the type of institutions to attend. For example parents can only afford or be prepared to pay for a child to go to college and not university. Obviously the child will choose college education even if his/her plan was to do something different. Indirectly the parents' decision forces the child to decide otherwise. In addition to this study, Van Der

Merwe and Welshi (1992) conducted a study in South Africa on students' perceptions of employment and education. The findings showed that, learners whose fathers have attained higher standards of education, for example a degree showed relatively higher educational aspirations than their colleagues whose fathers had not received any formal education or had just attained a maximum of primary education level. In addition to this learners from families where mothers had had more than primary education, aspired to post-secondary education (tertiary education). On the other hand, learners from families where mothers had attained only primary education or less aspired to only secondary school.

This is in line with the study conducted in the United States of America by Duran and Weffer (1992) among the Mexican- American families. The findings indicated that family educational values had an important effect on the learner's academic achievement especially in maths and science subjects. For example children of parents who had higher education, especially in science fields, were more likely to perform well in science subjects. In addition to this, the findings showed that parents' level of education influences learners' literacy skills. This implies that learners whose parents are not well educated might not perform well in languages compared to those whose parents are well educated. However, one could argue that, one of the reasons why some Mexican children could not perform well in languages was that English was their second language, not because of parents' education level.

2.6 THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

Gender continues to play a role in most spheres of life. In the world of work there are stereotypes associated with specific jobs. For example some jobs are perceived to be feminine or masculine oriented. Kifir (1988) conducted a longitudinal study on 3,154 high school learners in Israel. The aim was to find the factors that influenced educational and occupational aspirations of grade 10 learners. The findings showed that the sex of the children was a major factor related to their educational and occupational aspirations. Most popular careers for females were nursing, followed by teaching. Girls avoided careers such as engineering, law and piloting which are commonly associated with men. Boys avoided those careers commonly associated with women such as nursing and secretariat. Sex differences were associated with types of career, task assignment and roles that were culturally perceived as desirable and valued by girls and boys. The findings also indicated that girls tended to succeed more in the first stage of schooling (elementary school) and less in high school. The breaking point was the beginning of adolescence whereby girls become aware of their sexuality and traditional roles. At this stage the girls showed lower cognitive achievements in 'masculine' fields and in aspirations toward future achievements.

In addition Centra (1998) conducted a longitudinal study in the United States of America that indicated that girls had more restricted occupational aspirations than boys. Girls identified a narrower range of occupational preferences and had lower expectations of occupational attainment than boys. Boys engaged in greater sex-

typing of occupations. Implying that boys were more interested in occupations that were perceived to be masculine such as engineering, mechanic and the like. On the other hand girls were more likely to aspire to non- traditional occupations i.e occupations that were perceived to be feminine such as secretariat work, elementary teaching, nursing and so on.

Gottfredson (1991) shows that most high prestige jobs are very masculine, for example physicists, geologists, engineers, auto mechanics, accountants and sales managers. Again there are jobs that are of lower prestige but very masculine such as mining and construction. Occupations such as nursing, elementary teaching, secretarial work, social work and clerical work are perceived to be more feminine and some are rated as of lower prestige. However, some jobs are neutral and are perceived to be suitable for both sexes. For example those of doctors, high school teachers, writers, journalists and psychologists.

Jacobs et al., (1998) carried out a study on 220 grade 9- 12 adolescent girls. The purpose was to examine a variety of social, attitudinal, and educational factors that might be related to science career aspirations in a group of rural, science talented female adolescents. The findings indicated that girls lack exposure to math and science activities outside the classroom and they showed less interest in pursuing careers in math, science and engineering. Interests in mathematics and science decline with age. For example, at the younger age some girls show more interest in science and mathematics but as they grow older they change to different fields. This is in line

with the study conducted by Ethington and Wolfle (1988) in Chicago to examine the manner in which factors influence women's choice of undergraduate fields of study. The findings showed that at high school girls have negative attitudes towards science and mathematics subjects. This resulted in the few numbers of women taking up science fields in the future. However some girls performed well in science subjects in comparison to boys. The influence of sex with regard to education and occupations is evident in many countries especially in developing countries.

Namibia shares similar experience with regard to the effect of gender on learners' education. In 2002 the Ministry of education and UNICEF conducted the study on girl's education in the Rundu Education Region (MBEC, 2002). The study mainly focused on the home environment factors that seemed to have an impact on the school performance of both boys and girls. These home environment factors were: parents' expectations of boys and girls education and domestic workload boys and girls had to do after school. The results of the study revealed that parents were generally said not to discriminate in their expectations between boys and girls. They indicated that both boys and girls could reach the highest level of education. However, parents seemed to associate professions such as nursing, teaching and secretariat work with girls, whereas boys were described as future drivers, builders, carpenters or wood carvers. In addition to parental expectations, the results also revealed that poor school performance among boys and girls could also be attributed to the household chores learners were involved in after school. Most girls indicated that once they got home from school they had to give priority to household chores

before they were allowed to do their homework (MBEC, 2002). The household chores commonly tasked to girls were: pounding, cooking, fetching water, cleaning in and around the house, working in the field (ploughing) and fishing. Boys on the other hand were tasked with looking after cattle, doing construction working at the homestead, working in the field and erecting fences. However, girls were of the opinion that they had a heavier workload in the family compared to boys whose tasks tended to be more seasonal. This situation had an impact on learners' school performance especially grade 10 learners since most of them stayed at home due to the lack of school hostels in the region.

From the foregoing review of literature, it becomes evident that most studies which have been done on educational and occupational aspirations were carried out in foreign cultural contexts. It is also evident that very few studies in this area were conducted within the African context especially in the Southern Africa region. The study conducted by Sukati (1991) on the perceptions of 111 students on the Swazi labor market revealed that an individual's existing knowledge of a specific occupation as well as his/her knowledge about entry requirements, rewards, and economic conditions of occupational opportunities influence an individual's occupational aspirations. The findings also indicated that the effects of social status and ability on educational attainment are mediated substantially by an adolescent's perceptions of the encouragement of others and by their own aspirations.

Apart from studies that were conducted in Swaziland and South Africa as mentioned above, studies conducted in Namibia focused more on factors that influence career choices and development not specifically on students' aspirations. For example the study conducted by Mostert, Keyter and Scott (2001) on the views of students at the University of Namibia on factors that influence career choices found that factors such as parents and other family members, job availability, high salaries were some of the factors that influence students' career choices.

It was obvious that there was no study focusing on career aspirations of learners in Namibia, specifically in the rural area. Therefore there was a need for a research study such as this one to be carried out in Namibia especially in rural schools to increase our understanding of those factors in the home which possibly would influence educational and occupational aspirations of learners.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous two chapters have laid a foundation for this research. In chapter one, the problem of the study had been stated (Home environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of grade ten learners in the Omusati region) along with the hypotheses and limitations of the study as well as the definitions of terms. In chapter two, I provided an analytical view of related literature and in this chapter, I intend to provide the methodological and logistical issues of the study. Included here are the description of the research design, population, sampling, description of the research instrument, pilot study and the research procedure.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Deciding upon research design is a process that is determined by several factors. According to Mouton (2001), factors such as the research problem, researcher's ability, research questions, limitations, time, money, research and setting can determine what type of research design to be used. For the purpose of this study it was decided to use a quantitative non-experimental design. In a non-experimental design there is no manipulation of conditions. There are four types of non-experimental designs: descriptive, correlation, survey and ex post facto.

This study was conducted as an ex post facto study. Bailey (1994) defines an ex post facto design as a research design whereby the test stimulus is beyond the control of the researcher, as the researcher comes upon the scene after the test stimulus has already occurred. The reason why I selected this research design is that the independent variables (home environmental factors) could not be directly manipulated by me due to the fact that their manifestations had already occurred. It was thus assumed that the learners' aspirations had already formed and home environmental factors already existed. This type of research design was therefore considered to be appropriate for the study.

3.3 POPULATION

The population of this study consisted of grade 10 learners from the Omusati Education region. Omusati has 99 combined and senior secondary schools that offer grade 10 (MBEC, 2002). Omusati is one of the 13 educational regions in Namibia. It is situated on the northern part of the country, formerly known as Owamboland. The region is enriched with a variety of culture from different Oshiwambo ethnic groups such as Aambaanhu, Aakwambi, Aanganjera, Aakwaludhi and Aankolonkadhi.

3.4 SAMPLING

The study used the systematic stratified random sampling method. A stratified sample is obtained by separating the population elements into non-overlapping groups, called strata, and then selecting a simple random sample from within each stratum. The advantage is that a stratified sample will thus assure representation not only of ranks

but simultaneously of all age and income ranks within the population being sampled (Bailey, 1994).

A list of schools in Omusati region was obtained from the Ministry of Basic education and Culture (MBEC). Omusati has 99 schools that offer grade 10. Only 10 % of the schools were selected i.e 10 schools. To obtain this number, every 10th school in the list was selected. Class groups were selected randomly whereby I obtained a list of grade 10 classes from school principals and selected one class per school. I used full class groups because it was convenient to deal with the entire class than individual learners from different classes. The respondents were 126 boys and 172 girls with ages ranging from 14 to 17 years (See table 1, 2 and 3).

Only government schools were included in the study due to the reason that there were no private schools in the Omusati region. However, government schools admit children from a variety of home backgrounds. Parents that send children to government schools belong to various professions such as business people, farmers, skilled and semi- skilled laborers. This gave a clear indication that most government schools in the region represent learners from different classes and hence different home backgrounds.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to gender.

Gender	Number of learners	Percentage of learners
Female	172	57,1%
Male	126	41,9%
Missing values	3	1.0%
Total	301	100%

Table 2: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to age

Age	Number of learners	Percentage of learners
Younger than 15 years	4	1.3 %
15 years	51	16.9 %
16 years	107	35.5 %
17 years	70	23.3 %
Older than 17 years	64	21.3%
Missing values	5	1.7 %
Total	301	100 %

Table 3: Distribution of respondents in the sample according to schools.

School	Number of learners	Percentage of learners
Shikongo Ipinge	36	12.0%
Nakayale	34	11.3%
Okavu	34	11.3%
Anamulenge	30	10.0%
Ondukuta	30	10.0%
David Sheehama	30	10.0%
Mwaala	29	9.6%
Okanimekwa	28	10.0%
Omuulukila	25	8.3 %
Uukwandongo	25	8.3%
Missing values	0	0 %
Total	301	100%

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This study used a questionnaire to collect data. The reason for selecting such a research instrument was that, with a questionnaire there is a potential of gaining first hand information direct from the respondents (De Vos and Strydom, 2002). Another reason was that, other research methods such as interviews and observations seem to be difficult for this study due to the fact that they are costly and time consuming.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A dealt with home environmental factors and section B dealt with learners' educational and occupational aspirations. Section A was designed specifically to elicit responses from the home environment of the subjects. Twenty items were constructed. Each variable of the home environment was measured. Variables were: Socio- economic background, parental education, parental involvement and gender.

Socio economic background: This section consisted of open-ended questions whereby respondents were asked to indicate whether parents/guardian had a paid job, parents/guardians' occupation, home economic circumstances, responsibilities at home and items they had at home for example, reference books, computers, electricity and so on.

Parental level of education: In this section respondents were expected to indicate the level of education of their parents/guardians. Multiple choice questions were given and respondents had just to tick which response was applicable to them.

Parental involvement: Items in this section aimed at assessing the parent/guardian 's involvement in the learner's academic work, further study and future employment plans. Multiple choice and rating questions were presented to the respondents. Multiple choice questions entailed questions such as how often parents/guardians assisted with homework, attended school functions, gave awards and discussed future

plans with the child. Rating questions required the respondent to rate items from the lowest to the highest.

Section B consisted of a variety of items that related to educational and occupational aspirations of the respondents. Open-ended questions were presented for the respondent to indicate the highest level of education they would like to attain. This enabled the researcher to assess the respondent's educational aspirations as low or high. Finally the questionnaire was written in English, since English is the medium of instruction in the Namibian schools. Moreover, using English was not only for the sake of understanding but also to ensure validity of the instrument.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study is a small-scale trial run of all the aspects planned for use in the main inquiry. The main objective of the pilot test is to detect whether the research instrument is biased, not clear (can be misinterpreted) and to identify ambiguous words or terms that might cause misunderstanding or confuse the respondents. By identifying all these problems, the researcher had an opportunity to rectify them (Mitchell and Jollet, 2001). The questionnaire was pilot tested by the researcher in one of the schools in Windhoek.

3.7 REPORT ON THE PILOT STUDY

The questionnaire was administered on two class groups in one of the schools in Windhoek. On both occasions the respondents understood the instrument (questionnaire) and answered the questions accordingly. No adjustment was made to the questionnaire. However, the researcher noted that the time allocated was not sufficient since some learners took about one hour to complete the questionnaire. The researcher also acknowledged the fact that home circumstances of rural and urban areas are different and it was important to do a pilot study in the rural area. However, due to time and financial constraints the researcher opted to conduct the pilot study in one of the government schools in Windhoek that had other characteristics similar as the schools in the rural area.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

According to De Vos, et al (2000) a valid instrument has been described as doing what it is intended to do , as measuring what it is supposed to measure and as yielding scores whose differences reflect the true differences of the variable being measured rather than random or constant errors. In this study, the validity of the instrument was checked by means of open-ended questions whereby the researcher confirmed answers with the respondents. In other words, the researcher asked the respondents about answers given in the questionnaire (face or content validity).

In quantitative research, reliability refers to the extent to which one's findings could be replicated should the study be repeated – with the aim of developing cause and

effect relationships among variables (Merriam, 1988). De Vos et al (2000) also adds that reliability refers in general to the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument (or highly similar instruments) consistently yields the same (or similar) results under comparable conditions. Reliability is primarily concerned not with what is being measured but with how well it is being measured. In order to investigate test-retest reliability, the researcher administered the questionnaire on two occasions as indicated on the report of the pilot study.

3.9 PROCEDURE

The research questionnaire was designed by the researcher at the University of Namibia in early 2005 after the research proposal had been approved by the relevant bodies of the University. In addition, the researcher prepared the covering letter that aimed at explaining the purpose of the study to the respondents (Mertens, 1998).

In addition to the covering letter, the researcher forwarded two letters to the Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture asking for permission to conduct research in schools. One letter was directed to the Permanent Secretary and another one to the Omusati Education Regional Director. This enabled the researcher to contact respondents at their respective schools. In addition, the researcher made an appointment with school principals to introduce herself and submit the permission letter from the Ministry.

The questionnaire was administered to the subjects in their perspective schools. The researcher administered the questionnaire and each respondent received one

questionnaire on which he/she was required to respond to each item. The researcher with the assistance of a school teacher read the instructions to the subjects and pointed out the importance of the questionnaires. Respondents were also asked to be honest in their responses and were ensured that the information would be treated with confidentiality.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

The dependent variables in the study were educational and occupational aspirations while the independent variables were socio economic status, parental involvement, gender and parents level of education. This study used the Chi- square test to determine whether there was a significant relationships and/ or differences amongst the variables. The researcher used descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages to present the data. The open-ended questions were analyzed by means of grouping the responses according to consistent themes, as recommended by Miles and Huberman in Sarantakos (1993: 308).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. The results are presented according to the main research questions. As already stated in chapter one, there were four central questions that needed to be answered. These were:

- What impact does the socio- economic background have on learners' educational and occupational aspirations?
- What impact does parental education have on learners' educational and occupational aspirations?
- What are the effects of gender on learners' educational and occupational aspirations?
- What impact does parental involvement have on learner's educational and occupational aspirations?

However, based on each of the first four research questions, one major question was evident i.e educational and occupational aspirations of the learners. Results regarding educational and occupational aspirations will be presented first then followed by those pertaining to the four research questions.

4.1 RESULTS REGARDING THE EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS.

With regard to the educational performance, respondents were presented with a multiple choice question whereby they had to indicate the average marks they obtained in the latest examination (April, 2005). The research results showed that respondents who obtained above 70% were 21.9% whereas those who obtained between 61-70% were 24.9%. The results further revealed that the majority of the respondents (25.9%) obtained between 51-60% and 11.6% of the respondents obtained below 50% (See table 4).

Table: 4 Academic performance of the respondents in the latest examination, April 2005.

Marks	Number of learners	Percentage
Above 70%	66	21.9%
61-70%	75	24.9%
51-60%	78	25.9%
41-50%	35	11.6%
31-40%	20	6.6%
20-30%	20	6.6%
Missing values	2	2.3%
Total	301	100%

In order to assess the educational aspirations, respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education they would like to continue with after grade 10. Data in table 5 clearly indicate that 82, 7% of the respondents aspired to university education whereas 15.3% aspired to college or vocational education. Only 2.0% of the respondents indicated that they wanted to terminate their education after grade 12.

Table 5 Highest levels of education respondents would like to continue after grade 10.

Level of education	Number of learners	Percentage
University	249	82.7%
College/ vocation	46	15.3%
Grade 12	6	2.0%
Missing values	0	0%
Total	301	100%

Considering the vocational aspirations, respondents were given three categories to choose from. These categories were high, medium and low status jobs. According to

table 6 the majority of the respondents (70.1%) aspired for high status jobs whereas 28.6% aspired for medium status jobs. Only a few respondents (1.3%) showed interest in jobs that were perceived to be of low status.

Table 6: Status of jobs respondents would like to do after completing school.

Job status	Number of learners	Percentage
High	211	70.1%
Medium	86	28.6%
Low	4	1.3%
Missing values	0	0%
Total	301	100%

4.2 RESULTS REGARDING THE SOCIO- ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF LEARNERS.

Looking at the employment of parents, learners were asked whether their parents had a paid job and also to indicate the type of job. The data showed that 50.2 % of the respondents reported that their fathers had no paid jobs, while 48, 5 % indicated that their fathers had paid jobs. In addition to this about 60, 8 % indicated that their mothers had no paid jobs while 36, 9 % reported that their mothers had paid jobs. (See table 7).

In an effort to give the respondents an unrestricted scope for comment and response, two open - ended questions were offered where by learners had to indicate the type of jobs parents did. 29.1 % of the respondents reported that their fathers/ guardians were in the teaching profession while 13, 5 % reported that their fathers were in the army. However a few numbers of fathers were in professions such as nursing. (See table 8)

Table 7: Whether parents/ guardians had a paid job

Parent/guardian	Yes		No		Missing values	Total
	No .of Learners	%	No. of learners	%		
Father	146	48.5%	151	50,2%	4	100%
Mother	111	36,9%	183	60,8%	7	100%

Table 8 : Father/ guardian occupation

Occupations	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	135	49.0%
Teaching	43	29.1%
Army	20	13.5%
Clerical	18	12.2%
Mining	14	9.5%
Cleaning	13	8.8%
Farming	11	7.4%
Economics	7	4.7%
Being an Artisan	6	4.0%
Engineering	4	2.7%
Medicine	4	2.7%
Journalism	4	2.7%
Carpentry	2	1.4%
Nursing	2	1.4%
Missing values	18	6.0%
Total	301	100%

Looking at data in Table 9 it should immediately be noted that the majority of mothers/ guardians were also in common professions as the fathers. For instance 30% reported mothers to be teachers while 16, 7 % were nurses. However, the results revealed that 60% of mothers and 49% of fathers were unemployed.

Table 9: Mother/ guardian occupation

Occupations	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	181	60.1%
Teaching	25	30 %
Nursing	14	16.7%
Cleaning	8	9.5%
Clerical	7	8.3%
Farming	7	8.3%
Army	6	7.0%
Accountancy	5	5.9%
Medicine	5	5.9%
Hairdressing	4	4.8%
Casual jobs	3	3.6%
Missing values	18	6.0%
Total	301	100%

Respondents were also asked to classify their home economic circumstances. According to the results 47,5% of the respondents reported that their home economic circumstances were average. Implying that their families were in a position to provide them with basic needs such as paying school fees and buying food, clothes and textbooks.

In addition to this, 25, 2% of the respondents reported that their home economic circumstances were poor, while 14, 3% were above average and 10, 6 % were well off. (See table 10).

Table 10: Home economic circumstances

Economic circumstances	Frequency	Percentage
Average	143	47,5%
Poor	76	25,2%
Above average	43	14,3%
Well off	32	10,6%
Missing values	7	2,3%
Total	301	100%

In order to obtain a deep understanding of the home economic circumstances respondents were also presented with different items to indicate what they had at home. These items were television, radio, electricity, a specific place to study, computer and reference books. Analyzing the data on these items revealed that 94% of the respondents had radios, 22.6% had specific place to study, 22.6% had television sets, 17,9% had reference books, 17,6% had electricity and 2,0% had computers (See table 11).

Table 11: Availability of facilities at home

Facilities	Yes		No		Missing Values	Total
	Number of learners	%	Number of Learners	%		
Radio	283	94,0%	17	5,6%	1	100%
Specific place	82	22,6%	218	72,4%	1	100%
Television	68	22,6%	232	77,1%	1	100%
Reference books	54	17,9%	245	81,4%	2	100%
Electricity	53	17,6%	247	82,1%	1	100%
Computer	6	2,0%	294	97,7%	1	100%

In assessing how often learners eat breakfast before they go to school, learners were presented with three categories to choose from. These categories were hardly ever, sometimes and everyday. As can be gleaned from the statistics about half of the respondents (51,2 %) had breakfast everyday before they went to school, 44,9 % had breakfast sometimes. while 3,0% hardly had breakfast before they went to school (See table 12).

Table 12: Have breakfast before going to school

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	154	51.2%
Sometimes	135	44.9%
Hardly ever	9	3.0%
No response	3	1.0%
Total	301	100%

Considering the distance between home and school, respondents were asked to indicate the distance they walked to school. Five statements were presented. The results clearly show that the majority of the respondents (31, 2 %) walked a short distance of less than 15 minutes, 20, 3% of the respondents indicated the distance of 30 to 45 minutes, 18, 9% walked a long distance of more than one hour, 16, 3% walked a distance of 15- 30 minutes while 12, 3% walked a distance between 45 to 60 minutes (See table 13).

TABLE 13: Time taken to get to school

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 15 minutes	94	31.2%
Between 15 and 30 minutes	49	16,3%
Between 30 and 45 minutes	61	20,3%
Between 45 and 60 minutes	37	12,3%
More than one hour	57	18,9%
No responses	3	1,0%
Total	301	100%

Data in table 14 revealed that about 48,2% of the respondents usually studied and did their homework at school while 27,9% of the respondents reported that they studied and did their home work at home in a room by themselves. However it was also interesting to note that 10, 3% of the respondents studied and did homework at home in a quite room, but with other people around. The data further indicated that about 6, 0% of the respondents studied and did home work outside the house and 2, 3% in a room where family members talk, listen to radio and etc.

TABLE 14: Where do you usually study or do your homework

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
At school	145	48.2%
In a room by myself	84	27.9%
In a quite room at home with other people around	31	10.3%
At home outside the house	18	6.0%
In a room where family members talk, listen to radio etc.	7	2.3%
No response	16	5.3%
Total	301	100%

To find out if learners had sufficient time to study and do home work, learners were presented with different items to indicate what they regularly do at home. These items were fetching water, cooking, pounding mahangu, sorghum and millet, and looking after the goats and cattle. The results revealed that 72, 1% of the respondents were responsible for fetching water, 60.1% for cooking while 54.8% were responsible for pounding mahangu. In addition to this, about 41.9% of the respondents were responsible for looking after goats and cattle. (See table 15).

Table: 15 Responsibilities at home

Responsibilities	Yes		No		Missing values	Total
	Number of learners	%	Number of learners	%		
Fetching water	217	72,1%	82	27,2%	2	100%
Cooking	181	60,1%	118	39,2%	2	100%
Pounding mahangu	165	54,8%	134	44,5%	2	100%
Looking after goats and cattle	126	41,9%	172	57,1%	3	100%

When the data pertaining to the impact of socio-economic background were analyzed according to parents' job, home economic circumstances, items learners had at home and the distance between home and school, the picture that follows emerged.

In general, the data revealed that the variable of socio-economic background statistically had a significant impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations. More learners from average and poor families (70, 8%) reported that the mothers had the biggest influence on their job wishes than learners from above average and well off families (47%). This difference was found to be statistically significant (See table 16).

In addition learners who had television at home (7, 5%) reported that the media had the biggest influence on their job wishes in contrast to those who did not have television (2. 2%) (See table 17).

Table 16: Relationship between respondents' home economic circumstances and the influence of mother on the job wishes

RESPONSE			
Home economic circumstances	Mother has the biggest influence on job wishes		
	Yes	No	Total
Average	35 25.5 %	102 74.5%	137 100%
Poor	34 45.3 %	41 54.7%	75 100%
Above average	9 22.0 %	32 78.0 %	41 100%
Well off	8 25.0 %	24 75.0 %	32 100%
Total	86 30.2 %	199 69.8 %	285 100%

Note: Chi-Square=11.294; df= 3; P< 0.05

Table 17: Whether those who had television at home were influenced by the media on their job wishes

Television at home	Media has the biggest influence on your job wishes		Total
	Yes	No	
No	5 2.2%	220 97.8 %	225 100%
Yes	5 7.5%	62 92.5%	67 100%
Total	10 3.4%	282 96.6%	292 100 %

Note: Chi-Square = 4.287; df = 1; P < 0.05

The results furthermore revealed that learners who had a specific place to study at home exhibited higher educational aspirations than their counterparts who had no specific place to study at home. For example data in table 18 indicates that 76, 8% of the respondents who had a specific place to study at home aspired to university level while only 61, 8 % of those who had no specific place to study at home aspired to university level. This difference was found to be statistically significant.

Table 18: The relationship between specific place to study at home and educational aspirations.

Specific place to study at home	Highest level of education would like to achieve			Total
	Grade 12	College/ Vocational	University Education	
No	33 15.2 %	50 23.0 %	134 61.8%	217 100%
Yes	4 4.9 %	15 18.3 %	63 76.8%	82 100%
Total	37 12.4 %	65 21.7%	197 65.9%	299 100 %

Note: Chi-Square = 7.802; df = 2; P < 0.05

In addition, learners who had reference books at home showed better academic performance than those who had no reference books at home. For instance data in table 19 shows that 38, 5% of learners who had reference books at home obtained above 70% in the latest examination while only 19% obtained the same marks from the group who had no reference books at home. When analyzed according to below 50%, the data revealed that more learners (23.3%) who had no reference books at home obtained marks below 50% in the latest examination while only 11.5% of those who had reference books at home obtained marks below 50% . The difference was statistically significant.

Table 19: Whether reference books at home had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents.

Average mark for latest examination	Reference books at home		
	Yes	No	Total
20-30%	1 1.9%	19 7.9%	20 6.8%
31-40%	1 1.9%	18 7.5%	19 6.5%
41-50%	4 7.7%	31 12.9%	19 12.0%
51-60%	13 25.0%	64 26.7%	35 26.4%
61-70%	13 25.0%	62 25.8%	75 25.7%
Above 70%	20 38.5%	46 19.2%	66 22.6%

Note: Chi-Square = 12. 354; df = 5; P < 0.05

The other variable that seemed to have an impact on learners' academic performance was electricity at home. The results reveal that more learners who had electricity at home (38, 0%) reported to perform well than their counterparts who had no electricity at home (19, 3%). Considering the performance in terms of below 50%, it can be seen that more learners (28.4%) who had no electricity at home performed below 50% in the latest examination while only 12% of those who had electricity at home performed below 50%. These differences were statistically significant (See table 20).

Table 20: Whether electricity at home had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents.

Average mark for latest examination	Electricity at home		
	Yes	No	Total
20-30%	3 6.0%	17 7.0%	20 6.8%
31-40%	1 2.0%	19 7.8%	20 6.8%
41-50%	2 4.0%	33 13.6%	35 11.9%
51-60%	63 25.9%	14 28.0%	77 26.3%
61-70%	11 22.0%	64 26.3%	75 25.6%
Above 70%	19 38.0%	47 19.3%	66 22.5%

Note: Chi-Square = 12. 085; df = 5; P < 0.05

However differences in academic performance could also be seen in terms of learners who had breakfast before they went to school. Data in table 21 indicates that more learners (25,5%) who had breakfast every day before they went to school exhibited good academic performance than learners who had breakfast only sometimes (18,0%). Furthermore it was interesting to note that learners who hardly had breakfast had average academic performance. With regard to the performance in terms of below 50%, the data revealed that 22.8% of the respondents who hardly had breakfast before they went to school performed below 50% in the latest examination while 20.8% of those who had breakfast everyday before they went to school performed below 50%. These differences were statistically significant.

Table 21: Whether having breakfast before going to school had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents.

Average mark for latest examination	Have breakfast before school			
	Everyday	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Total
20-30%	13 8.7%	7 5.3%		20 6.0%
31-40%	1 0.7%	18 13.5%	1 11.1%	20 6.9%
41-50%	17 11.4%	17 12.8%	1 11.1%	35 12.0%
51-60%	37 24.8%	36 27.1%	5 55.6%	78 26.8%
61-70%	43 28.9%	31 23.3%		74 25.4%
Above 70%	38 25.5%	24 18.0%	2 22.2%	64 22.0%

Note: Chi-Square = 27. 125; df =10; P < 0.05

The data also revealed that the distance between home and school had an impact on the learners' educational aspirations. For example more learners who walked short distances to school (76.7 %) reported to be aspired to postgraduate studies than learners who walked long distance to school (42.5%). Looking at the data, it was observed that more learners who walked a distance between 15-30 minutes (42. 5%) were aspired to vocational education than those who walked a distance of more than one hour (11.7%).These differences were statistically significant (See table 22).

Table 22: Whether distance from home to school had an influence on learners' educational aspirations

RESPONSE				
Distance from home to school	Highest level of education you would like to have			
	Grade 12	College/ Vocational education	University Education	Total
Less than 15 minutes	7 24.1%	9 31.0%	46 76.7	62 100%
Between 15 and 30 minutes	11 27.5%	17 42.5%	41 57.7%	69 100%
Between 30 and 45 minutes	12 18.8%	21 32.8%	31 48.4%	64 100%
Between 45 and 60 minutes	8 11.3%	22 31.0%	13 44.8%	43 100%
More than one hour	7 11.7	7 11.7%	17 42.5%	31 100%
Total	45 17.0%	76 28.8%	143 54.2%	264 100%

Note: Chi-Square=23.359; df= 8; P< 0.05

Furthermore, Chi- Square results revealed that the relationship between responsibilities at home and learners' educational aspirations was not statistically significant. These responsibilities were pounding mahangu, fetching water, collecting wood, and looking after sheep and goats.

4.3 RESULTS REGARDING THE PARENTAL EDUCATION OF LEARNERS

Answers to this question were obtained from an analysis of respondent responses to section A of the questionnaire. Looking at the education of the parents, learners were asked to indicate their parents' level of education. The results clearly show that for 22, 9% of the respondents, their fathers/guardians had junior primary education (5 to 7 years) while 22,9 % had senior secondary education (8 to 12 years). In addition to this 20, 6 % of the respondents indicated that their fathers/guardians had tertiary education (more than 12 years) whereas 9 % reported that their fathers/guardians had primary education (1 to 4 years). The result also shows that 15, 6 % of the respondents reported that their fathers/ guardians were uneducated. (See table 23)

Table 23: Years of schooling father / guardian had

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No Education	47	15.6%
1 to 4 yrs	48	15.9%
5 to 7 yrs	69	22.9%
8 to 12 yrs	69	22.9%
More than 12 yrs	62	20.6%
No responses	2	2.0%
Total	301	100%

According to table 24 about 11.6% of the respondents reported that their mothers/guardians had no education while 15, 3 % had primary education (1 to 4 years). The data further indicated that 23, 3 % had junior primary education (5 to 7

years), 26, 2 % had senior secondary education (8 to 12 years) and for 21.9% their mothers/guardians had tertiary education (more than 12 years).

Table 24: Years of schooling mother/guardian had

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No Education	35	11.6%
1 to 4 yrs	46	15.3%
5 to 7 years	70	23.3%
8 to 12 yrs	79	26.2%
More than 12 yrs	66	21.9%
No responses	5	1.7%
Total	301	100%

A Chi-Square analysis of the data revealed that the level of parental education had an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations. These data showed that those learners whose mothers had obtained high standards of education showed relatively high educational aspirations compared to their colleagues whose mothers had not received any formal education or had just attained primary education. For example from the group whose mothers had obtained post-secondary education, 93,9% aspired to university education, while for those whose mothers had no education only 71,4% aspired to university education. This difference was found to be statistically significant (See table 25).

Looking at the data in table 25 it was observed that children of the mothers without any formal education had lower educational aspirations compared to those whose mother had obtain high education. These results therefore support the research question which had predicted an impact of parental education on learners' educational aspirations. It indicated that learners from homes where mothers had obtained high standards of education tended to have higher educational aspirations than their

counterparts whose mothers had obtained only minimum standards of formal education or no formal education at all.

Table 25 : Whether years of education of mother had an influence on the highest level of education respondents would like to have

RESPONSE				
Years of education mother has	Highest level of education you would like to have			
	Grade 12	College/ Vocational education	University Education	Total
No education	3 8.6%	7 20.0%	25 71.4%	35 100%
1 to 4 yrs	2 4.3%	5 10.9%	39 84.8%	46 100%
5 to 7 yrs		18 25.7%	52 74.3%	70 100%
8 to 12 yrs	1 1.3%	12 15.2%	66 83.5%	79 100%
More than 12 yrs		4 6.1%	62 93.9%	66 100%
Total	6 2.0%	46 15.5%	244 82.4%	296 100%

Note: Chi-Square=23.359; df= 8; P< 0.05

In an attempt to find out whether parental education had an impact on learners' occupational aspirations, it was found that those respondents whose parents had obtained high standards of education showed high occupational aspirations. For example data in table 26 reveal that more learners whose parents/guardians obtained more than 12 years of education (93.9%) aspired to higher status jobs than those

whose parents had no education (53.4%) . Looking at the data, it immediately can be noted that as parental educational level got higher, the learner's occupational aspirations also become high.

Table 26 : Whether years of education of parents/guardians had an influence on the occupational aspirations of the respondents.

RESPONSE				
Years of education parents had	Status of job respondents would like to do after complete school			
	Low	Medium	High	Total
No education	32 24.4%	29 22.1%	70 53.4%	131 100%
1 to 4 yrs	6 6.3%	30 31.3%	60 62.5%	96 100%
5 to 7 yrs	5 10.9%	23 26.1%	52 74.3%	75 100%
8 to 12 yrs	1 1.3%	14 15.5%	68 84.5%	83 100%
More than 12 yrs	2 1.4%	4 6.1%	64 93.9%	70 100%
Total	6 2.0%	46 15.5%	244 82.4%	296 100%

Note: Chi-Square=20.829; df=4; P< 0.05

Statistically no significant difference was found with regard to the impact of fathers' educational level and learners' occupational aspirations. However, a significant relationship was found to exist between the father's level of education and the

learners' performance. Results in table 27 indicated that more learners whose fathers/guardians had more than 12 years of education (48.3%) performed better in the latest examination than their counterparts whose fathers /guardians had no formal education or had just obtained a maximum of primary education level (17.0%). When analyzed according to above 50 %, the data revealed that more learners (88.3%) whose fathers obtained more than 12 years of education performed above 50% than those whose fathers had no education (59.6%).

Table 27 : Whether years of education of father/ guardian had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents

RESPONSE							
Years of schooling	Average mark for latest examination						
	20-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	Above 70%	Total
None	5 10.6%	6 12.8%	8 17.0%	13 27.7%	7 14.9%	8 17.0%	47 100%
1 to 4 yrs	4 8.9%	3 6.7%	7 15.6%	15 33.3%	13 28.9%	3 6.7%	45 100%
5 to 7 yrs	7 10.3%	4 5.9%	7 10.3%	23 33.8%	18 26.5%	9 13.2%	68 100%
8 to 12 yrs	2 2.9%	6 8.8%	8 11.8%	19 27.9%	18 26.5%	15 22.1%	68 100%
More than 12 yrs	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	4 6.7%	8 13.3%	16 26.7%	29 48.3%	60 100%
Total	20 6.9%	20 6.9%	34 11.8%	78 21.1%	72 25.0%	64 22.2%	288 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 47.949; df = 20; P < 0.05

Table 28 indicates further analysis of this relationship in terms of the mother/guardian education level. The data revealed that 48.3% of those learners whose mothers/guardians had more than 12 years of education performed above 70% in the latest examination in contrast to their counterparts whose mothers/guardians had no formal education (17,0%). This difference was found to be statistically significant. Considering the learners' performance in terms of below 50%, the data indicated that the majority of the respondents whose mothers had no education (32.3%) performed below 50% in the latest examination while only 15.5% of those whose mothers had more than 12 years of education performed below 50%.

Table 28: Whether years of education of mother/ guardian had an influence on the academic performance of the respondents

RESPONSE							
Years of schooling	Average mark for latest examination						
	20-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	Above 70%	Total
None	2 5.9%	1 2.9%	8 23.5%	10 29.4%	7 20.6%	6 17.6%	34 100%
1 to 4 yrs	4 9.1%	4 9.1%	6 13.6%	16 36.4%	8 18.2%	6 13.6%	44 100%
5 to 7 yrs	7 10.1%	7 10.1%	9 13.0%	18 26.1%	22 31.9%	6 8.7%	69 100%
8 to 12 yrs	3 3.9%	5 6.5%	7 9.1%	23 29.9%	16 20.8%	23 29.9%	77 100%
More than 12 yrs	4 6.2%	2 3.1%	4 6.2%	10 15.4%	20 30.8%	25 38.5%	65 100%
Total	20 6.9%	19 6.6%	34 11.8%	77 26.6%	73 25.3%	66 22.8%	289 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 38.059; df = 20; P < 0.05

4.4 RESULTS RELATED TO THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

The Chi-Square analysis of data revealed that the variable of gender had an impact on learner's performance, career choice and job status. Data in table 29 clearly indicated that significantly more female learners performed better than male learners. For example, 22,4 % female learners obtained above 70% in the latest examination while only 21,0 % male learners obtained above 70%. Considering the performance in terms of below and above 50%, the data revealed that more girls (77.1%) obtained marks above 50% compared to boys (70.2%).

Table 29: Academic performance of respondents by gender

RESPONSE							
Latest examination mark							
Gender	20-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	Above 70%	Total
Female	11 6,5%	16 9.4%	12 7.1%	46 27.1%	47 27.6%	38 22.4%	170 100%
Male	9 7.4%	4 3.3%	23 19,0%	31 25.6%	28 23.1%	26 21.5%	121 100%
Total	20 6.9%	20 6.9%	35 12.0%	77 26.5%	75 25.8%	64 22.0%	291 100%

Note Chi- Square= 12. 959; df = P< 0.05

When data pertaining to the type of job learners would like to do after school were analyzed according to gender, the following picture emerged. It was observed that boys had relatively high and diversified occupational aspirations compared to girls. For example more boys would like to be doctors (28,8%), engineers (15.6%), accountants (8%), lawyers (8%) and pilots (8.8%) than girls. However, it is interesting to note that a high number of girls were interested in common professions

such as teaching (38.6%) and nursing (19.9%). Looking at the results it came out clearly that none of the girls indicated that they would like to be pilots or dealing with any type of business. Similarly, none of the boys showed interest in professions such as nursing and secretariat work (See table 30).

Table 30: Type of jobs respondents would like to do after complete school by gender

Type of job	Gender	
	Male	Female
Teaching	39 31.2%	66 38.6%
Medical doctor	27 28.8%	34 19.9%
Farming	9 7.2%	4 2.3%
Nursing	0 0%	33 19.3%
Business	2 1.6%	0 0%
Media practitioner	3 2.4%	10 5.8%
Being a pilot	11 8.8%	0 0%
Engineering	20 15.6%	1 6%
Law	1 8%	4 2.3%
Accountancy	1 8%	9 5.3%
Vetenerian	0 0%	1 6%
Secretariat	0 0%	2 1.2%

The research results further indicated that gender had an influence on the way learner’s perceived different occupations. For example when analyzed to determine the perceptions of the respondents on the status of engineering, it came out that more boys (71, 2%) perceived engineering to be a high status job than the girls (55.1%) (See table 31).

Table 31: Perceptions of respondents on the status of engineering by gender

RESPONSE				
Status of engineering				
Gender	Low	Medium	High	Total
Female	17 10.9%	53 34.0%	86 55.1%	156 100%
Male	9 7.6%	25 21.2%	84 71.2%	118 100%
Total	26 9.5%	78 28.5%	170 62.0%	274 100%

Note: Chi-Square= 7.409; df = 2; P < 0.05

Pertaining to the information on careers that are available, data in table 32 indicates that more girls obtained information from teachers and friends compared to boys. For example 62.9% of girls reported that teachers provided information on careers that were available compared to 48.4% of boys.

Table 32: Whether teachers gave information on careers by gender

RESPONSE			
Teachers gave information on careers that were available			
Gender	Yes	No	Total
Female	107 62.9%	63 37.1%	170 100%
Male	60 48.4%	64 51.6%	124 100%
Total	167 56.8%	127 43.2%	294 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 6.190; df = 1; P < 0.05

4.5 RESULTS RELATED TO THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Answers to this question were obtained from an analysis of learner responses to section C of the questionnaire. Looking at the involvement of parents/guardians in their children's education, learners were asked amongst others to indicate whether parents/guardians asked about schoolwork.

Results as indicated in table 33 shows that, 44, 9 % of the respondents reported that their parents/guardians sometimes asked about schoolwork while 41, 2% always asked about schoolwork. It is interesting to note that about 13, 3 % of the respondents said that their parents/ guardians never asked about schoolwork.

Table 33: Whether parents/ guardians ask about school work

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes ask about school work	135	44.9%
Always ask about schoolwork	124	41.2%
Never ask about schoolwork	40	13.3%
No response	2	0.7%
Total	301	100%

With regard to learners' academic performance learners were also asked to indicate whether their parents/ guardians praised good performance. Data in table 34 clearly showed that for 59,8 % of the respondents their parents always praised them when they perform well at school, 34, 9 % reported that they got praise sometimes and 5% never got praise when they perform well at school.

Table 34: Whether parents/ guardians praise good performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Always	180	59.8%
Sometimes	105	34.9%
Never	15	5.0%
No response	1	0.3%
Total	301	100

According to table 35 about 47, 5% of the respondents reported that sometimes their parents rewarded them when they perform well at school. 42, 9 % indicated that their parents always rewarded them for good performance and 9.0 % never got reward for good performance.

Table 35: Whether parents/guardians rewarded good performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes	143	47.5%
Always	129	42.9%
Never	27	9.0%
No response	2	0.7%
Total	301	100%

In an attempt to investigate learners' future education and employment plans, learners were asked to indicate how often their parents/guardians discussed with them about their future education and employment plans. Data in table 36 revealed that 55,8 % of the respondents reported that their parents/ guardians never discussed future education and employment plans with them, 29,2% indicated that their parents/guardians discussed this with them sometimes, while 13,3% always discussed about their future education and employment plans with their parents.

Table 36: How often parents/ guardians discuss future education and employment with the respondents.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Never	168	55,8%
Sometimes	88	29,2%
Always	40	13,3%
No response	5	1.7%
Total	301	100%

The results further indicate that a very high percentage of the respondents' parents/guardians (69.3%) want them to further their education up to university level while 14,6 % want their children to continue up to college level. It was also interesting to note that 10.0 % of the respondents reported that their parents only want them to continue until grade 12 (See table 37).

Table 37 : Whether parents/ guardians want their children to continue after grade 10

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
University	210	69.8%
College	44	14.6%
Grade 12	30	10.0%
Not applicable	11	3.7%
No response	6	2.0%
Total	301	100%

Analysis of the data showed that there was a positive relationship between parental involvement and learners' educational aspirations. Learners whose parents became involved in their academic endeavors exhibited higher educational aspirations compared to those whose parents never became involved in their school welfare. For example data in table 38 indicates that the majority of the respondents, whose parents/guardians monitored their academic performance most of the time (44.6%), aspired to university level compared to those whose parents/guardians sometimes monitored their academic performance (37.6%). The data further revealed that only 15.9% of the learners whose parents never monitored their academic performance aspired to university level. These differences were statistically significant.

Table 38: Whether how often parents/guardians monitor the school performance had an influence on learners' educational aspirations.

How often parents /guardian monitor school performance	Highest level of education you would like to attain			
	Grade 12	College/ Vocational	University education	Total
Most of the time	15 14.9 %	41 40.6%	45 44.6%	101 100%
Sometimes	31 22.0%	57 40.4%	53 37.6%	141 100%
Never	11 25.0%	26 59.1%	7 15.9%	44 100%
Total	57 19.9%	128 44.8%	101 35.3%	286 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 10.481; df= 4; P< 0.05

The data further revealed that there was a significant relationship between the levels of education parents/ guardians would like their children to have and the highest level of education learners themselves would like to have. For example 66.4% of the respondents whose parents/guardians want them to continue after grade 10, aspired to further their studies up to university level in comparison to their counterparts whose parents did not want them to continue after grade 10 (45.5%) (See table 39).

Table 39: Whether the level of education parents/ guardians wants their children to achieve had an influence on the learners’ educational aspirations.

Whether parents want you to continue after grade10	Highest level of education you would like to attain			
	Grade 12	College/ Vocational	University education	Total
Yes	32 11.3%	63 22.3%	188 66,4%	283 100%
No	5 45.5%	1 9.1%	5 45.5%	11 100%
Uncertain	1 25.0%	1 25.0%	2 50.0%	4 100%
Total	38 12.8%	65 21.8%	195 65.4%	298 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 11.880; df= 4; P< 0.05

The data were also analyzed to investigate the relationship between the level of education parents want their children to obtain and status of jobs learners themselves would like to attain. Table 40 revealed that learners whose parents/ guardians wanted them to further their studies after grade 10 aspired to high status jobs (71.1%) in contrast to their counterparts whose parents did not want them to further their studies after grade 10 (54.5%).

Table 40: The relationship between highest levels of education parents/ guardians would like their children to achieve and status of job children would like to do after complete school.

Whether parents want you to continue after grade10	Status of job you would like to do after school			
	Low status	Medium Status	High Status	Total
Yes	3 1.1	79 27.8%	202 71.1%	284 100%
No	1 9.1%	4 36.4%	6 54.5%	11 100%
Uncertain		3 75%	1 25.0%	4 100%
Total	4 1.3%	86 28.8%	209 69.9%	299 100%

Note: Chi-Square = 10.033; df = 4; P < 0.05

Data in Table 41 revealed that more learners whose parents always praise good academic performance (69.4%) exhibited high educational aspirations than their counterparts whose parents sometimes praised good academic work (59.6%). Looking at the data, it is interesting to note that for learners of parents who never praise them, 66.7% aspired to university level education.

Table 41 : Whether praising children had an influence on the highest level of education a child would like to achieve.

Whether parents praise good performance	Highest level of education you want to achieve			
	Grade 12	College/Vocational Education	University education	Total
Always	14 7.8%	41 22.8 %	125 69.4%	180 100%
Sometimes	19 18.3%	23 22.1%	62 59.6%	104 100%
Never	4 26.7%	1 6.7%	10 66.7%	15 100%
Total	37 12.4%	65 21.7%	197 65.9%	299 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 11.102; df= 4; P< 0.05

The data was further analyzed to find the relationship between the parents/ guardians' discussion on future education and employment plans with the respondents and respondent's perceptions of job status. The Chi- Square data indicated that more learners (59.5%) whose parents/ guardians always discussed future education and employment plans aspired for high status jobs than those learners (42.2%) whose parents never discussed future education and employment plans. This is clearly shown in table 42 when respondents were asked to indicate whether medicine is a high, medium or low status job.

Pertaining to the data more learners (59.5%) whose parents always discuss with them about their future plans perceived medicine to a high status job compared to those learners whose parents never discuss future education and employment plans with them. (42.2%).

Table 42 : The relationship between discussion about future education and employment plans and the status of medicine

How often parents discuss future education & employment plans	Status of medicine			
	Low	Medium	High	Total
Never	27 16.8%	66 41.0%	68 42.2%	161 100%
Sometimes	15 20.3%	15 20.3%	44 59.5%	74 100%
Always	4 10.8%	11 29.7%	22 59.5%	37 100%
Total	46 16.9%	92 33.8%	134 49.3%	272 100%

Note: Chi- Square = 11.915; df= 4; P< 0.0

SUMMARY

The research results have provided some answers to the four main questions. It was found out that the variables of socio-economic background, parental involvement, parental education and gender had a significant influence on the learners' educational and occupational aspirations. No significant relationship was found with regard to the impact of father's level of education and learners' occupational aspirations. However, a significant relationship was found to exist between the father's level of education and learners' academic performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The preceding chapter analyzed and reported the results of the collected data. The objective of this chapter is to summarize the findings reported and to discuss the various implications of these findings and make recommendations. The discussion will be carried out in the following way: Firstly, discussion of the results question by question as it was done in the previous chapter, followed by implications of the study, recommendations and conclusions of the study.

DISCUSSION

The study serves as a meaningful call to refocus empirical and theoretical treatments of the home environmental factors that have an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations. The findings of this study are convincing evidence that home is an important site that shape learners' future educational and employment plans.

5.1 DISCUSSION ON THE EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS.

The results indicated that in general learners performed better in the latest examination. For example more learners obtained above 70%. This is an indication that more learners were in a position to pass end of the year examination (Nov. 2005). However, there were those learners who obtained between 20-30%. Such learners might not make it to grade 11 next year (2006). Apart from learners who obtained above 70% and 20-30%, the differences in academic performance could also be seen in terms of above and below 50%. Looking at the data one could easily see that more learners managed to obtain marks above 50% and only few who obtained below 50% (See table 4).

With regard to the educational aspirations of learners, the majority of the respondents reported to have higher educational aspirations. For example the data revealed that more learners would like to continue their education up to tertiary education i.e university and college or vocational education. However, there were those learners who indicated to terminate their studies after grade 12 (See table 5).

In addition to educational aspirations, the results further indicated that more learners exhibited higher occupational aspirations. For example the majority reported to be aspiring for high status jobs (See table 6). Looking at the results one gets an impression that the majority of the respondents were in a position to know which type of jobs perceived to be of high, medium and low status.

5.2 DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIO ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

As indicated earlier, socio- economic background has been found to have an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations. Pertaining to the findings, learners whose parents were poor had more limited information with regard to careers that are available than their counterparts from rich families. For example learners from rich homes obtain most of the information from the television and those from poor homes obtain information from their mothers (See table 16). The motive could be most of the learners in the rural areas spend more time with their mothers, since most fathers stay in towns for work. In this case children depend on their mothers for information regarding their future plans. The question is whether these mothers have sufficient information to assist their children to plan for the future.

In addition to information regarding careers, facilities at home seemed to have an impact on the educational aspirations of the learners. This was clearly shown by the differences in educational aspirations of learners whereby more learners who had television, reference books, own place to study and electricity at home aspired to

postgraduate education than those who have no access to these items (See table 11). One might argue that well off parents were in a better position to provide their children with resources that could be useful to learning compared to poor parents.

The present data lend support to the findings reported by Duran and Weffer (1992) that family socio- economic background was seen as an influencing academic achievement in turn influenced aspirations. This could mean that learners whose parents are well off had higher aspirations than those learners whose parents are poor. For example it was found that the majority of the respondents who had reference books at home exhibited higher educational aspirations than those without reference books at home (See table 19).

The differences in academic performance could also be seen in terms of learners who had breakfast before they go to school. The data clearly indicated that learners who had breakfast every day before they go to school exhibited better academic performance than learners who had breakfast sometimes. However it was interesting to note that for learners who hardly had breakfast their academic performance was also better (See table 21). One would have expected to see that learners without breakfast might perform poorly because Maslow' hierarchy theory argued that food is one of the basic needs that has to be fulfilled in order for an individual to be productive.

In addition to having breakfast before school it was also worth noting the significant relationship that existed between the distance from home to school and learners' educational aspirations. The data revealed that more learners who walked short distances to school reported to be aspiring to postgraduate studies compared to learners who walked long distance to school (See table 22). This could be that walking long distances become unbearable to these learners and therefore they were not really motivated to further their studies up to postgraduate level.

Furthermore the data also showed that there was no significant relationship between responsibilities at home and learners' educational aspirations. These responsibilities were fetching water, cooking, looking after cattle and sheep, pounding mahangu, looking after siblings and collecting wood. The message that is communicated here is that although learners in the Omusati Education region were pre-occupied with householder responsibilities, this did not hamper their education and employment plans. Contrary to this findings, the study conducted by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF in 2002 in Rundu Education Region indicated that the householder responsibilities such as cooking, pounding mahangu, fetching water and looking after animals had an impact on the learners' educational aspirations in Rundu Education region (MBEC, 2002).

Looking at this finding one gets an impression that family socio economic background could influence educational and occupational aspirations of learners. For example the results clearly showed that some learners from poor families exhibited lower educational and occupational aspirations than those from rich families (See table18). This finding supports some previous findings and opinion from the literature. For example Gottfredson (1991) reported that family economic status is one of the factors that influence people's way of selecting a career. For example some people might have the capability to study specific fields such as medicine and engineering but do not have funds.

5.3 DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL EDUCATION ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Pertaining to the findings of this study, a significant relationship was found to exist between parental level of education and the respondents' educational and occupational aspirations. The data revealed that fathers' and mothers' educational levels were important factors in the way the learners formed their educational and occupational aspirations. For example more learners from homes where mothers

obtained more than secondary school education reported that they aspired to post graduate education compared to those from homes where mothers had less education.

These findings were consistent with those of Van Der Merwe and Welshi (1992) who conducted a study in South Africa. They reported that learners from families where mothers had more than secondary education, aspired to obtain post- secondary education. In addition those from families whose fathers had attained higher standards of education, for example a degree, showed relatively higher educational aspirations than their counterparts whose fathers had not received any formal education or had just attained a maximum of primary education level. However there were few learners from families of uneducated parents who indicated that they would like to further their studies up to the post graduate level.

The conclusion can be made that educated parents are capable of providing their children with moral support which the lowly educated parents may not be capable of doing. Such parents value education and encourage their children to work hard. This idea was supported by Duran and Weffer (1992) who conducted a study in the United States of America among the Mexican- American families. They reported that family educational values had an important effect on the learners' academic achievement. For example children of learners who had higher education especially in science fields were more likely to perform well in science subjects.

Apart from learners educational aspirations it was also observed that lack of formal education on the part of the parents could also hamper the learners' occupational aspirations. These learners from homes where parents had no education at all or just obtained primary education reported to exhibit lower occupational aspiration compared to their counterparts. These findings were consistent with those of Maple and Stage (1991) who in their study on the influence of parental education on the educational and occupational aspirations of secondary students in India, reported that the parent's education affected career choices of the students whereby learners

whose parents are educated aspired to post graduate studies in comparison to those whose parents are not educated.

5.4 DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF GENDER ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

Other interesting findings in the study were those related to gender differences. It was clear that children's career choices were guided by stereotyped beliefs. Pertaining to the data more boys were interested in diversified and high status jobs such as law, engineering, medicine and piloting. On the other hand girls were more interested in common professions such as nursing and teaching (See table 30).

Looking at the findings, one gets an impression that learners choose careers based on gender roles and expectations set by the society. For example the results clearly indicated that, boys showed higher occupational aspirations than the girls. Possibly this could be due to the differences in their upbringing. For instance boys observed the roles and responsibilities taken by their fathers and men around them, then realize that the task they have in life is not light. At home boys are being told that they will be heads of their families, therefore this and other factors make boys set high goals for themselves leading to high educational and occupational aspirations.

On the other hand, girls observe and imitate what their mothers and other women do at home and in the society. Women in the rural area are more interested in common professions such as teaching, nursing and secretariat work. Due to these circumstances girls may not really be motivated to set high goals for themselves like boys. This finding was consistent with those of Kifir (1988) who conducted a study on the factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of grade 10 learners in Israel. He reported that sex of the children was a major factor related to their educational and occupational aspirations.

The popular careers for females were teaching followed by nursing. Girls avoided careers such as engineering, law and piloting which are commonly associated with men. Boys avoided those careers commonly associated with women such as nursing and secretariat work. Similarly Centra (1998) reported that girls had more restricted occupational aspirations than boys. It may be said that the society and including the home, unconsciously fosters high aspirations in the male children as it lowers the female children's aspirations due to the stereotypes beliefs they hold in respect to sex roles. However, it was worth noting that only few learners showed interest in farming. This could be explained in terms of past attitudes held by most people that farming was for the uneducated persons back in the rural areas (See table 30).

Gottfredson (1991) reported that most high status jobs are very masculine, for example physicists, geologists, engineers, auto mechanics and accountancy. On the other hand, occupations such as nursing, elementary teaching, secretarial works are perceived to be more feminine and some are rated as of low status. This finding was contrary to the findings of the present study that revealed that in the Namibian context even though teaching was perceived to be more feminine it is categorized as a high status job not a low status job as Gottfredson indicated.

Contrary to the expectations of the researcher, the findings of the study revealed that there was statistically no significant relationship between the educational aspirations of the learners and their occupational aspirations. This led to a conclusion that the educational aspirations of the learners were quite independent of their occupational aspirations.

5.5 DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON LEARNERS' EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

The data have confirmed that parental involvement had an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations. It is worth noting that the majority of educated parents were reported to show more interest in the education of their

children than uneducated parents. For example they were involved in their children's school activities since they understood the importance of such involvement to their children's learning.

The fact is that, well educated parents assist their children with school work and they are able to relate between what children learn in schools and what they will do after school. Unfortunately most uneducated parents are not in a position to do that.

This finding was consistent with research by Bureil and Cardoza (1998) who reported that learners, whose parents are supportive and had positive attitudes towards the learners' education, encouraged the learner to perform well. Such a learner acquires a sense of achievement and confidence for individual activity, he/she stands a better chance of succeeding in his/her schoolwork and he/she is capable of making his/her own decisions. In addition such learners discuss their future education and employment plans with their parents.

The data furthermore seemed to show that learners who always discuss their future education and employment plans with their parents exhibited high educational and occupational aspirations (See table 42). This could imply that there is a good communication between parents and learners that enable parents to guide and advise their children on future educational and employment plans. It is, however, important to note that some learners from poor home backgrounds also exhibited high educational aspirations. The motive could be that these learners might want to get out of the poor conditions of living, since they realize that education is the key to social mobility and to successful living. They strive for high education that will grantee them a good job.

The picture depicted by this finding is consistent with the interpretation that was provided previously, namely that learners from poor families just take any job as long as it pays to sustain their basic needs (Gottfredson (1991)).

Looking at this finding it could imply that apart from financial constraints learners' career choice could be influenced by lack of information regarding careers that are available. For example the results indicated that learners from poor families obtained information on careers that are available from their mothers (See table 16). Due to this circumstance, some of these learners lack awareness of the existence of various jobs. Such learners opt for common professions such as nursing and teaching. In addition to career options, these learners also lack knowledge on institutions of higher learning such as Polytechnic and the University of Namibia. This could contribute to low educational aspirations as some learners aspired to secondary school and some might even terminate their study after grade 10 as indicated earlier.

Based on the results the researcher noted that many learners had limited information on careers that are available. Those who were aware of different careers were not realistic about their school performance. For example a learner obtained 40% in the latest examination indicated that he/she would like to become a medical doctor or an engineer. Obviously this is a sign that some of the learners were not realistic about what they want to do after completing school. Based on this finding the conclusion can be reached that many school going children have failed to see the relationship between what they learn in school and what they will do when they leave the education system. Thus young people in Omusati region need to be guided to pursue the right type of education and careers which ideally should relate to their interests, abilities and aptitudes but not purely for prestige as most respondents in the study seemed to do.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings in the previous section of this chapter have some implications. This section deals with a few of the important implications. The results discussed have raised many questions and concerns, particularly with regard to learners' attitudes toward higher education and perception of job categories. From the findings it was clearly shown that the majority of learners aspired to post graduate levels and high

status jobs. This can be as a result of societal beliefs that university education has more value than technical education. For example in Namibia and some other African countries, the society places more emphasis on higher educated people who have high status jobs such as law, medicine, engineering etc. On the other hand technical education is not really recognized as an important sector which contributes to the economy of the country.

This was clearly shown by the findings that few learners reported to aspire for farming profession in comparison to other professions. Due to these attitudes and perceptions, a large number of students enroll for universities rather than technikon. Looking at this situation it seems that the education system is faced with a challenge of restoring the dignity of labor by teaching learners to respect manual work, and to prepare them to take up jobs such as carpentry, construction, mining, farming and the like. Finally, with regard to limited information on careers that are available, the reason could be that, in the rural area many of the learners are in many cases the first in their families to get secondary education or any formal education, especially those whose parents are uneducated. Even in those cases where their parents are educated still parents could not provide the children with sufficient information regarding careers that are available.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the exploratory nature of this research, it gave rise to issues that need to be addressed within the context of learners' educational and occupational aspirations in the rural area. These issues were: the need for further research, strengthening of career programmes and improvement of home environment. The following recommendations were made based on the above issues.

a) Further research

- ◆ Since this study was only conducted in one education region and these findings cannot easily be generalized to other educational regions in the country, it is therefore

recommended that there is a need to conduct a similar study in other educational regions in Namibia.

- ◆There is a need to conduct a comparative study in order to assess the impact of home environment factors on both rural and urban area.

- ◆It is further recommended that a study of the same nature should be carried out at different educational levels, for example at primary school level, since, primary school forms the basis of education whereby a child is prepared for secondary school and university.

B) Strengthening career programmes

- ◆The research findings indicated that learners in the Omusati education region had limited knowledge regarding careers that are available. It is therefore recommended that a study of job categorization should be carried in the Omusati education region.

- ◆It is also suggested that schools in the Omusati education region should consider having school guidance councillors that will be responsible for assisting and guiding learners on issues related to aspirations. By doing this vocational guidance should also be emphasized throughout so that learners become aware of vocational institutions available and different courses offered.

- ◆The ministry of education should consider including aspects of occupations and the world of work in the syllabi for the various subjects taught at primary level. This will equip learners with relevant information on various occupations and help them to choose school subjects that are related to their career choice.

c) Improvement of home environment

♦There is a need to improve home conditions that seem to influence learner's educational and occupational aspirations, this can be done by motivating parents to become more involved in their children s' education.

♦In creating home environments that are conducive to learning, parents and psychologists in the Omusati region should form support groups for sharing information on raising children and helping them with school work. Such groups would also be concerned with improving the poor home environments of the learners.

♦Another recommendation is that parents in collaboration with schools should be more involved in the child's education. Central to this recommendation is the specific suggestion that the parents together with concerned teachers should at all times keep academic records of a child in order to determine the child's interests and abilities. When the child is ready to choose a career these records should be consulted to help the child to make proper decisions with regard to his/ her field of specialization.

5.8 CONCLUSION

It is the wish of each and every learner to finish school and follow a career of his/her choice. Due to some difficulties, some learners might be forced indirectly to terminate their studies or just take up any job available in order to survive. However, there are those who have all the support they need to continue their education and fulfill their dreams.

I would like to conclude this study, by saying the followings

- a) This study serves as a meaningful call to refocus empirical and theoretical treatments of the home environmental factors that have an impact on learners' educational and occupational aspirations.
- b) The findings of this study are convincing evidence that the home is an important site that shape learners' future education and employment plans, Because of this parents/ guardians can play a very significant role in

organizing and enriching the home environments to enhance their children's educational and occupational aspirations.

6. REFERENCES

- Bailey, K.D. (1994). *Methods of Social Research*. 4th Ed. New York: Free Press.
- Blanche, M.T.,& Durrheim, K. (1999). *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social science* .Cape Town: University of Western Cape Press.
- Brown, D., Brooks, L. and Associates. (1996). *Career Choice and Development*.3rdEd. California: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers.
- Bureil, R., & Cardoza, R. (1998). Sociocultural correlates of achievement among three generations of Mexican American high school seniors. *American Educational Research Journal*. 25(2), 177-192.
- Centra, J.A. (1998). Graduate degree aspirations of ethnic student groups. *American Educational Research Journal*. 17 (4), 459-478.
- De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. & Delpont, C.S.L. (2000). *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions* .2rd Ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Duran, B.J. & Weffer, R.E. (1992). Immigrants' aspirations, High school process, and academic outcomes. *American Educational Research Journal*. 29 (1), 163-181.
- Ethington, C. & Wolfle, L. (1988). Women's selection of quantitative: undergraduate fields of study: Direct and indirect influences. *American Educational Research Journal*. 25(2), 157-175.
- Gottfredson, L. (1991). Circumscribing vocational aspirations in junior high school. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. 39 (1), 81-90.

- Jacobs, J., Finken, L. & Griffin, N. (1998). The career plans of science – talented rural adolescent girls. *American Educational Research Journal*. 35 (4), 681-704.
- Kfir, D. (1988). Achievements and aspirations among boys and girls: A comparison of two Israel ethnic groups. *American Educational Research Journal*. 25(2), 213-236.
- Maple, S. & Stage, F. (1991). Influences on the choice of Math/ Science major by gender and ethnicity. *American Educational Research Journal*. 28 (1), 37-60.
- Marini, M.M. & Greenberger, E. (1998). Sex differences in Educational aspirations and expectations. *American Educational Research Journal*. 15(1), 67-79.
- Marjoribanks, K. (1995). School attitudes and adolescents' aspirations: Ethnic differences. *International Journal of Psychology* .20 (1), 277-289.
- Merriam, S.B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Merterns, D.M. (1998). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology*. California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993). *Toward Education for All: a development Brief for Education, Culture and Training*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1999). *Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training*. Windhoek: Solitaire Press.
- Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (2002). *An Assessment of girl's education in Rundu education region*. Windhoek: United Nations.

- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (1990). *The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Mitchell, M. & Jolley, J. (2001). *Research design explained*. London: Harcourt College.
- Mostert, M.L., Keyter, M.C. & Scott, A. (2001). *Views of students at the University of Namibia on factors influencing their career choice*. Windhoek: University of Namibia.
- Mostert, L. (1994). *The development of careers education in Namibia*. Unpublished M.ED Thesis. University of Bristol.
- Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral studies: South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: J. L. Van Schaik.
- Plattner, E.P., & Mbwale, S.V. (2002). *Career Choice: A Challenge for Namibian High School Students*. Windhoek: University of Namibia.
- Rodermund, E. & Vondracek, F. W. (2002). Occupational dreams, choices and aspirations: Adolescent's entrepreneurial prospects and orientations. *Journal of Adolescence*. 25, 65-78.
- Sarantankos, S. (1993). *Social Research*. Australia: MacMillan Education Australia.
- Sukati, C. (1991). Perceptions of 111 students on the Swazi labor market: Implications for career guidance. *Boleswa Educational Research Journal*. 8, 18-27.
- Van Der Merwe, H. & Welshi, D. (1992) *Student perspective of South Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publisher.
- Vlaardingerbroek, B. (2001). Botswana secondary student's perceptions of the education/employment nexus. *International Journal of Educational Development*. 21, 315-329.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

**Home environmental factors that influence educational and
occupational aspirations of grade 10 learners
in the
Omusati Region.**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent

Thank you for participating in this important research project. The purpose of the project is to investigate home environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of grade 10 learners in the Omusati region.

NB: All the information in this study will be treated as confidential and the respondents' answers will only be known to the researcher.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do not write your name.
2. Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible.
3. There are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to air your views.
4. Write answers in the space provided or tick (✓) the appropriate answer(s).

SECTION A

1. Name of the school

1. Nakayale	1	
2. Anamulenge	2	
3. Okavu	3	
4. Okanimekwa	4	
5. Omuulukila	5	
6. Oshikulufitu	6	
7. Eengolo	7	
8. Uukwandongo	8	
9. Nuuyoma	9	
10. David Sheehama	10	

2. Sex

1. Male	1	
2. Female	2	

3. How old are you? (Age in full years)

.....

SECTION B

1. Who do you stay with?

1.1 Biological parents	1	
1.2 Relatives	2	
1.3 Guardian	3	
1.4 None of the above (specify).....	4	

2. How many other people live in your house?

.....

3. How many years of schooling does your father/ guardian have?

3.1 None	1	
3.2 1 to 4 years	2	
3.3 5 to 7 years	3	
3.4 8 to 12 years	4	
3.5 Over 12 years	5	

4. How many years of schooling does your mother/ guardian have?

4.1 None	1	
4.2 1 to 4 years	2	
4.3 5 to 7 years	3	
4.4 8 to 12 years	4	
4.5 Over 12 years	5	

5. Does your father/ guardian have a paid job at present?

5.1 Yes	1	
5.2 No	2	

If Yes, what type of job?

.....

6. Does your mother/ guardian have a paid job at present?

6.1 Yes	1	
6.2 No	2	

If Yes, what type of job?

.....

7. How do you classify your home economic circumstances?

7.1 poor	1	
7.2 average	2	
7.3 above average	3	
7.4 well off	4	

8. Which of the following do you have at home? (Tick those you have)

8.1 Television	1	
8.2 Radio	2	
8.3 Computer	3	
8.4 video	4	
8.5 electricity	5	
8.6 Room of your own	6	
8.7 A specific place for study	7	
8.8 Reference books	8	
8.9 Car	9	
8.10 Bicycle	10	
8.11 Motor bike	11	

9. Do you eat breakfast before you go to school?

9.1 Hardly ever	1	
9.2 Sometimes	2	
9.3 Every day	3	

10. How long does your trip to school usually take?

10.1 Less than 15 minutes	1	
10.2 More than 15 minutes, but Less than 30 minutes	2	
10.3 More than 30 minutes ,but less than 45 minutes	3	
10.4 More than 45 minutes but less than 60 minutes	4	
10.5 More than one hour	5	

11. Where do you usually study and do your home work? (Tick the most frequent situation).

11.1 At home in a room where the rest of the family talks, listens to the radio etc.	1	
11.2 At home in a room that is usually quiet, although other people are there.	2	
11.3 At home in a room by myself	3	
11.4 At home outside the house	4	
11.5 At school	5	
11.6 Other (Specify)	6	

12. For which of the following are you regularly responsible at home (Mark all that you do regularly).

12.1 Fetching water	1	
12.2 Collecting wood	2	
12.3 Cooking	3	
12.4 Looking after goats or cattle after school	4	
12.5 Looking after younger brothers or sisters after school	5	
12.6 Cleaning the house	6	
12.7 Pounding Mahangu	7	

12.8 Other duties (specify).....	8	
-------------------------------------	---	--

SECTION C

1. How often do your parents/ guardians help you with your school work?

1.1 Most of the time	1	
1.2 Sometimes	2	
1.3. Never	3	

2. Except for your parents/ guardians, does anybody in your family help you with your school work?

1.1 Yes	1	
1.2 No	2	

If Yes, Who?

.....

..

3. How often do your parents/ guardians go through your school work to see how you perform at school?

3.1 Most of the time	1	
3.2 Sometimes	2	
3.3 Never	3	

4. In your spare time at home, do your parents/ guardians

4.1 Care if you do not read	1	
4.2 Suggest that you read	2	
4.3 Encourage you to read as much as possible	3	

5. when you get home from school, do your parents

5.1 Ever ask about schoolwork	1	
5.2 Sometimes ask about your schoolwork	2	

5.3 Always ask about your schoolwork	3	
--------------------------------------	---	--

6. Do your parents/ guardians attend school functions whenever there are any?

6.1 Always	1	
6.2 Sometimes	2	
6.3 Never	3	

7. Do your parents/ guardians praise you when you perform well at school?

7.1 Always	1	
7.2 Sometimes	2	
7.3 Never	3	

8. Do you receive a reward from your parents/ guardians when you perform well at school?

8.1 Always	1	
8.2 Sometimes	2	
8.3 Never	3	

9. How often do your parents/ guardians discuss with you about your future plans for education and employment?

9.1 Never	1	
9.2 Often	2	
9.3 Sometimes	3	

10. Do your parents/ guardians want you to continue schooling after you have finished grade 10?

10.1 Yes	1	
10.2 No	2	
10.3 Uncertain	3	

If Yes until what level ?

.....
.....
.....

11. What type of work (occupation) would your parents/ guardians like you to do after you have finished schooling?

.....
.....
.....

SECTION D

1. What is the highest level of education that you would like to have?

2.1 Grade 12	1	
2.2 College or Vocational education	2	
2.3 University education	3	

2. Considering all practical constraints, what is the highest level of education you think you will reach?

2.1 Grade 12	1	
2.2 College or Vocational education	2	
2.3 University education	3	

3. What type of job do you think you would like to do and be able to do after completing school (Describe the job clearly)?

.....
.....
.....

4. Do you consider this job to be of low, medium, or high status?

.....
.....
.....

5. Considering possible constraints what job do you think you will be able to do one day? (Describe the job clearly).Note: Jobs in questions 3 and 5 can be the same.

.....

6. Do you consider this job to be of low, medium or high status?

.....

7. Which of the following best describes the reason for your choice of the job in question 5? (Select only one).

7.1. Easy to find employment	1	
7.2 High salary	2	
7.3 Respectable and Prestigious	2	
7.4 Share knowledge with others	3	
7.5 Parents' wishes	4	
7.6 Other reasons (specify).....	5	

8. Who has the biggest influence on your job wishes?

8.1 Father	1	
8.2 Mother	2	
8.3 Both mother and father	3	
8.4 Relatives	4	
8.5 Media	5	
8.6 Teacher	6	
8.7 Friends	7	
8.8 Others (specify).....	8	

9. Listed below are different occupations. Please indicate by ticking the type of occupation you consider to be of low, medium and high status.

	Low	Medium	High
8.1 Teaching			
8.2 Nursing			
8.3 Being an Artisan			
8.4 Medicine			
8.5 Farming			
8.6 Being a Psychologist			
8.7 Being a Human Resource Manager			
8.8 Being a Pilot			
8.9 Engineering			
8.10 Being an Air hostess			
8.11 Carpentry			
8.12 Biological Science			
8.13 Economics			
8.14 Accountancy			
8.15 Journalism			

9. Do you think you will be able to follow the career of your choice?

9.1 Yes	1	
9.2 No	2	

Motivate your answer

.....

10. Where did you get information on careers that are available?

.....

 ...

11. What was your average mark for the last examination?

6.1 20-30%	1	
6.2 30-40%	2	
6.3 40-50%	3	
6.4 50-60%	4	
6.5 60-70 %	5	
6.6 Above 70%	6	

Thank you

End of the Questionnaire

APPENDIX B

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

P.O Box 25604
Windhoek
Namibia

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek
Namibia

.....

Dear Sir

Subject: Request for permission to visit 10 schools in the Omusati region.

I am a Master of Education student at the University of Namibia. Part of my study is to complete a thesis by conducting research on a specific area of Special Education. My research topic aims at exploring home environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations of grade 10 learners in the Omusati region.

It is expected that, the research findings of this study may provide some understanding of home environmental factors that influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations in rural area. Schools, parents, curriculum designers and other educators may benefit in several ways. For example, the information may be used by life skills teachers in helping learners in determining their future occupations. Curriculum designers might find this information helpful and integrate it in school subjects that are dealing with personal development such as life skills and social studies.

By knowing the home environmental factors that influence educational and occupational aspirations, parents might become more involved in planning their children's education and help them to choose careers depending on their abilities and personalities. Parents might also take into consideration the influence of gender on occupational choice and encourage their children to choose occupations of their choice regardless of gender influences.

The study might also highlight the need to improve home conditions that seem to influence learners' educational and occupational aspirations, by motivating parents to improve their educational level and provide their children with a home environment conducive for learning.

The collection of data will be done through the administration of a questionnaire that will last about 20 minutes. I will personally administer the questionnaires in order to clarify issues that might arise. Attached please find an example of the questionnaire. The study is focused on learners only. The schools to be visited are : Nakayale, Anamulenge, Okavu, Okanimekwa, Omuulukila, Mwaala, Shikongo Ipinge, Uukwandongo, Ondukuta and David Sheehama.

The envisaged visit to schools is from 20 to 30th June 2005. I would be very grateful if favourable consideration is made at your earliest possible convenience.

Sincerely yours

.....
Penoshinge I. Shililifa
Tel: 212659 (W)
0812438565 (H)