

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT OF GRADE 12 LEARNERS IN THE KHOMAS REGION OF
NAMIBIA

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY
(GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING)

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY

SONJA GRÜTTEMEYER

STUDENT NUMBER: 200916661

MAY 2017

MAIN SUPERVISOR: PROF M. L. MOSTERT

CO-SUPERVISOR: PROF A.D. MÖWES

ABSTRACT

The core aim of this research study was to enlighten the relevant parties (such as the government, schools, parents and learners) within the education system, of the perceived opinions as well as the perceived barriers that Grade 12 learners experience regarding their career aspirations. These career aspirations exert a significant influence on the learners' career choices. This research study was embedded in a quantitative method. The research instruments consisted of two separate parts, namely a researcher-designed questionnaire and secondary data which were the academic achievements (reports) of every individual learner. The Pearson correlation was used to determine a possible relationship between the learners' academic achievement and the requirements of the careers to which they aspired. It was found that there was a low positive correlation between the two variables. Another finding, however, exposed the fact that the majority of learners did not make a successful match between their academic achievements and the minimum requirements for the careers to which they aspired. Additional factors, such as significant others as well as perceived barriers, had an influence on a learners' career aspirations. The research investigation revealed that career aspirations were a complex process and that several components interacted, such as the gender, socio-economic status, significant others, time and most importantly the academic achievements.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
DEDICATION	x
CHAPTER 1	
INTRODUCTION	
1.1 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	3
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	4
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	5
1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS	5
1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY	6
CHAPTER 2	
LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 INTRODUCTION	8
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	9

2.3 DEFINING CAREER ASPIRATIONS	16
2.4 FORMATION OF CAREER ASPIRATIONS.....	17
2.5 THE RANGE AND TYPES OF CAREERS TO WHICH LEARNERS ASPIRE	19
2.6 CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	22
2.7 CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND GENDER.....	25
2.8 THE ROLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARENTS	25
2.9 THE NAMIBIAN CONTEXT.....	28
2.10 CONCLUSION.....	30
 CHAPTER 3	
 METHODOLOGY	
3.1 INTRODUCTION	31
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN	31
3.3 POPULATION.....	32
3.4. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD.....	32
3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.....	33
3.6 PROCEDURE.....	35
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS	36
3.7.1 Quantitative Analysis.....	36
3.7.1.1 <i>Pearson Correlation</i>	38
3.7.2 Document Analysis	39

3.8 RESEARCH ETHICS.....	41
3.9 CONCLUSION.....	42
CHAPTER 4	
RESULTS	
4.1 INTRODUCTION	43
4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF LEARNERS.....	43
4.3 RANGE AND TYPE OF DESIRED CAREERS	47
4.4 LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS TO ENTER THE DESIRED CAREER.....	50
4.4.1 <i>Training Needed in Order to Enter Desired Career</i>	51
4.4.2 <i>Importance of Academic Goals</i>	52
4.4.3 <i>Performance in English</i>	56
4.4.4 <i>Learners' Level of Confidence to Enter their Desired Career</i>	57
4.4.5 <i>Learners' Understanding of the Careers to which they Aspired</i>	59
4.5 AGENCIES THAT INFLUENCE LEARNERS' CAREER ASPIRATIONS.....	59
4.6 PERCEIVED BARRIERS	61
4.7 CORRELATION RESULTS OF THE LEARNERS' DESIRED CAREERS AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.....	63
4.8 GENDER DIFFERENCES.....	66
4.8.1 <i>Range and Type of Careers Boys and Girls Aspired To</i>	66

<i>4.8.2 Girls' and Boys' Desired Careers in the Four Career Levels</i>	69
<i>4.8.3 Girls' and Boys' Perceived Likelihood to Achieve their Goals</i>	69
<i>4.8.4 Possibility to Enter their Desired Career by Gender</i>	70
4.9 CONCLUSION	72
CHAPTER 5	
DISCUSSION	
5.1 INTRODUCTION	73
5.2 RANGE AND TYPES OF CAREERS TO WHICH LEARNERS ASPIRED	73
5.3 LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF THEIR DESIRED CAREERS.....	75
5.4 AGENCIES THAT INFLUENCE CAREER ASPIRATIONS.....	77
5.5 PERCEIVED BARRIERS	78
5.6 POSSIBILITY TO ENTER A DESIRED CAREER CONSIDERING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.....	80
5.7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDERS.....	81
5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS	83
5.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	84
5.10 CONCLUSION.....	86
REFERENCES	87

APPENDIX 1: Ethical clearance certificate of the University of Namibia

APPENDIX 2: Permission letter of the University of Namibia

APPENDIX 3: Permission letter of the permanent secretary

APPENDIX 4: Permission letter of the Khomas Regional Office

APPENDIX 5: Example of self-designed questionnaire

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Career levels based on points required according to UNAM	38
Table 2: Points allocated to the various percentage range/symbols according to the UNAM point system	40
Table 3: Example of learner X's academic achievement	41
Table 4: Demographic information overview of learners.....	46
Table 5: The range and type of desired careers indicated by the learners.....	49
Table 6: Number of learners aspiring to careers at the different entry levels	50
Table 7: Training needed to enter into desired career	52
Table 8: Level of importance learners assigned to achieving academic goals.....	53
Table 9: English scores achieved by the learners	57
Table 10: Learners perceived likelihood to achieve goals.....	58
Table 11: Agencies that influenced learners' career aspirations.....	61
Table 12: Learners' perceived barriers to pursue their desired career.....	62
Table 13: Correlation between points scored and career levels (points required) to enter the learners' desired careers.....	64
Table 14: Learners obtaining sufficient points per selected career category	66
Table 15: Range and types of careers to which learners aspired according to their gender.....	68
Table 16: Number of learners by gender aspiring to careers at different entry levels	69
Table 17: Learners' perceived likelihood to achieve goals by gender	70
Table 18: Learners obtaining sufficient points per selected career category according to gender.	72

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to make use of this opportunity to thank my family and friends for your constant trust and faith in me. Thank you for supporting me in my venture to achieve my dream. Your endless understanding and support enabled me to complete this research project. Thank you for always believing in me, my skills and abilities!

I am grateful to have had such inspiring and hardworking fellow students who were always willing to assist, listen and discuss. The most heartfelt appreciation goes to my main supervisor, Professor M. L. Mostert. The time she availed to assist and guide me is priceless and unforgettable. Thank you also to my co-supervisor, Professor A. D. Möwes, who was always willing to read my work and assist me. Thank you to Dr Marina Muller for your uplifting words and encouragement in times of darkness, when I was trying to make sense of all the data collected.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to all my friends and family members who never doubted my abilities. Without your unconditional love and endless support this would not have been a success! There are no words to express my deepest gratitude to all of you!

I, Sonja Grüttemeyer, declare hereby that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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 permission of the author or The University of Namibia in that behalf.

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

.....

Date.....

Sonja Grüttemeyer

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

This chapter provides an overview of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, as well as an explanation of the significance of this particular study. The first chapter will conclude with an elaboration of the structure of the study and short definitions of relevant terms applied within this research study.

It is a daunting and difficult process for young individuals to make a career choice as there are many aspects that may influence this process. The career decision process has received a fair amount of attention within the scientific research field. For example, Mbwale (2004) investigated learners decision-making skills in choosing a career, while Lee and Rojewski (2009) did an in-depth analysis of the career aspirations concept and its influence on career choice development. However, no known research has been conducted in Namibia regarding the complex aspect of career aspirations. The career decision process incorporates several aspects, such as family and peer influences, values, interests, skills and the abilities of the individual, as well as exposure to different careers along with the individuals' career aspirations (Stead & Watson, 2006). The dictionary defines career as “an occupation or way of making a living that a person follows, especially one with opportunities for promotion” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 149), while aspiration is defined as “a strong hope or ambition” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 55). Career aspirations can be regarded as the motivational factor that drives the learner

eventually to pursue a specific career. This motivational factor is a vital and powerful key element, as it ‘keeps the individual going’ to follow his or her dream career. The variety of possible careers, as well as the many barriers that may arise during this process, emphasises the importance of support for our youth from various parties, such as their communities, government, peers, teachers, parents and family members.

The Namibian government has acknowledged its responsibility to provide some guidance in the complex career-choice process for secondary school learners. The efforts of the government are evidenced in the Life Skills subject and career counselling programmes that were introduced and implemented in 2007. In general, the Life Skills Syllabus (Ministry of Education, 2006) is an attempt to provide Namibian learners with the basic skills to cope with life in school and after completing school. At senior secondary level the syllabus focuses on career options and possible choices that correspond with the individual's interests, strengths, weaknesses and abilities. At this point of learners' academic careers, they should have developed an understanding of a realistic self which they should be able to match with an appropriate career. In order to match an individual's attributes to a career successfully, the knowledge of various careers, as well as the requirements to enter into a specific career, need to be known by the individual. Research (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012) indicates that individual differences may influence career aspirations and knowledge of different careers. These individual differences include internal factors, such as academic ability, personality, gender and values, as well as external factors, such as socio-economic status and cultural

issues. In order to gain a holistic picture of the phenomenon of career aspiration, it is of paramount importance to include some of these factors in this research. This is especially important, since research has revealed that several learners not only lack knowledge about the range of careers that are available, but are also unaware of the requirements and actual duties expected from occupations (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is recorded in the Situation Analysis Report (National Planning Commission & UNICEF, 2010) that 67.7% of Namibians between 20 and 24 years of age are unemployed and that many young people are not actively looking for work. There are various reasons for the high rate of unemployment among the Namibian youth. According to statistics obtained by J. Steytler (“Unemployment rate still alarmingly high,” 2013) 49% of Namibian youth are unemployed and the main reason for this phenomenon, is associated with the lack of education and even more so the lack of specialised skills for the jobs that are available. Another reason may be, however, that the adolescents have career aspirations that may not fit their personalities, interests or abilities realistically. This could result in a sense of hopelessness and a lack of motivation. Mbwale (2004) analysed learners’ awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and their decision-making skills in choosing a career. The findings emphasised that learners needed to know their strengths and weaknesses before they could decide where they were heading or where they wanted to be. As a Life Skills

teacher, I experienced that many Namibian learners lacked the knowledge or were simply ignorant about the academic requirements necessary to enter certain careers. Observation revealed that learners were unaware of the variety of career options available.

It seems that for many learners there is an unequal match between their academic performance and the careers to which they aspire. Learners seem to be oblivious of the fact that their academic performance is the most important element to gain access to a vast number of opportunities. However, in order to find a suitable career, a person's career aspirations should match his or her academic ability realistically. Career aspirations have a vital function within the career decision process, as this is the motivation which drives individuals to evaluate different possible and desirable career options, and then pursue their desired career.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives that guided this research were:

1. To determine the range and types of careers to which Grade 12 learners aspire.
2. To determine learners' awareness of the basic academic requirements of the careers to which they aspire.
3. To determine the extent to which learners meet the minimum academic requirements for the careers to which they aspire.

4. To evaluate possible differences between the two genders (girls and boys) in terms of their career aspirations.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Findings of the study may provide information on whether or not learners have realistic career aspirations in terms of their academic abilities and performance. The study is aimed at enlightening the public (such as the government, communities, teachers and parents) about the opinions and perceived barriers that Grade 12 learners often experience regarding their careers. An evaluation of the knowledge level of the different careers would allow insight and provide a guideline for intervention and improvements in this area. For example, it may encourage Life Skills teachers to assist learners to consider careers that match their academic abilities, as well as their interests and personalities realistically. The aspiration to enter a certain career is the ultimate motivation and internal drive behind young people's efforts to enter their desired career despite possible barriers.

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined as indicated below:

- Career is “an occupation or way of making a living that a person follows, especially one with opportunities for promotion” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 149).

- Job is defined as “work that someone does regularly to earn a living” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 552). Job and career are used interchangeable within this research.
- Aspiration is a “strong hope or ambition” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 55).
- Academic has “to do with a school, college, or university” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 5). Achievement is “to gain or reach something by an effort, to accomplish something” (Allen & Delahunty, 2007, p. 8). Therefore, academic achievement can be understood as the academic performance of an individual which is obtained by the individual’s efforts. The measure of academic achievement in this study is the learner’s school report.
- Career levels are the levels determined by the researcher which contain the various careers. These careers are categorised according to their minimum academic requirements with reference of the University of Namibia point system (see Table 1).

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

In the first chapter the orientation of the study was discussed; it included the statement of the problem, the research objectives and significance of the study. The second chapter focuses on the theoretical framework and the literature review. The research methodology and ethical considerations are discussed in the third chapter.

The fourth chapter presents the research findings. In Chapter Five the discussion, limitations, recommendations and conclusion are presented.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to gain a holistic understanding of the concept of career aspiration and all the influences that affect it, an in-depth discussion of the theoretical framework will be provided. This section will follow a detailed definition of the term ‘career aspiration’. This will be followed by an explanation of the career selection process and the role career aspirations play in this process. Although it is an integral part of the career selection process, the formation of career aspirations throughout an individual’s life is discussed next. A separate section has been allocated due to the lengthy and complex nature of the career selection process.

The next aspect that will be discussed is the range and types of careers to which individuals aspire. This is specifically of interest as the theory identifies certain processes that an individual undergoes in order to arrive at a suitable career. However, there are two distinctive elements that influence the type of career to which an individual aspires and ultimately chooses.

Academic achievement is one of the most vital components that influences and determines an individual’s career aspirations, more specifically the sacrifices that individuals will have to make in terms of arriving at an appropriate, accessible and desirable career. The relationship of academic achievement and career options will be discussed in greater detail under a separate heading.

Another important aspect of the theory is that of gender. This was already mentioned in some of the previous sections. However, due to its importance, it will be elaborated in more detail. This section will be expanded with an additional section including socio-economic factors, as well as significant people in an individual's life who have a substantial influence on his or her career aspirations. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a focus on the Namibian context.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One can already hear children of kindergarten age talk about what they want to become one day as they start to socialise and become aware of people in their lives. At this early stage of an individual's life, it is a playful and imaginative way of thinking about a possible career. However, as we grow older and mature, it becomes clear that it is a daunting and complex process to select a specific career suitable for us as individuals. Furthermore, once a decision has been made, more factors, such as financial resources, academic performance and the labour market, come into play. The concept of career aspirations and all the possible factors that influence these aspirations need greater exploration. This exploration will commence with a discussion of Holland, Super and Gottfredson theory of career development. Followed by a detailed discussion of Gottfredson's theory of circumscription and compromise which forms the underlying theoretical framework of this study.

There are several career developmental theories available. Holland's theory of career choice describes a person-environment fit approach. This means that a person's abilities

and interests corresponds with the career that involves the same abilities and interests. Therefore, the individual's personality is of importance within this theory and Holland believes that congruence between personality and work environment determines career satisfaction, stability and achievement (Stead & Watson, 2006). Holland also believes that individuals can be categorised into one of six personality types which can be matched to one of six environmental types. The interaction between these two components determine the individual's behaviour and ultimately determines the three aspects mentioned above. Another valuable theory is Super's theory which emphasises the ongoing process of career development which implies, as individuals develop so does their career choices. The second vital contribution of Super's theory is the self-concept within the career development. The theory is based on six prepositions which evolve around the development of the self-concept. These suggest that the self-concept shapes the individual's interests and competencies regarding their career choices over time. The time component allows the self-concept to stabilise and is furthermore shaped through social learning (Stead & Watson, 2006). However, the nature of this study requires a detailed explanation of career aspirations within the theory which is offered in Gottfredson's theory.

Gottfredson's (1981) theory describes career development as a gradual, progressive process of considering and then eliminating career options resulting from factors, such as gender and socio-economical influences (Stead & Watson, 2006). The first process is termed 'circumscription' which allows children to develop their career preferences.

Gottfredson's theory (Tsaousides & Jome, 2008) explains that when the circumscription process occurs, individuals consider three critical aspects when they develop their career preferences. These are gender-type (male or female), prestige (ranging from low to high) and interest (such as working primarily with people). The circumscription process is of complex nature, incorporating several aspects which are entangled and exert an influence on individuals' career aspirations. The key aspect throughout the process is the self-concept of an individual that develops from an early age and continues throughout adolescence, even to young adulthood. The self-concept consists of the way individuals see themselves (abilities, interests, personality) and how they see themselves fit into society (Gottfredson, 1981). The self-concept is unique for every individual as they differ in gender, age, intelligence, socio-economic status, race, religion and other social features. Therefore, individuals have different perceptions of their self-concept and have their own opinions as to which careers are compatible with their perceived self-concept. This elevates the notion that all three critical aspects (gender, prestige and interest) are incorporated within the development of the self-concept and the circumscription process. The second process is that of compromising which can be described as adding the reality factor to the circumscription process. Individuals discard "their most preferred career[s] for less compatible but more accessible ones" (Lee & Rojewski, 2009, p. 82). In other words, external influences prevent the pursuit of their most desirable career preferences; this can cause individuals to re-evaluate their choices and adjust these to less desirable but more feasible ones (Tsaousides & Jome, 2008). Therefore, the compromise process

is a continuous and on-going process until the individual feels that he or she is in an appropriate and satisfying career. Gottfredson (1981) elaborates on the rank of compromise according to individuals in general. The interests of an individual would be sacrificed first, then the prestige status and finally the gender-specific element of the career. This finding is interesting as these aspects are directly opposite to the first process, the circumscription process. Simultaneously, children eliminate careers that require great effort according to their perceived abilities and skills. In this sense, individuals will not necessarily pursue their most preferred career as such but rather make use of more accessible opportunities to obtain a satisfactory career (Gottfredson, 1981). Once an individual has reached the later stages of secondary schooling, he or she should have gone through both these processes in order to re-define and re-structure his or her career options.

The prestige aspect mentioned in the circumscription process requires additional explanation. Gottfredson (1981) expands on the prestige aspect as she acknowledges that children eliminate careers that are of unacceptably low prestige status according to their specific social standing. Findings of Gottfredson's investigation indicate that the high prestige careers were classified as investigative careers, such as the field of science and medicine, which were also generally considered as gender-neutral. These were followed by enterprising careers, such as sales and management, which were seen as less prestigious and slightly more male-dominated. The more female-dominated careers were identified within the social careers, such as social services and education, descending on

the prestige ladder. Careers, such as technical and physically demanding careers, were classified as even lower prestige careers and male-dominated. Additional to this aspect, Gottfredson's perspective explains that individuals face barriers to their career aspirations which compel them to compromise, leading to a constriction in the range of the occupational alternatives available to them (Stead & Watson, 2006). Gottfredson (1981) identifies two specific barriers: one being the problem of completing training or education and the other as acquiring employment within the individual's career aspirations. Academic achievement may be one of the paramount and most challenging barriers that inevitably leads to compromising career options. It can thus be concluded that the learner with weak academic performance will have fewer career options than the learner with sufficiently good academic achievements because careers associated with a higher status (higher prestige) require higher academic achievements. This is supported by another research study compiled by Akos, Lambie, Milsom, and Gilbert (2007) that specifies that the status associated with, and the requirements linked to, a specific career as well as any additional information collected over the learners' academic years, plus their teachers' or significant others' views and expectations, may all have a direct or indirect influence on an individual's career aspirations. It can be noted that academic achievement is of importance in order to allow the individual the most possible career options, which is one of the main objectives of this research. However, there are other aspects, such as barriers, that may force an individual to sacrifice certain career options. One of these may be significant others who exert an influence to adjust and modify one's

career options. Therefore, it becomes clear that prestige is linked to academic achievements and in this research its important role is emphasised.

Gottfredson (1981) holds that, as the self-concept develops, the compatibility of careers are re-evaluated and career options are narrowed down; this forms a key element in understanding the career selection process holistically. Gottfredson's (1981) view of the self-concept of an individual is composed of various aspects, such as gender, socio-economic status, academic abilities, interests, skills and values. These aspects are integrated in the individual's self-concept, and interact and change over time as individuals mature and adjust their world perceptions that result from experiences within social settings. Gottfredson theorises that this development can be described in four specific stages. The first stage is termed "orientation to size and power (ages 3-5 years)" (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 548). In this phase, children understand that they will become adults. Adults have responsibilities, such as earning money, and this requires a job. The second stage is called "orientation to sex roles (approximately ages 6-8 years)" (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 549) which means that children exclude careers that are not appropriate for their sex-type. For example, society in general makes children aware that it is not acceptable or the norm to become a female truck driver. Although nowadays it seems to be more liberal and tolerant, it is still frowned upon in some societies. Gottfredson (Miller, 1986) states that children between the ages of 9 and 13 years are in the stage of "orientation to social valuation" (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 549). During this third stage children evaluate the level of prestige and status which may be associated

with specific careers. Therefore, children eliminate further possible career options, narrowing their possible career options list according to their own abilities and the level of prestige with which a certain career is associated. For example, the career of a mechanic, which is considered as a typical blue collar career, involves more physical work, and would be seen as a lower prestige career. If a child discards such a career, he or she will probably discard becoming an electrician or plumber as well, for that matter. Finally, the fourth stage, according to Gottfredson (Miller, 1986), is called the “orientation to the internal, unique self (beginning around age 14)” and incorporates personal aspects, such as interests, abilities and skills (Gottfredson, 1981, p. 549). In these four stages, the underlying element of career aspirations is continuously active while the individual shapes his or her self-concept, and evaluates the career options and accessibility; this leads back to the circumscription and compromise processes.

These complex aspects of Gottfredson’s theory focus on the developmental process of the self-concept of an individual which develops and changes over time. This can be noted with younger children who have great imagination and even bigger dreams of what they wish to become one day. However, as they mature and start to develop a sense of self-awareness and self-knowledge, which incorporates the evaluation of themselves according to their abilities, strengths, interests and, simultaneously, become aware of possible barriers, they adjust their career options. Hence, the individual matches how he or she perceives his or her self-concept in connection with the most suitable and accessible career options.

According to Lee and Rojewski (2009), career aspirations play a vital role in young people's career development, as well as their occupational attainment. These career aspirations initiate planning, monitor their learning process (academic achievements), assist in evaluating and re-organising their life options and choices and, finally, assist in their overall preparation for adulthood.

2.3 DEFINING CAREER ASPIRATIONS

A career is a necessity for any individual to survive and live. Human beings have the desire to advance in their chosen careers at some point, which contributes to the individual's job satisfaction; hence, the 'opportunities for promotion'. It is important to distinguish between career aspirations and career expectations. Career expectations "are considered to be an expression of the individual's realistic or likely career goals" (Howard, et al., 2011, p. 98), whereas career aspirations may be unrealistic and not attainable. Wicht and Ludwig-Mayerhofer (2014) distinguish between realistic and idealistic occupational aspirations; this explains the concept described above on another level. They explain that realistic occupational aspirations reflect anticipated career outcomes. These express people's beliefs about what they can reasonably expect to achieve, considering both their own resources, as well as their external circumstances, i.e., their opportunity structure. In contrast are the idealistic occupational aspirations which incorporate people's desires, interests and wishes. These are possibly quite independent, or detached, from existing opportunities or constraints; in other words, idealistic occupational aspirations are often unrealistic.

Gottfredson (1981) describes occupational aspirations as the one specific career that an individual believes to be the best alternative at a specific given time. However, due to the element of time, the individual perceptions of compatibility and accessibility may change, which alters the individual's assessment of his or her best career fit.

Akos, et al. (2007, p. 57) describe aspirations as the "educational and vocational dreams" which learners have for their future. It can, therefore, be established that the motivation for pursuing a certain job or career would be the aspiration that an individual has. The level of career aspiration of an individual is extremely important as it keeps him or her determined to do whatever it takes to obtain the job or career to which he or she aspires, from a realistic perspective. Research has shown that young people with higher career aspirations have a higher probability of entering a career which is classified as a higher-status occupation (Howard, et al., 2011). These jobs and careers require lengthy and intensive years of training and/or education which can be physically, mentally and/or psychologically exhausting and draining at times, but a high career aspiration level may motivate and strengthen the individual's willpower and perseverance to work hard in order to achieve his or her career aspirations.

2.4 FORMATION OF CAREER ASPIRATIONS

The formation of career aspirations is an integrated part of the career selection process and can, therefore, be described as "developmental, reflecting individuals' assessments of personal capabilities and available opportunities, and influenced by personal and societal characteristics including gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status" (Lee

& Rojewski, 2009, p. 82). It is assumed that career aspirations develop and change over time as a learner's self-knowledge deepens (such as discovering his or her abilities, interests, values and evaluating possible barriers).

Career aspirations are developed at an early age of an individual's life and are influenced and adapted by barriers. These barriers form due to external influences, such as "bias, discrimination, cultural expectations, societal attitudes and stereotypes based on gender, race/ethnicity, and social class" (Lee & Rojewski, 2009, p. 83). When one considers the different factors, it becomes clear that learners should have a specific or a few career options that they believe to be suitable for them at a certain time in their lives. An additional important aspect to acknowledge is that learners consider the appropriateness and accessibility of a specific career. Learners focus on one specific career which seems to be more accessible than another, grounded on factual information that he or she has collected. However, the values and beliefs of learners' significant others, such as peers, parents and teachers, can shape their career aspirations over time (Akos, et al., 2007). This means that the formation of an individual's career aspiration is a lengthy, continuous and complex process. There are many factors, which influence the career aspiration formation, that need to be considered. These factors, such as gender, socio-economic status and academic achievements, require a detailed explanation and investigation.

A positive positioning towards an individual's future, combined with optimistic educational aspirations, is a vital foundation of motivation and can promote appropriate

behaviour in positive ways (Stoddard, Heinze, Ewon Choe, & Zimmerman, 2015). This positive behaviour would have a direct influence on the learner's academic achievements as he or she would want to aim higher, and be allowed the greatest number of career options possible. The learners will put in the efforts that are required to attain their career aspirations and, at the same time, they would develop a realistic self-concept which ultimately would lead to a successful and satisfying fit between the desired career and the individual.

Finally, it is stated that "[c]areer and academic aspirations are clearly influenced by multiple intrapersonal and systemic factors" (Akos, et al., 2007, p. 57). It can be summarised that intrapersonal factors are all those elements that are within the learner (interpersonal skills, self-reliance, self-control, self-concept and level of responsibility/maturity). The systematic factors (socio-economic status (SES), families' engagement, race, level of parental education) would, therefore, be all the external aspects that are relevant to the individual learner. All of these elements exert influence and form an important part during the formation of career aspirations and, simultaneously, illustrate and emphasise the complexity of this process, which is an integral and significant part of the career decision process.

2.5 THE RANGE AND TYPES OF CAREERS TO WHICH LEARNERS ASPIRE

Research completed in the United States of America, reveal that some types of careers have a higher share of men and some have a higher share of women; it is termed "occupational gender segregation". For example, data recorded in 2012 exposed that 9%

of women were employees within the construction business while 78% of women were employed within the health service section (Wright, Eaton, & Skagerberg, 2015). These statistics reveal that there seems to be specific types or ranges of careers to which women aspire and which seem more appealing to them than others, despite the vast possibilities that are open to them. The increased participation of women in the labour force and their increased educational achievements lead to the conclusion that there may be other factors that play a motivating role in the choice of careers (Wright, Eaton, & Skagerberg, 2015). Further research may offer some insight into why women chose certain career types, despite their vast opportunities and possibilities. Schwenkenberg (2014) found that women seemed to choose careers that allowed them the flexibility to work fewer hours, while men were more likely to remain in low rewarding careers with long working hours. This phenomenon could be explained due to evolutionary matters, as women and men typically have the desire, at a certain stage of their lives, to start a family, where the roles are typically distributed, namely that the women care for the children and the men provide for the family. Therefore, woman would enjoy a career that allows for flexibility and a man would stick to a career that allows him to provide for his family, even if that means long working hours or it not being his career of choice.

In order to consider a specific career one needs to be aware of all possible careers. Gottfredson (1981) explains that during the learners' school years, they are exposed to different careers which elevate these to their conscious level. There are many factors that interact throughout the developmental phase of forming career aspirations and arriving

at a chosen career option. One of the most significant aspects is that of developing the self: how they see themselves, how they want to be perceived by others and what ultimately suits them as an occupation. Gottfredson (1981) summarises that there is a general developmental process (specific stages) taking place through which every child proceeds; however, children have an individual pace due to their individual levels of intelligence. She also concludes that, in general, individuals seem to have little knowledge about the responsibilities and requirements of different careers, and this can have an influence on their career aspirations and envisioned careers.

In 2008 research published in Canada revealed the desired careers of high school learners and the rationale underlying their choices (Witko, Bernes, Magnusson, & Bardick, 2008). The researchers divided careers into eleven themes which were 1) professional careers, such as medicine, law, architecture; 2) glamorous careers which included acting and fashion design; 3) trade occupations, such as that of a mechanic or carpenter; 4) occupations with children; 5) occupations with animals; 6) volunteer work; 7) the service and support industry, such as that of a chef or hairdresser; 8) law enforcement; 9) transportation; 10) broadcasting; 11) artistic careers. The learners mentioned several motivating factors for opting for certain careers. These rationales accumulated to seven themes in total, namely: 1) like the work; 2) skilled at the type of work; 3) finding the work fun and interesting; 4) financial compensation; 5) personal meaning; 6) a challenge; 7) parental support.

Determining the range and type of careers to which Namibian learners aspire is one of

the objectives of this study. Furthermore, it investigated learners' understanding of their desired career, and which aspects might have influenced their career aspirations and, consequently, had an influence on their career choices. It is thus hoped that this will add to the knowledge base regarding the nature and types of career choices that learners make.

2.6 CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Hill, et al. (2004, p. 1491) conclude that "school performance is a key mechanism through which adolescents learn about their talents, abilities, and competencies, which are an important part of developing career aspirations". These findings highlight the opportunity for schools to have a positive and significant effect on a child's future. However, to exert this possible positive effect, schools will have to function at an effective level; this implies that the staff be motivated and working as a team towards being the best school for their learners. Schools that have inspiring and helpful teachers and, even more so, an excellent Life Skills programme which leads to good or above-average academic success rates, set up these learners with more career options and a greater opportunity to develop a realistic self-concept; these are the two essential requirements for a successful career choice. Learners at such a school could have higher career aspirations which would result in them having elevated levels of motivation and insight to strive for suitable careers.

"Adolescents with high educational and career aspirations have higher educational achievement, occupational prestige and wage attainment in adulthood compared to those

with low aspirations” (Gutman & Schoon, 2012, p. 609). A South African study investigated the developmental and contextual factors associated with academic success and career aspirations. One of the findings indicate that learners wished to be academically successful; however, they were fearful of not having the necessary abilities and skills. Another finding suggests that learners’ academic success appeared to be disconnected from concrete future plans/goals (Robbins, Wallis, & Dunston, 2003). This emphasises that there seems to be an understanding that academic abilities and achievement are important; however, learners seem to be unaware of the direct impact that academic performance has on their long-term goals and future plans. Here the Life Skills programmes play an important role, especially the career part, which is extremely important and should provide sufficient information for learners to be aware of different career options and their requirements.

Researchers established a significant relationship between reading ability and both the aspirations of learners and the aspirations that their parents had for them. Effective reading ability was associated with higher child and parental aspirations (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012). Reading is the most important skill to acquire at an early age as it allows access to understanding and learning concepts, theories and facts about various subjects. If learners can read and comprehend at an advanced level, their academic levels could be above average, which would allow their parents to have higher expectations and hopes for their children in terms of more prestigious careers.

The internal motivation and control of an individual is valuable. Inner strength and self-

control allow the individual to strive for his or her goals, and also avoid 'bad' behaviour which may influence future goals negatively. This inner motivation increases the individual's academic achievements. Learners with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to complete their education successfully, and to be better prepared for a range of career options in today's competitive world of work (Carroll, et al., 2009). Expanding on this concept, results suggest that a greater sense of academic self-efficacy (including high efficacy for self-regulated learning and mastery of academic work) nurtures both academic aspirations and academic achievement (Carroll, et al., 2009). It makes sense that, if learners are highly motivated, they will put in the necessary effort which includes successful, academic achievements, to achieve their desired career goals. The importance of academic achievements is acknowledged by Akos, et al. (2007) who argue that there is a significant, positive relationship between learners' academic achievements and their career choices. The positive relationship between these two variables therefore indicates that higher expectations lead to higher educational and occupational attainment, for example a gifted or academically strong learner will be encouraged to attend tertiary education while a less academically strong learner may rather consider a vocational orientated option.

Another research study in the United States of America suggests that students who aspire to more than they can realistically achieve are likely to come from more economically disadvantaged backgrounds and show poorer academic performance (Boxer, Goldstein, DeLorenzo, Savoy, & Mercado, 2011). Therefore, when considering their career

aspirations, there needs to be a realistic fit between individuals' academic performance and their chosen careers; this is what the present study aimed to investigate.

2.7 CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND GENDER

As it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, according to Gottfredson's theory (1981), girls and boys differ as far as appropriate and acceptable gender-type careers are concerned. Girls and boys are different in nature regarding interests, personalities, abilities and the like; they, therefore, have different needs, wants and values which influence their career choices. These differences in themselves reveal that boys and girls may aspire to different careers.

Studies completed in the UK and US show clear gender-type differences and, more specifically, that girls are inclined to have 'higher' and more intrinsic aspirations than boys, as well as, in general, a greater motivation for school. On the contrary, boys seem to be more inclined to be adventurous in their dreams, more confident in their abilities and more likely to aspire to rare jobs (Flouri, Tsivrikos, Akhtar, & Midouhas, 2014). Research conducted by Stoddard, et al. (2015) supports the previously mentioned findings which indicated that girls seemed to have higher educational expectations and less uncertainty when compared to boys.

2.8 THE ROLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARENTS

Socio-economic status (SES) assumes an important role in development of career aspirations (Gottfredson, 1981). Linking with this factor is the aspect of parents or significant others in an individual's life and their influence on the development of the

individual's career aspirations. For example, an Australian study found that "there is a positive relationship between the socio-economic background of students and their aspirations" (Bowden & Doughney, 2010, p. 116). Furthermore, in America an investigation was conducted with a small number of high school learners, and it was determined that those learners with a lower socio-economic status had a lower self-belief and, ultimately, aspired to more simplistic careers as they did not feel confident to have high expectations (Ali & Saunders, 2009).

This effect on the child's career aspirations is tragic and can have more severe consequences as the child eliminates careers that may actually be within his or her reach. Gutman and Schoon (2012) found that young people in the United Kingdom and the United States were struggling with uncertainty regarding their education and career opportunities. It was investigated whether there was a link between uncertain career aspirations and educational outcomes. Results indicate that lower, prior achievement and lower socio-economic backgrounds were likely to lead to learners having uncertain career aspirations.

Research in Australia, the U.S and in Britain reveal consistently that, the family's socio-economic status had an influence on the careers identified by learners (Howard, et al., 2011). Hill, et al. (2004, p.1493) emphasise even more so that "adolescents from lower SES backgrounds are at increased risk for lower academic performance, completing fewer years of schooling and having lower career aspirations". Furthermore, it was mentioned that the families' socio-economic status was the most powerful predictor of a

child's achievement, as well as career aspirations. This may be explained by the barriers placed by parents as they lack resources and social support, as well as the fact that they may experience additional stress due to financial difficulties. The global challenges of socio-economic inequalities are also present in Namibia, which is noticeable in the high percentage of orphans and vulnerable children. It illustrates the crises in which these children are, as they experience unfavourable home circumstances and adverse living standards. Hence, schools are a valuable and important platform from which to support and motivate learners to explore their abilities, interests and skills, and consider various career options and possibilities.

Another crucial factor is that parents have a great influence on their children's career choices (Schuette, Ponton, & Charlton, 2012). Over the last years research has determined that there is a correlation between parents and their child's career aspirations. Sosu (2014) states that parents may influence their child's career aspirations on different levels. Parents would invest more resources, such as financial resources or/and time, into their child's educational venture if they have higher aspirations for their child. It would influence the parent's choice of a specific school and investing time and attention in their child; in turn, this influences the child's determination and motivation to aspire to a higher-status career. "Empirical studies suggest that there are certain characteristics of a parent that influence whether or not the parent will have higher or lower aspirations for a child's education. Among these are parental socio-economic status, ethnicity and age" (Sosu, 2014, p. 69). Another important factor, according to Sosu (2014), is the level of

education that a parent has attained. This would influence the type of career the parent has and, consequently, determine the income and, in turn, would influence the resources available for the child. For example, a parent with solid academic achievements is more able to assist the child with homework, whereas a parent with low or no academic experience may not be able to assist the child. Therefore, “parents with higher levels of education tend to set higher educational aspirations for their children in comparison to those with lower levels of education” (Sosu, 2014, p. 69).

The parental influence should not be underestimated in this regard as parental support may have a positive impact on a child's academic performance and, therefore, have an influence on the development of the child's career aspirations. A research study conducted by Mostert, Keyter and Scott (2001) found that learners who had working mothers developed more flexible views of sex roles. Girls seemed to have a less negative view of femininity and tended to be more independent, motivated and career-oriented. This is an important finding as it may be the key to a more open-minded and tolerant generation and, more so, a motivated youth who aspire to attain the most suitable careers, despite adversities or barriers.

2.9 THE NAMIBIAN CONTEXT

As was mentioned above, academic achievement is extremely important as it opens doors to a greater number and variety of career options and possibilities, since many careers can only be accessed by obtaining a successful Grade 12 certificate. One of the crises of the Namibian education system is that around 50% of learners do not qualify to

even enter the senior secondary school phase (Grade 11) due to entry requirements and a shortage of schools (Mostert, 2003). These findings can be supported by the summary report of 2012 from the Education Management Information System (EMIS) which reveals that, in Grade 10, there was a fluctuating percentage, between 19% and 38%, of learners who dropped out of school between the years of 2005 and 2011. Furthermore, the repetition rate of Grade 10 from 2005 to 2011 increased from 7% to 24%. The former Prime Minister (now president of Namibia), Hage Geingob, expressed his concern about the large number of Grade 10 learners failing in 2013, and said as follows: The reality in today's world is that a young woman or man who does not complete high school education and does not move on towards obtaining a university degree, is at a competitive disadvantage (Immanuel, 2014, p. 1).

Based on a research report, this situation is even more detrimental for those coming from poor families (Wils, 2013). For example, it was mentioned that in secondary schools there were more barriers for poor learners and their families than for those who were better off.

Only 44% of children from the poorest 20% of households enter junior secondary schools, compared to 91% of children from the wealthiest 20% of households; furthermore, only 13% of children from the poorest households reach the end of junior secondary, compared to 78% of children from the wealthiest households (Wils, 2013, p.5).

This trend suggests that the exclusion of the financial poorer learners from classrooms increases as the Grades progress.

2.10 CONCLUSION

There are several theories available within the career development process, Gottfredson's theory (1981) is the appropriate choice within this research study as it provides a paramount focus on the key element of career aspirations. Although Gottfredson's theory (1981) was developed within a western and high-income context the researcher believes that it also has relevance for the Namibian context, as the development of an individual's self-concept is universal. The influences of the context may differ to a western and high-income context, however the basic stages of the development of an individual's self-concept would be very similar.

This chapter discussed a theoretical framework for career aspirations, as well as factors and elements that contribute to, or influence, the formation of the career aspirations of adolescents, as well as the career selection process. Furthermore, important issues that contribute to and shape adolescents' career aspirations, such as gender, socio-economic status and significant people, were expanded. Another important aspect that was emphasised throughout the discussion was that of academic achievement. This aspect contributed to a holistic picture of the complexity of the formation of career aspirations and emphasised the importance of having these aspirations.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research design, the population, how the sample was selected, research instruments and the data collecting procedures. Finally, detailed descriptions of the data analysis methods, as well as ethical considerations, are discussed in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research is embedded in a purely quantitative research approach. Within the post-positivism research paradigm, it is believed that the researcher can study the social world in the same way as the natural world (Mertens, 2005). It is suggested that the social world can be studied in a value-free manner in order to derive at explanations of a causal nature. There is one reality which the research needs to study, however this reality can only be known in an imperfect manner due to the researcher's human limitations. Therefore, the theory cannot be proven as such but a strong case can be made by eliminating alternative explanations. The researcher should remain neutral in order to prevent values and biases from influencing the work as described by Mertens (2005). This paradigm is appropriate for this research study as the research is investigating the career aspirations in an objective manner.

The quantitative approach is more structured and controlled in the sense that the research method is focused to answer specific research questions. The case study correlation

research design (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009) was utilised as there were two variables which were correlated. The variables were career aspirations and academic achievement.

3.3 POPULATION

Population is a term used to set boundaries on the study units, and refers to individuals who possess specific characteristics (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2002). It can, therefore, be stated that the population consists of all the existing members of a specific group (Coolican, 2009). The population in this particular research study was all the Grade 12 learners in the Khomas Region of Namibia. At the time of the research there were 25 secondary schools and about 8000 Grade 12 learners registered in the Khomas Region (Republic of Namibia, Ministry of Education, 2013).

3.4. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD

A combination of non-probability and probability sampling methods were used for this study and will be discussed in detail.

Non-probability sampling suggests that the researcher selects a certain group to serve as the population/sample; therefore, not all the participants have a chance to be selected to be part of the sample group. Purposive sampling was used by the researcher to select Grade 12 learners, as this “type of sampling is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher” (De Vos, et al., 2002, p. 207). The researcher decided that Grade 12 learners would be a suitable population for this study and, therefore, excluded all other Grades. At this stage of their lives, Grade 12 learners should have developed their career aspirations and should have narrowed their career options to some extent. Furthermore,

the researcher used purposive, criterion sampling to select a total of six schools. Two schools each from three different academic performance levels (high, average and below average) were selected. The school performance levels were based on the ranking list as provided by the Directorate National Examination and Assessment Centre (Republic of Namibia, Ministry of Education, 2013) at the end of 2013.

“A probability sample is one in which each person or other sampling unit in the population has the same known probability of being selected” (De Vos, et al., 2002, p. 203). In other words, all the Grade 12 learners attending the schools in the Khomas Region had an equal chance of being part of this research. The two schools in each of the three different academic performance levels were selected randomly. Thus, a total of six different schools participated in this research. From each of the six selected secondary schools, 50 learners were randomly selected from the Grade 12 classes. Sampling also ensured gender equality, as boys and girls may aspire to different careers; hence, 25 boys and 25 girls were randomly selected from each of the sampled schools. The sample size, therefore, consisted of 300 participants.

3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

An overview of the data collecting instruments is provided in this section. The two instruments used were a researcher-designed questionnaire and the learners' Grade 12 progress reports.

The first research instrument chosen for this research study was a questionnaire. De Vos, et al. (2002) define a questionnaire as a set of questions on a form which is completed by

the respondent in respect of a research project. There are different kinds of questionnaires, such as mailed, telephonic, personal, hand-delivered and group-administered questionnaires. A group-administered questionnaire was identified for this research study. As described by De Vos, et al. (2002), the questionnaire is completed in a group setting while the researcher is present in the background, should uncertainties arise. However, the participants do not discuss their answers with one another. The researcher-designed questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions which determined learners' personal details (for recording purposes only), their social context, as well as their career aspirations. The design of the questionnaire was guided by the literature review, for example the family structure and the socio-economic status questions were influenced by research study of Bowden and Doughney (2010). The paramount aspect of the career aspiration, the knowledge of these careers, as well as the learners' understanding of the academic component was motivated by the research article of Robbins, Wallis, and Dunston (2003). The questions concerned with influence of significant others on a learners' career aspirations was stimulated by the research study of Schuette, Ponton, and Charlton (2012). Some questions were infused to the researchers' discretion. Information regarding career aspirations was obtained through open-ended questions to avoid any possibility of leading the learners into a direction of career/s which would defeat the purpose of this study. In addition, the questionnaire included questions on the barriers that they perceived or experienced with regards to selecting their future careers. The questions were designed in a Likert type style which

consisted of a set of statements which learners responded to by using a fixed scale of choices. This allowed the researcher to categorise the answers (Coolican, 2009).

A vital and integral part of this research was to accumulate information of learners' academic achievement which was manually calculated according to their achieved symbols and the use of the University of Namibia (UNAM) point system. Therefore, the Grade 12 learners' end of first term school examination reports of 2015 were obtained and employed to calculate a Grade Point Average. These calculations will be explained in more detail at a later stage in this chapter.

3.6 PROCEDURE

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Namibia (see Appendix 1) which was submitted as an attachment for requesting permission from the Permanent Secretary and Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Firstly, the Permanent Secretary (see Appendix 2) granted permission which allowed the researcher to request permission to collect the data at the selected high schools in the Khomas Region. This request was approved by the Khomas head office for Education (see Appendix 3). Appointments with all the principals of the selected schools were arranged individually, in order to explain the research, as well as to obtain their co-operation in order to conduct the research at their schools. Thereafter, the Life Skill teachers assisted the researcher in obtaining consent from the learners' parents/guardians, and provided the opportunity for the researcher to administer the questionnaires. Questionnaires were collected immediately after completion. It was envisaged that the individual Life Skill classes

would complete the questionnaires; however, this was not possible due to practical matters. It should be noted that all learners in each of the respective schools (one school at a time due to sole researcher) completed the questionnaire at the same time without a time limit. Furthermore, the end of first term academic progress reports were copied and safely stored by the researcher for data analysis purposes only.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

This research followed a post-positivism methodology which will be discussed in more detail in the following section. There are two parts of the data analysis process that require careful explanation.

3.7.1 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The learners' responses were quantified by representing the frequencies of the different pre-determined categories by means of a graphic method. The results are presented either in a simple frequency distribution table or in a grouped frequency distribution Table (De Vos, et al., 2002). The frequency distribution was used, for example, when the learners indicated their gender where only two possible categories were available, namely male or female. The grouped frequency distribution was used to represent the questions that had continuous data in a pre-determined category, e.g. the learners' age ranges which allowed for a range in the different categories. This method was simultaneously utilised to summarise learners' attitudes about different issues concerning their academic performance and career aspirations. The representations of these responses are in table or narrative format, depending on the nature of the question

and its responses.

Learners' career aspirations, as recorded in the researcher-designed questionnaire, were coded and categorised manually according to the academic level required to enter the desired career. The UNAM point system, calculated based on the school symbols acquired by the learners, was used to determine the career categories for those jobs that required tertiary education. This point system is used by UNAM to determine whether a learner meets the minimum requirements to be considered for their desired field of study. The different fields of studies are categorised on different levels. For example, a learner who desires to enter the field of medicine, would need a minimum of 35 points whereas a learner who desires to become a professional guide would need a minimum of 22 points. Therefore, the UNAM point system assisted the researcher to determine the different career categories, which set a minimum requirement of points to enter the desired field of study. In some cases, when the identified career path was not offered by UNAM, the point system of the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) was utilised and, in rare cases, where neither one of these Namibian institutions of higher education offered the identified career path, the researcher obtained the minimum points required at the specific institution where the specific career could be studied or trained for. This allowed the researcher to categorise all the desired careers reported by the learners into categories, from the least required to the highest required points.

Jobs that did not require any tertiary education were categorised into one of the levels: jobs requiring less than Grade 12 or jobs requiring Grade 12 with less than 22 points.

Table 1 provides an illustration of the career categories that were used in this research study.

Table 1: Career levels based on points required according to UNAM

Career level	Grade 12 points needed to enter /study the aspired career	Example of careers
1	Less than Grade 12 certificate required	Musician, professional hunter, personal trainer, etc.
2	Grade 12 with less than 22 points required	Police officer, electrician, beautician, etc.
3	Grade 12 with 22 to 24 points required	Psychologist, teacher, agriculturalist, etc.
4	Grade 12 with 25 points and above required	Doctor, optometrist, dentist. etc.

The calculated Grade Point Average (GPA) of the learner and the minimum point requirements of the career to which he or she aspired were then correlated, which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

3.7.1.1 PEARSON CORRELATION

“Correlation is the measurement of the extent to which pairs of related values on two variables tend to change together” (Coolican, 2009, p. 428). The relationship can be positive, which would mean as one variable increases so does the second variable, negative, which would indicate that as one variable increases, the second variable decreases or no relationship, which would display no correlation between the two variables at all. The relationship between two variables can be expressed in its strength itself. This strength is expressed on a scale ranging from -1 (perfect negative) through

zero (no relationship) to +1 (perfect positive) (Coolican, 2009). The strength of the relationship is called the correlation coefficient (r) – it is a descriptive statistic in itself – from its value it can be concluded that two variables are related to each other or not at all or, put differently, they are co-dependent on each other. For example, the further away from zero (negative or positive) the value of r , the stronger the relationship. The one variable is the academic performance (points accumulated) of the individual and the second variable is the career aspiration level of the individual (expressed as a number from 1 to 4), which is categorised according to the minimum points required. In order to calculate this correlation, the Pearson (2-tailed) correlation method was used. In addition to this, the researcher also calculated the number and percentage of learners who actually qualified for the career in the specific category that they had selected. The SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences - version 23) was utilised to analyse the data.

3.7.2 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In order to arrive at the quantitative value of the relationship between the two variables described above, an additional document analysis was required. The official documents, which were classified as a secondary source (De Vos, et al., 2002), were the learners' academic progress reports. The learners' individual GAP were calculated manually and individually by consulting the results of their four best subjects, as well as their English subject results, based on the UNAM point system which is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Points allocated to the various percentage range/symbols according to the UNAM point system

Levels	Percentage range	Symbol	Points
Higher level	80-100	1	10
	70-79	2	8
	60-69	3	7
	50-59	4	6
	49-0		0
Ordinary level	80-100	A	8
	70-79	B	6
	60-69	C	5
	50-59	D	4
	40-49	E	3
	30-39	F	2
	20-29	G	1
	19-0	U	0

The points achieved by the individual learners were manually calculated by consulting the learners' academic scores and the information supplied in Table 2 according to UNAM's point distribution scale. It can be understood that learner X accumulated 23 points in total (see Table 3).

Table 3: Example of learner X's academic achievement

	Symbols achieved	Points acquired
Biology (higher level)	4	6
Physical Science (ordinary level)	E	3
Mathematics (ordinary level)	F	2
Afrikaans 2 nd (ordinary level)	C	5
English 2 nd (higher level)	3	7
Total points scored	-	23

3.8 RESEARCH ETHICS

This research involved young people and it was of great importance to keep their best interest at heart during the whole research process which “requires a commitment to responsibility on the part of the trained psychologist in terms of competence, objectivity and the welfare of research participation” (Coolican, 2009, p. 586).

Furthermore, anonymity was guaranteed and no participant’s identity was, or will be, revealed when data are published (Coolican, 2009). The learners and their families were ensured that they would remain anonymous for the purpose of this research, which hopefully increased their willingness to participate.

Informed consent was obtained from the parents/guardians, the school and from the Ministry of Education. Assent was obtained from the learners which they signed on the second page of the questionnaire. As clearly stated in the code of ethics, stipulated by the American Psychological Association (2003), the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the research and their right to withdraw at any time without any

consequences. The researcher elaborated to the sampled group any prospective research benefits, as well as the limits of confidentiality (American Psychological Association, 2003). It was explained that findings in this research would provide insight into their career aspirations and, most importantly, assist teachers and parents, as well as the government, to guide them more effectively in their career choices. Confidentiality was ensured by the researcher as all the learners were coded and no names were revealed at any stage of the research process. However, the researcher had to record their names in order to match their questionnaires with their individual academic reports. Finally, ethical clearance was sought from the University of Namibia.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the research procedure to collect the data, as well as the analysing procedures followed. A detailed description of the statistical measures performed in order to analyse the data, from which results were derived, was also given. The results obtained from this data analysis will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of the statistical analysis described in Chapter 3 will be presented. Firstly, the demographic information of the learners is offered and then the range and types of careers to which the sampled group aspired are presented and the most popular careers described. Secondly, learners' knowledge of the requirements for their desired careers and related aspects, such as the importance of sufficient English scores, are discussed. Thirdly, the importance that learners placed on their academic achievements and future plans are reported. Fourthly, the learners' perceived barriers are stated, including the learners' confidence level of overcoming these, as well as significant parties that might have had an influence on their career options and choices. Finally, the correlation results of the relationship between the learners' academic performance and their desired career requirements are described in detail.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF LEARNERS

Some learners, 16% (48), were 17 years of age and younger. The majority of the learners, 50.3% (151), were 18 years old, while 19.7% (59) were 19 years old. Fourteen percent of the learners (42) were 20 years and older (see Table 4).

When learners were questioned about their home circumstances, 54% (162) stated that they lived with five or fewer people in their homes, while 37.7% (113) shared a home with between six and eight people. Only 6.3% (19) lived with between nine and fourteen

people and 2% (6) of the learners stayed with more than fourteen people in a single house (see Table 4).

Furthermore, learners stated that they had to walk to and from school every day due to financial constraints; 37.7% (113) of learners indicated this to be their reality. On the other hand, 34% (102) of learners were transported to and from school by their parents. Sixteen per cent (48) of learners made use of a taxi service to get to school. Only 8.3% (25) of learners specified that they used other transportation, such as their own car. An additional 3% (9) of learners mentioned that they were taken to and from school by a friend's parents. One percent (3) of learners' responses revealed that they made use of bus services as a means of transport to and from school (see Table 4).

One of the questions in the questionnaire asked the learners about their legal guardian/s. Both parents (mother and father) acted as legal guardians for 51% (153) of the sampled group, whereas 21.1% (64) of learners had only their mother as legal guardian. Only 5.7% (17) of learners mentioned that their father was their single, legal guardian while 3.7% (11) had their grandparents as legal guardians. Relatives, such as an aunt, uncle, brother and/or sister, were the legal guardians of 16.3% (49) of learners and only 2% (6) of the learners specified children's home or adoptive parents to be their legal guardians (see Table 4).

Living arrangements might be different according to the learners' legal guardians and home circumstances due to various reasons. Therefore, the question was asked about their family structure with regards to with whom they were staying during their final

school year. Forty-nine per cent (147) of learners indicated that they were staying with their parents and siblings, whereas only 26.7 % (80) of learners were staying with a single parent who was either their mother or father. A smaller percentage, 16.7% (50) of learners, were staying with extended family members. Six per cent (18) of learners were staying with their sibling(s) who were older than 21 years of age, and only 0.7% (2) of learners were staying with their sibling(s) who were younger than 21 years. One percent (3) of learners indicated that they were staying in a children's home (see Table 4).

The financial status of learners' families, according to the learners themselves, was distributed across the whole range, from being financially well-off to being very poor. Forty-nine per cent (147) of learners stated that they believed their families had an average financial status. Some learners, 20.3% (61), felt that their families were financially well off whereas only 4.3% (13) of the learners specified that their families were financially very well off. The responses of 15% (45) of the learners showed that their families' financial status was below average and 8.7% (26) of learners were of the opinion that their families' financial status could be described as poor. Only 2.7% (8) of learners described their families' financial status as very poor (see Table 4).

Table 4: Demographic information of learners

Aspects of demographic information	Number of learners	
	%	f
Age		
17 years old and younger	16.0	48
18 years old	50.3	151
19 years old	19.7	59
20 years old and older	14.0	42
Home circumstances		
5 people and less	54.0	162
6 to 8 people	37.7	113
9 to 14 people	6.3	19
More than 14 people	2.0	6
Transportation		
Walking	37.7	113
Parents	34.0	102
Taxi/bus service	17.0	51
Other	11.3	34
Legal guardian		
Parents	51.0	153
Mother only	21.1	64
Father only	5.7	17
Grandparents	3.7	11
Relatives	16.3	49
Other	2.0	6
Living arrangements (stay with during last school year)		
Parents and siblings	49.0	147
Single parent	26.7	80
Extended family	16.7	50
Siblings older than 21 years old	6.0	18
Siblings younger than 21 years old	0.7	2
Children's Home	1.0	3
Perceived financial status		
Very-well off	4.3	13
Well-off	20.3	61
Average	49.0	147
Below average	8.7	26
Poor	2.7	8

(N=300)

4.3 RANGE AND TYPE OF DESIRED CAREERS

In this section, the learners' desired careers are presented. Additionally, the numbers of learners aspiring to certain careers are included in order to provide a holistic picture of the range and types of careers. The desired careers are categorised into the four different levels which were associated with the different minimum requirements. The careers were sorted into the four different levels based on the entry requirements of tertiary institutions of Namibia. Therefore, careers associated with the first level required lower entry requirements and higher-level careers (level 2 to 4) required higher entry requirements. There is no official document available which required the researchers' discretion to categorise the careers as precisely as possible.

Learners were asked to state their desired career after completing their final school year. There were various careers to which the learners aspired which were summarised and sorted into different career levels (see Table 5). The various careers were sorted into the different levels ranging from 1 to 4. Level 1 included careers that did not require a Grade 12 certificate while Level 2 required a Grade 12 certificate with fewer than 22 points. Level 3 fused all the careers that would require a minimum of 22 points and a maximum of 24 points. Level 4 was the highest level which required a minimum of 25 points. Table 5 also provides an overview of the range of the different careers. However, results from only the most popular careers, chosen by the learners, are discussed in more detail. Some learners stated two different careers. In such cases, the response of the following question was taken into account in which the learners described their chosen career. If

both careers were described, the first career stated by the learner was chosen as a valid response. Furthermore, careers that were the same but stated by a different term, were grouped together, for example 'primary teacher' would be grouped under the main umbrella of the teaching profession. This allowed for a better overview of the most selected careers by the sampled group. Table 5 further lists all the desired careers stated by the learners, as well as the frequencies in brackets, which provides an overview of the most popular and the least popular careers within the different levels. The most popular career chosen by 9.6% (29) of the learners was to become a lawyer and the second most favourable career was that of medical doctor, chosen by 9.3% (28) learners. Another career, chosen by 7.9% (24) learners was that of an engineer while 7.3% (22) learners indicated their desired career as that of a teacher. The same number of learners, namely 4.0% (12), indicated that they aspired to become psychologists, accountants and business managers. Finally, 3.6% (11) learners aspired to become chartered accountants after completing their school careers. The rest of the careers listed (see Table 5) were chosen by learners ranging from only one learner up to eight learners. Only 0.7% (2) learners indicated that they were unsure of what career they would like to pursue.

Table 5: The range and type of desired careers indicated by the learners

Career level	requirements to enter career	Range and types of desired careers stated by the learners
1	Less than Grade 12 certificate	Entrepreneur (3), construction worker (2), chef (2), model (1), waiter/waitress (1), musician (1), actor/actress (1), event manager (1), professional hunter (1), professional soccer player (1), author (1)
2	Grade 12 with less than 22 points	Tourism consultant (6), beautician (4), electrician (3), diesel mechanic (2), police officer (2), petrol mechanic (1), plumber (1), bank teller (1)
3	Grade 12 with 22 to 24 points	Teacher (22), business manager (12), psychologist (12), pilot (9), graphic designer (4), marketing manager (4) navigator (1), film producer (1), professional field guide (1), 3d animation creator (1)
4	Grade 12 with 25 points and above	Lawyer (29), medical doctor (28), engineer (24), accountant (12), chartered accountant (11), information technology expert (8), architect (8), paramedic (8), geologist (6), nurse (6), veterinarian (5), pharmacist (4), physiotherapist (4), forensic scientist (3), bio-kinetist (3), biomedical scientist (3), dermatologist (3), flight hostess (2), radiographer (2), town planner (2), dentist (2), journalist (2), nature conservation agent (2), quantity surveyor (2), occupational therapist (1), food technologist (1), draftsmen (1), insurance broker (1), public relations officer (1), human resource manager (1), chiropractor (1), pathologist (1), advertising copywriter (1), optometrist (1), logistic manager (1), social worker (1), stockbroker (1), economist (1), air traffic controller (1), fashion designer (1), pastor (1)

(N=298)

Note: Number in brackets represents the frequencies of careers chosen. Two (2) boys indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired career.

Another interesting finding is that 65.8% (196) of learners aspired to careers that required the highest entry level, Level 4, (according to the points required – see Table 6), whereas 22.5% (67) of learners aspired to careers that fell in the third level which required slightly fewer points (22-24 points). A lower percentage of learners, 6.7% (20) aspired to careers which required even fewer points (fewer than 22 points) than the third

level. The careers categorised within Level 1 are careers which did not require a Grade 12 certificate; however, only 5% (15) of learners aspired to these careers (see Table 6).

Table 6: Number of learners aspiring to careers at the different entry levels

Career level	Points needed to enter /study for the aspired career	f	%
1	Less than Grade 12 certificate required	15	5.0
2	Grade 12 with less than 22 points required	20	6.7
3	Grade 12 with 22 to 24 points required	67	22.5
4	Grade 12 with 25points and above required	196	65.8

(N=298)

4.4 LEARNERS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS TO ENTER THE DESIRED CAREER

In order to gain an in-depth understanding of the learners' knowledge of their desired careers, as well as the requirements associated with these, several aspects needed to be considered. Firstly, the learners' understanding of training required for their aspired career was analysed. Secondly, the learners' perception of the importance of several academic goals was presented and special attention was given to the learners' English scores, which play a key role in applying at the university. The learners' level of confidence in being able to enter tertiary training, as well as their desired career, was presented. Finally, the learners' knowledge of the career to which they aspired was examined; this required the learners to provide a short description of their aspired career.

4.4.1 TRAINING NEEDED IN ORDER TO ENTER DESIRED CAREER

Learners were asked about their understanding of what they would have to consider in order to enter their desired career. A total of 37% (111) of learners indicated that they needed to obtain a specialised degree at a tertiary institution. Whereas 20.3% (61) of learners were aware that they would have to obtain a degree at a tertiary institution, 24% (72) of learners acknowledged that they would need to obtain a diploma or certificate at a tertiary institution in order to enter their desired career successfully. The same number of learners, 7.7% (23), indicated that they would need to be given in-service training or would need to have technical training at a technical institution. Lastly, only 3.3% (10) of learners believed that they did not need to acquire any further training to be able to pursue their desired career successfully (see Table 7).

Table 7: Training needed to enter into desired career

Training needed:	f	%
No further training required	10	3.3
In-service training required	23	7.7
Technical training needed at a technical institution	23	7.7
Diploma or certificate required	72	24.0
Degree required	61	20.3
Specialised degree required	111	37.0

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they might be unsure of their desired careers, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

4.4.2 IMPORTANCE OF ACADEMIC GOALS

Learners were asked to rate the levels of importance that they assigned to achieving certain academic goals. These included: to obtain a Grade 12 certificate for securing a job or for further studies; to obtain a C symbol or higher in English; to obtain a C symbol or higher in at least 5 subjects; to obtain tertiary training or a university degree and to secure a job in their desired career. Based on a four-point Likert scale, their responses could range from very important to not important at all. Their responses can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8: Level of importance learners assigned to achieving academic goals

Academic goals	Very important		Somewhat important		Not very important		Not important at all	
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
To receive a Grade 12 certificate for securing a job	65.7	197	18.7	56	10.0	30	5.7	17
To receive a Grade 12 certificate for further studies	89.3	268	7.7	23	2.3	7	0.7	2
To obtain a C symbol or higher in English	74.3	223	19.3	58	5.3	16	1.0	3
To obtain a C symbol or higher in at least 5 subjects	68.0	204	26.3	79	4.0	12	1.7	5
To obtain tertiary training	82.3	247	12.0	36	4.0	12	1.7	5
To obtain a university degree	86.0	258	9.7	29	2.7	8	1.7	5
To acquire a job in the area of their desired career	92.3	277	6.7	20	0.7	2	0.3	1

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they might be unsure of their desired career, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

In response to the question regarding the importance of obtaining a Grade 12 certificate, 65.7% (197) of the learners felt that it was very important. Only 18.7% (56) of the sampled learners felt that it was somewhat important, whereas 10% (30) of learners found it not to be very important. Lastly, 5.6% (17) of learners indicated that they believed that this was not important at all.

With regards to the importance of obtaining a Grade 12 certificate in order to continue tertiary education, 89% (268) of learners felt that it was very important for them to further their studies. While 7.6% (23) of learners believed that it was somewhat

important to obtain a Grade 12 certificate in order to study the following year, 2.3% (7) found it not to be very important and 0.6% (2) of the learners were convinced that it was not important at all to complete the Grade 12 school year successfully.

Learners were asked to indicate how important it was to achieve a C symbol or higher in at least 5 subjects. It can be observed from Table 8 that 68% (204) of the sampled learners found it very important to achieve at least a C symbol in at least 5 subjects in their academic reports. There were 26.3% (79) of learners who indicated that they did believe it to be somewhat important while only 4% (12) of learners believed that it was not very important. Finally, only 1.7% (5) of learners found it not important at all to receive a C symbol in at least 5 of their academic subjects in their final school year.

Similarly, learners were asked about how important it was to achieve a C symbol or higher in the subject English. Seventy-four (223) percent of the sampled learners were convinced that it was very important to receive at least a C symbol for English. Only 19.3% (58) of learners fell in the second category of finding it somewhat important to obtain a C symbol, whereas 5.3% (16) of the sampled learners believed that it was not very important to receive at least a C symbol in English as a subject. Only 1% (3) of the learners found it not important at all.

It can be observed that 82.3% (247) of the learners found it very important to receive tertiary training in order to enter their desired career. Only 12% (36) of learners were of the opinion that it was somewhat important to receive tertiary training after completing their school years. Furthermore, merely 4% (12) of the learners found it not to be very

important and 1.6% (5) of learners felt that it was not important at all to enter tertiary education.

In another question learners indicated their opinions about the importance of receiving tertiary training or obtaining a university degree. A total of 86% (258) of learners found it very important to obtain a university degree in order to enter the world of work in their desired careers. Only 9.7% (29) of learners were of the opinion that it would be somewhat important to obtain a university degree, whereas just 2.7% (8) of the learners found it not very important to have a degree. A small percentage of learners, 1.7% (5), responded that it was not important at all for them to obtain a university degree.

Learners stated their feelings about being able to work in a profession that they felt passionate about. A large percentage of learners, 92.3% (277), found it very important to work in a profession that they were passionate about. A few learners, 6.7% (20), found it somewhat important to enter a job that they loved, whereas 0.7% (2) learners believed it not to be very important. Only 0.3% (1) learner found it not important at all to have a job that you desire.

Lastly, learners were questioned about their immediate plans for the following year. Whereas 79% (237) of the learners indicated that they would like to further their studies, a small percentage of learners, 12.3% (37), would have liked to find a job in order to save money to further their studies. Only 5.3% (16) of the learners would have liked to take a gap year straight after completing their Grade 12 school year. A mere 1.7% (5) of learners would have liked to enter the world of work after completing their Grade 12

year, and another 1.7% (5) of learners wished to work and study simultaneously or start up their own business.

4.4.3 PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH

UNAM requires applicants to have at least a C symbol (ordinary level) or a 4 (higher level) for English, in order to be considered for any programme offered at the university. Therefore, the learners' English scores were recorded. These were extracted from their academic reports. A summary of these scores is listed in Table 9. The symbols 1 to 4 are scores obtained at higher level (1 being the highest score) while A to G symbols are scores obtained at ordinary level. A smaller percentage, 10.3% (31), of learners who chose to complete English as a subject on higher level, failed when obtaining zero and, therefore, the option of attending university was eliminated. The same situation arose for 22.3% (67) of learners who selected to complete English as a subject on the ordinary level. The remaining 31.3% (94) of learners obtained English scores between A to C. These learners would be able to apply at the university, based solely on their performance in English. However, additional academic achievements need to be considered as well, which will be discussed at a later stage in this chapter.

Table 9: English scores achieved by the learners

English symbols obtained	f	%
1	0	0
2	5	1.7
3	45	15.0
4	58	19.3
0 (ungraded)	31	10.3
A	0	0
B	19	6.3
C	75	25.0
D	36	12.0
E	21	7.0
F	9	3.0
G	1	0.3

(N=300)

4.4.4 LEARNERS' LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THEIR DESIRED CAREER

Another question investigated the learners' level of confidence about entering tertiary education, as well as entering their desired careers at some stage in their futures, considering their current academic achievements. The results for the two questions are

similar and can be observed in Table 10. Some learners, 21.4% (64), felt rather confident that they would be able to enter tertiary education, while a larger percentage of learners, 44% (132), felt that it would be quite likely. There were 28.8% (86) of learners who felt that it was somewhat likely that they would be able to enter tertiary education, whereas six percent (18) of learners did not believe it likely at all, regarding their current academic situation. Only 24.3% (75) of learners were optimistic that they would be able to enter their desired careers, whereas a large percentage of learners, 40.7% (122), were confident that it would be quite likely to enter their desired careers. There were 28.7% (86) of learners who believed that it would be somewhat likely and only 6.3% (19) of learners were rather pessimistic about their chances to enter their desired careers due to their poor academic performance; they, therefore, believed that it would not be likely at all.

Table 10: Learners perceived likelihood to achieve goals

Future goals	Very likely		Quite likely		Somewhat likely		Not likely at all	
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
To enter tertiary education	21.4	64	44.0	132	28.8	86	6.0	18
To enter their desired career	24.3	73	40.7	122	28.7	86	6.3	19

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they may be unsure of their desired careers, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

4.4.5 LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE CAREERS TO WHICH THEY ASPIRED

Finally, learners were requested to describe the careers to which they aspired in a short sentence. This allowed insight into the learners' understanding and knowledge of the specific careers that they envisioned for their future. The learners' responses were categorised into two groups. The first category was classified as providing an insufficient description of the career by the learner, for example, to work in the media environment as a journalist was simply described as “enjoyable” or to become a civil engineer was described as “a recognized and well-paid job”. The second category was classified as providing sufficient descriptions of the learners' desired careers, for example, a lawyer's profession was described as “to provide legal advice to clients” or a psychologist “counsels people who have problems”. An interesting finding was that more learners from the academically higher performing schools (76%) seemed to have a better understanding and knowledge of their chosen careers, by providing sufficient descriptions of these. Although 95% (177) of the whole sampled group revealed a sufficient description of their desired careers, a remaining 41% (123) showed an insufficient understanding of the duties and responsibilities in their desired careers.

4.5 AGENCIES THAT INFLUENCE LEARNERS' CAREER ASPIRATIONS

Learners were asked to rate their perceptions of the different agencies that they perceived to be influential in their career options and choices. See Table 11 for a

summary of the results.

Most influential, according to the sampled group, was the television and radio. When the two positive opinions were combined, a rather large percentage of learners, 64.7% (194), indicated that the television and radio had a great influence on their career choices and options, compared to 21.3% (64) of learners who believed that the media did not have an effect on their career choices.

Secondly, the learners' mothers also seemed to have a great influence. When the two positive opinions were combined, results indicated that 61.6% (185) of learners found their mothers to have influenced their career choices. Thirdly, 58.4% (175) of learners believed that Life Skills lessons provided guidance and assistance regarding their career ventures, to either a large or some extent.

Learners' fathers and teachers shared the last position, as the results for these two agencies were exactly the same. The two favourable opinions (large and some extent) were combined and revealed that 51% (153) of learners' fathers, as well as their teachers, had an influence on their career options. When the two negative opinions (little or no extent) were added, it became clear that 49% (147) of learners felt that their fathers' and teachers did not have any influence on their future career choices.

Table 11: Agencies that influenced learners' career aspirations

Agency	Large extent		Some extent		Little extent		No extent	
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
Teachers	17.7	53	33.3	100	23.7	71	25.3	76
Life Skills lessons	29.7	89	28.7	86	21.7	65	20.0	60
Mother	39.3	118	22.3	67	21.0	63	17.3	52
Father	29.7	89	21.3	64	15.7	47	33.3	100
Television and radio	38.7	116	26.0	78	14.0	42	21.3	64

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they may be unsure of their desired career, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

4.6 PERCEIVED BARRIERS

This section reveals the learners' perceived barriers to enter their desired career, as well as their level of confidence in overcoming these barriers. The learner's responses are summarised in Table 12. Receiving bad Grade 12 results was selected by the highest percentage of learners, 33.3% (91), as a barrier that affected them to a large extent. This was closely followed by a lack of financial support to continue further studies, 30.7% (92). The lack of job opportunities, due to the country's economy, was selected by 22% (66) of learners as a barrier which could prohibit them from entering their desired career. The possibility of fierce competition acting as a barrier was indicated by 19% (57) of learners. The lack of parental support to further their studies was indicated by 16.3% (49) of learners. The possibility of being distracted by friends seemed to be a lesser perceived barrier to overcome, 11.7% (35). The lack of personal willpower and

perseverance was indicated by 11.3% (34) of learners as the second least perceived barrier. Parents or family members who were not in favour of the learners' desired career were less of a concern, as only 4.7% (14) of learners perceived this to be a barrier.

Table 12: Learners' perceived barriers to pursue their desired career

Perceived barriers:	Large extent		Some extent		Little extent		No extent	
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
Bad Grade 12 results	33.3	91	25	75	29.0	87	15.7	47
Lack of financial support to continue further studies	30.7	92	21.7	65	19.0	57	28.7	86
Lack of job opportunities due to our country's economy	22.0	66	33.7	101	29.7	89	14.7	44
Intense competition for jobs	19.0	57	40.7	122	31.0	93	9.3	28
Parents/family members not in favour of chosen career	4.7	14	15.0	45	19.7	59	60.7	182
Distraction by friends	11.7	35	19.0	57	23.7	71	45.7	137
Lack of parental support to continue with further education	16.3	49	17.7	53	21.0	63	45.0	135
Lack of personal willpower and perseverance	11.3	34	22.7	68	28.3	85	37.7	113

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they may be unsure of their desired career, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

Furthermore, the learners determined their level of confidence regarding overcoming these barriers mentioned above. Thirty-nine per cent (117) of learners felt very confident that they would be able to overcome their perceived barrier. Thirty-seven per cent (112) of learners indicated that they felt confident that they would successfully conquer the barrier that they had identified. However, there was a group of 19.3% (58) learners who felt somewhat confident and only 4.3% (13) of learners did not feel confident at all in

overcoming their perceived barrier.

Finally, learners were questioned about whether they believed that they would enter their desired career or not, considering their barriers, as well as their academic performance. A larger percentage, 86.6% (260) of the sampled group, indicated that they were rather confident and optimistic to enter their desired career, considering their present circumstances. Only 13.3% (40) of learners did not believe that they would be able to enter their chosen careers.

4.7 CORRELATION RESULTS OF THE LEARNERS' DESIRED CAREERS AND THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The Pearson correlation for normally distributed data was utilised (SPSS version 23) to determine a possible correlation between the learners' academic achievements and the four career levels. The first variable was presented by the points scored by each learner based on their academic reports. These were manually calculated according to the UNAM point system. The second variable was the career levels which ranged from Levels 1 to 4, depending on the desired career and the minimum academic requirements associated with these. These levels were associated with a certain range of points, progressing from the careers requiring the least to the highest number of points. A very small, positive correlation of 0.125 was found between academic achievement and career levels. This means that with an increase in academic achievement there was also a very slight increase in the level of career selected by learners. This correlation was found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). See Table 13.

Table 13: Correlation between points scored and career levels (points required) to enter the learners' desired careers

Correlations: Pearson			
		Points achieved	Points required
Points achieved	r	1	0.125*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	298	298
Points required	r	0.125*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
	N	298	298

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
(N=298)

Although there was a very small, positive, low correlation (0.125) found, it does not provide a clear answer to how many learners would actually be able to enter their aspired careers after completing Grade 12. Therefore, further analysis was necessary in order to investigate this research objective. The learners' points achieved and the points required for the careers to which they aspired were matched individually. For example, the researcher investigated how many of the 196 learners, who aspired for Level 4 careers, actually scored points of 25 and above (see Table 14). This was done for all four career categories. These results revealed a more accurate picture of learners being able to enter their desired career. The overall results indicated that the learners who aspired to enter careers categorised within the first and second levels all met the minimum

requirements. This accumulated to 35 (12.2%) learners who would all be able to enter their desired careers. The learners' careers categorised in Level 3 had different results. Only 13 (19.4%) of the 67 learners, who selected careers in category 3, would be able to enter their desired careers with their current academic achievements, while 54 (80.5%) learners did not achieve the minimum points required to enter their desired careers. This would thus eliminate them from the opportunity to enter their chosen careers straight after completing school. Careers that fell in the fourth level required higher minimum points, and only 43 (21.9%) of the 196 learners, who selected careers in this category, had achieved the required points to enter these careers. The remaining 153 (78.1%) learners did not achieve the minimum points required to enter their desired careers.

Overall, 69.5% (207) of the whole sample would not be able to enter their desired careers, due to insufficient academic achievements. In other words, they did not meet the minimum requirements for the career to which they aspired. Only 30.5% (93) of the sampled group would be able to enter the career to which they aspired. This means that that these learners had achieved the minimum requirements for the career to which they aspired. A large percentage of these learners (11.7%) also fell in the group who aspired to Level 1 and 2 careers.

Table 14: Learners obtaining sufficient points per selected career category

Career level	Learners qualifying to enter into aspiring career		Learners not qualifying to enter into aspiring career		Total learners aspiring for career	
	%	f	%	f	%	f
1	100	15	0	0	5.0	15
2	100	20	0	0	6.7	20
3	19.4	13	80.6	54	22.5	67
4	21.9	43	78.1	153	64.4	196
Total	30.5	91	69.5	207	100	298

(N=298)

4.8 GENDER DIFFERENCES

In order to gain an understanding of possible differences between girls and boys regarding their career aspirations, some aspects were evaluated based on the two genders. These included the range and types careers to which boys and girls aspired, the distribution of these careers according to the different career levels, boys' and girls' perceived likelihood of achieving their goals, as well as agencies that might be perceived by girls and boys to influence their career aspirations and choices.

4.8.1 RANGE AND TYPE OF CAREERS BOYS AND GIRLS ASPIRED TO

The five most popular careers aspired to by both genders are discussed in this section. However, a summary of all the careers to which girls and boys aspired can be seen in Table 15.

The most popular career to which boys aspired was that of an engineer. This is an umbrella term for all the sub-sections of possible engineering types, such as civil-, electrical-, mechanical-, marine- and mining-engineering. Fourteen percent (21) of boys

aspired to this particular career. The career of a medical doctor assumed the second most popular position, according to 10.6% (16) of boys. This career was followed closely by ten percent (15) of boys who aspired to become lawyers. The fourth most popular career to which boys aspired was that of an information technology expert, as 5.3% (8) of boys indicated. The fifth position was shared among two careers, namely to become an accountant or a teacher, which was selected by 4.6% (7) of boys.

The most popular career among girls was to become a teacher. Ten percent (15) of girls indicated this career which was closely followed by the law profession, 9.3% (14). Eight percent (12) of girls aspired to become a medical doctor and 5.3% (8) of girls wished to become a psychologist. Finally, 4.6% (7) of girls envisioned themselves becoming a business manager in the future. A significant finding that should be noted as well was the fact that, of the whole sampled group, only two learners were unsure of their desired career. These learners were boys only, 1.3% (2).

Table 15: Range and types of careers to which learners aspired according to their gender

Career Level	Careers chosen by boys	Careers chosen by girls
1	Entrepreneur (3), construction worker (2), chef (1), musician (1), professional hunter (1), professional soccer player (1), author (1)	Waiter/waitress (1), model (1), actor/actress (1), chef (1), event manager (1)
2	Tourism Consultant (5), electrician (3), diesel mechanic (2), police officer (1), plumber (1), petrol mechanic (1)	Beautician (4), police officer (1), bank teller (1), tourism consultant (1)
3	Teacher (7), business manager (5), pilot (5), psychologist (4), graphic designer (3), marketing manager (2), navigator (1), professional field guide (1)	Teacher (15), psychologist (8), business manager (7), pilot (4), marketing manager (2), 3d animation creator (1), film producer (1), graphic designer (1)
4	Engineer (21), medical doctor (16), lawyer (15), information technology expert (8), accountant (7), chartered accountant (5), architect (3), paramedic (3), veterinarian (3), geologist (3), quantity surveyor (2), town planner (2), physiotherapist (1), bio-kinetist (1), nature conservation agent (1), advertising copywriter (1), nurse (1), stockbroker (1), pastor (1), dermatologist (1), journalist (1), forensic scientist (1), insurance broker (1), draftsmen (1), food technologist (1), chiropractor (1)	Lawyer (14), medical doctor (12), chartered accountant (6), paramedic (5), accountant (5), architect (5), nurse (5), pharmacist (4), physiotherapist (3), geologist (3), biomedical scientist (3), engineer (3), dermatologist (2), dentist (2), flight hostess (2), radiographer (2), bio-kinetist (2), veterinarian (2), forensic scientist (2), optometrist (1), journalist (1), nature conservation agent (1), occupational therapist (1), economist (1), public relations officer (1), air traffic controller (1), fashion designer (1), social worker (1), logistic manager (1), human resource manager (1), pathologist (1)

(N=298)

Note: Number in brackets represents the frequencies of careers chosen. Two (2) learners indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired career.

4.8.2 GIRLS' AND BOYS' DESIRED CAREERS IN THE FOUR CAREER LEVELS

From the results, it was observed that the majority of both girls and boys, 66% (99) of girls and 65.5% (97) of boys, aspired to careers that fell in the highest university entry level, requiring a minimum of 25 points. Careers in the third level, requiring a minimum of 22 points, were aspired to by 20.9% (31) of boys and 24% (36) of girls. A few boys, 7.4% (11), aspired to careers that were categorised in the first and second levels. Fewer girls, 4% (6), aspired to careers which fell in the first level, while a few more girls, 6% (9), wished to enter careers that fell in the second career level (see Table 16).

Table 16: Number of learners by gender aspiring to careers at different entry levels

Career level	Grade 12 points needed to enter/study for the aspired career	Boys		Girls	
		%	f	%	f
1	Less than Grade 12 certificate required	6.1	9	4.0	6
2	Grade 12 with fewer than 22 points required	7.4	11	6.0	9
3	Grade 12 with 22 to 24 points required	20.9	31	24.0	36
4	Grade 12 with 25 points and above required	65.5	97	66.0	99

(N=298)

4.8.3 GIRLS' AND BOYS' PERCEIVED LIKELIHOOD TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

Results were analysed to determine differences between girls and boys regarding their confidence levels for entering tertiary education, as well as their desired careers. See Table 17. The results show that 60.6% (91) of the boys felt very or quite confident that they would be able to enter tertiary education, while 39.4% (59) felt somewhat or not likely at all to achieve this goal. Furthermore, 65.4% (98) of boys felt very or quite confident to enter their desired career. On the other hand, 34.6% (52) felt somewhat or

not likely at all to enter their desired career.

Table 17: Learners' perceived likelihood to achieve goals by gender

Future goals	Gender	Very likely		Quite likely		Somewhat likely		Not likely at all	
		%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f
Boys									
To enter tertiary education	Boys	19.3	29	41.3	62	32.7	49	6.7	10
	Girls	23.3	35	46.7	70	24.7	37	5.3	8
To enter their desired career	Boys	22.7	34	42.7	64	27.3	41	7.3	11
	Girls	26.0	39	38.7	58	30.0	45	5.3	8

(N=300)

Note: The responses of the two learners, who indicated that they were not sure yet of their desired careers, were included in this question. Although they may be unsure of their desired careers, they seemed confident enough to answer this question.

When the two positive responses, very and quite likely, were combined, it became clear that 70% (105) of girls were confident to enter tertiary education. While the two negative responses, somewhat and not likely at all, were added, it revealed that 30% (45) of girls felt less confident to enter tertiary education in future. Furthermore, 64.7% (97) of them felt rather confident to enter their desired career while 35.3% (53) felt less confident to achieve this goal.

4.8.4 POSSIBILITY TO ENTER THEIR DESIRED CAREER BY GENDER

Table 18 represents an overview of the results for boys and girls. The overall results indicate that the boys and girls, who aspired for careers categorised within the first and second levels, all met the minimum requirements. This accumulated to 35 (12.2%) of boys for Level 1 and 2 who would all be able to enter their desired career. Within the

first level, 6 (4%), and the second level, nine (6%) girls qualified to enter their desired careers. Careers categorised in Level 3 had different results. There were 31 (20.9%) boys who aspired to careers categorised in the third level. In this category only eight (25.8%) boys would qualify to enter their desired career, while 23 (74.2%) boys did not achieve the minimum points required to enter their desired career. There were 36 (24%) girls who aspired to careers categorised in the third level. Thirty-one (86.1%) girls did not meet the minimum requirements set for these careers and only five (13.9%) managed to meet the minimum requirements. Careers that fell in the fourth level required higher minimum points. In total, 97 (65.5%) boys aspired to careers that fell in the fourth level. Eighty-two (84.5%) boys did not meet the minimum requirements and only 15 (15.5%) boys, who selected careers in this category, had achieved the required points to enter these careers. While a total of 99 (66%) girls chose careers that fell in the last level, only 28 (28.3%) managed to achieve the minimum required points in order to enter their desired careers. The remaining 71 (71.7%) girls did not achieve the minimum points required to enter their desired career.

Overall, 70.9 % (105) of all the boys would not be able to enter the career to which they aspired due to insufficient academic achievements. In other words, they did not meet the minimum requirements for their desired career. Only 29.1% (43) of the boys would be able to enter the career to which aspired; this implies that these boys had achieved the minimum requirements for their desired careers. While 32% (48) of girls in total did achieve the minimum requirements for the careers to which they aspired, 68% (102)

would not be able to enter their desired careers due to insufficient academic achievements.

Table 18: Learners obtaining sufficient points per selected career category according to gender

Career level	Gender	Learners qualifying to enter the careers to which they aspired		Learners not qualifying to enter the careers to which they aspired		Total learners aspiring to a career per gender	
		%	f	%	f	%	f
1	Girls	100	6	0	0	4.0	6
	Boys	100	9	0	0	6.1	9
2	Girls	100	9	0	0	6.0	9
	Boys	100	11	0	0	7.4	11
3	Girls	13.9	5	86.1	31	24.0	36
	Boys	25.8	8	74.2	23	20.9	31
4	Girls	28.3	28	71.7	71	66.0	99
	Boys	15.5	15	84.5	82	65.5	97
Total	Girls	32	48	68.0	102	100	150
Total	Boys	29.1	43	70.9	105	99.9	148

(N=298)

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a detailed description of the results of the study conducted. A holistic picture was revealed of the learners' knowledge of careers, perceived barriers and, most importantly, the possibility to enter their desired careers by comparing the minimum points required and the actual points the individual learner had achieved. Special attention was given to the different gender types as well. In the final chapter these findings will be discussed in depth.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter presents a discussion of the results presented in Chapter 4. The research objectives will be used as a guideline for the discussion of the findings. Firstly, the researcher wished to determine the range and types of careers to which Grade 12 learners aspired. Secondly, an evaluation of the learners' awareness of the basic academic requirements of the careers to which they aspired, as well as the perceived agencies that assisted and guided them in their career choices, are discussed. The third objective was to determine the extent to which learners met the minimum academic requirements for the careers to which they aspired. Fourthly, an investigation was completed to determine possible differences between the two genders (girls and boys) in terms of their career aspirations. Furthermore, shortcomings, as well as recommendations for this research study, are stated.

5.2 RANGE AND TYPES OF CAREERS TO WHICH LEARNERS ASPIRED

Overall, the learners aspired to 71 different careers. The range revealed that the learners were aware of various careers. Although it seems like a reasonably high number, it may still be somewhat restricted, considering the sample size and the number of careers available in the market. There seemed to be an awareness of different careers amongst learners but there are many more options. The internet, especially, is useful in researching information about different careers and the responsibilities and duties that

each of these different careers entail. Gottfredson's (1981) findings suggest that learners do not have a solid knowledge of career requirements and responsibilities. The careers stated by the learners that most desired to venture into after completing their school careers were law, medicine and engineering, which are normally associated with a higher status (prestige), as well as an above average financial reward. To become a teacher assumed the fourth position while to be a psychologist, accountant and business manager was desired by an equal number of learners. These could be considered as medium status careers.

Findings concluded that the majority of learners (64%) aspired to careers that fell in Level 4, which required higher academic achievements (25 points and higher), aiming for specialised university degrees. The findings show that a significant number (24%) of learners aspired to careers that fell in Level 3. It should be noted that, in this level, the teaching profession was chosen by a significant number of learners (6.9%). This outcome was surprising and elicits hope, as this profession shapes our youth who are the country's future. The second level careers were aspired to by only a few learners (6%), while even fewer learners (5.7%) aspired to careers that required little academic achievement (less than a Grade 12 certificate).

These results reveal that learners did aspire to careers associated with higher status and reward. Gottfredson's theory elaborates that, within the circumscription process, individuals establish career preferences which are associated with the gender-type (male or female), prestige (ranging from low to high) level and interest (such as self-concept)

components. She mentions that the prestige aspect allows children to eliminate careers that are of unacceptably low prestige status according to their specific social standing. Although there are three components mentioned by Gottfredson, the prestige factor seems to have a slightly more influential power according to the findings recorded in this study. However, to enter successfully into careers which fall in Levels 3 and 4 requires a solid academic achievement by the individual as the requirements for these careers are set at a higher level. These findings emphasise that learners seemed to aspire to careers associated with higher prestige and status. I do believe that movies and television series have a significant influence on learners' choice of career; however, this cannot be statistically represented within the scope of this research.

5.3 LEARNERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF THEIR DESIRED CAREERS

In Chapter 4 several findings were addressed under this section, such as the importance to achieve certain academic goals, as well as learners' understanding of the level of training needed for the career to which they aspired. Specific attention was given to the learners' results in English as a subject and their level of confidence regarding their abilities to enter tertiary education.

Learners felt that their academic achievement was of importance in order to attain their future careers. The majority of learners (89%) found it important to obtain a Grade 12 certificate in order to enter tertiary education. Results also reveal that many learners (86%) found it important to obtain a university degree and, finally, a vast number of

learners (92.3%) found it important to acquire a career that they desired. Therefore, learners were aware of the fact that they needed to acquire a respectable, educational base in order to pursue the career that they desired.

In spite of the fact that learners were aware of the need for high academic performance, their actual school results, as reflected by both their total points achieved for university entry and their English results, were not corresponding to the requirements for the careers to which they aspired. The English scores revealed that 43% (129) of the whole sampled group did not meet the UNAM minimum requirement for English. The biggest consequence with the highest impact, therefore, was that these learners would not have the opportunity to enter or be considered for entering university for further studies, based on their present school results in English. Although there are further requirements set by the university, students' performance in English is an additional factor determining learners' options regarding further studies and possible careers.

Although the majority of the sampled group (59%) displayed a sufficient understanding of the duties and responsibilities of their desired careers, one would have expected more learners to have a good understanding of their selected future careers at the beginning of Grade 12. Knowledge about the available careers is another key aspect in career selection. If learners do not have a solid understanding of their desired careers, they cannot make effective career choices. They may discontinue their efforts to pursue their chosen careers due to misfits between their personalities and interests, or they may end up dissatisfied in their jobs. Learners should have more exposure to the different careers

through Life Skills lessons in their schools. The learners need appropriate information about the possible careers and what these entail in order to make an informed and best suited career choice for themselves.

5.4 AGENCIES THAT INFLUENCE CAREER ASPIRATIONS

The most influential agency on learners' career choices was the media, such as the television and radio. Results showed that 65% of learners selected this agency as the one that influenced their career choices to a large extent. This finding has a positive connotation, as this may be a method to reach more learners and a useful tool for Life Skills classes. However, there should be guidance to convey a realistic picture of the different careers. Movies and series may convey only the attractive aspects of a career, such as that of a lawyer or medical doctor. Class discussions facilitated by the teacher should follow broadcasted movies and series to deepen the learners' understanding regarding the duties and responsibilities of different careers. The entry requirements for careers should also be stressed so that learners will be reminded of their own responsibilities, should they want to pursue certain career paths.

Interestingly, an almost equal percentage of learners (61%) felt that their mothers had an influence on their career decisions and, therefore, had an influence on their career aspirations. On the other hand, close to half of the sampled group (51%) perceived that their fathers exerted some influence regarding their career choices. Although these results were close, a ten percent difference can be noticed, which is significant. These results support Sosu's (2014) findings that emphasise the importance of parents'

influence on their child's career aspirations. Parents, who play a role in their children's future career choices, tend to act as role models and they invest more resources, such as money and time. Although the results of this research do not allow the conclusion that there were similarities between parents' careers and learners' career aspirations, there seemed to be a stronger influence from the learners' mothers than from their fathers.

More than half of the learners (58%) indicated that Life Skills lessons did play a supportive role in their career choices. As mentioned above, visual methods could reach learners on a more creative and deeper level if utilised in an effective manner. The Internet can be an additional method and can be extremely helpful. Accessibility and effective use should be provided by the school. The Internet is the most used and most popular technology currently worldwide. Individual career guidance for learners experiencing difficulties in their career choices should be provided during Life Skills lessons.

5.5 PERCEIVED BARRIERS

Despite learners' confidence regarding entry into the careers of their choice, the majority of learners (55%) felt that receiving bad academic results would be a barrier to enter the careers to which they aspired. Yet, a large number of learners (45%) did not feel that this would be a barrier. This finding indicates that learners did understand the importance of their academic achievements. However, these results were conflicting with the confidence levels regarding their abilities to enter their desired careers. Most learners (76%) felt confident to overcome their perceived barriers, whereas only a few learners

(24%) felt less confident regarding such barriers. Although their levels of confidence seemed admirable and positive, the reality of their academic achievements was rather disappointing. There seemed to be a concern about obtaining bad academic results; however, the learners did not seem to be prepared to take responsibility for the possible consequences. It seemed that they did not have a realistic picture of the requirements of careers in relation to their own levels of achievement.

Additionally, even though slightly more than half of the learners (52%) did not think that the lack of financial support would be a barrier to them in pursuing their future careers, there was a large percentage of learners (48%) who did believe this to be a barrier. That financial constraints would be perceived as a barrier by the learners was expected. This can be a vital and difficult barrier to overcome. Gottfredson's theory (1981) mentions two specific barriers, namely the training or education part and the obtaining of a job, which are interlinked with the two key aspects mentioned above.

The lack of job opportunities, due to the Namibian economy, was of a concern for most learners (56%). Fewer learners (44%) indicated the intense competition in the labour market to be a barrier. This was an unexpected result as, once the individual has a good education and qualification, job opportunities tend to increase in Namibia, and this should become less of a concern.

5.6 POSSIBILITY TO ENTER A DESIRED CAREER CONSIDERING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The two variables utilised in the correlation analysis were the learners' points achieved and their points required according to their desired careers. The results of the correlation analysis of the two variables indicated that there was a very low positive correlation ($r = 0.125$). This means, that there was a very slight tendency for learners who achieved higher points, to also aspire to careers with higher entry point requirements. However, the correlation results could not answer the research question sufficiently and further analysis was required. Therefore, the researcher looked at the learners individually, by comparing their achieved points with the minimum points required for their desired careers. These findings suggest that only 34% of the learners met the minimum requirements of their desired careers, while the majority (66%) of learners would not be able to pursue the careers to which they aspired due to lacking academic achievements. A closer look at the results of the specific levels exposed a somewhat disappointing and concerning picture. Levels 1 and 2 were not of concern, as all the learners qualified in terms of requiring the minimum points to pursue their desired careers. However, there were only 11% of the whole sampled group that aspired to careers that fell in these two levels. The majority of learners aspired to careers that fell in Level 3 and 4 which required a significant number of points. The percentages for the two levels were similar and resulted in about 80% of learners not having obtained the minimum points for their desired careers. Therefore, most learners would not be able to pursue their desired

careers straight after completing Grade 12, which is a devastating result. The results emphasise the importance of learners' academic achievements in order to pursue their desired careers.

Despite these findings, a vast majority of learners, 65%, believed they would be able to enter tertiary education, considering their current academic achievements. The vast discrepancy between the learners' levels of confidence and their actual academic achievements illustrates that these learners were not completely in touch with their circumstances. A harsh awakening to reality seems inevitable, which may have implications for their futures. These findings support a study done in South Africa (Robbins, Wallis & Dunston, 2003) which investigated the developmental and contextual factors associated with academic success and career aspirations. Especially, the finding that learners wished to be academically successful; however, they were fearful of not having the necessary abilities and skills. Although the sample group in this study seemed not to be fearful, they did not make the appropriate link between their academic achievements and the possible implications on their future plans. This finding could be understood in the light of the findings of another study which suggests that learners' academic success appear to be disconnected from concrete, future goals (Robbins, Wallis & Dunston, 2003).

5.7 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENDERS

Many careers were selected by both genders. For example, both girls and boys aspired to become medical doctors or pilots. However, a few careers seemed to be more desired by

girls, such as to become a beautician, teacher and flight hostess, whereas more boys seemed to desire becoming engineers, information technologists and electricians. These findings can be understood, considering the underlying theoretical framework as Gottfredson's circumscription concept elaborated that children aspire to careers according to three guidelines, namely the sex-type, the prestige associated with the specific careers and their interests. This concept may serve as an explanation for the girls' and boys' differing career choices. The gender-type of career seemed to be a highly motivating factor alongside the prestige factor. A research study in the United States of America termed the separation of certain careers according to their gender as "occupational gender segregation". An additional factor offered by Schwenkenberg (2014) which elaborates and expands on this phenomenon is that women choose certain career types, despite vast opportunities and possibilities, due to the flexibility to work fewer hours, while men are not concerned about long working hours as long as it allows them to provide for their families. This does reflect in the findings recorded in this study, and may be traced back to the fact that women would like to have the opportunity to work and raise children, while men are mostly concerned with providing for their families financially. However, a clear-cut difference between careers chosen by girls and boys cannot be concluded in this research, as both genders desired differing, as well as somewhat similar, careers.

There was a difference in the fourth career level regarding gender. There were more girls (28%) who qualified for their desired careers than boys (15%). There could be various

reasons for this finding which would require additional investigation. However, the majority of boys (85%) and girls (71%) did not qualify for their desired career in this career level.

The results regarding the boys' and girls' perceived likelihood to achieve their future goals matched the overall results. Seventy percent of girls and 61% of boys felt rather confident that they would be able to enter their desired career and tertiary education. These findings contradict the results found when the points required and points achieved were compared. Overall results revealed that the majority of girls (68%) and boys (70%) were not able to enter their desired career due to poor academic achievement.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

- Although learners aspired to a relatively wide range of careers, there is opportunity for improvement by exposing learners to more options and career types, especially careers that do not require such high entry requirements since poor academic achievements were a barrier for many learners.
- Learners' poor academic achievements remain a major concern. The learners' academic achievements need to be improved and learners should be made aware of the possible consequences that low academic achievement would have on their future career choices.
- The learners' understanding of the requirements and responsibilities of their

desired careers was sufficient in the higher performing schools. The data revealed, however, that learners attending a lower performing school had a rather poor understanding of the careers to which they aspired. Helpful guidance from teachers, as well as effective and interesting Life Skills lessons, can improve this dilemma. Additionally, the internet should be made more accessible and implemented in schools, especially for career matters.

- The parents' awareness of their influence on their children's career choices, as well as their motivation and aspirations, should be raised and heightened. They play a vital role in their children's lives and can assist them in making realistic and successful choices regarding their desired careers. They need to act as role models and inspire their children to reach for their dreams with great commitment and to work hard for these dreams to become reality.
- More research should be done on the impact of the socio-economic level and the academic achievement as this is an important aspect within the career aspirations development. This aspect is complex and would require more in-depth investigation.

5.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the greatest limitations was the career levels which were determined by the researcher. These levels were categorised according to the minimum points required to enter a specific career. According to this system, Levels 3 and 4 were too closely linked within the range. There was no possibility to avoid this. One of the consequences of this

dilemma was that a learner who aspired to a career with higher academic requirements would have a positive match, even if he or she had not actually obtained the required points. For example, a learner who had achieved 25 points and indicated his/her desired career was that of a medical doctor (which requires a minimum of 34 points), would be a positive match as this learner would fall in the highest category. Therefore, this result would not reflect the true picture. However, the holistic picture that was revealed by the findings was valuable and useful. The most important finding was the learners' poor academic achievements and the direct consequences these had on their career options.

Furthermore, it was not possible to analyse every learner individually in terms of the requirements for his or her desired career, as some fields of study indicated that, besides a certain number of points, they would have to have at least three symbols above a C and so forth. This was not attainable due to the sample size and resources.

Additionally, there were two boys who were unsure of their desired careers. Therefore, these learners could not be placed into a specific career level. Their responses were eliminated in many findings; however, their responses were included in some answers, as their opinions regarding certain career-related issues were still valid.

Lastly, the rationale underlying learners' career aspirations was not possible to analyse in the scope of this research. It would have been interesting to obtain specific reasons why a learner chose a certain career. However, this was not possible due to resources and the vast number of factors influencing one another in this complex matter.

5.10 CONCLUSION

This research reveals several interesting findings and emphasises that an individual's career aspirations are developmental and continuous processes. This research simplified this phenomenon in order to investigate career aspirations on a scientific level. However, theories as old as Gottfredson's (1981) are still relevant and valuable in today's time, and served as a guideline throughout this research paper. However, the negative overall results conclude that the Namibian education system is in crisis, and requires assistance and improvements from government and all its stakeholders.

REFERENCES

- Akos, P., Lambie, G. W., Milsom, A., & Gilbert, K. (2007). Early Adolescents' Aspirations and Academic Tracking: An Exploratory Investigation. *Professional School Counselling, 11* (1), 57-64.
- Ali, S. R., & Saunders, J. L. (2009). The Career Aspirations of Rural Appalachian High School Students. *Journal of Career Assessment, 17* (2), 172-188.
- Allen, R., & Delahunty, A. (2007). *Oxford student's dictionary*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- American Psychological Association (2003). *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. Retrieved September 18, 2012, from <http://www.apa.org.ethics/code>
- Bowden, M. P., & Doughney, J. (2010). Socio-economic status, cultural diversity and the aspirations of secondary students in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. *High Education, 59*, 115-129.
- Boxer, P., Goldstein, S. E., DeLorenzo, T., Savoy, S., & Mercado, I. (2011). Educational aspiration–expectation discrepancies: Relation to socioeconomic and academic risk- related factors. *Journal of Adolescence, 34* (4), 609–617.

- Carroll, A., Houghton, S., Wood, R., Unsworth, K., Hattie, J., Gordon, L., & Bower, J. (2009). Self-efficacy and academic achievement in Australian high school students: The mediating effects of academic aspirations and delinquency. *Journal of Adolescence*, 32 (4), 797–817.
- Coolican, H. (2009). *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*. (5th ed.). London: Hodder Education.
- De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Fouché, C. B., & Delpont, C. S. L. (2002). *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human services professions* (2nd ed.). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Flouri, E., Tsivrikos, D., Akhtar, R., & Midouhas, E. (2014). Neighbourhood, school and family determinants of children's aspirations in primary school. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 87, 71-79.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E. & Airasian, P. W. (2009). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*. United States of America: Pearson Education.
- Gottfredson, L. S. (1981). Circumscription and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Counselling Psychology Monograph*, 28 (6), 545-579.
- Gutman, L. M., & Schoon, I. (2012). Correlates and consequences of uncertainty in career aspirations: Gender differences among adolescents in England. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 80 (3), 608-618.

- Hill, N. E., Castellino, D. R., Lansford, J. E., Nowlin, P., Dodge, K. A., Bates, J. E., & Pettit, G. S. (2004). Parent Academic Involvement as Related to School Behavior, Achievement, and Aspirations: Demographic Variations across Adolescence. *Child Development, 75* (5), 1491-1509.
- Howard, K. A., Carlstrom, A. H., Katz, A. D., Chew, A. Y., Ray, G. C., Laine, L., & Caulum, D. (2011). Career aspirations of youth: Untangling race/ethnicity, SES, and gender. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 79* (1), 98-109.
- Immanuel, S. (2014, December 18) Education stagnant. *The Namibian*, p.1
- Lee, I. H., & Rojewski, J. W. (2009). Development of occupational aspiration prestige: A piecewise latent growth model of selected influences. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 75*, 82-90.
- Mbwale, S. V. (2004). *Career Choice: A challenge for high school students*. Unpublished master's thesis. Windhoek: University of Namibia.
- Miller, R. R. (1986). Reducing occupational circumscription. *Elementary School Guidance & Counselling, 20* (4), 250-254.
- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Life Skills Syllabus Grades 5-7*. Windhoek: National Institute for Educational Development.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Education Statistics*. Windhoek: Education Management Information System.

- 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.
- Mertens, M. D. (2005). *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrated diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (2nd ed.). United States: Sage Publications.
- Mostert, M. L. (2003). *The Vocational Interests of Namibian Grade 10 Learners*. Oslo: Unipub Forlag.
- National Planning Commission & UNICEF. (2010). *Children and Adolescents in Namibia: A Situation Analysis*. Windhoek: John Meinert Printing.
- Republic of Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2013). *National and regional rank order of Centres*. Windhoek: Directorate National Examination and Assessment Centre.
- Robbins, S. B., Wallis, A. B., & Dunston, K.T. (2003). Exploring the Academic Achievement and Career Aspirations of College-Bound and Postsecondary Zulu Students. *Counselling Psychologists*, 31 (5), 593-618.
- Schmitt-Wilson, S., & Welsh, M. C. (2012). Vocational knowledge in rural children: A study of individual differences and predictors of occupational aspirations and expectations. *Journal of Learning and Individual Differences*, 22 (6), 862-867.
- Schuette, C. T., Ponton, M. K., & Charlton, M. L. (2012). Middle School Children's


- Career Aspirations: Relationship to Adult Occupations and Gender. *Journal of Career Development Quarterly*, 60, 36-46.
- Schwenkenberg, J. M. (2014). Occupations and the evolution of gender differences in intergenerational socioeconomic mobility. *Economic Letters*, 124, 348-352.
- Sosu, E. M. (2014). Predicating maternal aspirations for their children's education: The role of parental and child characteristics. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 67, 67-79.
- Stead, G. B., & Watson, M. B. (2006). *Career Psychology in the South African context*. (2nd ed). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers
- Stoddard, S. A., Heinze, J. E., Ewon Choe, D., & Zimmerman, M. A. (2015). Predicting violent behavior: The role of violence exposure and future educational aspirations during adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 44, 191-203.
- Tsaousides, T., & Jome, L. (2008). Perceived career compromise, affect and work-related satisfaction in college students. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 73 (2), 185-194.
- Unemployment rate still alarmingly high. (2013, April 11) *The Namibian*, p.1
- Wicht, A., & Ludwig-Mayerhofer, W. (2014). The impact of neighborhood and schools on young people's occupational aspirations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 85 (3), 298-308.

Wils, A. (2013). *Regional Education Analysis for Namibia*. UNICEF Namibia.

Witko, K. D., Bernes, K. B., Magnusson, K. C., & Bardick, A. D. (2008). Senior High School Students' Occupational Aspirations. *The Alberta Counsellor*, 30 (1), 22-35.

Wright, D. B., Eaton, A. A., & Skagerberg, E. (2015). Occupational segregation and psychological gender differences: How empathizing and systemizing help explain the distribution of men and women into (some) occupations. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 54, 30-39.

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA


UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
Inspiring minds • shaping the future

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SEC/FOE/67/2014 **Date: 27 October, 2014**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's **Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines**. **Ethical approval is given** in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF GRADE 12 LEARNERS IN THE KHOMAS REGION, NAMIBIA.

Nature/Level of Project: MASTERS

Principal Researcher: SONJA GRÜTTEMEYER (Student No: 200916661)


Host Department & Faculty: Department Educational Psychology, Education

Supervisors : Professor M.L. Mostert (Main) (Co) Professor A.D. Möwes


Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
 - (i). withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - (ii). request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.


Prof. I. Mapaure
UNAM Research Coordinator
ON BEHALF OF UREC

APPENDIX 2: PERMISSION LETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA



UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA
Private Bag 13301, 340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pionierspark, Windhoek, Namibia

Date: 28 October 2014

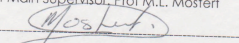
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

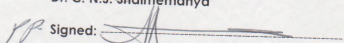
RE: RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

1. This letter serves to inform that student: Sonja Grüttemeyer (Student number: 200916661) is a registered student in the Department of Educational Psychology and Inclusive Education at the University of Namibia. Her research proposal was reviewed and successfully met the University of Namibia requirements.
2. The purpose of this letter is to kindly notify you that the student has been granted permission to carry out postgraduate studies research. The School of Post- graduate Studies has approved the research to be carried out by the student for purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the degree being pursued.
3. The proposal adheres to ethical principles.

Thank you so much in advance and many regards.

Yours truly,

Name of Main Supervisor: Prof M.L. Mostert
Signed: 

Dr. C. N.S. Shaimemanya
Signed: 

Director: School of Postgraduate Studies
Tel: 2063523
E-mail: cshaimemanya@unam.na

APPENDIX 3: PERMISSION LETTER OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Enquiries: Ms. H. Amukana
Tel. No: 061-2933277
Fax. No: 061-2933922
Email: Hileni.Amukana@moe.gov.na

PRIVATE BAG 13186
WINDHOEK

7 May 2015

Ms. S. Gruttemeyer
P.O. Box 790
Windhoek

Dear Ms. Gruttemeyer

**RE: PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE MASTERS DEGREE RESEARCH IN
KHOMAS EDUCATION REGION**

Your letter received on the 27th April 2015 on the above-captioned bear reference.

Your request to conduct research for your Masters' Degree in Khomas Region on "*the relationship between career aspirations and academic achievement of grade 12 learners in Khomas Education Region*" is approved. Please take note that the permission to visit schools is subject to the following conditions:

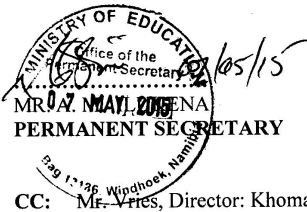
- Before visiting the schools, you should acquire authorization from the Regional Director of Education concerned.
- Interviews or discussions with teachers and learners must not be held during normal school time. In other words, the normal school programme of teaching and learning should not be interrupted.
- Please arrange your schedule with the principals of the concerned schools to securing their cooperation.
- Participation of learners and teachers in your interview is voluntary.

The Khomas Region is notified by copying of this letter to Regional Director of Education.

All official correspondences to be addressed to the Permanent Secretary



The Ministry wishes you success with your studies and awaits to share your research findings.

Yours sincerely,


MR. A. MAYI, PERMANENT SECRETARY

CC: Mr. Vries, Director: Khomas Education Directorate

APPENDIX 4: PERMISSION LETTER OF THE KHOMAS REGIONAL OFFICE



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
KHOMAS REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION

Tel: [09 264 61] 293 4356
Fax: [09 264 61] 231 367/248 251
Enquiries: Mr G. N. Vries

Private Bag 13236
WINDHOEK

19 May 2015

Ms Sonja Gruttemeyer
P.O. Box 790
Windhoek

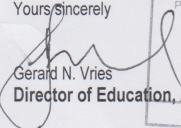
REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE A RESEARCH FOR MASTER DEGREE IN KHOMAS REGION

Your undated letter received on 6 May 2015 is hereby acknowledged.

Your request to do research in the following six schools; Windhoek High School, Delta Secondary School, Dawid Bezuidenhot High School, Rocky Crest High School, Ella du Plessis and A. Shipena Secondary School in Khomas Region for your Master Degree to establish "the relationship between career aspirations and academic achievement of Grade 12 learners in the Khomas Region, Namibia" is approved with the following conditions:

- ❖ The Principal of the selected school to be visited must be contacted in advance and agreement should be reached between you and the principal.
- ❖ The school programme should not be interrupted.
- ❖ The seven teachers who will take part in this exercise will do so voluntarily.
- ❖ Khomas Education Directorate should be provided with a final copy of your thesis.

I wish you success in your research.

Yours Sincerely

Gerard N. Vries
Director of Education, Arts and Culture

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 13236 WINDHOEK
20 MAY 2015
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
KHOMAS REGION

APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLE OF SELF-DESIGNED QUESTIONNAIRE

LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this research project! Choosing a career can be extremely daunting and complex.

This questionnaire is part of a research project that looks at Grade 12 learners' career choices and future plans. The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out what ideas and plans learners have for the years ahead. This research project will investigate an important aspect of the complicated career choices and the results will, hopefully, assist and enlighten teachers and counselors how to assist and guide learners in a more effective manner.

Any information you provide in this questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. This means that your responses to questions in this questionnaire will not be made known to any person apart from the researcher. No names will be mentioned when results are published. Thus your individual responses will not be presented in isolation; they will be added to those from other respondents and represented together.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Read all the questions carefully.

Please answer the questions by indicating with an X in the space provided.

Where applicable please write your answer in a clear and legible manner on the lines provided.

The numbers are for analysis purposes only.

Answer all the questions.

Consent Form

Please read carefully and sign. Should there be any questions please consult the researcher.

I, _____, am aware that my information provided in this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only. The research was clearly understood and I hereby give my permission for the researcher to analyze and use my information in a confidential manner.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

School A: _____

Please complete all the questions and return this questionnaire to the researcher.

To answer the questions tick the appropriate box or write your answer in the space provided.

1 What is your Name?

2 Which of the following age categories apply to you?

17 and younger		1
18		2
19		3
20 and older		4

3 Indicate whether you are: male or female.

Female		1
Male		2

4 Who is your guardian (select only one)?

Parents		1
Single parent (mother)		2
Single parent (father)		3
Grandparents		4
Relatives (such as aunt, uncle, brother, sister)		5
Other (please specify): _____		6

5 Which of the following statements would best describe your family structure (select only one).

Staying with my parents and siblings.		1
Staying with a single parent (either mother or father) and siblings.		2
Staying with extended family members (such as grandparents, aunt and/or uncle).		3
Staying with my brother and/or sister who are younger than 21 years old.		4
Staying with my brother and/or sister who are older than 21 years old.		5
Staying in a Children's Home, such as SOS.		6
Other (please specify): _____		7

6 We are _____ people staying in our house. Indicate the most appropriate number.

5 and less		1
6 to 8		2
9 to 14		3
More than 14		4

7 What means of transport do you use to get to school (select only one)?

With my parents		1
With parents of another learner at my school		2
By taxi		3
By bus		4
By walking		5
Other (please specify): _____		6

8 What would best describe your present financial situation?

Very-well off		1
Well off		2
Average (middle class)		3
Below average		4
Poor		5
Very poor		6

9 Indicate the level of importance that applies to you in the following questions:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all
	1	2	3	4
9.1 How important is it to you to receive your Grade 12 qualifications, so that you can get a job next year?				
9.2 How important is it to you to receive your Grade 12 qualifications, so that you can go on to tertiary education?				
9.3 How important is it to you to further your studies after Grade 12?				

10 What are your immediate plans for next year? (Select only one.)

Find a job to save for further studies.		1
Take a gap year.		2
Start working.		3
Further my studies.		4
Others (please specify): _____		5

11 You are in your final year at school. Which job or career do you have in mind for your life after school?

12 Briefly describe this job. Use only one or two sentences.

13 In your opinion, what will you need in addition to your Grade 12 certificate to enter the job that you identified in Question 11? (Select only one).

I need no further training.		1
I will need in-service training (on the job training)		2
I need technical training at a technical institution.		3
I will need to obtain a diploma or certificate at a tertiary institution.		4
I will need a regular degree at a tertiary institution.		5
I will need to obtain a specialization degree at a tertiary institution.		6
Other (please specify): _____		7

14 In order for you to enter the job that you identified in Question 11, how important are the following:

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all
	1	2	3	4
14.1 Tertiary training				
14.2 A score of C or above in English				
14.3 A score of C and above in at least five of my present school subjects				
14.4 Scores of A or B in most of my school subjects				
14.5 High scores in mathematics				
14.6 High scores in physical science				

15 If you look realistically at your present school results, how likely is it for you to:

	Very likely	Quite likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely at all
	1	2	3	4
15.1 Enter tertiary education				
15.2 Enter the job that you identified above				

16 What working surrounding would you prefer? (Select only one.)

Indoors		1
Outdoors		2
Urban		3
Rural		4
In an office		5
In an shop		6
In a warehouse/factory		7

17 In what financial category do you expect to be placed, if you would enter the job that you identified in Question 11?

Very well-off		1
Well-off		2
Average (middle class)		3
Below average		4
Poor		5
Very poor		6

18 To which extent do you think each of the following, might prevent you from following the job that you would like to do?

	Large extent	Some extent	Little extent	No extent
	1	2	3	4
18.1 Not finding a job due to intense competition for jobs				
18.2 Lack of job opportunities due to our countries economy				
18.3 Lack of parental support to continue with further education				
18.4 Parents or other family members are not in favour of my chosen career				
18.5 Lack of personal willpower and perseverance				
18.6 Distraction by friends				
18.7 Lack of financial support to continue with my education				
18.8 Bad Grade 12 results				

19 Which of the barriers would be most difficult to overcome? Write down the number in the previous question (e.g. 18.1).

20 How confident do you feel to overcome this barrier, as mentioned in Question 19?

Very confident		1
Confident		2
Somewhat confident		3
Not confident at all		4

21 To what extent did each of the following influence you in deciding about your future career/job?

	Large extent	Some extent	Little extent	No extent
	1	2	3	4
21.1 Career Expos				
21.2 School teachers				
21.3 Life Skills Lessons				
21.4 Mother				
21.5 Father				
21.6 Other family members and relatives				
21.7 Friends and peers				
21.8 Television and Radio				
21.9 Others (please specify): _____				

22 How much control do you feel you have over accomplishing the job that you identified above? (Select only one.)

A lot of control		1
Some control		2
Not much control		3
No control		4

23 Overall, when you think about your life in ten years' time how optimistic or pessimistic do you feel that you will be in the job or career of your choice?

Very optimistic		1
Quite optimistic		2
Quite pessimistic		3
Very pessimistic		4
Not sure		5

24 How important are the following to you:

	Very important	Somehow important	Not very important	Not important at all
	1	2	3	4
24.1 To have a university degree				
24.2 To have a job that you love				

25 Taking into consideration the possible barriers as well as your present school results, do you think you will be able to enter the job that you identified in Question 11?

Yes		1
No		2

26 If you answered no in the previous question. What other job, do you think, will you be able to realistically enter?

27 If there were no barriers in your way and you could choose your dream (ideal) job, what would that job be?

**Thank you once again for your participation and good
luck with your career!!!**