PERCEPTIONS OF NAMIBIAN GRADE 10 LEARNERS AND THEIR TEACHERS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS TOPICS IN THE KHOMAS REGION

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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1 INTRODUCTION

In this study I will attempt to investigate the perceptions of Namibian Grade 10 learners in the Khomas Region on the importance of Life Skills Topics as proposed by the National Curriculum of the Ministry for Basic Education, Sport and Culture.

2. NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

In our modern world today academic education and formal knowledge is not enough, as learners will have to be equipped with Life Skills that enable them to reach maturity and contribute positively in the development of the world. These skills enable a learner in achieving something in life, expertness in his personal, social or career-orientated domains and a practised ability when facing the world and its challenges as a person (Fowler, 1978).

Life-Skills education forms an important part of the development of people. Through Life-Skills education we develop certain attitudes, knowledge and skills (Nelson-Jones, 1991), which help us deal effectively with demands and challenges in our everyday life. This is supported by the Division of Mental Health of the World Health Organisation as stated in the Electronic Article of UNESCO (UNESCO, 2001 page 2/4). They stated that there are a core set of skills which include decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relations, self-awareness, ability to emphasise, coping with emotions and coping with stress, which are

needed for the promotion of health and well-being of individuals. De Jong, Ganie, Lazarus & Prinsloo (1995), who supported the international trends of Reddy and Lazarus et al. (l995), identified certain areas within the South African context. These are health education, sexuality, education, work and career education, economic education, citizenship education, environmental education, personal and interpersonal development and education concerning the field of study, which would have to be included to facilitate Life-Skills education.

Namibia, before independence, offered a subject, Career Guidance and Counselling, which was based on the education system of South Africa under the Apartheid era. This resulted in most schools still preparing Namibian learners for a world, which no longer existed using outdated methods. Justly, Namibia's newly elected government, after independence on 30 March 1990, set about reforming the Education System by setting new goals for educating the nation under the slogan "Education for All". The major aims were; equal access for all, achieving equity, raising the quality of our education system and fostering democracy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). The aims of Basic Education were supported by the Government plans and these applied a more holistic approach to education. They would promote functional literacy and language development, functional numerical and mathematical thinking, intellectual development, personal development and self-fulfilment, health and physical development, spiritual and ethical development, social and cultural development, national unity, international understanding and political development, vocational orientation and economic development and development of environmental awareness. To achieve their aims, the

curriculum for Basic Education included the following areas of learning – aesthetic, social and economic, linguistic and literacy, mathematical, spiritual, moral and ethical, physical, natural scientific and technological (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996).

Life Skills, after Namibia's Educational Reforms of 1993, replaced the subject, Career Guidance and Counselling. This compulsory, yet non-examinable subject was partly incorporated in the overall curriculum but it also became a stand-alone subject for Grades 7 to 10. The subject is especially important in developing the spiritual and ethical areas of learning within our set curriculum. A well-prepared curriculum, based on the Ministry's holistic view, have been prepared by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and forwarded to all schools (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1996). The curriculum aims to facilitate the development of skills that will equip the learner with attitudes, knowledge, and skills in preparation for effectively dealing with the challenges and demands of everyday life within Namibia. This more practical need-based curriculum is geared towards the changing demands of Namibia, its economy and developing society. Life Skills was awarded one time period (lesson) a week, which compromises 2,5 % of the timetable.

The present status of Life Skills in Namibia as per Mr. L. Grobler (Staines, 2000) shows that Life Skills "seems to be disregarded for its value in many ways, by many people in Namibia'. Life Skills, as per the report, experiences many difficulties and there are many issues jeopardising its implementation, for example:

- One Life Skill period per week is inadequate; (26 periods per year),
- Due to budgetary constraints there is an absence of full-time teachers,
- There is no continuity as teachers responsible for this subject change constantly,
- Teachers tend to utilise the period for other purposes than Life Skills,
- Some schools do not even have the subject Life Skills on the timetable,
- Equipped classrooms are not available in most cases,
- Full quota of Regional School Counsellors are not appointed, and
- There still is restricted subject choices at schools.

This viewpoint was underlined by a national survey completed by Staines (2001a) who indicated that:

* only 88% of the schools under review reflected Life Skills as a statutory subject (reflected it on their timetable),
* in most cases over 50% of the schools surveyed have only one Life Skill Teacher. Of these, 45% devote less than 10% of their time to teaching Life Sills, 37% devote 10 –25% of their time to Life Skills, 10% devote between 25 and 50 % to Life Skills teaching and only 7% devote more than 50% of their time teaching Life Skills,
* 94% of the teachers had additional teaching responsibilities,
* furthermore there was a deficiency of qualified Life Skill teachers (less than 15% of the schools under review), and

he thus concluded that 'there is only a limited provision of Life Skills teaching in the curriculum' (Staines, 2001a, p 23).

If one studies the many findings in the Career Guidance and Counselling Summary Report of Staines, (2001c; 2001d) and/or Stoner and Engelbrecht's addendum to the consultation report (2001), it highlights the qualifications of the Life Skills teachers. Only 214 out of 691 teachers have a qualification of Grade 12 plus 3 or more years formal education as a teacher (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001). It would

therefore seem impossible to achieve the well- defined aims and objectives as set out by the Life Skills curriculum. Considering the various viewpoints and given statistics, one only ponders on the ability of Life Skills as a subject, to prepare the learner for maturity and adulthood by equipping them with daily living skills, personal and social skills and occupational guidance and preparation.

Since our present pass rate in Grade 10 is 45,4 % (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001) - 12 539 out of 27 649 learners achieved adequate points as per the Directorate of National Planning and Assessment in Windhoek - 54,6% of the learners are now facing the world outside the formal education system.

To date, no research has been conducted to establish whether this vital school subject has been effective or perceived to be effective in achieving its aims and objectives as established by a sound constructed, reformed, national Life- Skills curriculum. The researcher believes that Life Skills plays an important role in the Grade 10 learners life and would thus like to see how these learners and their teachers perceive the individual skills and in how far the learners were able to master these skills based on their own perceptions.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Pilot Curriculum for Life Skills for Formal Basic Education stresses a holistic approach to education and includes in its aims and objectives personal development, spiritual and ethical development as well as cultural development and vocational orientation (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003b). Within the limited time allowed to achieve these aims (2,5% of the timetable) and very often, unqualified teachers utilised for this task, the question must be asked: **"**Can these goals be achieved as set out in the Life Skill curriculum for the Grade 10 learner?"

Against the background of 54% of the Grade 10 learners having to leave the formal education system the acquisition of these skills would be seen to be important and vital. It is thus vital that the aims and objectives of the Life Skill curriculum with reference to Grade 10 learners should be achieved. This is to ensure that the learner is prepared in the best possible way so as to become an asset rather than a liability to society. Preparedness of the Grade 10 learner involves developing their daily living skills, developing their personal and social skills and enduring good occupational guidance and preparedness.

This study seeks to assess the perception of the Grade 10 learners and their teachers within the Khomas region on the importance of the subject Life Skills and the topics as proposed in the national curriculum of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (1997). By questioning the Grade 10 learners and their teachers about the subject Life Skills and the topics, which have been included in the compulsory Life Skills curriculum of Grade 10, one will be able to establish their perceptions of the importance of these

topics in the present situation. The study would also establish in how far the learners evaluated themselves in mastering the skills they were taught or have achieved through socialisation.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Based on the Grade 10 curriculum and syllabus that includes the development of the three competencies: daily living skills, personal-social skills and occupational guidance and preparation, the study tries to determine/investigate:

1. Learners' perception of the importance of Life Skills topics ,
2. Learners, perception (self-evaluation) on how well the various skills covered by these topics have been mastered by themselves,
3. Teachers' perception of the importance of Life Skills topics,
4. The comparison between teachers' and learners' perceptions on the importance of the Life Skills topics, and
5. The comparison between genders (males and females) on their perceived level of importance of the skills and the mastering of the self-evaluated skills.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Should the aims mentioned in the curriculum for Life Skills be achieved, learners will be functional and self-reliant young adults that will be a benefit to the future, the Namibian society and the Namibian economy. Failing to achieve this aim, the school systems may only produce learners that are equipped with academic knowledge i.e. people that will be

able to understand but not be able to act. Identification of the learner's perception with reference to what he/she is being taught will attempt to reflect how effective this subject is in reality. The study will attempt to bring attention to how meaningful or not, this very important school subject is for the learner, our society and our country.

Depending on the results, the study will help suggest guidelines for an improved development process, which may help ensure effective future development and revision of the topics offered in the subject Life Skills. The evaluation may, therefore, be used as a basis for a possible revision of the subject Life Skills. One may then initiate ways and means to rectify the shortcomings and implement changes to ensure that the subject can have the required impact on learners.

Furthermore, teachers and schools could benefit. They will be able to evaluate the success of the implementation of the topics with reference to the Grade 10 learner's perception in their school. Here too, the teachers and the school can find ways and means to rectify shortcomings and build on the success of other teachers and schools where the learners perceived the implementation of the topic as excellent.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Unfortunately, as with most students trying to fulfil their education, time and financial limitations limit the study. Firstly, it only addresses the Grade 10 students and their respective teachers in the Khomas region and not the students and teachers of the whole of Namibia. A representative group of 10% will be chosen within the Khomas region to

reduce the financial expenses. Secondly, it will only reflect the outcome of the Grade 10 learners and their respective teachers and none of the other groups that are offered this subject throughout their school career. Thirdly, the research relies heavily on the willingness of the educational institutions and their management to allow me to fulfil my task. The fourth limitation is the ability of the students and teachers to respond honestly and sincerely to the questionnaires or interviews presented to them. The last limitation refers to the learners' and teachers' ability to perceive my task as non-threatening and serious and a way to truthfully respond to the situation referring to the non-assessment subject of Life Skills.

7. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study does not attempt to measure the abilities of the Life Skills teachers or learners. The studies will neither determine nor evaluate the preparedness nor the personality of the Life Skills teachers and learners. The study will be limited to the Grade 10 learners and teachers and reflect their views on the relevance of Life Skills topics in the syllabus. In addition to this it will determine learners' views on the level that they perceive to have mastered these skills (self-evaluation). Their present acquired Life Skills should enable them to be more productive, independent and assume responsible roles within society.

CHAPTER 2:REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of the study is to establish the perception of the Namibian Grade 10 learners and their teachers in the Khomas Region on the importance of Life Skills topics as proposed by the National Curriculum of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. On this basis the researcher found it vital to review the literature based on a broad spectrum concerning the subject Life Skills and its implementation.

1. DEFINING LIFE SKILLS

Life Skills consist of two separate words namely "life" and "skills". According to the Oxford dictionary (1978) "skills" is related to a living being and it shows expertness, practised abilities or the facility in doing something. "Life" is a state of functional activity peculiar to the human being or it is seen as the period between birth and death. As a combination these two words according to the Dictionary of Empirical Education /Educational Psychology (Van den Aardweg & van den Aardweg, 1988) entails – 'a level of proficiency attained in carrying out sequences of human action in a consistent way. It is practical knowledge combined with ability and it shows a degree of expertise, competence and even cleverness of the learner, student and human'. (P 272)

In the field of education the World Heath Organisation (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have defined Life Skills as follows: (UNESCO, 2001) "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." (p 2) and "an education …as

basically being a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills." (p 2)

2. INTERNATIONAL TRENDS AND VIEWS OF LIFE SKILLS

Already in the 1980's Hopson & Scally (Hopkins, 1980), founders and co-ordinators of the Lifeskills Association in Leeds, recognised the necessity of life skills development at school. They stipulated that due to the post war industrial revolution, education must change to equip individuals with the competence, flexibility and personal resilience needed to cope with social and working life in the age of modern technology. This they claimed was not possible under the then present subject Career Guidance and Counselling. Learners, in order to meet the demands of our changing society, had to be equipped with skills that reached beyond the lessons taught during Career Guidance and Counselling. The newly identified skills according to their Lifeskills Teaching Programme No.1 (Hopson and Scally, 1981) are divided into four areas:

1. The skills I need to survive and grow,
2. The skills I need to relate effectively to others,
3. The skills I need to relate effectively to you, and
4. Skills I need in specific situations

These they advised were best incorporated into the formal education system and thus resulted in more self-empowered living. Various educational institutions world-wide and various countries implemented these ideas, based on the successes of Paulo Friere of Brazil, the "khit-pen" educational programme in Thailand, the public hygiene programme of Tanzania and India or the public educational radio programme of Botswana and many more. (Hopson & Scally, 1981)

UNICEF and WHO (UNESCO, 2001; 2003b; 2003c) both agree that life skills are vital abilities that help promote mental well being and competency in young people as they face the realities of life. They also reckon that life skills can be applied widely in various aspects of life and can be utilised in many areas, issues, topics or subjects. Internalised life skills according to them prevent drug abuse, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, suicide and many more. UNICEF even extended it further into consumer education, environmental education, peace education and education for development, livelihood and income generation (UNESCO, 2001). In short they concluded, it empowers young people to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and positive social relationships in life.

UNICEF, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and WHO (UNESCO, 2001) highlight kinds of life skills that empower the young person. These are 'problem solving, critical thinking, communication skills, decision making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationships, negotiation skills, self-awareness building skills, empathy, and coping with stress and emotions. Other skills are having a well-developed self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence first, in order to understand one's strengths and weaknesses, and these help the adolescent discern opportunities available and be prepared to face threats. This is then followed by developing social awareness of one's family and society's concerns, identifying problems that arise from both within the family and society. With life skills, one is able to explore alternatives, weigh pros and cons and make rational decisions in solving each problem or issue that

arises. It also entails being able to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others, communicating effectively in terms of being able to differentiate between hearing and listening and ensuring the messages are transmitted accurately to avoid miscommunication and misinterpretation. The ability to say "no", to be assertive but not aggressive and make mutual compromises represent good life skills'. (UNESCO, 2001)

UNICEF has identified certain criteria in ensuring a successful life skills-based education and has made these available. When following these criteria (UNESCO, 2001), they facilitate the following outcomes. –

> Less violent behaviour, increased pro-social behaviour and decreased negative self-destructive behaviour, increase of the ability to plan ahead and choose effective solutions to problems, improved self-image, self-awareness, social and emotional adjustment, increased acquisitions of knowledge, improved classroom behaviour, gains in self control and sociability, better constructive conflict resolution with peers, impulses control and popularity. They ensure us, that research studies on international level have shown that sex education based on life skills was more effective in bringing changes in adolescent contraceptive use, delay in sexual debut, delay in the onset of alcohol and marijuana use and in developing attitude and behaviour necessary for preventing the spread of HIV. (p.4)

Due to the importance of life skill development, the delegates of the 2000 World Educational Forum held in Dakar (UNESCO, 2002) reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration of Education for All held in 1990 in Thailand (UNESCO, 2003a). Thereafter they spelt out six goals in their Framework of Action of which two refer to the importance of the acquisition of Life Skills and the Life Skill programme. Here Frosen (2003, p 2) noted that they must achieve the following goals:

* ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes, and
* improving every aspect of quality of education, and ensuring their excellence so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

3. LIFE SKILLS WITHIN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

Now, through UNESCO, Education for All, the World Educational Forum and the Regional Framework of Actions (UNESCO 2000b), these goals and special programmes have filtered into Southern Africa and into Namibia. The importance of the implementation of Life Skills programmes were put into effect by a group of female Ministers of Education in Africa in April 1993 at a Pan African Conference (UNESCO 1999). The African programme thus began in 1994 with a meeting in Malawi with six representing countries but had grown to 20 countries by 1999 and even more today. It is called the Guidance and Counselling Programme for Youth Development and has brought about great results in Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and even Namibia (UNESCO, 1999).

According to UNESCO (1999), Botswana seems to be one of the most progressed countries in this respect. Here the successful programme was started in 1963 and was revised in 1994. This programme is developmental and preventative in nature and aims at self-discovery, personal growth of the learner, development of interpersonal skills and development of insight into the dynamics of human behaviour. The Guidance and Counselling Division of the Ministry of Education is able to provide numerous services

to young people in or out of school. They act in collaboration with numerous organisations like the Young Women's Christian Organisation, The Junior Achievement, UNESCO, UNICEF, the Swedish Developmental Agency and the Rotary Club. Due to a strong national support and its sound policy document on its development and implementation, Life Skills programmes have yielded tremendous success and there is good collaboration, communication and co-operation between stakeholders and beneficiaries.

A very successful and mentionable programme was the inclusion of Life Skills in the Vocational Educational Training in Dar es Salaam. Here Mrs. Bernadette Ndungura highlighted the importance of life skills programmes on the ever-increasing current social and economic demands on their young trainees. The lack of the curriculum for dealing with these additional demands creates graduates unsuitable as labourers. This, she stressed, is particularly so in view of the current HIV/AIDS pandemic, and widespread abuse of drugs and alcohol (Ndunguru, 2003).

In Nigeria, the programme implementation of Life Skills started somewhat later in 1988, but has also had great progress (UNESCO, 1999). Here much emphasis was put on gender sensitivity, adolescence reproductive health, personal guidance and counselling and the strengthening of school guidance and counselling programmes. The Nigerian Educational Department together with the programme organisers received great help from organisations like UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and The World Bank. By using an

approach that is consistent with the collaborative strategy being adopted by the United Nations system in Nigeria, the programme was perceived as highly successful and received great support from the media. This programme is especially advantages in giving recognition to women who have become role models in African communities and/or audio-visual presentations for training purposes.

South Africa, due to its apartheid era was faced with a gigantic task to re-dress the education system. Life Skills education before 1994 was associated with the South African Vocational Guidance and Education Association (Human Science Research Council, 1978). After 1994 this organisation ceased to exist and all that was remaining were two or three career centres found mainly in KwaZulu-Natal. In order to accommodate the shifting economic and social scenario, the Career Resource Centres continued with two basic types of services to the youth in South Africa. It offered entrepeneurship development training and developed the Career Game; a game based on the model of vocational guidance. It is interesting to note that this game has even sparked interest in Norway and is at present translated into a Nordic context. Important here is the fact that this game has been developed in Southern Africa and takes into account the African context (Staines, 2000). Furthermore, the South African programme concentrated widely on topics like race and sensitivity, counselling in a multicultural context, teenage mothers, substance abuse, serious criminal offences and career guidance and counselling in our modern world.

4. LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA

4.1 History and creation of the subject Life Skills

Namibia being a relative young independent country was able to incorporate the Life Skills aims and goals into their new Educational Policy of 1993. With the help of the Swedish International Development Authority and Dr. J Samoff, the Ministry of Education and Culture incorporated these global aims into a policy document. It translates the Namibian philosophy of education into concrete and implementable government policy based on the needs and resources of the Namibian society (Ministry of Education and Culture. 1993). This policy is explicitly highlighted in Towards Education for All, a development brief for Education, Culture and Training. Here, we find that among the aims of education is the desire to achieve spiritual, moral and ethical development in all young Namibians. Here, the old subject Career Guidance and Counselling gave way to the subject called Life Skills, which had to fulfil the spiritual, moral and ethical areas of learning for the learner. Life-skills education still today is often equated with 'guidance'. One must realise, however, that even though it includes certain elements of 'guidance and career counselling' it goes far beyond this.

4.2 Namibian Life Skills Policy

Today an abridged Namibian Life Skills Subject Policy (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003b) spells out the subject specific issues, the subject management issues and the other specific tasks of the Life Skills teacher. By studying the curriculum and syllabus one understands the rationale behind the subject namely,

> This curriculum is based on the concept of life centred education, the

philosophy of which is that education should embrace the full range of life experiences and not merely be limited to the acquisition of academic and pre-vocational skills. It is a total or holistic approach designed to prepare the learners effectively for the various roles, which they will be called upon to play in their day to day functioning now and in the future, inside and outside the classroom. In the spirit of its "real life" orientation programmes, it makes full use of the teacher, the learner and community input to achieve its learning objectives, which take the diverse needs of urban and rural learners, slow learners and mildly retarded learners into account.

(Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1997 p 2*)*

4.3 Namibian Life Skills aims and objectives

By following the Life Skills syllabus, the Life Skills teacher should be able to achieve the aims as spelt out by the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture and be able to internalise certain Life Skills in learners depending on their grades. The aims of the syllabus are:

To enable learners to function effectively and act responsible initially and later as citizens by: -

- focusing on the optimal development of all individuals,
- providing the knowledge, skills and understanding needed by individuals to master their environment,
- emphasise daily living, personal-social and occupational skill development.
- provide a unified approach to education for life,
- provide an approach, which is relevant to life and focus on the total life roles, settings and events and their relationships, which are important in the lives of individuals, including those that pertain to work,

- encouraging all members of the school community to have a shared responsibility and a mutual co-operative relationship among the various subjects,
- including learning in the home, private and public institutions, the employment community as well as the school,
- encouraging teachers to relate subject matter to career implications,
- include basic education, citizenship, family responsibility, and other important education objectives,
- providing for career awareness, orientation, exploration and skill development through self-awareness and a positive self-conscience,
- providing a balance of content, experiential learning and hands-on activities,
- providing a personal framework to help individuals plan and cope with their lives including career decision making, and
- encouraging open communication between learners, teachers, parents/providers and the community.

(Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1997)

4.4 Development of Competencies in the subject Life Skills

The Life Skills syllabus of Grade 10 tries to develop competencies within the three domains of daily living skills, personal-social skills and occupational guidance and preparation.

Each domain has various themes and topics which aim to achieve a learning objective and equip the learners with basic competencies that will enable them to become a more skilful young person that is able to successfully face the world outside the formal educational sector.

For Grade 10 the following skills have been identified (MBEC 1997):

a) daily living skills

- managing family finances,
- selecting, managing and maintaining a home,
- preventative health care,
- marriage, child raising and family life, and
- engaging in civic activities.

b) personal-social skills

- understanding human growth, development and sexuality,
- achieving social responsible behaviour,
- achieving independence,
- achieving problem-solving skills, and
- women's issues.

c) skills in occupation guidance and preparation

- knowing and exploring occupational possibilities,
- selecting and planning occupational choice,
- exhibiting appropriate work habits and behaviour,
- seeking, securing and maintaining employment,
- unemployment,
- acquiring achievement motivation,
- uncertainty about occupational choices,
- from primary to junior secondary education, and
- tertiary studies.

4.5 The present situation in Namibia as related to Life Skills

In Namibia many Life Skills topics have been integrated into various subject areas. We find school subjects like Life Science enlightening the learner about HIV/AIDS or other diseases. Accountancy teaches the recording of financial transactions whilst business management instructs about skills such as opening accounts, writing cheques or managing a small business. To the advantage of the learners these compulsory school subjects, are assessed and their internalisation is tested. This, however, is not the case with the non-assessment subject of Life Skills, which has two prescribed learner books (Cloete, Van Biljon & Landsberg, 1999: Pottas, 1995). Even though it has additional vital skills to be learnt many of these are not applied, or even if taught, not integrated as the learner's skills. It would therefore be interesting to see how many of these skills are seen as important and vital to the learners and how many the learner perceives as having mastered.

Life skills are best learnt through discussion, interpretation, interpersonal exploration and reflection. Often the Namibian Grade 10 classroom consists of 30 or more learners. This makes the above teaching method for acquisition of Life Skills very difficult for the educator and in desperation they revert to direct instruction. Direct instruction (teacher talk) is often not the best way of teaching and yet in our present situation this way of teaching is seen far too often. Here teachers have to guard against re-enforcing their own life skills causing a lack of skill acquisition in the learner. Group work and modelling are equally important when acquiring life skills but, once again, the overcrowded classroom situations and the little time available (one lesson per week), make this task very difficult.

As Linhard (1987) and Linhard & Dlamini (1992) note, this is a very difficult situation to ensure successful acquisition of Life Skills.

A proposal outlined by De Jong, et al. (1995) stresses that, while specialised staff (qualified Life Skill teacher or teacher having undergone training) may facilitate the development of life skills programmes in the school as a whole, teachers still need and must include life skills they have acquired. These need to be included in their everyday teaching and in the way they deal with learners. It would thus seem that even a good qualification would not guarantee a definite positive outcome in learners. According to the Education Management Information System (EMIS) report of 2001 there are 691 Secondary School Life Skills teachers of which less than a third have a qualification, which was subject specific to Life Skills and consisted of Grade 12 plus 3 years of formal training or more. This point was further stressed by Staines' Career Guidance and Counselling Survey of 2001, which showed that there was a definite strong desire for further training (83%) among the limited qualified Life Skills teachers.

As seen above and stated in the nature of the study, Life Skills lessons and teaching there of at schools seems to experience major difficulties and this could jeopardise the chance of successful implementation.

Already in the year 2000 (UNESCO, 2000a) it was stated that many schools "fail to teach non-promotional subjects.' Since these subjects are carriers of ethical values and life skills, the reason why they are neglected needs to be determined and addressed

(UNESCO, 2000a). As seen by a Career Guidance and Counselling Mission Report (Staines, 2001b), Life Skills teaching in the curriculum has a low priority and is frequently undervalued, even though the benefit for the individual and for our country is highly significant. It is my aim to establish whether Life Skills with the present time devoted to this subject, with the present status of the teachers offering this subject and the very well defined syllabus is successful as perceived by learners and teachers.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section highlights the methods and procedures the researcher was using in selecting the respondents, developing a research instrument, collecting the information and analysing the data.

1. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

This mostly quantitative research design (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Gorard, 2001; Keeves, 1988; Leedy, 1989; Mertens, 1998; Scott & Usher, 1996) is descriptive and explanatory in nature. It used the survey method of gathering data (Cox, 1996; Keeves, 1988; Mungazi & Walker 1997) by using a close-ended questionnaire for the Grade 10 learners and their respective teachers. This descriptive and explanatory method was favoured because it would give adequate information about the perception of teachers and learners on the importance of Life Skills topics and the level to which these have been mastered by the learners. It is used to describe the present status quo of the subject Life Skills as perceived by the Grade 10 learners and their teachers.

The questionnaire also included one open-ended question for both learners and teachers. In addition to this a semi-structured open-ended interview was done with 2 learners from each school. The open ended questions as well as the structured interview was based on qualitative research methods. It is believed that these additional findings strengthen the quantitative results, and one would be able to get a more detailed insight of the importance of Life Skills topics and the level of mastery of the different skills.

2. POPULATION

The population of the research was drawn from the Khomas region, as this was accessible to the researcher. The population consisted of all the Windhoek Secondary Schools that presently employ Life Skills teachers and who teach Grade 10 learners. Upon data collection there were 27 schools listed by the Khomas region as per the list of April 2003 (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2003a) handed to the researcher by Mr. Omeb, the Director of this Regional Educational Office. (Appendix 1). Altogether, these 27 schools as per EMIS (Educational statistics of 2001) had 3321 learners (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001).

3. SAMPLING

3.1 Participants

Upon receiving the list from the Khomas Regional Office it was confirmed that all the schools were equipped with Life Skills teachers for Grade 10, as this is compulsory as per the Educational Policy of 1993. The representative sample of learners was drawn from selected schools, which were elected by purposeful stratified sampling (Borg & Gall, 1989; Patton, 1990). Two lists were constructed, list 1 representing private schools and list 2 representing all the government secondary schools in the Khomas region. As seen on Appendix 2 there are 4 private secondary schools and 23 government secondary schools in the Khomas region. The purpose of this sampling procedure was to prevent an unbalanced representation of private schools in the eventual representative

sample. Thereafter all the secondary schools were coded 1 – 4 and then the school represented by the number one was randomly elected to partake in the research procedure. The following schools were identified as the sample:

1. Academia Secondary School, (replaced by Concordia)*
2. Jan Jonker Afrikaner Secondary School,
3. Centaurus Secondary School,
4. Delta Secondary School Windhoek, (replaced by Augustineum)*
5. Van Rhyn Project School,
6. Jacob Marengo Secondary School and
7. Windhoek International School (private).

***** See reason for replacement (page 33)

In order to obtain validity of representation it was estimated that 332 learners would have to be questioned. To achieve this required number, two full classes of the Grade 10 learners and teachers from each school (the number of classes vary from 2 – 6, whilst the learner numbers vary from 18- 38) would be randomly selected and be handed the questionnaire for completion within a Life Skills lesson. The reason for this process was not to discriminate against any learner or evoke a feeling of preference or rejection within the questioned group at a specific school. When phoning each school in the representative sample and verifying their number of Grade 10 learners, it was estimated that the number of learners at that time sitting in Grade 10 amounted to approximately 1300 learners consisting of more females than males. The total number of learners participating could, however, only be confirmed after completion of the sampling procedure, due to absentees and varying class numbers each day. This number had to however, meet

the criteria of 10% representation. The number of teachers questioned depended on the number of Grade 10 classes randomly selected but they were not expected to amount to more than 14 and here the representative teacher determined the sexes.

The interviews were optional and on a voluntary basis. One learner of each class had to be interviewed on 5 questions relating to their perception and ability to master certain Life Skill Topics. An effort was made to get a relative balance between males and females of the 14 voluntary participants.

4. TECHNIQUES FOR DATA COLLECTION

For this study, questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from the participants.

4.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaires tried to evaluate the importance of Life Skills topics as perceived by the learners and teachers. It tried to evaluate the level of mastering each topic mentioned. The Grade 10 learners were given the research instrument, a questionnaire for completion. This instrument was self-administered by the respondent and great care was taken not to make it too long or difficult.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

A) personal information and general perception of the subject

B) Life Skills as perceived by teachers and learners,

C) evaluating the importance and mastery of the daily living skills,

D) evaluating the importance and mastery of the skills for occupational guidance and preparedness, and

E) evaluating the importance and mastery of the personal-social skills.

Most questions were structured and close-ended that allowed a four point scale response for SPSS statistical evaluation. Each learner-question set on the different Life Skills topics included a contingency question so as to establish if the topic had been perceived as mastered by the learner.

The questionnaire ended in an open-ended question whereby the learners were able to give their valued input. The questionnaire consisted of 36 questions, which were organised into category responses (See Appendix 7).

The qualification and the opinion of the respective teacher of the learners of a school were gathered by means of a questionnaire similar to that of the learners, so as to be able to compare the results. Only the first section, personal information, was slightly different. Questions were mostly structured and close-ended. One open-ended question was included that allowed the teacher to make a valued contribution. The questionnaire consisted of 38 questions, which were organised into category responses (See Appendix 8). Questionnaires were believed to be the best method to solicit the information required (Bell, 1993; Cohen & Manion, 1994; Cox, 1996; Mungazi & Walker, 1997; Munn & Drever, 1999).

4.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were drafted and were used for the learners only (Bell, 1993; Patton, 1990; Schostak, 2002). The interview questions were developed based on the research questions. The purpose of the interview was to elicit views, experiences and practices of the learners regarding their perception of Life Skills in the present situation. Here the research was able to access information that was difficult to obtain in the above-mentioned research instrument. By talking to people their feeling, beliefs, attitudes and thoughts were accessed. Both Hitchcock & Hughes (1995) and Patton (1990) are of the view that interviews can be used to probe deeper into the interviewee's responses. Bell (1993) support the use of the interview as a data collection method citing its adaptability as a great advantage when used. She observes that the way in which the interview response is made can provide information that a written response would conceal.

Interviewees in the study were informed of the purpose of the study, the use of data and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The interview lasted ten to fifteen minutes and consisted of five open-ended questions only. During the interview rapport was established so as to create a conducive atmosphere for answers to be given freely and truthfully. The questions were designed to reveal more information about the mastering of the five Life Skills topics (See Appendix 9).

5. THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

One week was used for data collection (29 September to 3 October 2003). An informative letter of request, an official letter to the Ministry (Permanent Secretary), and an official letter of the Regional Office (Khomas regional director) and UNAM was handed or posted to the respective schools, more specifically to their headmasters, four weeks in advance (See Appendix 3 – 6). These informative letters did not only contain information that showed the purpose, significance and usefulness of this study but also a polite request to carry out this research among the Grade 10 learners. The procedure followed political, administrative and ethical requirements as far as possible to ensure the highest possible success rate. To ensure the best possible success rate, each principal was contacted by telephone to verify receipt of the letter of request to conduct the research and to schedule a set time for the research to take place. Personal contact was made with the Life Skills teacher to ensure correct timing and setting for the research questionnaire. Two schools were not accessible and were replaced by the schools immediately following their names on Appendix 2. The reasons for access problems were i) too many UNAM research students used this institution and ii) the institution only responded after the Grade 10 learners had left already. Each questionnaire was handed out to learners themselves and supervision was done personally so as to ascertain that no problems arose and everybody was subjected to the same stimuli. After completion of the questionnaires one learner of each class was interviewed on a voluntary basis for the next ten to fifteen minutes. Each school was allowed the time span either before or after break. This

allowed 10 possible time slots by which the respective school could fit this research into their tight school schedule. Appointments were verified and confirmed and by the end of the week all the samples had been collected.

After data collection, 25 incomplete questionnaires were eliminated. There were 355 completed learners questionnaires, 9 completed teacher questionnaires and 19 interviews. The data was coded with colours and numbers and then forwarded to a computer analyst for SPSS statistical analysis (Finkenstein, 1985; Hitteman & Simon, 1997).

5.1 Criteria for admissibility of the data

Only responses from the criterion group of Grade 10 learners and teachers in the Khomas Secondary Schools of Namibia as defined by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture were used in the study. Furthermore, the schools' Grade 10 timetable had to specifically make allowance for the compulsory once per week Life Skills lesson. Complete classes of learners were questioned to prevent ethical and sensitive issues.

6. PILOT TESTING

To ensure the highest possible success rate, a pilot study was done. Twenty questionnaires were handed to Grade 10 learners to complete at Jan Mohr Secondary School who willingly participated for this specific purpose. This school was randomly selected from the schools in the Khomas Region that were not elected to participate in the research. The pilot study allowed for any problems to be identified and eradicated before the actual research was set into motion.

Furthermore, it was used to eradicate ambiguity and imprecision, double, leading, sensitive or hypothetical questions. It also served as a trial run for the eventual data processing of the real study. (Travers, 1978; Verma & Mallick, 1999)

7. DATA ANALYSIS

Upon receipt of the questionnaires, the questions were divided into close-ended answers to be computer-analysed or open-ended answers to be personally coded by the researcher and then sent for computer analysis**.**

Upon receipt of SPSS close-ended questionnaires, the questions were grouped for interpretation. Question by question the answers were recorded resulting in a summary sheet for the learners and the teachers responses. A summary sheet for each question was presented as frequency tables or tables showing the percentage distribution to determine the learner's views on the importance of each of the given topics and the mastering thereof. After recording the individual questions, they were grouped into sections and some important information about the findings were discussed as can be seen in the research results. The same procedure was followed for the teacher's responses.

Thereafter the learners' results on how they perceived and mastered the topics were compared with reference to males and females using a t-test with independent mean to establish if any statistical significant differences were detectable. This was followed by comparing the learner's results with that of the teachers with reference to how important they perceived the topics of Life Skills. Here again the t-test with independent mean highlighted significant differences

with reference to the perception of the various topics. Lastly, the five interview questions were coded by the researcher and then submitted for further analyses by the computer. The results are discussed under the next chapter, the research results.

CHAPTER 4: THE RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presents the research findings, interpretation and discussions of the results.

Data analysis for this study focused on quantitative and qualitative data obtained through the use of questionnaires handed to the learners and teachers and interviews for the learners. The results are discussed and presented in frequency and percentage tables or graphs.

4.1 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

4.1.1 Learners

After excluding the pilot study 335 learners participated in this research and their ages ranged from 14 to 23. It was found that 90% of the learner's ages ranged from 15 to 18. 1 % of the learners represented age 14 whilst the remaining 9% were older than 18, with the oldest being 23 years of age.

Due to randomly selecting two full classes of Grade 10 learners from each of the seven schools, the distribution of male learners in comparison to female learners resulted in 137 males and 198 females. This unfortunately resulted in an unequal percentage distribution of 59% females compared to 41% males.

4.1.2 Teachers

For each of the seven schools included in the research two full classes of Grade 10 learners with their respective teachers were selected. The distribution of males in

comparison to female teachers resulted in 1 male to 7 females thus 87.5% female as compared to 12.5% male teachers. The ages of the teachers involved in the research ranged from a mere 22 years of age right up to retirement age of 65 years.

4.2 COUNSELLING STATUS

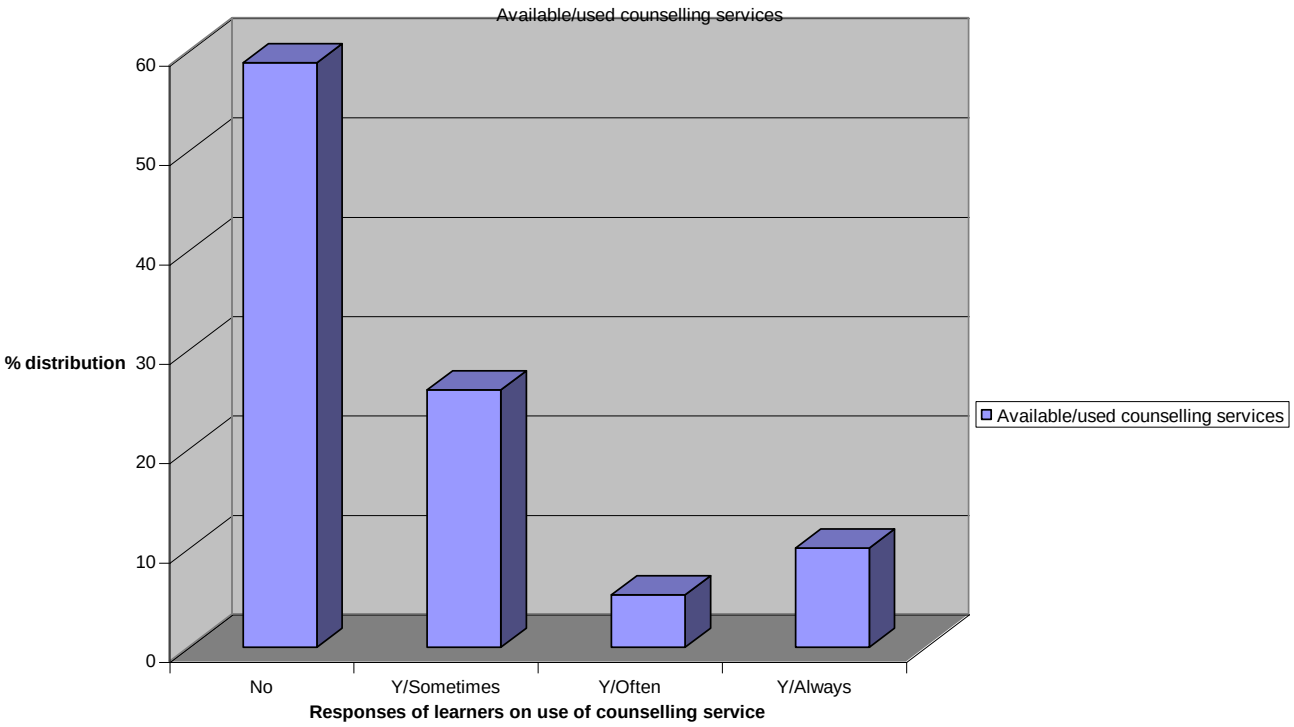
4.2.1 Learners

This section concerned the ability of receiving one to one counselling during or after school hours, with or without other parties. From the research results it was noted that 92.5% of the learners acknowledged that they were able to receive one to one counselling should they require the service. However when questioned if they ever referred a problem to the Life Skills teacher 73% stipulated that they had not. This negative response increased to 80% when asked if they ever had one to one counselling during school, and further increased to 85% when asked if they ever received this service after school or with other parties concerned. Another response that gave reason for concern was the fact that 78% of the learners were able to use the lesson for other activities than Life Skills, even if this occurred to be sometimes, often or always. For more detail see Table 1 and Graph 1.

TABLE 1: Percentages of learners that used counselling services

Category	Response	No	Y/Sometimes	Y/Often	Y/Always	Missing		TOTAL
Q3	1/1 counseling service	7.5	50.1	14.6	27.8			**100**
Q4	Problem referral	72.8	20	2.7	4.2	0.3		**100**
Q5	1/1 during school	79.7	15.2	1.2	3.9			**100**
Q6	1/1 after school	85.6	8.7	2.4	3.3			**100**
Q7	Counseling with others	85.4	10.7	1.2	2.7			**100**
Q8	Other activity in lesson	21.8	50.4	9.9	17.9			**100**
	Total % responses	58.8	25.9	5.3	10	0		**100**

GRAPH 1: Overall percentages of learners that used counselling services



4.2.2 Teachers

It was noted that of the eight teachers questioned, only two had formal Life Skills training and attended Life Skills workshops, whilst the others had only received training through workshops. That means 50% of the teachers involved in this educational task was unqualified as far as formal training and workshops were concerned and thus only taught out of their own Life Skills experience. It was also noted that 62,5% of the teachers had less than a year experience in their teaching task concerning the Grade 10 learners and had less than a year experience in the task of teaching Life Skills. Two teachers (25%) spent more than 75% of their teaching task on Life Skills whilst the rest were involved in teaching assessment subjects and were thus overloaded with other teaching duties. Even though we included 7 government institutions it was noted that only 37.5%, followed the syllabus as instructed by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. It was noted that 62.5% of the teachers experienced their teaching task as an enjoyment and none indicated that it was a burden. 7 teachers (87,5%) spent less than 25% of their teaching task aiding Grade 10 learners with personal counselling, may it be for personal problems, subject choices or other matters.

4.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS TOPICS

Altogether 28 questions were used to elicit information on how important the learners and teachers perceived the different Life Skills topics. The daily living skills were covered by 11 questions, the personal and social skills were covered by 7 questions whilst the occupational guidance and preparedness skills were covered by the remaining 9 questions.

4.3.1 Daily living skills

The daily living skills cover an extensive section of the Life Skills syllabus. Both the learners and the teachers were asked to indicate how important they perceived the individual topics to be.

4.3.1.1 Learners Perception

Subsequently the learner's perception concerning the importance of Life Skills topics involving the daily living skills were investigated. The individual category responses and the respective percentage distribution are recorded in Tables 2 and 3 respectively. From the research results it became clear that most of the daily living skill topics were perceived as 'important' and 'most important' representing more than 75% of the total responses.

The topic that was perceived as 'very important' by the majority of learners (82.7%) was the ability "to take responsibility for their own health". This was followed by the topic "knowledge about teenage pregnancy" (72.8%). Another topic that seemed to be of great importance to the learners was the ability "to maintain home safety" as 64.4% of the learners perceived this topic as 'very important'. In addition, knowledge on "the dangers of abortion" was selected by 62.6% of the learners as being 'very important'.

Those topics that were perceived as being 'not important' were the following – the ability "to manage and maintain ones own home" (19.7%), the knowledge "about marriage and its responsibilities" (18.8%), the knowledge "concerning the correct voting procedures" (13.7%) and the knowledge on "how to raise your own

child" (13.4%). It can be concluded that these topics seemed to be of less concern to Grade 10 learners as these topics were really factual realisations of adult life rather than of a teenager in Grade 10 as the learners were concentrating more on aspect like staying healthy and preventing teenage pregnancy.

If we look at the individual responses and percentages referring to the category response of 'not important' it is noticed that they were rather low and ranged from 1.5 – 19.7% in comparison to the last category 'very important' which ranged from 32.8 – 82.7%. We may infer that the learners perceived this section of Life Skills to be rather important.

The overall responses in this section recorded 3685 responses. Of these 326 perceived the 11 chosen topics as 'not important' and these responses represented only 9% of the total responses. 482 or 13% of the responses opted for the category "slightly important' with 934 or 25% opting for the category 'important'. The rest of the responses 1943 or 53% perceived the chosen daily living skills topics as 'very important'. See graph 3.

4.3.1.2 Teachers perception

The teacher's perceptions on the importance of topics of the Life Skills concerning the daily living skills of the learners were investigated next. The individual category responses of the teachers and their respective percentage distribution are recorded in tables 8 and 9 respectively. From the information in Table 9 it becomes clear that most of the daily living skills taught to the learners were perceived as 'important' and 'very important' by the teachers and these represented 85 % of the total responses.

The topics that were perceived as most important by the teachers dealt with topics about "the negative and positive aspect of teenage pregnancy" (100%), "the dangers of abortion (100%), personal health responsibility (87%) and birth control aspects" (87%). It is possible that these topics were perceived as very important by teachers who had seen or experienced the upheaval in a teenagers life when an unwanted pregnancy occurred or they suffered due to being unhealthy.

The highest frequencies recorded by the teachers in the category 'important' referred to the daily living skill topic of "the ability to understand voting requirements and procedures in Namibia" (62.5%). Another 50% of the teachers felt that the topics involving a "safe home environment" and knowing about "marriage, it's procedure and responsibilities" were important.

50% of the teachers felt that the daily living skill needed "to buy, manage and maintain a home" was only 'slightly important'. Another 25% of the teachers perceived the topics "manage ones family finances, upholding safety procedure around the house and being able to raise one's own child" as less important. This may be the case because these topics were responsibilities of an adult and teachers believed these could still be acquired through socialising before being subjected to them.

If we inspect the overall responses we notice that none of the 88 responses, therefore 0 % opted for the category "not important". It can thus be concluded that none of the teachers perceived the chosen topics as not important at all. Overall only 13 responses, that means 15% of the teachers evaluated some of the

daily living skills as only 'slightly important', whilst 23 responses thus 26% of the teachers evaluated them as 'important'. The rest, thus 52 responses and therefore 59% of the teachers evaluated the topics in the daily living section as 'very important' thus vital to a Grade 10 learner. See graph 2 page 51.

4.3.2 Personal and social skills

The personal and social skills of the Life Skills syllabus, were also covered. Again both the learners and the teachers were asked to indicate how important they perceived the individual topics to be.

4.3.2.1 Learners perception

The learners were asked to respond to their perception on the important topics of the Life Skills concerning the personal and social skills. The individual category responses and the respective percentage distribution are recorded on tables 4 and 5. From the information recorded on table 4 it becomes clear that most of the personal and social skills topics were perceived as "important' and 'very important' (69%).

The topic that was perceived as most important by the learners was "the acquisition of good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance to facilitate personal growth" (71.9%). This was followed by the topic of "acquiring social responsibility" (65.3%). Another topic that seemed to be of great importance to the learners was the topic concerned with "reaching set personal goals" because 65% perceived this topic as important. In addition to these, the importance of "understanding one's gender role" and being informed about the topic of "gender

equality" were topics which were selected by 62% of the learners as 'very important'. Overall the perception of these topics indicated the passage of an adolescent into young adulthood upholding mature and responsible personal and social habits.

The topics that were perceived as being 'not important' yielded relative low frequencies and percentages. They were the following- "the acquisition of the skill of personal independence (8.7%), the skill of sexual equality (7.5%) and the skill of setting reachable personal goals (6.6%)". It can be inferred that even though there were a number of responses in this category, they were pleasing low.

If we look at the individual responses and percentages referring to the category "not important' it is noticed that they were rather low and ranged from 0.9 – 8,7% in comparison to the category 'very important' which ranged from 50.4% to 71.9%.

If we view the overall responses in this section where the learners evaluated how 'important or useful' the personal and social skills are, a total number of 2345 responses were recorded. Of these 121 view the 7 chosen topics as 'not important', however only representing 5% of the total responses. 172 or 7% of the responses opted for the category 'slightly important' and 586 or 25% opted for the category 'important'. The rest of the responses 1466 or 63% perceived the chosen personal and social skills of the topics as 'very important'. See graph 3 page 52.

4.3.2.1 Teachers perception

This section elicited responses from the teachers concerning their perception on how important the Life Skills topics concerning the personal and social skill are. The individual category responses and respective percentage distribution are recorded on tables 10 and 11.

The topics referring to 'social responsibility and being able to achieve personal independence through one's own choices" were perceived as 'very important' by the teachers (87.5%). These were followed by 75% of the teachers believing that the topic of "good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance are necessary to facilitate personal growth" was of great importance to a Grade10 learner.

The topics "of understanding gender roles in life, understanding sexual responsibilities, setting reachable personal goals and upholding gender equality" were perceived as "important" and ranged between 50% – 37,5%.

Analysing the individual categories, the only response recorded under the category 'slightly important' was the topics that would enable the learners to develop the skills "of good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance to facilitate personal growth in learners" (12.5%).

None of the teachers felt that any of the personal and social skills to be acquired by Grade 10 learners were 'not important'.

A combination of all the topics revealed that only 2% of the teachers perceived the topics as only 'slightly important'. 28,5% opted for the category 'important

and the rest therefore 69,5% of the teachers fell that the topics were 'very important'. See graph 2 page 51.

4.3.3 Occupational guidance and preparedness

The occupational guidance and preparedness skills cover the last section of the Life Skills syllabus. Again both the learners and the teachers were asked to indicate how important they perceived the individual topics to be.

4.3.3.1 Learners perception

The importance of skills concerning occupational guidance and preparedness as perceived by the learners revealed the following. The individual category responses and the respective percentage distribution are recorded on tables 6 and 7 respectively. From the information on table 7 it is clear that most occupational guidance and preparedness topics were perceived as 'important' and 'very important', representing 84% of the total responses.

The topic that was perceived as most important by the learners (75.5%) was the ability to "create a successful revision and timetable". This was followed by the topic referring to the "knowledge of future educational institutions" (63%). Another topic that seemed to be of great importance was the "ability to be exposed to career exploration and guidance", as 60.9% learners perceived this as very important. In addition to this, the topic of "subject choice guidance and advice", was selected by 60.6% learners as being important. As the Grade 10 learners were two weeks away from their end year examination, the choice of the most important topic was understandable. The choice of the other topics can be

attributed to the fact the Grade 10 learners are faced with subject choices, career choices and therefore would appreciate some expert guidance. In general learners rather perceived the topics to be more 'important' than 'not' with the lowest frequency being 153 responses representing 45.6%.

Those topics that were perceived by the learners as being 'not important' were the following.: Topics about "the knowledge and ability to act upon one's career choice", "the knowledge about certain habits and behaviour codes within certain career choices", "the knowledge on and about vocational institutions concerning your career choice" and "the ability to act upon career uncertainties". 9.3% of the learners perceived the topic "facilitating the skills of being able to act upon one career choice" as not important. 8.7% of the learners perceived the knowledge about "certain habits and behaviour codes within certain career choices" as 'not important'. Another 7.8% felt that the "knowledge on and about vocational institutions concerning your career choice" was 'not important' and another 6.6% felt that the skill "of acting upon career uncertainties" was 'not important'. Due to the low scores it can be concluded that these topics seemed to be less important to the Grade 10 learners. This could possibly be as they were planning to complete their formal education at school with a Grade 12 and thus envisaged another two years to act upon acquiring these skills.

If we look at the individual responses and percentages referring to the category response of 'not important' it is noticed that they were rather low and ranged from 2.1 - 9,3% in comparison to the last category response of 'very important' which ranged from 45.6 - 75.5%

A total number of 3015 responses over 9 chosen topics were recorded. Of these 170 thus 5.5 % responded with the category 'not important'. 324 or 11% respondents opted for the category 'slightly important' and 769 or 25.5% opted for the category 'important'. The rest of the responses, 1752 or 58% perceived the chosen topics as 'very important'. See graph 3 page 52.

4.3.3.2 Teachers perception

The next section covered the perception of the teacher with respect to the importance of the topics of the Life Skills concerning the occupational guidance and preparedness skills. Overall 72 responses were recorded spread among the 9 topics chosen to represent the occupational guidance and preparedness skills.

The individual category responses and their respective percentage distribution were recorded on table 12 and 13. From the information on hand it becomes clear that most of these topics and their skills were perceived as 'important' and 'very important' by the teachers (93%).

The topics that were perceived as 'most important' by 75% of the teachers included the skill of "being able to select and plan for more than one career opportunity' and "being able to set up a successful revision timetable". Overall all the topics in this section were perceived as 'important and this is reflected by the information that only a few topics were represented by scores lower 50%. This could be as the Grade 10 learners are facing decisions that influence their whole life. Decisions to study well, to choose a subject that will not hinder a possible career or to have knowledge about where and how to continue their tertiary education. The occupational guidance and preparedness section answered

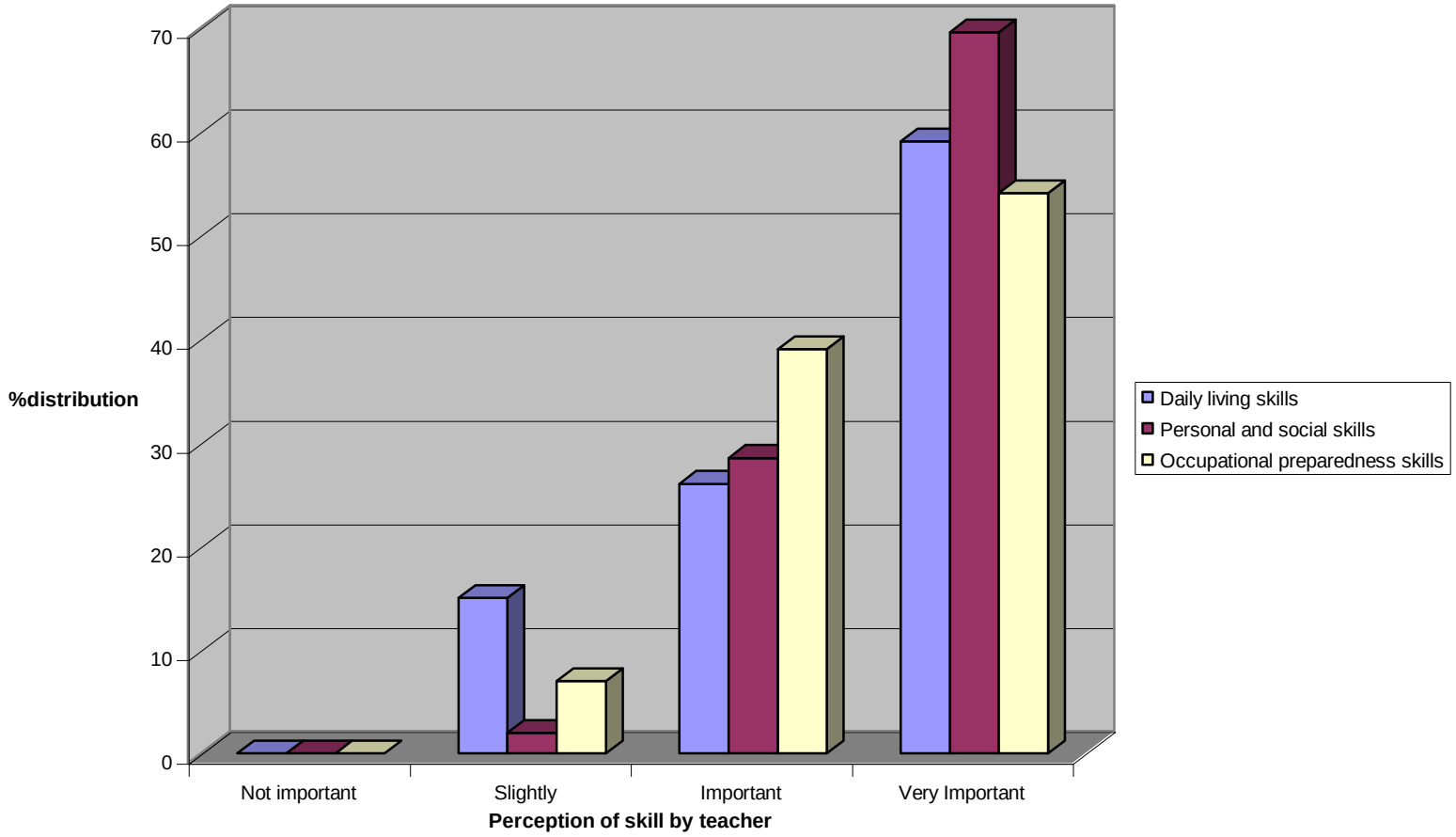
by the teachers was definitely represented strongest in this category, perceiving the topics as ‘very important’.

It was found that 75% of the teachers felt that the topic “ being able to get advice when choosing the most suitable subjects for one’s career choices” is important to the Grade 10 learners. The rest of the topics in this category elicited less than 50% representation all round.

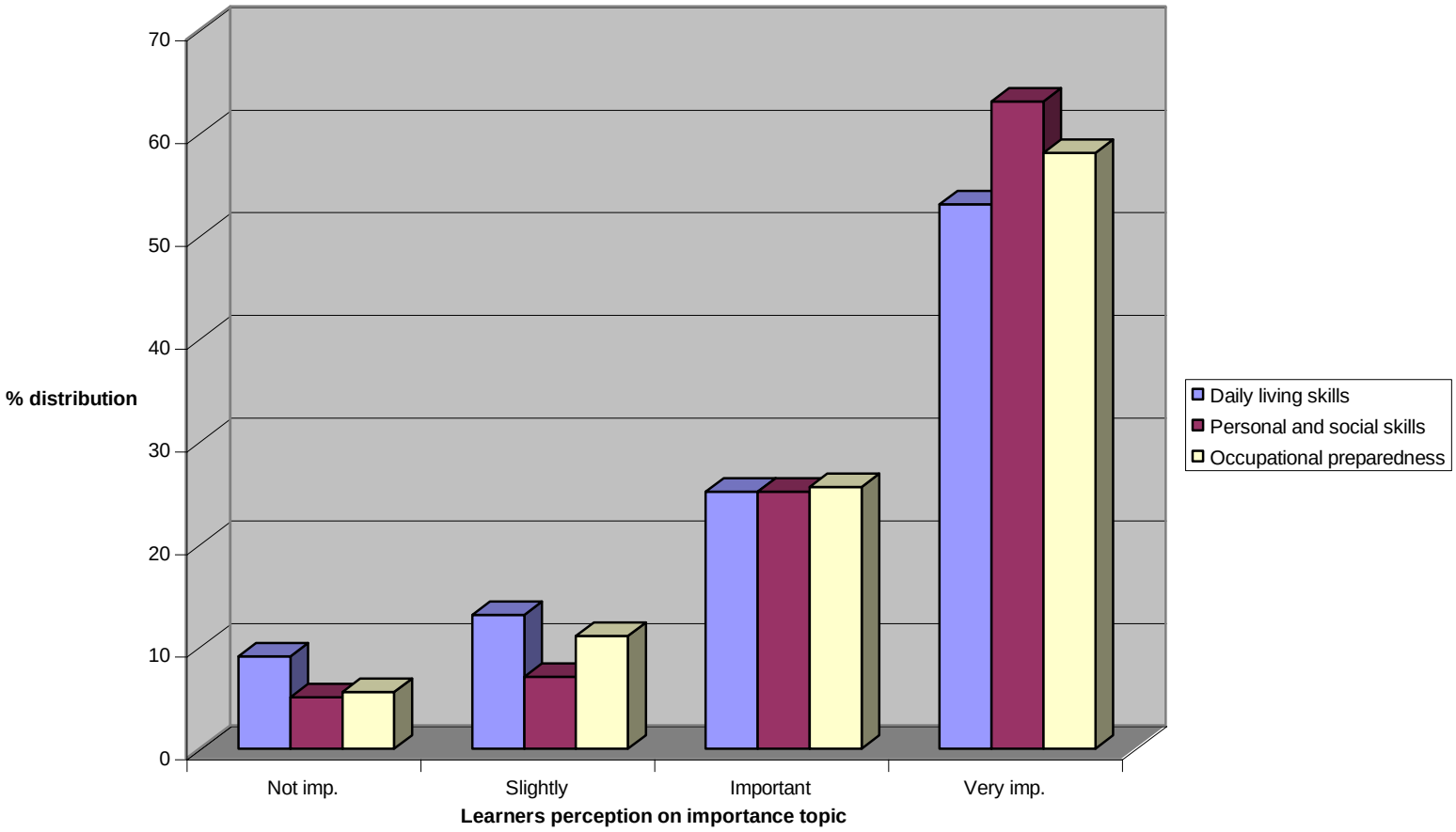
The following topics achieved only 12.5% in the category of ‘slightly important’. Here the teachers perceived “the ability to select and plan for one or more career opportunities, understanding the habits and behaviour displayed by different work opportunities, the ability to seek and secure employment within his/her choice, understanding unemployment and its effect, and the ability to achieve guidance when choosing subjects for a future career”, as only ‘slightly important’.

A combination of all topics revealed that none of teachers therefore 0 %, perceived any of the listed topics on the occupation guidance and preparedness section as ‘not important’. Only 7% of the teachers perceived the topics as ‘slightly important’, 38% opted for the category ‘important and the rest namely 54% perceived the topics as ‘very important’. See Graph 2 for the teachers’ perception and Graph 3 for the learners’ perception on the importance of the Life Skills topics.

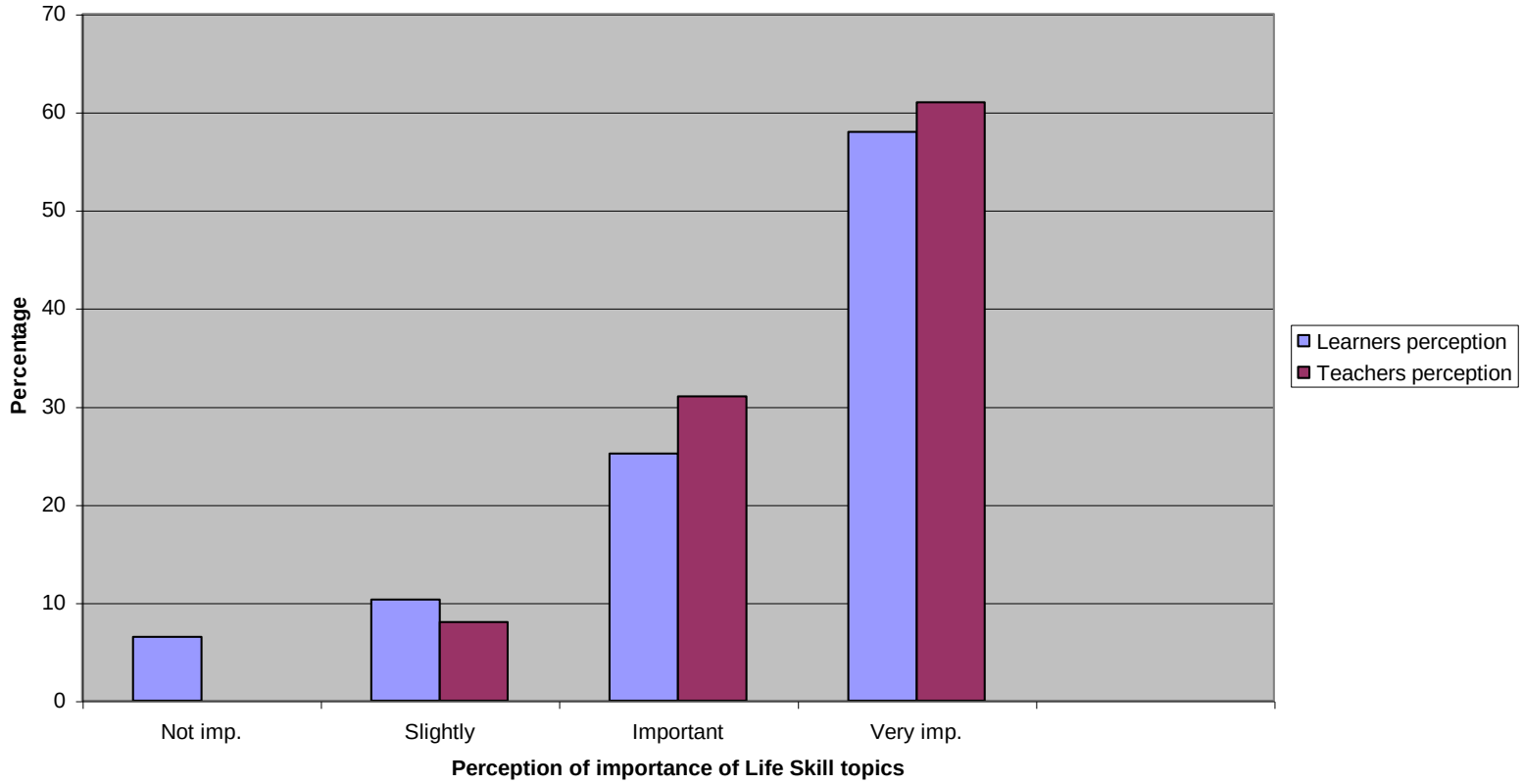
GRAPH 2: Teachers' perception on the importance of Life Skills topics



GRAPH 3: Learners' perception on importance of Life Skills topics



GRAPH 4: Perception of importance of Life Skills (All topics)



If we compare the overall perception of Life Skills by the learners and teachers we must conclude that the teachers perceive them as more important overall. The learners felt that 6.5% of the skills were unimportant, 10,3 % slightly important, 25,2% important and 58% of the skills were very important. The teachers again felt that 8% were slightly important, 31% were important and 61% of the skills were very important. For a more graphic representation view graph 4.

4. PERCEPTION OF LEARNERS ON MASTRING LIFE SKILLS

Part of the questionnaire asked the learners to evaluate in how far they perceived to have mastered the three different sections of Life Skills.

4.4.1 Daily living skills

The Grade 10 learners were asked to truthfully evaluate if they had mastered the daily living skills as set out by the MEBC.

As related to the learners' perceptions regarding the mastery of the daily living skills the following overall results were recorded (see tables 2 and 3). 665 (18%) respondents felt that some or other of the 11 skills were not mastered. A further 1181 (32%) felt that the skills were 'slightly mastered', 1015 9(28%) indicated that they mastered the skill whilst 824 (22%) respondents acknowledged that they mastered the skills 'very well'. See graph 5 page 59.

An alarming number of respondents were of the opinion that they had not mastered the daily living skills of "the voting requirements" (40%), "marriage procedures and it's responsibility" (31.3%), "managing ones own home" (22.7%) and "managing family finances" (23%). Here, however, it was pleasing to note that very few learner's indicated that they could not master their own health

(0.9%), a safe home environment (4.5%) and all aspects concerning teenage pregnancy (6.3%).

In contrast to the above the research revealed that the categories 'mastered' and 'well mastered' recorded particular high frequencies with the above-mentioned topics. Here 82% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic on "health responsibilities", 73% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic of "a safe home environment" and 66% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic with respect to "teenage pregnancy".

As noted on table 3 the highest overall scores were representative to the learners perceiving to have mastered these skills 'only slightly'. The learners felt that they were slightly able to mange family finances (42.7%) or raise a child (39.1%).

Overall 50% of these skills were perceived as mastered whilst the other 50% would benefit the Grade 10 learner if they were enhanced.

4.4.2. Personal and social skills

As related to the learner's perceptions regarding the mastery of the personal and social skills, the following results were recorded. (See table 4 and 5 and graph 5). Of the 335 learners 179 (8%) felt that they had not mastered some or other of the 7 skills mentioned. Another 532 (23%) learners felt that they had only slightly mastered these skills, 875 (37%) felt that they had mastered the skills whilst 759 (32%) respondents acknowledged that they mastered the skills 'very well'.

The highest frequencies recorded in the category where skills were perceived as not mastered were considerably low (below 14%) and included the topics of "mastering sexual responsibility", "achieving personal independence" and

achieving “sexual equality’. Here 14% of the learners felt that they had not mastered “sexual responsibility”, 11.3% of the learners felt that they had not mastered the skill of “personal independence” and 9 % of the learners perceived to be unable to achieve the skill of “sexual equality”.

In contrast to the above, the research revealed that the categories ‘mastered and ‘well mastered’ elicited particular high frequencies with reference to the topics concerning “gender roles”, “mastering social responsibility”, “mastering good habits to facilitate personal growth” and “achieving sexual responsibility”. This may well be the case as these young adults strive for social acceptance, group recognition and start experimenting with sexual relationship. Here cumulative percentages obtained were the following. Of the total population, 79% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic “social responsibility” and 78% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic of “gender roles”. Another 75% of the learners perceived to have mastered the topic concerned with “personal growth” and 66 % of the learners perceived to have mastered the skill of “sexual responsibility”. Overall this section showed that the learners perceived the personal and social skills topics as mastered, may it be ‘slightly’, ‘mastered’ or ‘well mastered’.

4.4.3 Occupational guidance and preparedness skills

As related to the learner’s perception regarding the mastery of the skills concerning their occupational guidance and preparedness, the following results were recorded (See table 6 and 7 and graph 5). Out of the 3015 responses, 638

(21%) felt that some or other of the 9 chosen skills mentioned were 'not mastered'. Another 1043 (35%) responded with the category 'slightly mastered' whilst 762 (25%) felt that they had 'mastered' the skill. A mere 19% (572) perceived to have mastered the skills 'very well'.

An alarming number of respondents were of the opinion that they had not mastered certain occupational guidance and preparedness skills. 29.3% of the respondents felt that they did 'not master' the ability "to understand habits and behaviour displayed by different career choices" and would also be unable "to seek and secure employment with their career choice". 25% of the learners felt that they were unable "to choose a vocational institution within their career choice" and 24% learners felt that they could/would not "act upon uncertainties concerning their career choice". These 'not mastered' skills might be attributed to the fact that most Life Skills teachers concentrate heavily on acquisition of these skills within the last two years of formal school education.

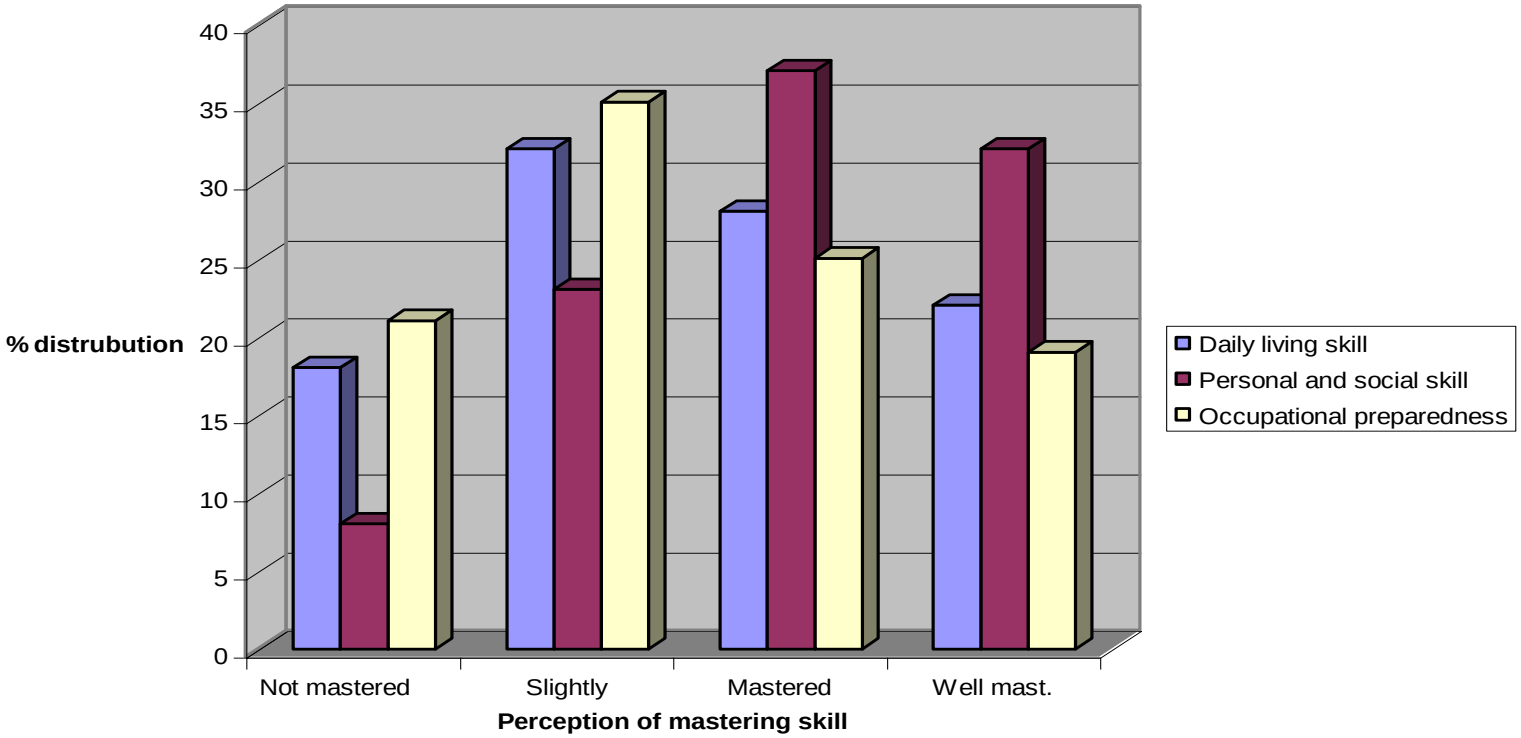
In contrast to the two sections before, concerning the daily living skills and personal social skills in the categories 'mastered' and 'well mastered', the occupational guidance and preparedness skills recorded average frequencies. Here the following topics of mastering the skill recorded percentage between 34-45%: "habits and behaviour displayed by certain career choices" (34%), "act upon uncertainties" (35%) "to seek and secure employment within your career choice" (36%), "knowledge of vocational institutions" (39%) and "the knowledge of exploring career opportunities" (40%).

The highest scores recorded in the category 'slightly mastered' were the topics of "knowing and being able to explore career opportunities" (42.4%),

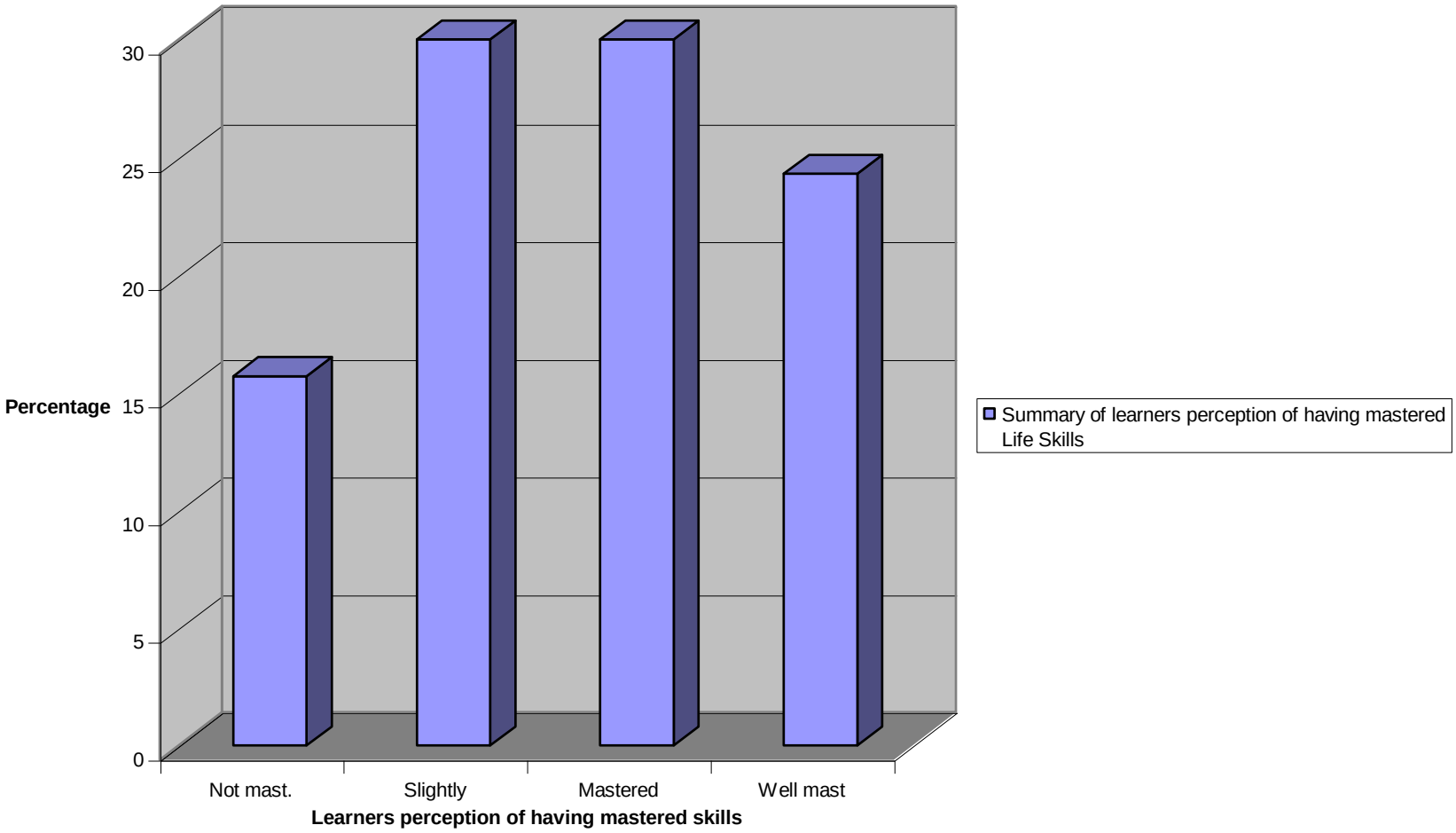
"understanding the habits and behaviours exhibited by certain career choices" (36.7%), and "the ability to find a vocational institution within your career choice" (35.8%). The results obtained highlighted a certain not preparedness as far as career guidance and preparedness skills are concerned with respect to the Grade 10 learners. This again can be indicative to the ability of ascertaining skill acquisition in Grade 11 and 12.

It was noticed that in the section concerning the occupational guidance and preparedness skills, learners scored particular poor in the categories 'mastered' and 'well mastered' if compared with the daily living skills and personal and social skills. For a more visual comparison of the overall percentage distribution of the three skill sections within the Life Skills syllabus, view graph 6. Overall 15,7% of the learners felt that they had not mastered some of the skills, 30% felt they mastered them slightly, whilst another 30% felt that they were mastering the skills and the last 24.3 percent felt that they mastered the Life Skills very well.

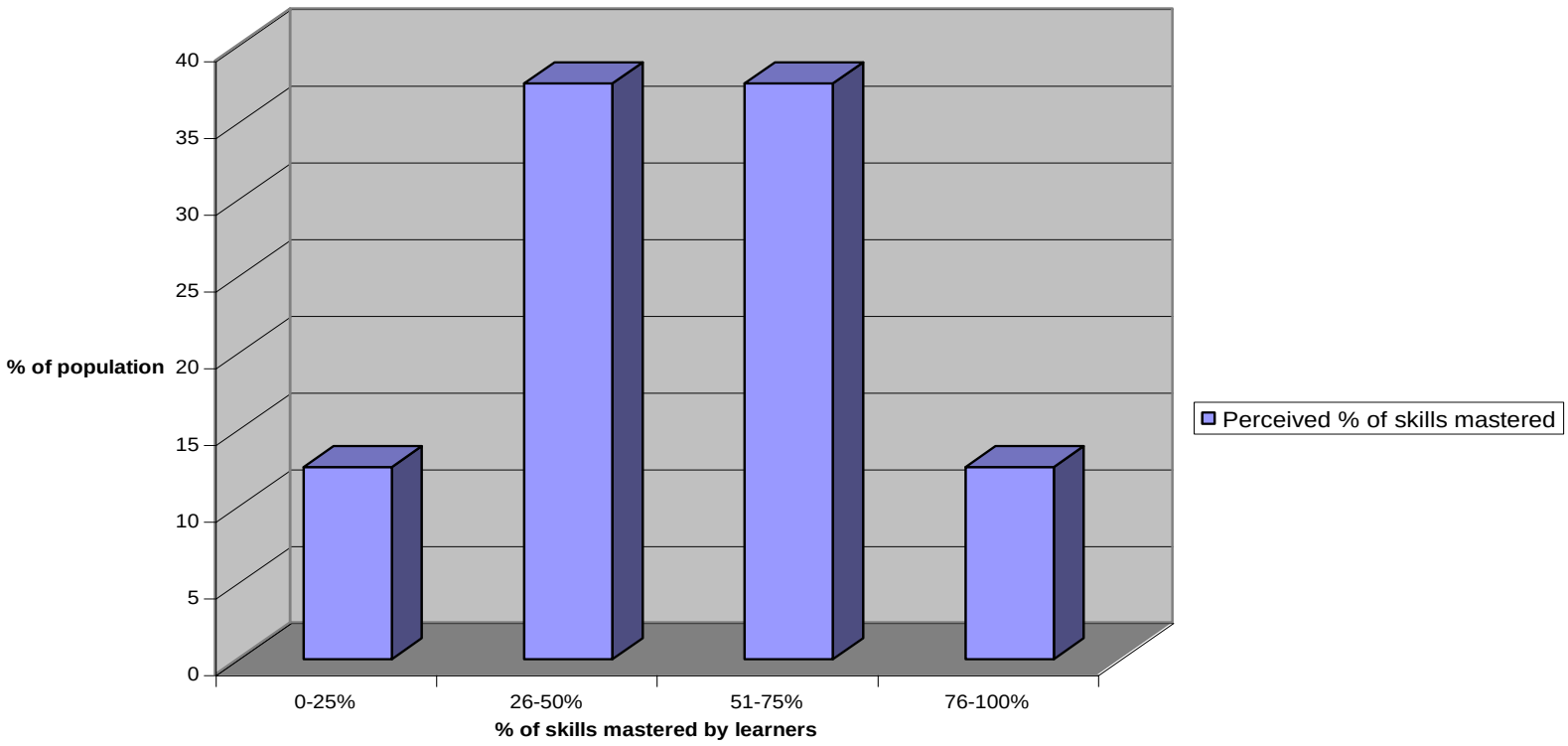
Graph 5: Learners perception on mastering the skills



Graph 6: Summary of learners perception of having mastered Life Skills



GRAPH 7: Teachers perception if learnes internatized Life Skills



4.5 ACQUISTION OF SKILLS

4.5.1 Teachers perception

One question focused on how many of the numerous skills as set out by the curriculum for Grade 10 were perceived by the teachers as acquired when referring to the Grade 10 learners before completing their Grade 10. Here a variety of responses were recorded. One response stated only up to 25% of the Life Skills mentioned were internalised. Three responses felt that up to 50% of the skills were acquired and another 37.5% of the teachers felt that up to 75% of the skills were acquired by the learners. The last 12.5% stated that the learners were perceived to have internalised between 76 – 100% of the skills (See graph 7).

4.5.2 Recommendations by learners

As pointed out before one open-ended question was asked and from the responses very important information was recorded.

When requested to describe how the aspect of Life Skills and the teaching thereof can be altered to ensure that one acquired the important skills, 30 respondents or 9% of the population of learners opted for the response 'no comment'. The rest of the 305 learners contributed positively and/or negatively with numerous suggestions as mentioned hereafter.

It was noticed that 92 learners (28%) interviewed suggested that Life Skills books should be more learner-friendly and more comprehensive with more relevant and interesting information. Here topics of gender issues, unemployment, stress management, sugar daddies, a realistic picture of the HIV pandemic, juvenile delinquency and drug abuse were specifically asked, to be included. A further 53 respondents thus 19% of the learners independently suggested that Life Skills should be taught by qualified Life Skills teachers who should also be available for learner counselling, during

and after school, as well as counselling learners in small groups. Another 51 responses and therefore 15% of the learners suggested that more time should be awarded for this subject as to be able to cover all these important topics mentioned in the questionnaire. A further 15% of the learners suggested that some of the lessons be supplemented with audio-visual material, visitors, professionals or career practical (in house) training. Rather than spend the time set apart for Life Skills doing nothing, it was suggested that the above ideas should be investigated and implemented. 35 learners (10%) suggested that self-help material be made available to learners and not only to teachers, and that teachers should enhance their presentation skills by better preparation, more input, more contemporary material or discussions that are relevant to their problems. A further 10% suggested that Life Skills was an important subject but hoped for better learner-teacher relationships. Here ideas of being more approachable and being able to talk to the same gender were forwarded. 7% of the learners suggested that Life Skills lesson only be used for the teaching thereof whilst another 7% hoped that their fellow students would grow up and realise the importance of this subject. 5% of the learners suggested that this subject needed more teachers especially allowing a more balanced scale between genders, as one prefers to relate one problem to a person of the same gender. 3% of the learners suggested the Grade 10 teachers should concentrate more on vocational and practical career guidance for Grade 10 school leavers, and that this subject be made an assessment subject and that learners should have some say in choosing the topics presented to them. 1 % and less learners suggested that there should be individual vocational advice, by which teachers should guide learners into subject choices and that Life Skills should be taught in Primary Schools. Only three responses and thus 1% of the total population suggested that Life Skills as a subject was a waste of time and thus not necessary. We can thus conclude that the

learners perceived this subject as important and in general would like the teaching thereof with a few changes suggested to the present situation.

4.5.3 Recommendation by teachers

When asked how Life Skills or the teaching thereof can be altered to ensure the acquisition of these skills, the responses of the teachers were recorded by an open-ended question.

It was noticed that 50% of the teachers suggested that Life Skills teachers need more Life Skills periods, to become more effective. They also mentioned that the subject matter was to extensive for the time allocated to teach it. 2 respondents, (25%) suggested the possibility of employing qualified and/or specialised staff to handle this important task and to achieve better results. Another 25% suggested that special time must be made available on the timetable to facilitate one to one counselling and that topics in textbooks should be more relevant and contemporary. It was noted that 12.5% of the teachers suggested that Life Skills teachers should meet on a regular basis to share ideas and everyday problems. They suggested that Life Skills should get a rightful place in Education, that Life Skills should be taken more seriously and therefore be evaluated. They furthermore suggested that Life Skills Education should already start in Primary School, that more supportive material be submitted for effective completion of this task and that Life Skills should be split into two separate subjects namely Life Skills and Career Guidance.

Overall the responses were of a positive nature and none of the teachers concerned perceived the subject as not important. They rather perceived it as neglected and shelved even though it could make a great difference in the life of a Grade 10 learner.

4.6 COMPARISON OF BOYS AND GIRLS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS TOPICS

Of the 335 respondents, 137 were boys and 198 were girls. It was assumed that there would be no differences between the population means of the two groups. To test this assumption a t-test with independent means was conducted. The computed values of t now had to exceed the predetermined criterion of 95% thus the 0.05 level of reliability to reject the assumption that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of boys and girls as far as the importance of Life Skills topics was concerned.

4.6.1 The daily living skills

Statistically there was a significant (or true) difference between the perception of boys and girls regarding the following three topics: the perception of learners on the importance of skills concerning aspects 'about teenage pregnancy, the importance of knowledge about the dangers of abortion and knowing about voting matters". With the two topics concerning 'teenage pregnancy and abortion' the girls achieved higher mean scores than the boys. This means that they perceived these topic as more important than the boys. This could be due to the fact that the girl is more concerned with these problems as she is directly affected with the problem when pregnant or when aborting the baby whilst it may only affect the boy indirectly or not at all. The topic on voting matters was perceived to be more important by the boys than the girls which indicates that the responsibility of voting is a matter that is taken more seriously by the male gender in Grade 10.

The rest of the topics in this section showed no significant (or true) differences between the views of boys and girls. These topics concerned the daily living skill of "managing the family finances, of understanding the family finances, of buying and managing ones own home, of being responsible

for one's own health, of maintaining home safety, of correct stress management, of knowing about marriage procedures and their responsibilities, and of mastering child raising responsibilities, and of understanding birth control methods".

4.6.2 Personal and social skills

Statistically there was a significant (or true) difference between the perceptions of boys and girls regarding three topics. These three topics were the perception of learners on the importance of skills concerning aspects of "social responsibility, achieving personal independence through making ones own choices and facilitating personal growth through good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance". In all three cases the girls perceived these topics as 'very important' whilst the boys perceived the topic as only 'important'. The two topics concerning "social responsibility and personal growth" may be a result due to the earlier maturation age of girls than boys and therefore their ability to approach social responsibility and personal growth from a more adult perspective. The perception of importance on the topic sexual equality may indicate that the male gender in Grade 10 still has not understood and accepted the fact that a woman should be given equal chances in every aspect in life.

Statistically there was no difference between the views of boys and girls with respect to the following topics: understanding one's gender roles in life, understanding sexual responsibilities, setting reachable personal goals, and knowing about equality among sexes.

4.6.3 Occupational guidance and preparedness skills

Statistically there was a significant difference between the perception of boys and girls regarding the importance of two topics. The two topics were the perception of learners on the importance of skills concerning 'the ability to find and secure employment within one's career choice and the

ability to set up a successful examination and revision time table". In both cases the girls perceived the topic as 'very important' whilst the boys perceived the topic as only 'slightly important". The difference in perception of boys and girls with respect to the two topics concerning 'employment security and successful revision and exam time tables" may once again be the result of earlier maturation of girls than boys. They therefore were able to approach these responsibilities from a more mature perception than the boys.

Statistically there was no significant difference between the views of boys and girls as related to the following topics: the skill of knowing and exploring the various career opportunities, being able to select and plan for one or more careers, understanding the habits and behaviour displayed by various careers, understanding unemployment and its implications, acting upon uncertainties concerning career choices, and knowing about many vocational institutions and their causes.

4.7 COMPARISON OF BOYS AND GIRLS ON THE PERCEPTION OF MASTERING THE LIFE SKILLS TOPICS

Once it was established that there was a slight difference in perception of importance of the Life Skills topics with respect to boys and girls, it seemed vital to establish if there was indeed a significant difference when they perceived to have mastered the skill.

4.7.1 Daily living skills

Statistically there was a significant (true) difference between the perception of boys and girls of having mastered the skill regarding four topics. These four topics where the learners themselves judged in how far they had mastered the skills were concerned with aspects about teenage pregnancy, the importance of knowledge about the dangers of abortion, stress management and knowing about voting matters. The topics concerning teenage pregnancy, stress management and

abortion revealed that the girls achieved higher mean scores than the boys. This means that they perceived to have mastered them better than the boys. This could be due to the fact that the girls are those directly affected with the problem when pregnant or when aborting the baby whilst it may only affect the boys indirectly or not at all. Being directly exposed to these problems they might realise the necessity of knowledge in applying preventative measures, or when handling these problems therefore they do make a point to master these skills. The topic on voting matters was perceived to be mastered better by the boys than the girls which once again may indicate that the responsibility of voting is a matter that is taken more seriously by the male gender in Grade 10.

Statistically there was no significant difference between the views of boys and girls concerning the daily living skill of managing the family finances, of understanding the family finances, of buying and managing one's own home, of being responsible for one's own health, of maintaining home safety, of knowing about marriage procedures and their responsibilities, of mastering child raising responsibilities, and of understanding birth control methods .

4.7.2 Personal and social skills

Statistically there was no significant difference between views of boys and girls as related to the seven topics in this section. These topics yielded same or similar mean scores and one therefore conclude that the boys and girls perceived to have mastered the skills to the same extent with reference to the personal and social skills of the Life Skills topics.

4.7.3 The occupational guidance and preparedness skills

Statistically there was a significant (true) difference between the perception of boys and girls regarding having mastered two topics. These two topics concerned the topic of unemployment and the ability to set up a successful examination and revision timetable. In both cases the girls

perceived to have mastered the skill whilst the boys perceived to have slightly mastered this skill. The difference in the perception of having mastered these two topics may once again be the result of earlier maturation of girls than boys and therefore their ability to approach their responsibilities from a different perspective and therefore resulting in better internalising of the skill than the boys.

Statistically there was no significant difference between the views of boys and girls as related to the topics concerning the skill of knowing and exploring the various career opportunities, of being able to select and plan for one or more careers, of understanding the habits and behaviour displayed by various careers, of being able to seek and secure employment with one's career choice, of acting upon uncertainties concerning career choices, of achieving guidance in choosing subjects for one's future career and of knowing about many vocational institutions and their causes.

4.8 COMPARISON OF THE LEARNERS AND TEACHERS PERCEPTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIFE SKILLS TOPICS

The 335 learners and the eight teachers were assigned into the groups of learners and teachers. Then it was assumed that there were going to be no differences between the population means of the two groups. To test this assumption another t-test with independent means was conducted. The computed values of t now had to exceed the predetermined criterion of 95% thus the 0.05 level of reliability to reject the assumption that there were no significant differences in the perceptions of learners and teachers as far as the importance of Life Skills topics was concerned.

4.8.1 Daily Living skills

Once again there was a statistical significant difference between the perception of learners and teachers regarding some topics. The topics were the perception of learners and teachers on the skill

of home safety, knowledge about abortion and knowing about birth control. The latter two topics concerning the knowledge about abortion and birth control achieved higher means scores by the teachers than the learners. That means the teachers perceived these topic as more important than the learners. This may be due to the fact that the teachers were more concerned with the possible consequences these problems bring with them. They may have seen the effects these problems can have on the future of the Grade 10 learner. We must remember, however, that the learner group included boys which proved before, perceived this matter as not so important as perceived by girls. It may only affect the boy indirectly or not at all. This may also have influenced the result. The ability to create a safe home environment was perceived to be more important by the learners than the teachers. This indicates that this is a matter that is taken more seriously by the learners in Grade 10 than the teachers, who more than likely are already responsible homemakers and realised that it is not such a difficult skill to acquire.

The rest of the topics covering the perception of importance of the daily living skills showed no significant differences between the perceptions of the learners and teachers. These were the topic of managing the family finance, of buying and managing one's own home, of being responsible for one's own health, of understanding various aspects of teenage pregnancy, of correct stress management, of knowing about marriage procedures and their responsibilities, of mastering child raising responsibilities, and of knowing about the voting procedures.

4.8.2 Personal and social skills

Statistically there was a significant difference between the perception of learners and teachers regarding the topic that said it was important for learners to achieve personal independence by

making their own choices and bearing the consequences thereof. Here the teachers perceived the topic as very important whilst the learners perceived the topic as only important. This may be the case, as grade 10 learners may not have realised the importance of making ones own choices and bearing the consequences thereof. This may be the case as they are still under the umbrella care of their parents who still have a great influence in making decisions with and for them and even covering for possible mistakes along the line.

Statistically there was no difference between the views of learners and teachers as related to the rest of the topics. These topics referred to understanding gender roles in life, understanding sexual responsibilities, understanding social responsibilities, achieving personal growth through good habits, setting reachable personal goals and knowing about equality among sexes.

4.8.3 Occupational guidance and preparedness skills

Statistically there was a significant difference between the perceptions of learners and teachers on one occupational guidance and preparedness topic. The topic concerned the perception of learners of being advised and guided into choosing the most suitable subjects for ones career choice. Here the teachers perceived the topic as 'very important' whilst the learners perceived the topic as only 'important'. A possible reason for this may be that teachers have been around a long time to realise the importance of selecting the correct subject for further studies. Grade 10 learners, however may be advised by parents and/or professionals yet they are guided by their impulses and possible social influences, likes and dislikes.

Statistically there was no difference between the views of the learners and the teachers as related to the rest of the topics. They were the skills of knowing and exploring the various career opportunities, of being able to select and plan for one or more careers, of understanding the habits

and behaviour displayed by various careers, seeking and securing employment within a chosen career, of understand unemployment and its implications, being able to set up a successful revision/exam timetable, of acting upon uncertainties concerning career choices and of knowing about many vocational institutions and their causes.

4.9 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

This section included five interview questions that were handed to 18 learners of the school where sampling took place. Each learner was interviewed once rapport was established and they understood the procedures, and were ensured of confidentiality. The five questions covered the following topics:

* the one to one counselling situation,
* the maintenance of personal health,
* the ability to set up a successful examination and revision time table,
* sexual equality and
* occupational preparedness.

4.9.1 The one to one counselling situation

When reporting on the one to one counselling situations at their school all learners felt that the service is available, yet it seemed unprofessional and superficial. 50% of the learners preferred the trust and confidence of their parents, family members or a trustworthy person outside the school environment. Some learners namely 22% persisted that they needed an objective person outside the family surrounding to talk too. A few of the learners (11%) felt that social teenage pressures could best be solved with the help of their Life Skills teachers whilst another 22% of the learners

perceived their teachers as trustworthy and approachable. However, 17% felt that the teachers seemed rather busy and unapproachable, whilst 22% of the learners felt that they would prefer talking to a teacher of their own sex. 22% of the learners felt that their Life Skills teachers did not uphold confidentiality and therefore were not perceived as trustworthy. In addition to this 17% felt that they do not use one to one counselling but would rather seek help outside the school environment with professional counsellors. Overall 67% interviewees felt that the service is offered, yet here 39% felt that they do not require this service.

This aspect seemed to evoke quite a bit of controversy among the learners as some felt the service was commendable, whilst others felt it was a waste of time. Here one may have to delve deeper for more reliable information.

4.9.2 Personal health

As related to the perceptions of learners for being responsible for their own health, all 18 learners believed that this aspect was very important. When asked to elaborate 67% of the learners mentioned that it was vital in preventing all types of diseases, especially the threat of HIV and other threatening diseases. A further 57% felt that a healthy person projects a healthy appearance, which is vital for ones image and self image and thus peer- acceptance. Some 61% persisted that it entails the prevention of any abuses may these be drugs, alcohol or smoking. 44% felt that one is able to concentrate better and therefore stand a better chance in future endeavours. Only 22% of the learners felt that one may then be able to achieve greater heights in sport whilst only 6% responded that they only obey what they had been taught and instructed. Overall the skill that developed health responsibilities seemed of great importance to the learners and was thus mastered well.

4.9.3 Setting up a successful examination and/or revision timetable

When asked if they had mastered the skill of setting up a successful examination and revision timetable, 67% of the Grade 10 learners felt that they had not mastered this skill. Of the 33% that had mastered the skill, 28% reported that the application of this skill has brought about improved results whilst 5% felt that the use of this skill had brought about no benefits. Of the rest, 39% indicated that they were taught the skill but they were too lazy to apply it. Another 28% felt that they knew of the benefit but do not use it.

Only 5% of the learners had never been taught this skill. Of those that acquired the skill, 17% have been taught the skill by their Life Skill teacher while another 17% said they acquired the skill by help outside the school environment. This result supports the information gathered from question 11 in the learner's questionnaire about the importance and mastering of the skills.

4.9.4 Sexual equality

Here 89% of the learners felt that equality among sexes is important, whilst 11% felt it was unimportant. A mere 17% felt it should be upheld as it is and thus obeying the Namibian laws while 22% substantiated their argument with the reason that it upholds the human rights law of freedom and equality. 12% of the learners however perceived the practice of equality only within the school environment. Reasons for perceiving sexual inequalities within the society were blamed on inflexible old cultures and tradition imprinted in societies (22%) and the fact that parents who pass their ideas on to the new generations lip service this law but in reality do not enforce it (22%). A further 22 % believed that the superiority of men is imprinted in society and thus slow in changing as can be seen within the top management structure of our own county. A small percentage of the boys (5%) believed that men should stay superior due to their strength and old

traditional practises whilst 5% of the girls suggested that it is time for girls to be treated as superior. Overall the learners felt that during school hours sexual equality was upheld but once they entered society it was a different story.

4.9.5 Occupational preparedness

Here 73% of the interviewed learners felt that they had acquired the skill of occupational preparedness and 27% believed they had not acquired this important skill. Of those that had mastered it, 44% felt that their acquisition had been facilitated by their parents whilst 11% perceived to have been responsible themselves for acquiring the skill. Some 22 % of the learners felt very uncertain about their future and an occupation whilst 17% felt that Grade 11 and 12 provided ample time to look into this matter. A few learners (11%) felt insecure and had to wait for their Grade 10 result before continuing along this path. A further 28% indicated that they were still in the process of being aided by their Life Skills teacher and thus had not mastered the skill to their full ability. This result confirms the finding under the section of occupational guidance and preparedness in the questionnaire handed to the learners where they perceived these skills as important and yet not mastered.

4.10 SUMMERY

4.10.1 Biographical information

Learners

The learners age distribution seemed wide (14 to 23 years), yet acceptable as some of the learners may have only started their education at a later stage or were one of the unfortunate disadvantaged groups within the old system that repeated a few grades. The gender distribution of the learners resulted in 59% being girls and 41% being boys.

Teachers

Teacher's ages varied from 22 to 65 years. The gender of the teacher (1 male against 7 females) resulted in very unequal distribution, yet may be a true picture of the teaching situation of Life Skills. It is possible that far more women are employed for this specific task and also as teachers as a whole.

4.10.2 Counselling status

Learners

The one to one counselling situation at schools seems to be in place as perceived by 93% of the respondents, yet questionable in its effectiveness as 80% of these do not make use of it. Here the interview question on this situation shed light on possible causes. Only 11% of the learner's responded with teacher's upholding a trusting and confidential relationship. However, this stood in direct contrast to 22% of the learners perceiving this was not the situation. They claimed their teachers are unapproachable, always busy with administrative task, they did not uphold a trusting and confidential relationship and they did not use the lessons effectively. Furthermore a lot of male respondents requested to be able to talk to someone of their own sex rather, as they would like to discuss information on sensitive issues which they would never discuss with someone of the opposite gender, even if it is a trustworthy Life Skills teacher. The perception of the service offered was found to be superficial and not professional and this may explain the possible negative response to a service concerning its use.

Teachers

This study confirmed Staines' (2001a) finding that Life Skills teachers are mostly unqualified and have little experience. It also confirmed that not all lesson are used for the purpose set out, as only

37.5% teach the prescribed syllabus and 78% of the lessons are sometimes, often or always used for activities other than teaching Life Skills. Therefore even though the teachers enjoy this teaching task they somehow do not seem to fulfil its purpose as set out by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture.

4.10.3 The importance of Life Skills topics

Learners

When summarising the results of all the skills, (combining the daily living, personal and social and occupational guidance and preparedness skills) it was noted that 6.5 % of the learners stated that the skills were 'not important'. Furthermore 10.3% of the skills were perceived as only 'slightly important', 25.2% of the skills were perceived as 'important', and 58% were perceived as 'very important' (See Graph 5 and 6). Thus 82% of the skills were perceived as 'important' and therefore it would seem that the learners were interested to be taught these skills. This again stands in direct contrast with only 37.5% of the teachers admittedly following the prescribed syllabus and thus teaching the skills of the syllabus. This means that the skills, although perceived as important and beneficial, were not made available to the learners.

The topics that the learners perceived as very important were the following: - the responsibility for one's health, the knowledge about sexual responsible behaviour, abortion and birth control, achieving personal growth and social responsibility, the ability to create a revision timetable, the knowledge about future educational institutions and the availability of subject choice guidance. Most of the skills mentioned here are skills that a teenager should be confronted with and thus he/she would like to ensure that the skills are internalised to prevent problems in the very near future.

The topics that were perceived as not important were the following: - home maintenance, child raising procedures, marriage procedures, voting procedures, good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance to facilitate personal growth, behaviour and codes related to a career choice and the ability to react upon career uncertainties. A lot of 'not important' skills above pertain to futuristic planning and young adulthood and therefore might not be perceived as important, as obtaining them could occur in the near or distant future.

Teachers

When summarising the results of all the skills, (combining the daily living, personal and social and occupational guidance and preparedness skills) it was noted that none of the teachers stated that the skills were 'not important'. Here 9 % of the teachers perceived the skills as 'slightly important', 31 % of the teachers perceived the skills as 'important', and 60 % of the teachers perceived it as 'very important'. Thus 91 % of the teachers perceived the skills as either 'important' or 'very important' and thus it would seem that the teachers would be determined to educate the learners with respect to these skills. This however, is not the case as only 37.5% of the teachers admitted following the syllabus and thus teaching the skills of the syllabus. This means that even though they perceive the skills as important, for some reason or other they do not make efficiently use of the time set aside in the prescribed ministerial guidelines to equip the learners with these skills.

The topics that were perceived as very important by the teachers included teenage pregnancies and abortion, health aspects, birth control, social responsibilities, achieving personal independence, efficient revision and exam planning and knowing about where to find employment concerning your career and understanding the specific habits that come with your choice. Most of these topics facilitate a teenager with skills that will enhance responsible preventative measures, develop better socialising skills and will prevent problems in the near and distant future.

As discussed in detail in the research results, the topics that posed relevant problems to the learners during their adolescent phase were perceived as more important, than the topics that taught them skills for the far future. Some of the topics that they would like to master were teenage pregnancy and abortion, health education, social responsibility, sexual responsibilities and preventative measures, and guidance in subject choices. The skills like mastering correct voting procedure, managing one's own home and its finances, sexual inequality, achievement of personal independence, detailed career planning and information about career habits were perceived as not so important. These skills all pertain to possible events in the future, that means young adulthood and thus seems not to be missed if not internalised.

4.10.4 Mastering Life Skills topics

The learners were asked to evaluate themselves as having mastered the various skills taught by the Life Skills teacher. Here 16% felt that they had 'not mastered' the skills upon which they were questioned, 31% felt that they had mastered them only 'slightly' whilst 29% felt that they had 'mastered' them and 29% felt they had mastered them 'very well'. Upon questioning the learners about mastering the skills, the following topics seemed to be mastered quite efficiently. This was information about teenage pregnancies and abortion, a safe home environment, health education, social responsibility, sexual responsibility, understanding unemployment and subject choice guidance. It is possible that the threat of AIDS and other severe diseases, the threat of spoiling one's future with an unwanted pregnancy and social rejection may contribute to the certainty of mastering these skills.

Here the interview question on mastering one's health and occupational preparedness shed some light on the fact why or why not this topic was mastered. The learners that indicated they are responsible for their health, acquired these skills as to prevent diseases, to obtain a better living

quality, as to ensure peer acceptance and to achieve an overall better performance with respect to academic, social and sport achievements. Another possibility of insuring its acquisition is the fact that some of the topics mentioned were explicitly taught in other assessment subject and thus also evaluated through test and examinations.

Those topics that were perceived as not mastered by the learners concerned voting matters, marriage procedures, managing one's own home, sexual equality, sexual responsibility, successful revision or exam timetable, certain habits pertaining to careers, knowing about vocational institutions and acting upon uncertainties with respect to careers. Most of these skills were applicable only after school and therefore might not be perceived as necessary to a Grade 10 learner for example marriage, voting and managing your own home. The other skills pertaining to sexual responsibility may indicate sexual immaturity or carelessness, whilst the skills referring to one's future career preparation may well still be enhanced through Life Skill teaching in Grade 11 and 12.

The interview question on the topic of a '"successful revision and examination timetable" was answered very honestly by the learners. Here they indicated the necessity of the skill and showed understanding of its benefits, yet they admitted not applying it. This they said might be due to laziness, unwillingness to do so or perceiving it as not beneficial. The response to the interview question on inequality among sexes, seemed more a resigned response of acceptance as we are unable to change the situation by ourselves and that even governmental policy cannot ensure its enforcement. The information gathered with respect to the acquisition of the occupational preparedness skill indicated a definite implementation of the skill. It also indicated that the skill was still in a developmental phase that could be improved through Life Skill teaching in Grade 11 and 12.

When the teachers were asked if the Grade 10 learners had internalised the skills, they painted a different picture. They stated that 12.5% of the skills were not internalised, 37.5% of the skills were only slightly, 37.5% of the skills were mastered whilst another 12.5% of the skills were mastered well. Life Skills as a subject is never evaluated and thus confirmation of the above numbers is impossible. One would be inclined to rely more on the information supplied through the self-evaluation of the Grade 10 learner than the perceived guess of the teacher.

4.10.5 Comparison of boys with girls on the importance of Life Skills topics

In 70 % of the cases there was no significant difference in the responses of males and females as related to the importance of Life Skills with reference to the perception of the topics if you were male or female. The 30 % cases that did indicated significant differences between the perception of males or females mostly showed that the girls perceived the topics as more important than the boys.

The topics concerned teenage pregnancy, abortion, personal independence, social responsibility, facilitating personal growth, a successful study timetable and ability to seek and secure employment within your career choice. The only topic that showed statistical significant differences where the boys perceived the topics as more important was the topic relating to voting requirements and procedures. As stated before these differences might directly relate to developmental differences between boys and girls during adolescence with the girls showing quicker maturity and feelings of responsibility than boys at this age in general.

4.10.6 Comparison of boys with girls on the perception of the mastering the skills

In the research 78 % of the respondents showed that when it came to mastering the Life Skills topics there was no significant difference with reference to the perception of having mastered the topics if you were male or female. The 22 % of the cases that did indicate significant differences

between males or females all showed that the girls perceived to have mastered the topics better than the boys.

The topics that showed true differences were knowledge on teenage pregnancy, abortion, stress management, voting matters, unemployment and a successful study timetable. All of them were perceived as mastered better by the girls except the topic concerning voting matters. Here the boys had indicated that they mastered this skill better. As stated in the research result section this might directly relate to developmental differences between males and females during adolescence with the girls showing better maturity and feelings of responsibility than boys, at this age in general. It might even be the fact that girls are more likely to bear the consequences of teenage irresponsibility rather than boys.

4.10.7 Comparison of learners and teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics

In 81,5% of the cases there were no significant differences between learners and teachers concerning the importance of Life Skills topics. The 18.5% that indicated significant differences related to the topics of "safe home environment, abortion and birth control, personal independence and establishing a successful revision and exam timetable. Of these 18.5% significant cases, only 4% were learner's which believed it was important to know more about establishing a safe home environment. The other 14.5% indicated that the teachers perceived the skill to be more important than the learners. This can be a possible result due to the insight and knowledge that the teachers have gained thought adulthood and their own mistakes as well as their experience as a teacher.

To conclude the study one may infer that the topics and the skills associated with Life Skills, are definitely perceived as important by both the learners and the teachers. Even if there are slight differences in perception between the different genders or slight differences between the learners

and teachers, the teaching thereof should go ahead to its best ability to create better skilled Grade 10 learners for the Namibian society. It is advisable to continue researching the present status of the subject Life Skills as to ensure the mastering of the skills which were both perceived by the teachers and the learners as important, vital and beneficial.

5. CONCLUSION

This research showed that both the learners and the teachers perceived the topics of the Life Skills syllabus as important and meaningful. It would thus seem vital to ensure the acquisition of these skills. This, however, is not the case. The research finding showed that most of these skills are not fully mastered and internalized by the end of Grade 10. The reason for this could possibly be linked to the second hand status this subject has received since independence, the unqualified and over-loaded teachers and the ineffective and improper use of the teaching time set aside for its purpose. These findings may be used for a possible revision of the subject Life Skills. Here one may rectify the shortcoming and implement changes to enhance the acquisition of these important skills based on suggestions and ideas elicited both from learners and teachers.

The comparison between the boys and girls, or the learners and teachers showed slight significant differences in perception of importance of topics. These finding could benefit teachers and schools if they were informed of this. The teachers and educational institutions could find ways as to eradicate the shortcoming by using suggestions and ideas of the qualitative finding included in the research.

The research has highlighted the perception of learners and teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics in the Khomas region and may therefore have opened a platform for further research, may it be in other regions or trying to understand the poor acquisition of mastering these important skills.

TABLE 2: Learners perception on the importance and the ability to master the daily living skills

			PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT					PERCEIVED AS MASTERED				
		Not imp	Slightly	Important	Very imp	**Total**		Not imp	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q9.1	Management of family	30	63	96	146	**335**						
Q9.2	Finances							76	143	71	45	**335**
Q10.1	Management of home	66	66	84	119	**335**						
Q10.2	Skills							89	113	82	51	**335**
Q11.1	Responsible for	9	4	45	277	**335**						
Q11.2	Personal health							3	56	122	154	**335**
Q12.1	Maintaining home	5	22	92	216	**335**						
Q12.2	Safety							15	76	137	107	**335**
Q13.1	Teenage pregnancy	9	16	66	244	**335**						
Q13.2	Aspects							21	93	108	113	**335**
Q14.1	Dangers of abortion	21	30	74	210	**335**						
Q14.2								54	120	93	68	**335**
Q15.1	Stress management	10	42	124	159	**335**						
Q15.2								45	127	104	59	**335**
Q16.1	Marriage and its	63	70	92	110	**335**						
Q16.2	Responsibility							105	114	69	47	**335**
Q17.1	Child raising	45	57	81	152	**335**						
Q17.2	Responsibilities							73	131	74	57	**335**
Q18.1	Birth control methods	22	41	91	181	**335**						
Q18.2								50	116	95	74	**335**
Q19.1	Knowledge on voting	46	71	89	129	**335**						
Q19.2	Matters							134	92	60	49	**335**
TOTAL Nr	**Of learners responses**	**326**	**482**	**934**	**1943**	**3685**		**665**	**1181**	**1015**	**824**	**3685**

TABLE 3: Percentages of learners that perceived the daily living skills as important and mastered

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT						Perceived as mastered				
		Not important	Slightly imp	Important	Very imp	**Total**		Not mastered	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q9.1	Management of family	9	18.8	28.7	43.5	**100**						
Q9.2	Finances							22.7	42.7	21.2	13.4	**100**
Q10.1	Management of home	19.7	19.7	25.1	35.5	**100**						
Q10.2	Skills							26.6	33.7	24.5	15.2	**100**
Q11.1	Responsible for	2.7	1.2	13.4	82.7	**100**						
Q11.2	Personal health							0.9	16.7	36.4	46	**100**
Q12.1	Maintaining home	1.5	6.6	27.5	64.4	**100**						
Q12.2	Safety							4.5	22.7	40.9	31.9	**100**
Q13.1	Teenage pregnancy	2.7	4.8	19.7	72.8	**100**						
Q13.2	Aspects							6.3	27.8	32.2	33.7	**100**
Q14.1	Dangers of abortion	6.3	9	22.1	62.6	**100**						
Q14.2								16.1	35.8	27.8	20.3	**100**
Q15.1	Stress management	3	12.5	37	47.5	**100**						
Q15.2								13.4	37.9	31.1	17.6	**100**
Q16.1	Marriage and its	18.8	20.9	27.5	32.8	**100**						
Q16.2	Responsibility							31.3	34	20.7	14	**100**
Q17.1	Child raising	13.4	17	24.2	45.4	**100**						
Q17.2	Responsibilities							21.8	39.1	22.1	17	**100**
Q18.1	Birth control methods	6.6	12.2	27.2	54	**100**						
Q18.2								14.9	34.6	28.4	22.1	**100**
Q19.1	Knowledge on voting	13.7	21.2	26.6	38.5	**100**						
Q19.2	Matters							40	27.5	17.9	14.6	**100**
TOTAL	**% of learner response**	**9**	**13**	**25**	**53**	**100**		**18**	**32**	**28**	**22**	**100**

TABLE 4: Learners perception on the importance and the ability to master the personal and social skills

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT						PERCEIVED AS MASTERED				
		Not imp	Slightly	Important	Very imp	**Total**		Not mast	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q20.1	Gender roles	22	30	75	208	**335**						
Q20.2								19	56	89	171	**335**
Q21.1	Sexual responsibilities	22	15	95	203	**335**						
Q21.2								47	66	118	104	**335**
Q22.1	Social responsibilities	10	14	92	219	**335**						
Q22.2								18	52	141	124	**335**
Q23.1	Personal independence	29	50	87	169	**335**						
Q23.2								38	94	127	76	**335**
Q24.1	Good habits, positive	3	14	77	241	**335**						
Q24.2	Attitude and perseverance							10	75	132	118	**335**
Q25.1	Obtainable personal	10	20	87	218	**335**						
Q25.2	Goals							17	98	138	82	**335**
Q26.1	Sexual equality	25	29	73	208	**335**						
Q26.2								30	91	130	84	**335**
TOTAL NR of learner response		**121**	**172**	**586**	**1466**	**2345**		**179**	**532**	**875**	**759**	**2345**

TABLE 5: Percentages of learners that perceived the personal and social skills as important and mastered

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT						PERCEIVED AS MASTERED				
		Not important	Slightly imp	Important	Very imp	**Total**		Not mastered	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q20.1	Gender roles	6.6	9	22.4	62	**100**						
Q20.2								5.7	16.7	26.6	51	**100**
Q21.1	Sexual responsibilities	6.6	4.5	28.4	60.5	**100**						
Q21.2								14	19.7	35.3	31	**100**
Q22.1	Social responsibilities	3	4.2	27.5	65.3	**100**						
Q22.2								5.4	15.5	42.4	36.7	**100**
Q23.1	Personal independence	8.7	14.9	26	50.4	**100**						
Q23.2								11.3	28.1	37.9	22.7	**100**
Q24.1	Good habits, positive	0.9	4.2	23	71.9	**100**						
Q24.2	Attitude and perseverance							3	22.4	39.4	35.2	**100**
Q25.1	Obtainable personal	3	6	26	65	**100**						
Q25.2	Goals							5	29.3	41.2	24.5	**100**
Q26.1	Sexual equality	7.5	8.7	21.8	62	**100**						
Q26.2								9	27.2	38.8	25	**100**
TOTAL %	**of responses**	**5**	**7**	**25**	**63**	**100**		**8**	**23**	**37**	**32**	**100**

TABLE 6: Learners perception on the importance and ability to master the occupational guidance and preparedness skills

			PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT					PPERCEIVED AS MASTERED				
		Not mast.	Slightly	Important	Very Imp	**Total**		Not mast.	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q27.1	Career exploration	21	29	81	204	**335**						
Q27.2	and knowledge							59	142	82	52	**335**
Q28.1.	Select and plan	10	47	106	172	**335**						
Q28.2	Career							63	124	96	52	**335**
Q29.1	Habits and behavior	29	47	99	160	**335**						
Q29.2	of selected career							98	123	72	42	**335**
Q30.1	Act upon career	31	54	97	153	**335**						
Q30.2	Choice							98	118	76	43	**335**
Q31.1	Understand unemployment	15	36	84	200	**335**						
Q31.2	and its effects							50	104	79	102	**335**
Q32.1	Successful revision	7	17	58	253	**335**						
Q32.2	and study timetable							60	109	76	90	**335**
Q33.1	Acting upon uncertainty	22	27	90	196	**335**						
Q33.2								81	104	96	54	**335**
Q34.1	Subject choice guidance	9	32	91	203	**335**						
Q34.2	and advise							46	99	120	70	**335**
Q35.1	Knowledge on future	26	35	63	211	**335**						
Q35.2	educational institutions							83	120	65	67	**335**
TOTAL NR of learner response		**170**	**324**	**769**	**1752**	**3015**		**638**	**1043**	**762**	**572**	**3015**

TABLE 7: Percentages of learners that perceived the occupational guidance and preparedness skills as important and mastered

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT						PERCEIVED AS MASTERED				
		Not important	Slightly	Important	Very Imp	**Total**		Not mastered	Slightly	Mastered	Well mast.	**Total**
Q27.1	Career exploration	6.3	8.7	24.1	60.9	**100**						
Q27.2	and knowledge							17.6	42.4	24.5	15.5	**100**
Q28.1.	Select and plan	3	14	31.6	51.4	**100**						
Q28.2	career							18.8	37	28.7	15.5	**100**
Q29.1	Habits and behavior	8.7	14	29.6	47.7	**100**						
Q29.2	of selected career							29.3	36.7	21.8	12.2	**100**
Q30.1	Act upon career	9.3	16.1	29	45.6	**100**						
Q30.2	choice							29.3	35.2	22.7	12.8	**100**
Q31.1	Understand unemployment	4.5	10.7	25.1	59.7	**100**						
Q31.2	and its effects							15	31	23.6	30.4	**100**
Q32.1	Successful revision	2.1	5.1	17.3	75.5	**100**						
Q32.2	and study timetable							17.9	32.5	22.7	26.9	**100**
Q33.1	Acting upon uncertainty	6.6	8	26.9	58.5	**100**						
Q33.2								24.2	31	28.7	16.1	**100**
Q34.1	Subject choice guidance	2.7	9.5	27.2	60.6	**100**						
Q34.2	and advise							13.7	29.6	35.8	20.9	**100**
Q35.1	Knowledge on future	7.8	10.4	18.8	63	**100**						
Q35.2	Educational institutions							24.8	35.8	19.4	20	**100**
TOTAL % of responses		**5.5**	**11**	**25.5**	**58**	**100**		**21**	**35**	**25**	**19**	**100**

TABLE 8 : Teachers perception on importance of daily living skills

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT			
		Not imp	Slightly	Important	Very
Q11	Management of family finance	0	2	3	3
Q12	Management of home skills	0	4	1	3
Q13	Responsibility for personal health	0	0	1	7
Q14	Maintaining home safety	0	2	4	2
Q15	Teenage pregnancy aspects	0	0	0	8
Q16	Dangers of abortion	0	0	0	8
Q17	Stress management	0	1	2	5
Q18	Marriage and its responsibility	0	1	4	3
Q19	Child raising responsibilities	0	2	2	4
Q20	Birth control methods	0	0	1	7
Q21	Knowledge on voting matters	0	1	5	2
TOTAL NR of teacher responses		**0**	**13**	**23**	**52**
TOTAL NR of % perceived as important					

PERCENTAGE PEREIVED AS IMPORTANT			
Not imp	Slightly	Important	Very
0	25	37.5	37.5
0	50	12.5	37.5
0	12.5	12.5	87.5
0	25	50	25
0	0	0	100
0	0	0	100
0	12.5	25	62.5
0	12.5	50	37.5
0	25	25	50
0	0	12,5	87.5
0	12.5	62.5	25
0	**15**	**26**	**59**

TABLE 9 : Teachers perception on importance of personal and social skills

		PERCEIVED AS IMPOTANT			
		Not imp	Slightly	Important	Well
Q22	Gender roles	0	0	4	4
Q23	Sexual responsibilities	0	0	3	5
Q24	Social responsibilities	0	0	1	7
Q25	Personal independence	0	0	1	7
Q26	Good habits and attitude	0	1	1	6
Q27	Obtaining personal goals	0	0	3	5
Q28	Sexual equality	0	0	3	5
TOTAL NR of teacher responses		**0**	**1**	**19**	**44**
TOTAL NR of % perceived as important					

PERCENTAGE PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT			
Not imp	Slightly	Important	Well
0	0	50	50
0	0	37.5	62.5
0	0	12.5	87.5
0	0	12.5	87.5
0	12.5	12.5	75
0	0	37.6	62.5
0	0	37.5	62.5
0	**2**	**28.5**	**69.5**

TABLE 10 : Teachers perception on importance of occupational guidance and preparedness

		PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT			
		Not imp	Slightly	Important	Well
Q29	Explore and know about career	0	0	3	5
Q30	Select and plan career	0	1	1	6
Q31	Habits and behavior of career	0	1	4	3
Q32	Act upon career choice	0	1	3	4
Q33	Unemployment and its effects	0	1	2	5
Q34	Successful Revision timetable	0	0	2	6
Q35	Act upon uncertainly	0	0	3	5
Q36	Subject choice guidance	0	1	6	1
Q37	Know about educat. Institutions	0	0	4	4
TOTAL NR of teachers responses		**0**	**5**	**28**	**39**

PERCENTAGE PERCEIVED AS IMPORTANT			
Not imp	Slightly	Important	Well
0	0	37.5	62.5
0	12.5	12.5	75
0	12.5	50	37.5
0	12.5	37.5	50
0	12.5	25	62.5
0	0	25	75
0	0	37.5	62.5
0	12.5	75	12.5
0	0	50	50
0	**7**	**39**	**54**

TOTAL NR of % perceived as important

TABLE 11: Comparison of boys and girls on the importance of Life Skills topics

t-Test results on the importance of The daily living skills				**T-test results on the ability to master the daily living skills**			
Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance	Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance
9.1	Female	3	0.858	9.2	Female	2	0.433
	Male	3	0.855		Male	2	0.422
10.1	Female	2.7	0.037	10.2	Female	2.3	0.841
	Male	2.9	0.039		Male	2.3	0.839
11.1	Female	3.3	0.797	11.2	Female	3.3	0.67
	Male	3.3	0.787		Male	3.2	0.72
12.1	Female	3.6	0.241	12.2	Female	3	0.754
	Male	3.5	0.252		Male	3	0.757
13.1	Female	3.7	0	13.2	Female	3	0.031
	Male	3.5	0		Male	2.8	0.035
14.1	Female	3.5	0	14.2	Female	2.6	0.028
	Male	3.2	0		Male	2.4	0.027
15.1	Female	3.3	0.517	15.2	Female	2.5	0.688
	Male	3.3	0.523		Male	2.5	0.689
16.1	Female	2.8	0.527	16.2	Female	2.2	0.853
	Male	2.7	0.519		Male	2.2	0.854
17.1	Female	3.1	0.352	17.2	Female	2.5	0.01
	Male	3	0.349		Male	2.2	0.09
18.1	Female	3.3	0.174	18.2	Female	2.6	0.744
	Male	3.2	0.175		Male	2.6	0.745
19.1	Female	2.8	0.038	19.2	Female	1.9	0
	Male	3	0.036		Male	2.3	0
20.1	Female	3.4	0.883	20.1	Female	3.2	0.104
	Male	3.4	0.882		Male	3.3	0.109
21.1	Female	3.4	0.806	21.2	Female	2.7	0.065
	Male	3.4	0.805		Male	2.9	0.062

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

TABLE 12: Comparison of boys and girls on the importance of Life Skills topics

t-Test results on the importance of The personal and social skills

Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance
22.1	Female	3.6	0.68
	Male	3.5	0.674
23.1	Female	3.3	0.827
	Male	3.2	0.825
24.1	Female	3.7	0.001
	Male	3.5	0.002
25.1	Female	3.6	0.005
	Male	3.4	0.006
26.1	Female	3.5	0.002
	Male	3.2	0.002
27.1	Female	3.4	0.565
	Male	3.4	0.553
28.1	Female	3.3	0.781
	Male	3.3	0.776

T-test results on the ability to master the personal and social skills

Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance
22.2	Female	3	0.77
	Male	3	0.769
23.2	Female	2.7	0.773
	Male	2.7	0.774
24.2	Female	3.1	0.749
	Male	3.1	0.752
25.2	Female	2.9	0.552
	Male	2.8	0.552
26.2	Female	2.8.	0.246
	Male	2.7	0.242
27.2	Female	2.4	0.479
	Male	2.4	0.479
28.2	Female	2.4	0.998
	Male	2.4	0.998

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

TABLE 13: Comparison of boys and girls on the importance of Life Skills topics

t-Test results on the importance of Occupational preparedness				**T-test results on the ability to master Occupational preparedness**			
Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance	Question	Gender	Mean score	Significance
29.1	Female	3.2	0.105	29.2	Female	2.1	0.176
	Male	3.1	0.108		Male	2.3	0.172
30.1	Female	3.1	0.492	30.2	Female	2.2	0.896
	Male	3.1	0.497		Male	2.2	0.896
31.1	Female	3.4	0.45	31.2	Female	2.7	0.58
	Male	3.4	0.456		Male	2.7	0.576
32.1	Female	3.8	0.01	32.2	Female	2.6	0.397
	Male	3.6	0.02		Male	2.5	0.386
33.1	Female	3.4	0.311	33.2	Female	2.5	0.001
	Male	3.3	0.315		Male	2.2	0.001
34.1	Female	3.5	0.037	34.2	Female	2.7	0.018
	Male	3.4	0.039		Male	2.4	0.016
35.1	Female	3.4	0.435	35.2	Female	2.4	0.377
	Male	3.3	0.43		Male	2.3	0.371

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

TABLE 14: Comparison of learners and teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics

t-Test results on the daily living skills

Question	Group	Mean score	Significance
11	Learner	3.1	0.873
	Teacher	3.1	0.856
12	Learner	2.8	0.785
	Teacher	2.9	0.764
13	Learner	3.8	0.605
	Teacher	3.9	0.414
14	Learner	3.5	0.026
	Teacher	3	0.08
15	Learner	3.6	0.134
	Teacher	4	0
16	Learner	3.4	0.064
	Teacher	4	0
17	Learner	3.3	0.461
	Teacher	3.5	0.461
18	Learner	2.7	0.196
	Teacher	3.3	0.83
19	Learner	3	0.542
	Teacher	3.3	0.483
20	Learner	3.3	0.072
	Teacher	3.9	0.002
21	Learner	2.9	0.551
	Teacher	3.1	0.362

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

GRAPH 15: Comparison of learners and teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics

t-Test result of the personal and social skills

Question	Group	Mean score	Significance
22	Learner	3.4	0.756
	Teacher	3.5	0.623
23	Learner	3.4	0.521
	Teacher	3.6	0.332
24	Learner	3.6	0.204
	Teacher	3.9	0.038
25	Learner	3.2	0.048
	Teacher	3.9	0
26	Learner	3.7	0.873
	Teacher	3.6	0.899
27	Learner	3.5	0.723
	Teacher	3.6	0.631
28	Learner	3.4	0.467
	Teacher	3.6	0.241

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

GRAPH 16: Comparison of learners and teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics

t =Test results on occupational guidance and preparedness

Question	Group	Mean score	Significance
29	learner	3.4	0.471
	teacher	3.6	0.263
30	learner	3.3	0.29
	teacher	3.6	0.279
31	learner	3.2	0.798
	teacher	3.3	0.739
32	learner	3.1	0.453
	teacher	3.4	0.355
33	learner	3.4	0.742
	teacher	3.5	0.723
34	learner	3.7	0.715
	teacher	3.8	0.617
35	learner	3.6	0.426
	teacher	3.3	0.22
36	learner	3.5	0.175
	teacher	3.9	0.31
37	learner	3.4	0.702
	teacher	3.5	0.526

Predetermined criterion is 95%

1 = NOT IMPORTANT
2 = SLIGHTLY
3 = IMPORTANT
4 = VERY IMPORTANT

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APPENDICES

A.	List of Khomas region schools	Appendix 1
B.	List of stratified sampling of schools	Appendix 2
C.	Letters of transmittal	Appendix 3 - 6
D.	Research questionnaire for learners	Appendix 7
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Appendix 3

P O Box 8526
Windhoek
NAMIBIA
18 September 2003

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

Dear Ms. Katoma

RE: Research Project – MASTERS IN EDUCATION – UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Currently I am enrolled as a student at UNAM for the Degree Masters in Education, Student number 9006710. I have successfully completed the theoretical exams for this degree and am now in the process of finalising my research to complete my studies.

Under the apt wings of my mentors, Prof. Zimba and Dr. Mostert (Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education), I believe that a valuable research for the field of Education, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and its establishments, represents itself under the topic" The perception of our Grade 10 learners on the importance of Life Skills and its topics as presented by our curriculum and syllabus".

My reasons behind this research is

- as shown by the survey and mission report of Mr. B. Staines in 2001 it would seem that this subject although vital to our Namibian learners, is somewhat neglected and one may not be sure of the impact it has on our Namibian learners in its present status.
- That no research has ever been done in this respect even though it could lead to great discoveries and/or improvements within this field of study and therefore also to our society and country.
- To highlight once more the importance of Life Skills and to see if in its present status the subject can do justice to its rationale, aims and objectives.
- That after an in-depth conversation with Mrs. MHW Eckleben, Mr. Grobbelar and NIED (Sam) concerning Life Skills and its implementation, which, together with a personal interest in the subject, can create a possible positive outcome for the Namibian future.

Due to limitations of financial resources, I have restricted the study to the Khomas region. With this in mind I contacted the Regional Director, Mr. Omeb, who kindly forwarded me with a list of all the educational institutions, senior schools only, within this region. (This list not only included governmental institutions but also the private schools) Based on this information and using random sampling, the following schools were elected for this study:

1. Academia SS
2. JJ Afrikaner SS
3. Centaurus SS
4. Delta SS
5. Van Rhyn Project School
6. J Marengo Tut. College and
7. Windhoek International School

In order for me to continue with this research, I have a questionnaire, which 350 learners and their respective teachers, selected from the above schools would have to complete. (This fulfils the requirements of a 10% representative sample). The questionnaire will consider the following elements of the Life Skills subject:

- Personal information about the learners/teachers and their attitude towards the subject,

- How the learners/teachers perceive this subject in guiding them towards skilled adults and Namibian citizens,
- How valuable and important the different topics are rated,
- Are the three different competencies taught and are they working for the individual, and
- Valued input by learners/teachers though suggestions and ideas.

Attached please find an example of this questionnaire.

Before contacting the schools to arrange for the distribution of the questionnaire, I require your approval and hence this letter. It would therefore, be greatly appreciated if you could approve this urgent request.

As I intend to complete the response of my questionnaires by the 3 October 2003, your prompt response would be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Yours faithfully.

Mrs. Heidi B Spinas
Tel: 225718
Mobile: 081 262 0448

Appendix 4

P O Box 8526
Windhoek
NAMIBIA
18 September 2003

The Regional Director
Windhoek Region
Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
Private Bag 13236
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

Dear Ms. C Tjikuua

RE: Research Project – MASTERS IN EDUCATION – UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Currently I am enrolled as a student at UNAM for the Degree Masters in Education, Student number 9006710. I have successfully completed the theoretical exams for this degree and am now in the process of finalising my research to complete my studies.

Under the apt wings of my mentors, Prof. Zimba and Dr. Mostert (Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education), I believe that a valuable research for the field of Education, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and its establishments, represents itself under the topic" The perception of our Grade 10 learners on the importance of Life Skills and its topics as presented by our curriculum and syllabus".

My reasons behind this research is

- as shown by the survey and mission report of Mr. B. Staines in 2001 it would seem that this subject although vital to our Namibian learners, is somewhat neglected and one may not be sure of the impact it has on our Namibian learners in its present status.
- That no research has ever been done in this respect even though it could lead to great discoveries and/or improvements within this field of study and therefore also to our society and country.
- To highlight once more the importance of Life Skills and to see if in its present status the subject can do justice to its rationale, aims and objectives.
- That after an in-depth conversation with Mrs. MHW Eckleben, Mr. Grobbelar and NIED (Sam) concerning Life Skills and its implementation, which, together with a personal interest in the subject, can create a possible positive outcome for the Namibian future.

Due to limitations of financial resources, I have restricted the study to the Khomas region. With this in mind I contacted the Regional Director, Mr. Omeb, who kindly forwarded me with a list of all the educational institutions, senior schools only, within this region. (This list not only included governmental institutions but also the private schools) Based on this information and using random sampling, the following schools were elected for this study:

1. Academia SS
2. Jan Jonker Afrikaner SS
3. Centaurus SS
4. Delta SS
5. Van Rhyn Project School
6. J Marengo Tut. College and
7. Windhoek International College

In order for me to continue with this research, I have a questionnaire, which 350 learners and their respective teachers, selected from the above schools would have to complete. (This fulfils the requirements of a 10% representative sample). The questionnaire will consider the following elements of the Life Skills subject:

- Personal information about the learners/teachers and their attitude towards the subject,
- How the learners/teachers perceive this subject in guiding them towards skilled adults and Namibian citizens,
- How valuable and important the different topics are rated,
- Are the three different competencies taught and are they working for the individual, and
- Valued input by learners/teachers though suggestions and ideas.

Attached please find an example of this questionnaire.

Before contacting the schools to arrange for the distribution of the questionnaire, I require your approval and hence this letter. It would therefore, be greatly appreciated if you could approve this urgent request.

As I intend to complete the response of my questionnaires by the 3 October 2003, your prompt response would be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Yours faithfully.

Mrs. Heidi B Spinas
Tel: 225718
Mobile: 081 262 0448

APPENDIX 5

P O Box 8526
Windhoek
NAMIBIA
4 September 2003

The Proposal Committee
UNAM
Private Bag 13301
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

Dear Sirs,

RE: Research Project – MASTERS IN EDUCATION – UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Currently I am enrolled as a student at UNAM for the Degree Masters in Education, Student number 9006710. I have successfully completed the theoretical exams for this degree and am now in the process of finalising my research to complete my studies.

Under the apt wings of my mentors, Prof. Zimba and Dr. Mostert (Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education), I believe that a valuable research for the field of Education, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture and its establishments, represents itself under the topic" The perception of our Grade 10 learners on the importance of Life Skills and its topics as presented by our curriculum and syllabus".

My reasons behind this research is

- as shown by the survey and mission report of Mr. B. Staines in 2001 it would seem that this subject although vital to our Namibian learners, is somewhat neglected and one may not be sure of the impact it has on our Namibian learners in its present status.
- That no research has ever been done in this respect even though it could lead to great discoveries and/or improvements within this field of study and therefore also to our society and country.
- To highlight once more the importance of Life Skills and to see if in its present status the subject can do justice to its rationale, aims and objectives.
- That after an in-depth conversation with Mrs. MHW Eckleben, Mr. Grobbelar and NIED (Sam) concerning Life Skills and its implementation, which, together with a personal interest in the subject, can create a possible positive outcome for the Namibian future.

Due to limitations of financial resources, I have restricted the study to the Khomas region. With this in mind I contacted the Regional Director, Mr. Omeb, who kindly forwarded me with a list of all the educational institutions, senior schools only, within this region. (This list not only included governmental institutions but also the private schools) Based on this information and using random sampling, the following schools were elected for this study:

1. Academia
2. JJ Afrikaner Secondary School
3. Centaurus Secondary School
4. Delta Secondary School
5. Van Rhyn Project School
6. J Marengo and
7. Windhoek International School (private)

In order for me to continue with this research, I have a questionnaire, which 350 learners and their respective teachers, selected from the above schools would have to complete. (This fulfils the requirements of a 10% representative sample). The questionnaire will consider the following elements of the Life Skills subject:

- Personal information about the learners/teachers and their attitude towards the subject,
- How the learners/teachers perceive this subject in guiding them towards skilled adults and Namibian citizens,
- How valuable and important the different topics are rated,
- Are the three different competencies taught and are they working for the individual, and
- Valued input by learners though suggestions and ideas.

Attached please find an example of this questionnaire.

Before contacting the schools to arrange for the distribution of the questionnaire, I require your approval and hence this letter. It would therefore, be greatly appreciated if you could approve this urgent request.

As I intend to complete the response of my questionnaires by the 3 October 2003, your prompt response would be highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Yours faithfully.

Mrs. Heidi B Spinas
Tel: 225718
Mobile: 081 262 0448
Fax: 2993528

Appendix 6 (example only)

P.O. Box 8526
Windhoek
NAMIBIA
26 September 2003

The Principal
Concordia
P. Bag 262002
Windhoek
NAMIBIA

Dear Mrs. Van Rooyen and Mrs. Reed,

RE: Research Project – Master of Education – University of Namibia

Currently I am enrolled as a student at UNAM and am in the process of completing my Masters of Education degree. To this purpose, I have elected to research "The perception of an Grade 10 learner on the importance of Life Skills and its topics as presented by our curriculum and syllabus.

This research will be restricted to the Khomas region and the following schools have been randomly selected for this study:

1. Augustineum SS
2. Jan Jonker Afrikaner SS
3. Centaurus SS
4. Concordia College
5. Van Rhyn Project School
6. J Marengo Tut. College and
7. Windhoek International School

My intention is to supply questionnaires to your grade 10 learners, 2 classes, and their respective teachers for completion during the week 29 September to 3 October 2003, which I believe can be completed during a Life Skills lesson so as not to disturb other classes. I intend calling on you to set the respective dates and times, which are most suitable to yourself. The results of the research will be made available to your school, should you request it, once the research has been accepted by UNAM.

Please, find letters of approval from the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, The Regional Office and UNAM approving this research.

I trust this request will be accepted positively and look forward to meeting with you early September i.e. shortly after the holiday.

Yours faithfully

Mrs.H.B.SPINAS
Fax 2995328
Tel:225718/081262044

Please answer the following questionnaire by crossing **only one** of the answers provided. The use of a pencil is compulsory.

Personal information

Q 1: Age (as at 31 August 2003) ----------

Q2: Gender

Female	Male
1	2

Q3: Do you believe it is necessary for a Grade 10 learner to receive one to one counselling with their Life Skills teacher should they require such services?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Q4: Have you ever referred a problem (personal, social or academic) to your Life Skills teacher?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Q5: If yes to the above, have you received individual counselling (one on one) from your Life Skills teacher during school?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Q6: If yes to Q4, have you received individual counselling (one to one) from your Life Skills teacher after school hours?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Q7: If yes to Q4, have you ever received counselling that included your parents, friends or guardians from your life Skills teacher?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always

1	2	3	4

Q8: During Life Skills classes, are you and/or your classmates allowed to do other work e.g. study, homework, etc, other than receive Life Skills education?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Daily Living Skills for a Grade 10 learner as per set curriculum

Please note that for questions 9 to 35 the scales are as follows:

For part 1: 1=least important/useful; 2=slightly important/useful; 3=important/useful; 4=very important/useful

For part 2: 1=not mastered; 2=slightly mastered; 3=mastered; 4=well mastered

Q9.1 How important do you believe, it is to understand how to manage family finances, which include opening bank accounts, recording transactions, obtaining loans, etc?

1	2	3	4

Q9.2 To what extent do you believe you have mastered the above skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q10.1 Do you believe the basic skills needed to buy, manage and maintain a home is useful?

1	2	3	4

Q10.2 To what extent do you believe you have mastered the above skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q11.1 Do you believe it is important to be responsible for one's own health?

1	2	3	4

Q11.2 To what extent do you believe you have mastered the above skill?

1	2	3	4

Q12.1 How important do you believe it is to learn how to apply safety procedures when maintaining a home?

1	2	3	4

Q12.2 To what extent do you believe you have mastered the above skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q13.1 How important is it that you understand the positive and negative aspects of teenage pregnancies?

1	2	3	4

Q13.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered the above skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q14.1 Understanding the dangers of abortion is important at your age. How important do you believe this statement to be?

1	2	3	4

Q14.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q15.1 Do You feel it is important to know about stress and how to successfully manage it at your age?

1	2	3	4

Q15.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q16.1 How important do you believe is classroom discussions about the union of marriage and the responsibilities that come with marriage?

1	2	3	4

Q16.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q17.1 Do you feel it is important to know about the responsibilities of child raising?

1	2	3	4

Q17.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q18.1 Understanding various methods of birth control is important in today's society.
How important do you believe it to be?

1	2	3	4

Q18.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q19.1 Do you believe it is important to understand voting requirements and procedures in Namibia?

1	2	3	4

Q19.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Personal – Social Skills for a Grade 10 learner as per the set curriculum

Q20.1 How important is to understand gender roles in life? (Gender roles refer to behaving like a female or male is expected to behave within a society)

1	2	3	4

Q20.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q21.1 Understanding the sexual responsibilities of males and females in society is important.
How important do you believe it to be?

1	2	3	4

Q21.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q22.1 During your school career, how important has social responsibility e.g. borrowing and returning items, respecting others and their properties, been to you?

1	2	3	4

Q22.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q23.1 Do you believe it is important to have achieved personal independence though making one' own choices and bearing the consequences thereof?

1	2	3	4

Q23.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q24.1 How important are good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance to facilitate personal growth?

1	2	3	4

Q24.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q25.1 The ability to set reachable personal goals and act there on is a necessary skill.
How important do you believe this statement to be?

1	2	3	4

Q25.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q26.1 How important do you believe equality among sexes to be?

1	2	3	4

Q26.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered and accepted this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Occupational guidance and preparedness for Grade 10 learners as per set Curriculum.

Q27.1 How important is it to know and explore the various career opportunities available?

1	2	3	4

Q27.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q28.1 Should all the various career opportunities be available, how important is it to be able to select and plan for one or more of these opportunities?

1	2	3	4

Q28.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q29.1 Each career opportunity displays different work habits and behaviour. How important is it to understand these habits and behaviour?

1	2	3	4

Q29.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q30.1 Once a Grade 10 learner has selected a career, how important is it for him/her to know how to seek and secure employment within his/her choice?

1	2	3	4

Q30.1 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q31.1 Unemployment is a major economic problem for Namibia and many other countries in the world. How important is it to understand this problem and the effect of unemployment on the individual?

1	2	3	4

Q31.1 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q32.1 How important is it to have the ability to set-up a successful revision and study timetable for every subject for your final exams?

1	2	3	4

Q32.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q33.1 As not all Grade 10 learners are certain about their future careers, how important do you believe it is to understand and act upon this or other uncertainty?

1	2	3	4

Q33.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q34.1 How important, do you believe it is, to be advised and guided into choosing the most suitable subjects for your career choice?

1	2	3	4

Q34.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

Q35.1 There are many institutions, which offer future academic and vocational studies once you have completed Grade 12. How important is it to know about these institutions and their causes?

1	2	3	4

Q35.2 To what extent do you believe to have mastered this skill?

1	*2*	*3*	*4*

General information

Q36 Describe in you own words how you believe the above aspects of Life Skills and the teaching there of, can be altered to ensure that you can acquire these skills?

-
_____
-
_____
-
_____
-
_____
-
_____

Thank you very much for your valued input into this research!

Please answer the following questionnaire by crossing **only one** of the answers provided. The use of a pencil is compulsory.
Teachers Questionnaire

Personal Information

Q1: Do you have formal training in Life Skills teaching through a university, a college or technicon?

Yes	No
1	2

Q2: Have you received any training in Life Skills through workshops relevant to this subject?

Yes	No
1	2

Q3: How many years have you been teaching Life Skill or Career Guidance and counselling?

0 -1	2 - 4	5 - 8	8+
1	2	3	4

Q4: How long have you been teaching Life Skills in Grade 10?

0 -1	2 - 4	5 - 8	8+
1	2	3	4

Q5: How much of your teaching task concerns Life Skills teaching?

0 - 25%	26 - 50%	51 –75%	78 –100%
1	2	3	4

Q6: Do you teach along the specification as set out by the Grade 10 syllabus supplied by the Ministry of Basic Education, Culture and Sport for Life Skills?

Yes	No
1	2

Q7: Do you enjoy your task as a Life Skills teacher?

Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4

Q8: The questionnaire of the learners focuses on the objectives and aims of the Life Skills Syllabus in Grade 10. How many of the numerous skills required by the learners, do you feel, would, an average learner internalises before completing Grade 10?

0 - 25%	26 - 50%	51 –75%	78 –100%
1	2	3	4

Q9: How much of your teaching time is spent on personal counselling for Grade 10 learners?

0 - 25%	26 - 50%	51 –75%	78 –100%
1	2	3	4

Q10: Gender

Female	Male
1	2

Daily Living Skills for a Grade 10 learner as per set curriculum
Please note that for questions 11 to 37 the scales are as follows:
1=least important/useful; 2=slightly important/useful; 3=important/useful; 4=very important/useful

Q11 How important do you believe, it is for the learner to understand how to manage family finances, which include opening bank accounts, recording transactions, obtaining loans, etc?

1	2	3	4

Q12 Do you believe the basic skills needed to buy, manage and maintain a home is useful for the learner?

1	2	3	4

Q13 Do you believe it is important for the learners to be responsible for their own health?

1	2	3	4

Q14 How important do you believe it is for the learners to learn how to apply safety procedures when maintaining a home?

1	2	3	4

Q15 How important is it that the learners understand the positive and negative aspects of teenage pregnancies?

1	2	3	4

Q16 Understanding the dangers of abortion for learners is important at their age.
How important do you believe this statement to be?

1	2	3	4

Q17 Do you feel it is important for learners to know about stress and how to successfully manage it at their age?

1	2	3	4

Q18 How important do you believe is classroom discussions about the union of marriage and the responsibilities that come with marriage?

1	2	3	4

Q19 Do you feel it is important for your learners to know about the responsibilities of child raising?

1	2	3	4

Q20 Understanding various methods of birth control is important in today's society.
How important do you believe it to be for your learners?

1	2	3	4

Q21 Do you believe it is important for the learners to understand voting requirements and procedures in Namibia?

1	2	3	4

Personal – Social Skills for a Grade 10 learner as per the set curriculum

Q22 How important is it to understand gender roles in life? (Gender roles refer to behaving like a female or male is expected to behave in a society?

1	2	3	4

Q23 Understanding the sexual responsibilities of males and females in society is important.
How important do you believe it to be for the learners?

1	2	3	4

Q24 During the learner's school career, how important is social responsibility e.g. borrowing and returning items, respecting others and their properties?

1	2	3	4

Q25 Do you believe it is important for the learners to have achieved personal independence though making their own choices and bearing the consequences thereof?

1	2	3	4

Q26 How important are good habits, a positive attitude and perseverance to facilitate personal growth in learners?

1	2	3	4

Q27 The ability to set reachable personal goals and act there on is a necessary skill. How important do you believe this statement to be with respect to your learners?

1	2	3	4

Q28 How important do you believe equality among sexes to be for your learners?

1	2	3	4

Occupational guidance and preparedness for Grade 10 learners as per set Curriculum.

Q29 How important is it for your learners to know and explore the various career opportunities?

1	2	3	4

Q30 Should all the various career opportunities be available, how important is it for the learner to be able to select and plan for one or more of these opportunities?

1	2	3	4

Q31 Each career opportunity displays different work habits and behavior.
How important is it for the learner to understand these habits and behavior?

1	2	3	4

Q32 Once a Grade 10 learner has selected a career, how important is it for him/her to know how to seek and secure employment within his/her choice?

1	2	3	4

Q33 Unemployment is a major economic problem for Namibia and many other countries in the world. How important is it for your learner to understand this problem and the effect of unemployment on the individual?

1	2	3	4

Q34 How important is it for the learners to have the ability to set-up a successful revision and study timetable for every subject for their final exams?

1	2	3	4

Q35 As not all Grade 10 learners are certain about their future careers, how important do you believe it is for the learner to understand and act upon this or other uncertainty?

1	2	3	4

Q36 How important, do you believe it is for the learner, to be advised and guided into choosing the most suitable subjects for their career choice?

1	2	3	4

Q37 There are many institutions, which offer future academic and vocational studies once you, have completed Grade 12. How important is it for the learner to know about these institutions and their causes?

1	2	3	4

General information

Q38 Describe in you own words how you believe the above aspects of Life Skills and the teaching there of, can be altered to ensure that the learners can acquire these skills?

-
_____
-
_____
-
_____
-
_____
-
_____

Thank you very much for your valued input into this research!

APPENDIX 2

Stratified Sample selection of senior secondary school: 1 Private Schools
2. Government Schools

1.	Private Schools		2.	Government Schools	
Nr.	**School**	**Sample nr.**	**Nr**	**School**	**Sample nr.**
10	DHPS (1)	4	21	Academia SS (1)	1 and 4
26	W Int. School (1)	1	22	Concordia (1)	2
13	WAP School (2)	2	23	D Bezuid. School (1)	3
26	St. Paul's (3)	3	24	Goreangab (1)	4
			25	J J Afr. (1)	1
			27	Hage Geingob (1)	2
			22	WHS (2)	3
			23	A. Shipena (2)	4
			24	Centaurus (2)	1
			26	Eldorado (2)	2
			03	Groot Aub (3)	3
			10	Baumgartbrun (3)	4
			15	Delta (3)	1
			16	Augustineum (3)	2
			17	Cosmos (3)	3
			18	W Tech. School (3)	4
			20	Van Rhyn Project (3)	1
			21	Jan Mohr (3)	2
			22	Ella Du Plessis (3)	3
			23	I Shifidi (3)	4
			24	J Marengo Tut. Coll. (3)	1
			25	St. Josephs (3)	2
			27	Emma Project School	3

Samples Elected were Number 1 therefore:
Academia
Jan Jonker Afr
Centaurus
Delta
Van Rhyn Project
J Marengo
Windhoek International School

School replaced Academia by Concordia
Delta by Augustineum

ACCRONYMS

UNESCO - United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

NIED - National Institute of Educational Development

WHO - World Health Organisation

UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

HIV - Human Immune Deficiency Virus

AIDS - Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

SAVEGA - South African Guidance and Education Association

EMIS - Education Management Information System

UNAM - University of Namibia

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I testify that the Research Project on "The perception of Grade 10 learners and their teachers on the importance of Life Skills topics in the Khomas" was completed by the author below, as student of the University of Namibia. This is the original work of the author, except where references are made and all references are accurately reported.

Signature of Student/Author

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

MY CHILDREN: Marc and Nicole
and Lars
MY MOTHER: Lucy (Lotti)

For their tireless support, love and patience during my study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to all authors of work quoted in this piece of work. If mistakes are found with reference to the quoted work, I am accountable for all misunderstandings and misinterpretations of their ideas, concepts and principles.

Furthermore I would like to thank all teachers who helped me obtain the necessary educational foundations. A special thanks to Dr L Mostert and Professor Zimba who offered me guidance throughout my study. Without their encouragement, support and assistance I would not have accomplished my studies.

I would like to show my appreciation to useful contributions made by teachers and their learners who participated in this study by way of responding to the study questionnaire or interviews and thus providing useful information. This contribution enabled the researcher to reach the conclusions of this study.

My immense gratitude goes to my children and mother. Their love and support extended to me during this study is not measurable. They stood by me and kept encouraging me though words and deeds and kept the computer up and running.

Finally, I thank God for his strength, guidance and wisdom though out my studies and life.

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Title of research proposal: "*Perceptions of Namibian Grade 10 learners and their Teachers in the Khomas region on the importance of Life Skills Topics as proposed by the National Curriculum of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture."*

August 2004

Name: Heidi Spinas

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

Chapter 1 deals with the importance of Life Skills education in our Education System in enhancing effective development of a variety of Life Skills when preparing the learner for maturity and adulthood. After reviewing the results of a national survey on Life Skills as a statutory subject, published by Staines (2001a) it seemed Life Skills as a subject was found wanting. It therefore seemed important to establish how effective this school subject was in achieving its aims and objectives as established by a sound constructed, reformed national Life Skills curriculum (1995).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Considering the limited time allowed for this subject and often, unqualified teachers utilised for this task, the research statement then focused on the following problem. The perception of the Grade 10 learners and their teachers in the Khomas region on the importance of Life Skills topics as proposed by the National curriculum of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture. It would also try to establish in how far the learners have evaluated themselves in mastering the skills they were taught or had obtained through socialisation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study is to determine the learners' perception on the importance of Life Skills topics and the mastering thereof, as well as the teachers' perception of the importance of the Life Skills topics. Thereafter a correlation between the teachers' and learners' perception on the importance of the Life Skills topics, as well as a gender perception on the importance/mastering of the Life Skills topics will be determined.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Due to the lack of research in this field of education the researcher found it wise to conduct this study. It is hoped that this study might help educators understand the importance of the Life Skills topics and the mastering thereof. It might help in future policy formulation and planning and in assisting teachers and schools when implementing the topics of the Grade 10 Life Skills curriculum.

LITERATRE REVIEW

The concept of Life Skills was defined. Important views and opinions concerning the importance and effectiveness of this subject were covered. The literature covered considered International, American and European viewpoints, then it considered African aspects and input and lastly it concentrated on the implementation, aim and objectives in Namibia. It became apparent that few research studies have been done in Namibia with reference to the perception on the importance of the Life Skills topics or the mastering thereof. Since no local studies had been undertaken concerning this topic, this study aims to fill this gap.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will be descriptive and explanatory in that it will describe how learners and teachers perceive the importance and/or mastering of the Life Skills topics through questionnaires. The study will use qualitative data through open-ended questions directed at learners and teachers and interviews held only with learners. The participants are the Grade 10 learners and their respective teachers in the Khomas region. To obtain validity of representation 7 school with the minimum number of 332 learners would be

questioned at the schools convenience. Data collected would be transferred to summery sheets and responses to open-ended questions would be analyzed through descriptive analysis. The strength of the relationship on the importance of perception between the learners and their respective teachers or the different genders would be determined by the correlation coefficient.