

The Role of Life Orientation Teachers in Promoting Career Guidance and Counselling for Secondary School Learners

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ABSTRACT This paper assessed the role of Life Orientation (LO) teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling for secondary school learners. A case-study design within qualitative approach purposively selected 12 LO teachers and 12 learners from Grade 10 to 12 in six secondary schools to participate in the study. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions and was thematically analysed. The study found that despite understanding their roles, LO teachers still lack the necessary skills to fully provide learners with relevant knowledge to choose careers that match their subjects of specialisation. The study revealed that teachers experience challenges such as lack of training, lack of support from different stakeholders, and negative attitudes towards the subject by both learners and LO teachers. A major recommendation was that the Department of the Basic Education should appoint competent staff to tackle the unique academic, psychosocial and career glitches faced by learners in schools.

INTRODUCTION

The study focused on the role played by Life Orientation teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling among secondary school learners in Limpopo Province in South Africa. Life Orientation teachers are also referred to as school counsellors, guidance teachers, vocational counsellors, career counsellors or counsellors, and hence, the terms will be used interchangeably. It was essential to conduct such a study because through Career Guidance and Counselling, learners are fortified for evocative and prosperous living in a briskly changing and transmuting society. For decades, in South African schools, career counselling has been compromised by apartheid philosophy, dearth of trained teachers in school guidance and counselling, under-equipped schools, and the low ranking afforded to Career Guidance and Counselling (Maree and van der Westhuizen 2011; Maree 2013). Presently, learners are neither exposed nor informed about wide-ranging Career Guidance and Counselling, and they still make careers choices without the guidance from parents and teachers.

Background

Before 1994, the Department of Education (DoE) offered school guidance as a non-examin-

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able subject because it focused much on occupational education, character building and socially appropriate behaviour (Magano 2011). In 1995, the National Education Department placed a suspension on the use of psychological examinations in schools, where learners from affluent families were assessed by private psychologists to assist them on subject and career choices. However, this service was not available for learners from low socio-economic backgrounds (Maree 2013).

After 1994, the same subject was introduced as the Life Orientation (LO) programme to provide necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values to learners for them to achieve specific educational goals (Pillay 2012). This new learning area was a result of the incorporation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE 2003; Roux 2013). The aim was to introduce a subject that incorporated and replaced subjects like the Guidance, Vocational Guidance and Physical Education in the current learning system (Roux 2013). Life Orientation became mandatory for all schools and was customised to meet the needs and concerns of learners in preparation for life's responsibilities and possibilities (DoE 2004). Teachers used LO periods to cover up their syllabus in the other subject areas or sometimes learners used it to do their homework. According to the DoE (2003), Life Orientation teachers are expected to possess a body of knowledge on a variety of subjects or focus areas as pro-

posed by the specific outcomes. However, LO is still regarded as less important in South African schools due to teachers who lack the necessary skills in the subject (Magano 2011).

According to Rooth (2005) and Jacobs (2011), LO was introduced as part of curriculum transformation to equip learners with proper knowledge to make the right career choice. Its main objective was also to educate the learner about healthy living, and to develop responsible and productive young people. A comprehensive Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document was designed for every learning programme and subject evaluation strategies in Grades R to 12 including LO (DoE 2011). According to the DoE (2003), LO is meant to address the personal, psychological, cognitive, physical, moral, cultural and social career in the development of the learner. Teaching and counselling are critical for the development of learners and this requires extensive guidance from educators to overcome peer pressure (Satheke 2014). The teaching of Career Guidance and Counselling is therefore as significant as the teaching of all other subject areas in the school curriculum, as it provides secondary school learners with ample information on different careers available in different higher institutions of learning in South Africa (DoE 2004).

According to Magano (2012), LO was introduced in schools specifically to prepare learners to survive with the complexities of the vibrant life in the 21st century. Several studies conducted (WHO 1999; Bandura et al. 2001; DoE 2003; Shumba and Naong 2012) illustrate that

new learners worldwide usually face difficulties in making decisions on the right career choices. Furthermore, choosing and planning for a career have become critical issues in life, particularly to teenagers due to a myriad of educational opportunities and extremely competitive and drastic changes in the labour market (Tallib et al. 2010). The failure to make career options emanates from lack of appropriate Career Guidance and Counselling in schools, which leads to high failure rates and dropouts in tertiary institutions. It is, therefore, imperative to assess the role of LO teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling in secondary schools in Limpopo Province of South Africa, to determine how teachers and learners view LO as a developmental aid to their career path in South Africa.

Theoretical Framework

The current study was informed by Donald Super's (1953) developmental theory. Super's developmental theory proposes that career selection and development are basically processes of emerging and implementing an individual's self-concept. The basis of the theory is that individuals first construct a career self-concept during adolescence (Super 1953). Table 1 outlines the tenets of the theory.

Super's (1953) developmental theory outlines the levels as follows:

1. Individuals differ among themselves regarding their capabilities, interests, personal qualities and values.
2. The diverse careers that demand a distinctive pattern or profile of aptitudes,

Table 1: Traditional approach to developmental theory

<i>Growth beginning at birth</i>	<i>Exploration around age 14</i>	<i>Establishment around age 25</i>	<i>Maintenance around age 44</i>	<i>Decline around age 60 and up</i>
Development of self-concepts through identifying with key figures in family. Begins to learn behaviors associated with self-help, social interaction, self-direction, goal setting and persistence.	Self-examination, role try-outs, and exploration of occupations begin to take place in school, during leisure activities and part-time work.	The individual has found his/her permanent and appropriate field of work. These years are the most productive and creative years of the life span.	The individual has already made a place in the world of work, now the concern is to hold on it,	During this stage, there is a physical and/ or mental power decline. Work activity changes or ceases. The individual gradually involves him/herself in other life roles

Adopted from Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

- interests and definite personality traits from the prospective practitioner.
3. Job-related preferences, dexterities and living situations of persons, and resultantly, their self-concepts, transformation with time and experience, and therefore, occupational selection and adjustment becomes an on-going practice.
4. This development happens in a series of life stages or phases, namely, growth, exploration, settlement, preservation and deterioration.
5. Finally, the person's career design is determined by his or her parents' socio-economic status, intellectual capacity and personality virtues, and the prospects to which he or she is exposed (Sikhwari 2015).

The theory emphasises that career and development choices based on capabilities, interests, temperament, traits and values, are the core values of LO, and therefore, the South African education system introduced it. It views the critical role LO teachers play in assisting learners to understand and to expand their capabilities and interests. LO teachers provide Career Guidance by matching the learner's personality, interests, abilities and values during the growth and exploration phase of choosing a career, which should start from Grade 9 (Eliasa and Iswanti 2014).

While Super's (1953) theory recognises that the person's socio-economic and ethnic factors are influential in career choice, it also acknowledges the effects of subjective cultural standards and beliefs in modelling vocational self-concepts and inclinations (Eliasa and Iswanti 2014). However, the limitation of the theory is that South African youth that reach the age of 25 years have vocational training but still remain unemployed, although a person is most productive during these years.

Literature Review

Role of Life Orientation Teachers in Promoting Career Guidance and Counselling

The DoE (2011) defines Life Orientation as the learning about oneself in relation to others and to society. Life Orientation directs and pre-

pares the learner for a lifetime, and for his or her obligations and possibilities by instilling a sense of confidence in learners. Through LO, learners interact with others on individual, psychosomatic, cognitive, motor, physical, ethical, mystical, traditional and socio-economic levels. Life Orientation provides learners with guidance on how to employ goal setting, decision-making and problem-solving strategies and to reach their full potential in making cognisant choices concerning individual and ecological health, education prospects and upcoming careers.

Children go to school to acquire education for a brighter future (Chireshe 2012), and schools are strategically designed to influence the future career aspirations of learners (Mesa 2013). Do Thi Bich and Nguyen (2015) assert that the role of Career Guidance teachers is to prepare learners for the world of occupation by adequately training them to stay pertinent and suitable in the international economy, while living purposefully. Through career development interventions and provision of information, school counsellors guide learners in making wise choices in personal, academic, career planning and social and emotional issues (Amoah et al. 2015; Samanyanga and Ncube 2015).

Currently, teachers perform varied roles, and hence, they need to be competent in providing Guidance and Counselling as their first duty and responsibility towards their learners (Lai-Yeung 2013). School counsellors also assist learners who cannot access or benefit from market-driven occupational skills, salvage and disperse information through modern technology and assist them to accomplish the needed employability and self-management proficiencies (Amoah et al. 2015; Do Thi Bich and Nguyen 2015; Miles 2015). Furthermore, by forming a connection between interests and abilities, learners can make smart long-term career choices they like and are comfortable doing that job (Do Thi Bich and Nguyen 2015). To this extent, learners also need to collaborate with team members of the school, parents and the society at large, to guide them in achieving all-round growth and life-long wisdom. However, Ramakrishnan and Jalajakumari (2013) caution that the choosing of a career should not be based on parental ambitions but should consider learners' capabilities. The importance of Guidance and Counselling compelled

the Department of Basic Education (2011) to introduce LO as a compulsory subject to help and lead learners to accomplish their optimal physical, academic, intellectual, individual and social potential through LO teachers.

Planning of Life Career

It is the school counsellors' duty to assist learners make more realistic decisions grounded in their capabilities, interests, and personal characteristics and providing them with opportunities to expand and sharpen their knowledge adapt to the demands of an ever-changing society (Abdellatif 2011; Shumba et al. 2011; Aksoy et al. 2013). Gama (2015) highlights that LO teachers should create a conducive school environment that goes beyond the classroom by not being a teacher only but also a counsellor, a communicator, a remedial teacher, and a social worker in a school environment (Gudyanga et al. 2015).

According to Mittendorff et al. (2011), LO teachers are responsible for guiding learners in academic growth for lifelong career development and career paths. Empowerment of learners can be achieved when LO teachers have the competencies and knowledge about the subject, and effective strategies to utilise when delivering the content (Shumba et al. 2011). Vocationally, Counselling and Guidance Services aim for the student to perceive himself or herself realistically, identify his or her strong and also weak points, and choose subjects in line with the career to pursue (Yuksel-Sahin 2012).

A study conducted by Nzeleni (2015) in Transkei, a sub-region of the Eastern Cape, South Africa, indicates that the education that learners are given should enlighten them on the basic personal qualities that are prerequisite to thrive in any occupation. Although the curriculum expects LO teachers to assist and support learners during their personal journey of self-discovery, tertiary institutions are still facing a serious challenge of matriculates who lack career ambition or direction thereof (Dodge and Welderufael 2014). Do Thi Bich and Nguyen's (2015) study indicates that education alongside career guidance has a positive influence on the learners' academic achievement and well being, as it helps learners to make good decisions re-

garding their careers. Despite these revelations, schools and stakeholders, including learners themselves, have not grasped the importance of LO in shaping brighter career path for the individuals.

Parental Involvement in Career Options

Parental involvement in career options is essential, and therefore, Guidance Counsellors should provide parents with required attitudes and skills necessary to inspire their children to make suitable career choices (Amoah et al. 2015). Shumba and Naong (2012) concur that parents, like teachers, are major players in the career pathways that young people finally pursue. Someway, parents who are linked to a specific field usually create an environment that affords their children comparable peer effects related to careers chosen by their parents (Hashim and Embong 2015). In Malta, guidance teachers conduct parent meetings with learners to inform them about the role of Career Guidance and Counselling and different subjects available so that parents can also support learners as they make career choices (Debono et al. 2007).

According to Ramakrishnan and Jalajakumari (2013), choosing a suitable career is a critical undertaking that all adolescents face in all societies because the wrong vocational choice can lead to lack of motivation and eventually lead to failure because one's chosen occupation is not merely a means of earning a livelihood but also a means of personal fulfilment. Similarly, Maiyo and Owiye (2009) note that parental pressure, improper guidance, and paucity of jobs in desired sectors, can be quite overwhelming for a learner unless they are appropriately guided. Therefore, teachers who provide Career Guidance and Counselling should assist learners in making proper career decisions by designing an integrated and passable picture of themselves and their duty in a rapidly fluctuating society.

Training of Life Orientation Teachers to Implement Career Guidance and Counselling

Those who teach LO should be professionally and adequately trained to effectively implement the programme. Prinsloo (2007) conducted a study in which principals and LO teachers lamented that their critical challenge was lack of

professional training in the subject content, outcomes and didactic approaches of LO. Furthermore, Prinsloo (2007) found disparity between rural schools and former Model-C schools (disparity between schools created during the apartheid regime in South Africa). In rural schools, teachers were well prepared to implement the LO programmes while in former Model-C schools, teachers have to work closely with an appointed school counsellor to implement the process.

While schools are expected to play a substantial role in Career Guidance and Counselling, in reality, it is the opposite in most cases. Van Deventer (2009) points out that LO is taught by non-specialist teachers even though the knowledge and proficiencies of the teacher determines the status and practice of that subject. Due to lack of skills, teachers fail to motivate or adequately guide learners on which careers to pursue (Magano 2011). In the context of the study, one may argue that specialists in LO are desired, and without them, unskilled teachers are made to teach the subject to fulfil the curriculum design. Magano (2011) indicates that owing to teachers' lack of skills, there is no motivation of learners on which careers to pursue. In Turkey, school counsellors are professional educators who possess undergraduate or graduate degrees in psychological counselling and guidance (Torunoglu and Genctanirim 2014). School counsellors work collaboratively with principals, teachers and parents for a smooth transition from secondary to tertiary institutions. The researchers note that in developed countries like the United States and Canada, school counsellors hold a Masters' degree, with proper training and licensing to specifically provide Guidance and Counselling services in schools (Torunoglu and Genctanirim 2014).

According to Maree (2013), career counselling strategies should be founded on three broad ideologies:

1. Access, which is making counselling freely accessible to everybody with all career counsellors.
2. Equity, privileges given to a specific group of people
3. Redress, which involves addressing the historical imbalances in South Africa.

Dabula and Makura (2013) propose that the aim of career guidance programmes should be to develop significant skills for life and work and assisting with proximate career decisions through learning centred approach. Career counsellors should essentially connect appropriate resources for diverse calibre of learners under dissimilar school conditions for promoting learners for different determinations (Ombaba et al. 2014).

There is need to design and implement career guidance programmes to meet the desires of the learners and the society (Dabula and Makura 2013). Similarly, Gama (2015) opines that professional growth of teachers through in-service training should encompass a learner-centred component and be knowledge and assessment-centred for optimum teacher acquaintance and development. Furthermore, Martin (2013) adds that this approach requires a teacher-training programme, which develops teachers to be empowered professionals with understanding of the subject and the veracities of classrooms. Chireshe (2012) mentions that the career counselling centres must have relevant books and current journals on careers, germane videos, useful classified information on available careers, career assessments and pertinent computer-based information. In South Africa, the DoE (2011) has taken obligation for organising career fieldtrips for learners in Grade 12 outside school hours, and these are typically like career exhibitions where people working in a particular field give career talks.

The Department of Basic Education can establish career centres such as libraries where learners can access information about different careers. Diale (2016) opines that close collaboration between schools, the government's Department of Education and different stakeholders, including NGOs and tertiary institutions, in terms of research, can be beneficial in dealing with issues beyond their scope of practice. In addition, the DoE has also taken an initiative for organising other important stakeholders such as the higher educational and training institutes, Sector Education and Training Authority (SETAs), Higher Education South Africa (HESA), the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private enterprises, to share the re-

sponsibility for delivering career summits and organising career occasions and showcases (Miles 2015). Unfortunately, such events are generally more accessible to learners in urban areas, while those learners in the rural areas are unheeded (Prinsloo 2007; Ombaba et al. 2014; Miles 2015). The collaboration of different stakeholders from the Department of Basic Education, NGOs, school management, and institutions is fundamental for the promotion of Career Guidance and Counselling in Limpopo Province schools.

Research Questions

The central research questions posed in this paper are:

- ♦ What is the role of Life Orientation teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling for secondary school learners?
- ♦ What intervention strategies can Life Orientation teachers implement to improve Career Guidance and Counselling for learners in secondary schools?

Research Objectives

The objectives of this paper are:

- ♦ To assess the role of Life Orientation teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling for secondary school learners.
- ♦ To suggest intervention strategies that Life Orientation teachers can implement to improve Career Guidance and Counselling for learners in secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted within the interpretive paradigm to explore and understand the role of LO teachers in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling among learners. In line with the interpretive paradigm, a qualitative approach was adopted. This approach allows the study of the phenomenon in its natural setting and does not require any enumeration (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Ngwenya 2017). Participants included teachers (n=12) and Grade 12 learners (n=12) and were purposively sampled. This enabled the researchers to access information from participants. Qualitative data was collected from

Life Orientation teachers by using two methods of data collection, namely, one-on-one interviews and focus groups. Only learners from Grades 10 to 12 participated in the focus group interviews.

The 24 participants were coded as follows:

IILO T 1 to 6	Individual Interview Life Orientation Teachers 1 to 6
FGDLO T 7 to 12	Focus Group Discussion Life Orientation Teachers 7 to 12
FGDL 1 to 12	Focus Group Discussion Learners 1 to 12

Qualitative data was analysed through a systematic process of coding, categorising and interpretation providing explanations on Career Guidance and Counselling by LO teachers in Limpopo Province schools. Triangulation was also applied to provide a better understanding of the problem, situation or the issue under study.

FINDINGS

Super's Career Decision Theory posits that a person's career design is determined by his or her intellectual capacity and personal traits, and the opportunities that are exposed to a person. Given their critical role and influence in learners' career choices, IILO T1 said:

As a Life Orientation teacher, my role is to expose learners to different careers so that they can make well-informed decisions about their future. We guide and assist learners to consider their future careers based on their academic capabilities, interests and hopes, as opposed to what peers and family prescribe to and for them.

The acquisition of information on career issues is a way of assisting learners to discover their innate potential. IILO T4 commented:

The vital aspects in Career Guidance and Counselling are that learners should first know themselves. This tends to be helpful to them when it comes to subject choice (usually done in Grade 10) in the context of career alignment.

In providing corroborative information, the learners' focus group discussants pointed out that LO teachers enable them to know themselves and to understand their strengths and weaknesses before deciding on a career. FGD L3 added:

Our teachers support us by teaching us how to discover who we are, our interests, abilities and our personalities. They also tell us the consequences of not making proper and informed decisions about our future careers.

IILO T5 reiterated that her major role was to help learners discover the careers they were suitable for, while IILO T6 said:

My role is to show learners career choices that are available without influencing or forcing them. Sometimes these learners are reluctant to choose certain subjects due to peer pressure.

FGDLO T9 defined her role as follows:

My role is to provide proper career guidelines that have to do with how learners should choose a career. For example, I encourage them to look at the job market before deciding on a career.

The above data indicates that teachers are aware of their role of offering career guidance although they are seemingly not fully supportive in assisting learners in choosing future careers. In actual fact, they do create an enabling situation where learners find themselves empowered to choose careers according to their academic potential as well as according to their personal interests. However, they do not warn learners on the dangers of peer pressure in choosing a career.

The promotion of Career Guidance and Counselling by LO teachers is of paramount importance since it helps learners to acquire self-knowledge regarding their personality, interests and abilities to make informed choices about their imminent careers. This is only possible if teachers responsible for the subject are fully equipped with skills and knowledge to guide learners appropriately to reflect on their goals, interests, abilities, aspirations and qualifications that are relevant to boost the country's economic growth. IILO T3 said:

My role is to channel learners in the right direction, but I do not have to the necessary skills to fully equip them. If Career Guidance and Counselling in schools were well promoted and implemented, it would ensure a good future workforce. The successful implementation of this service in schools has the potential to reduce the high unemployment rate in our country.

It further emerged from this study that despite the inadequate knowledge and skills to ef-

fectively promote Career Guidance and Counselling, LO teachers seem to understand their role and how it can positively impact the learners' future career paths. However, Life Orientation teachers seem to lack the necessary skills to help learners deal adequately with career choice dynamics.

Training of Teachers

Professional development plays an important role in promoting Career Guidance and Counselling among learners at school. LO teachers who are well capacitated on matters of Career Guidance and Counselling impart necessary skills to learners so that they can make well-informed career decisions. Inadequate skills and knowledge to provide proper Career Guidance and Counselling was a serious concern to LO teachers.

IILO T5 painted a gloomy picture of her situation:

When I am guiding learners on different careers, I can sense that I need more information to help them make the right choices. It does not serve any purpose to produce a 100% pass rate in the school with learners who are not sure of what careers to follow when they register at tertiary institutions. So, I think that the Department of Education should send people to provide adequate training or employ people who are experts on career guidance and counselling issues.

IILO T5's situation is only the tip of an iceberg. Distressful sentiments were also raised by IILO T6 who complained:

I do not have the capacity to provide career guidance to learners, as I am not trained at all. The Department of Basic Education and the school management do not care about what Life Orientation teachers go through as they try to provide career guidance to learners. That is why Life Orientation is a subject that anybody can teach.

In support of the above, FGDLO T7 and FGDLO T9 noted that training was important since teachers were unskilled to provide proper Career Guidance and Counselling. As part of continuous professional development, teachers need workshops or refresher courses to keep Life Orientation teachers abreast with current

trends in the labour market. To this end, IILO T6 said:

I once attended some training in Tzaneen some years ago and it was very good, but we only had it once back then. Unfortunately, training these days is focused much on examination and file administration at the expense of learners and their career endeavours.

I was given Life Orientation during subject allocation. I found myself teaching the subject since I needed some periods to make up for my inadequate teaching periods. The truth is that I never attended any training on how to teach Life Orientation.

The respondents expressed their lack of advanced knowledge on concerns related to Career Guidance and Counselling. One of the respondents was frank and stated categorically that she does not have enough skills to effectively deal with Career Guidance and Counselling issues at school. The dismal situation is that due to lack of sufficient knowledge, LO teachers cannot provide appropriate and comprehensive support to learners so that they can make subject choices in schools.

Parental Involvement in Career Choice

The situation, which this teacher noted, was further aggravated by the fact that most parents were not actively participative in their children's education, as IILO T4 noted:

Parents do not support their children. During career exhibitions, some parents are reluctant to pay transport for their children to visit such functions.

IILO T5 blamed parents for learners' lack of enthusiasm in career guidance and counselling at school commenting that learners take LO for granted.

IILO T3 added that:

Parents do not come for career guidance meetings where they can help their children choose subjects for the desired career. Learners influence each other according to friendship.

Learners in the focus group expressed similar sentiments about their parents not being involved citing lack of education, working out of town or simply lack of interest in the what the learners aspire to be after Grade 12. For instance, FGD L1 said:

My parents have never asked me about schoolwork. Our teacher encouraged us to check newspapers like Workplace, Sunday Times, or Mail and Guardian, but those are never bought at home... It's a luxury we cannot afford.

It emerged that besides ill-equipped teachers, learners had no support from parents. Lack of parental involvement leaves learners without much motivation in career choices.

Lack of Resources

The availability of resources such as resource centres, career guides, information technology and counselling rooms is important for proper Career Guidance and Counselling in schools. FGDLO T9 admitted that:

Teaching the subject without resources is like expecting an untrained and unarmed soldier to do better in the battlefield where his opponents use AK 47 rifles. How is this soldier expected to deliver the country from invaders? This is what we are expected to do under the circumstances.

FGD L6 discussants concurred:

The situation in our school is bad. We do not have computers to do any research on the careers that are available. Some of us here are in Grade 11 have spent five months without a Life Orientation teacher. The subject is being taught by another learner.

Data revealed lack of resources and lack of competent teachers as hindering effective implementation of career and guidance counselling in schools. The shortage of competent staff paints a melancholy picture and compromises the quality of the career guidance services provided in schools.

Strategies or Suggestions for the Improvement of the Promotion of Career Guidance and Counselling at School

Focus group discussants suggested that the Department of Basic Education should appoint career counsellors to offer Career Guidance and Counselling and other psychosocial problems to learners on a full-time basis. These sentiments were echoed by both IILO T3 and IILO T5. Hence, Prinsloo (2007) proposed that professional train-

ing of LO teachers be instituted as a matter of urgency.

The subject advisors should work with Life Orientation teachers, helping them to develop and sharpen their skills. FGDLO T8 complained that:

Sometimes, it is difficult to work with the subject advisors who are not qualified in the subject of Life Orientation, who are not sure of their role and instead, they end up frustrating Life Orientation teachers since they are in position of power and authority. Some of them became subject advisors through re-deployment, as they were redundant. In certain instances, some of the curriculum advisors seem uncertain of their roles. Instead of supporting and capacitating Life Orientation teachers, they humiliate them and ultimately, it results in frustration and low morale amongst these teachers.

Besides under qualified teachers, schools were confronted by lack of subject specialist in Career Guidance and Counselling as subject advisors. The challenges confronted by career guidance programmes in schools clearly require transformation of the mind-set among management, curriculum advisors and policy makers. IILO T5 suggested that such training should start from management, while IILO T2 suggested:

Bringing some people or learners who have studied there is helpful. Last year we invited one of our former learners who was studying in Stellenbosch to come and address the learners about different career opportunities. It was easier for them to relate with him since he was their peer.

The same participant suggested that exposing learners to Career Guidance as early as Grade 8 and 9 could potentially lay a good foundation for them, and as they progress to Grade 10, they should know the right subjects to choose for certain careers. In addition, job shadowing is considered important when assisting learners in making the right career choices. Job shadowing provides learners with day-to-day job responsibilities in the real world of work experience, and can help them figure out if they can adapt and enjoy working in the intended career. Work shadowing is key to a successful career because it helps learners get first-hand experience of how people work in certain companies and is an im-

portant issue that affected learners' career decisions (Basham 2011).

DISCUSSION

The study found that teachers are aware of the importance of career guidance and counselling in assisting learners make wise decisions on the subjects to take that form the basis of their career choice. This finding confirms Crisan et al.'s study (2015) who observe that numerous studies show that proper Career Guidance and Counselling offered to learners helps them to discover who they are and what they are capable of, and this significantly correlates with academic and professional satisfaction. Helping learners to understand themselves leads to self-discovery. It is also in line with Vanin's (2015) assertion that Career Counsellors should help learners to gain greater self-awareness, connect them in decision-making processes and assist learners to actively manage their career pathways, as well as to become lifelong learners. Findings of this study confirmed the assertion by Do Thi Bich and Nguyen (2015) that career guidance plays a crucial role of preparing learners in schools for the employment world by equipping them with accurate set of skills, so that they relevantly fit into the international economy at the same time living purposefully.

While Life Orientation teachers understand their function in helping learners to make well-informed choices about their careers however, they are not adequately trained to do justice to the subject. Hence, some of the teachers seem partially committed to their role of promoting Career Guidance and Counselling in secondary schools due to lack of information. The issue of career guidance programmes was compounded by the ineffectiveness of counselling personnel, most of whom admitted that they had never received any proper training in career guidance and lacked confidence in running the programme (Salleh 2010) even though they were expected to teach the subject (Diale 2016). Amoah et al. (2015) shared the same views that school counsellors are expected to be trained professionals, yet, in most cases untrained persons oversee Career Guidance and Counselling in schools. This eventually leads to career indecisions, con-

firming findings by Tallib et al. (2010) that making a career decision is one of the leading challenges that have been articulated by teenagers. Secondary school learners need accurate career guidance to make knowledgeable career choices, which will contribute to the skilled manpower requirements of the economy (Ombaba et al. 2014).

Besides untrained teachers and subject advisors the study found that lack of resources also militated against effective implementation of career guidance and counselling. The study found that there was lack of resources to promote Career Guidance and Counselling in their schools. The achievement of appropriate Career Guidance and Counselling hinge on the availability of resources such as career guides, resource centres, offices, computers, tables and chairs, brochures. Effective implementation of Career Guidance and Counselling requires schools to provide sufficient resources. This observation concurs with Majoko's (2013) views that learners are often deprived of sources of information and knowledge to help address their academic, personal, social and career concerns. Resources lacking included brochures and pamphlets. Rukwaro (2015) confirms that Career Guidance resources and activities are a great challenge in Kenya when compared to the developed countries due to insufficient resources.

CONCLUSION

The study found that despite understanding their roles, LO teachers lacked the necessary skills to fully equip learners with relevant knowledge so that they can choose careers that matched their subjects of specialisation. The study also found challenges such as lack of support by different stakeholders, the negative attitude towards the subject by both learners and teachers, the shortage of LO teachers, the subject not being valued like other subjects, poor parental involvement, constant turnover of LO teachers, and the lack of training and workshops relevant to assist learners on Career Guidance and Counselling bedevilled career choices among learners in Limpopo Province. While capacity building in the promotion of Career Guidance among learners is very important, it was under-provided to those in need. Issues such

as inadequate skills and knowledge, inadequate training and workshops and lack of experts to assist in the continued professional development of LO teachers were listed as contributing factors inhibiting the promotion of Career and Guidance in Limpopo Province. It emerged from the current study that training of LO teachers inadequately furnished learners with the required skills to promote Career Guidance and Counselling in schools. This has led to lack of recognition of the subject by stakeholders in South African schools. The success of learners in education depends on the support from the Department of Basic Education, subject advisors, school management and other teachers in the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the researchers recommend the following.

The Department of Basic Education should appoint trained counsellors, psychologists and LO teachers with adequate proficient skills, knowledge, the right mind-sets and understanding to address the distinctive academic, educational, psychosocial, career and vocational problems faced by learners in school.

School management should retain LO teachers with knowledge and skills in the subject, particularly those who have done a module in School Guidance and Counselling or Advanced Certificate in Education. At the same time these teachers need to attend refresher courses, as one lives in a world that is technically developing very fast.

The Department of Basic Education should educate parents and stakeholders on the importance of Life Orientation in shaping careers of the young generation.

The Department of Basic Education should ensure that Life Orientation is taught permanently by qualified teachers without being shifted to other subject teachers, to ensure such teachers gain experience in the subject and attach value to the subject.

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