

**THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF OFFENDERS ENROLLED IN AN OPEN  
DISTANCE E-LEARNING (ODEL) UNIVERSITY: A CAREER  
COUNSELLING PERSPECTIVE IN JOHANNESBURG CORRECTIONAL  
CENTRE**

**by**

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**Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTERS OF ARTS**

**in the subject**

**PSYCHOLOGY**

**at the**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Career counselling is the cornerstone of every person embarking on their career journey. While career counselling is still finding its roots in society, it became imperative for me to extend the need for these services at correctional centres. Career counselling should be integrated into the rehabilitation process to ensure that offenders make informed career decisions that will help them when they return to their communities. Against this background, the study explored the experiences of offenders receiving career counselling, the meaning they attach to it, and how their chosen career paths could assist with their rehabilitation and reintegration into society, especially by increasing their chances of being absorbed into the labour market. This is a phenomenological study where I explored the lived experiences of offenders at a Johannesburg correctional centre (JCC) who are receiving career counselling from an Open Distance eLearning institution (ODEL) like UNISA. The data collected here using in-depth semi structured interviews was analysed and interpreted using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The constructivist theory and chaos theory of careers were used in the study to give proper theoretical background. This study will assist counsellors with relevant skills and insight when providing career counselling to offenders enrolled at an ODeL university; it will also assist offenders in making informed career decisions. Provisioning these services will also play a role in rehabilitating participating offenders so they can be integrated into society on their release. Results from the study show although, offenders have little knowledge on career counselling, those who choose often do so based on their circumstances. It is also found that family contributes positively on the career decision making of the offenders, whereas on the other hand, the correctional officers have no contribution.

### **Keywords**

Career counselling, chaos theory of careers, constructivist theory, correctional centre, offenders, open distance learning, post education and training, rehabilitation, reintegration, University of South Africa

## OPSOMMING

Beroepsvoorligting is die hoeksteen van elke persoon wat hul loopbaanreis aanpak. Terwyl beroepsvoorligting steeds sy wortels in die samelewing vind, het dit noodsaaklik geword vir die navorser om die behoefte aan hierdie dienste na korrektiewe sentrums uit te brei. Loopbaanvoorligting moet by die rehabilitasieproses geïntegreer word om te verseker dat oortreders ingeligte loopbaanbesluite neem wat hulle sal help wanneer hulle na hul gemeenskappe terugkeer. Dit is teen hierdie agtergrond dat die studie die ervarings ondersoek het van oortreders wat beroepsvoorligting ontvang het, die betekenis wat hulle daaraan heg, en hoe hul gekose beroepsrigtings kan help met hul rehabilitasie en herintegrasie in die samelewing, veral deur hul kanse om in die arbeidsmark opgeneem te word, te verhoog. Hierdie is 'n fenomenologiese studie, waar die navorser die geleefde ervarings van oortreders by 'n Johannesburgse korrektiewe sentrum wat beroepsvoorligting van 'n Oopafstand-e-leerinstelling (ODEL) ontvang het, ondersoek het. Interpretierende Fenomenologiese Analise (IPA) is gebruik om die data wat ingesamel is deur middel van in-diepte semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude te ontleed en te interpreteer. Die konstruktivistiese teorie en chaosteorie van beroepe is in die studie gebruik om behoorlike teoretiese agtergrond te bied. Hierdie studie sal voorligters bystaan met relevante vaardighede en insig wanneer hulle beroepsvoorligting verskaf aan oortreders wat by 'n ODeL-universiteit ingeskryf is; dit sal ook oortreders help om ingeligte loopbaanbesluite te neem. Die verskaffing van hierdie dienste sal ook 'n rol speel in die rehabilitasie van deelnemende oortreders sodat hulle by hul vrylating in die samelewing geïntegreer kan word. Die resultate van die studie toon dat hoewel oortreders min kennis van beroepsberading het, doen diegene wat dit kies dit dikwels op grond van hul omstandighede. Daar word ook gevind dat families positief bydra tot die loopbaanbesluitneming van oortreders, terwyl korrektiewe beamptes aan die ander kant geen bydrae het nie.

### **Sleutelwoorde**

Beroepsvoorligting, chaosteorie van beroepe, konstruktivistiese teorie, korrektiewe sentrum, oortreders, oop afstandsonderrig, tersiëre onderwys en opleiding, rehabilitasie, herintegrasie, Universiteit van Suid-Afrika

## KAKARETŠO

Keletšo ka tša mošomo ke motheo wa motho yo mongwe le yo mongwe yo a thomago leeto la gagwe la tša mošomo. Le ge keletšo ka tša mošomo e sa hlwa e tsebja ke batho ka bontši setšhabeng, go ile gwa ba bohlokwa gore monyakišiši a katološetše tlhokego ya ditirelo tše disenthareng tša tshokollo. Keletšo ka tša mošomo e swanetše go kopanywa le tshepedišo ya tshokollo go netefatša gore basenyi ba tšea diphetho ka tša mošomo tše di nago le tsebo tšeo di tlogo ba thuša ge ba boela ditšhabeng tša bona. Ke kgahlanong le tshedimošo ye ya peleng moo nyakišišo e ilego ya hlahloba maitemogelo a basenyi bao ba amogelago keletšo ka tša mošomo, tlhalošo yeo ba itlamilego go yona, le ka fao ditsela tša mošomo tšeo ba di kgethilego di ka thušago ka gona ka tshokollo ya bona le go tsenywa gape setšhabeng kudukudu ka go oketša dibaka tša bona tša go akaretšwa mmarakeng wa mošomo. Ye ke nyakišišo ya ditiragalo, moo monyakišiši a ilego a hlahloba maitemogelo ao a phetšwego a basenyi senthareng ya tshokollo ya Johannesburg bao ba amogelago keletšo ya tša mošomo go tšwa go Setheo sa Lenaneotshepedišo la kabo ya thuto ya kgole ya elektroniki (ODEL). Tshekatsheko ya Tiragalo ya Tlhathollo (IPA) e šomišitšwe go sekaseka le go hlatholla datha yeo e kgobokeditšwego ka dipoledišano tše di tseneletšego tšeo di sego tša rulaganywa gabotse Teori ya gore tsebo e a agwa le teori ya tlhakatlhakano ya mešomo di šomišitšwe thutong go fa setlogo sa teori sa maleba. Dinyakišišo di tla thuša baeletši ka bokgoni bja maleba ge ba aba keletšo ya tša mošomo go basenyi bao ba ngwadišitšwego yunibesithing ya ODeL; di tla thuša gape basenyi ka go tšea diphetho tša tsebo tša mošomo. Kabo ya ditirelo tše e tla kgatha tema gape go tsošološong ya basenyi bao ba kgathago tema gore ba kgone go kopanywa le setšhaba ge ba lokollwa.

### **Mantšu a bohlokwa**

Keletšo ka tša mošomo, teori ya tlhakahlakano, teori ya gore tsebo e a agwa, senthara ya tshokollo, basenyi, lenaneotshepedišo la kabo ya thuto ya kgole, thuto le tlhahlo ya ka ntle ga thuto ya motheo, tsošološo, kopanyogape, Yunibesithi ya Afrika Borwa

**DECLARATION**

I, Mabowa Mamashu Gleda, student number 61567841, declare that this research report titled **The lived experiences of offenders enrolled in an ODeL university: A career counselling perspective in Johannesburg Correctional Centre** is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Psychology in the University of South Africa, Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.



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(Mabowa Mamashu Gleda)

Signed at ...Boksburg.....

On the .....24..... day of .....JANUARY..... 2023

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my parents (Maatsela D and the late Bojane “Mphele” Mabowa)

To my two sons (Onalenna Blessing and Mogau Hope Mabowa)

**... and to all my siblings, nephews and nieces**

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## **ACRONYMS FOR DISSERTATION**

CAS- Career Advisory Services

CODEL- Comprehensive Open Distance e-Learning

CTC- Chaos Theory of Careers

DCS- Department of Correctional Services

DHET- Department of Higher education and Training

FET- Further Education and Training

HEI- Higher Education Institutions

HPCSA- Health Professions Council of South Africa

IPA- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

MOU- Memorandum of Understanding

NYDA- National Youth Development Agency

NQF- National Qualifications Framework

ODEL- Open Distance eLearning

OECD- Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development

REC- Research Ethics Committee

SAQA- South African Qualifications Authority

TVET- Technical Vocational Educational and Training

UNISA- University of South Africa

UNODC- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces us to and give background, the purpose, the problem statement, the significance and delimitations of the study as well as definition of the terms. It also outlines research strategies and research methods, assumptions, and the overview of the chapters.

### **1.1 Theoretical background of the study**

The University of South Africa (UNISA) and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in 2017, formalising the collaboration between the two institutions and ensuring that offenders are provided with proper educational services. This formalisation of educational services for offenders in correctional centres has been fruitful, and one of its deliverables is the evidence in thousands of graduates and alumni offenders over the years. More than 500 offenders have passed their matric exams with a number of distinctions in different subjects since the training was first implemented in the correctional centres in 2010 (Mahlangu, 2017). The memorandum of understanding outlines the administrative support services including but not limited to access to computers with internet, printers, scanners, UNISA library resources, tutorial services and online submission of assignments (Mahlangu, 2017).

What seems to be missing or not being explicitly agreed upon is the provision of career counselling and how, where or when it should be provided. Tutorial services, academic advising, personal and career counselling, and library services are few of the supplementary resources that LaPudula (2003) notes are necessary for students in open distance learning and those taking classes online as well as those attending traditional campuses. One should not presume that older and experience distance learners have better-developed career plans than traditional on-campus students (LaPudula, 2003). According to Pityana (as cited in Chinyamurindi, 2016) distance learning in South Africa is widespread because it helps underprivileged people to overcome two key barriers which are geographical location and lack of funds. In this regard, the question of geographical location as a disturbing factor will be answered since the offenders can study while detained. Chinyamurindi (2016) further asserts that there is a dearth of

research on the topic of career development processes, a subfield of career counselling in the context of remote learning in South Africa.

The objective of formal education in DCS is to provide career-oriented, needs-driven, adapted, and relevant education programmes to current market and services to persons entrusted to the care in a stable teaching environment (formal education DCS, 2020). Reports indicate that the global correctional facilities population is estimated at 11 million (special covid19 dispensation statement, 2020). As of 01 April 2020, the World Prison Brief recorded 154 437 offenders in South Africa incarcerated in 235 correctional centres across the country (World Prison Brief, 2020). Out of these 154 437 in 2020, 10 817 participated in Adult Education and Training and Further Education and Training programmes for the 2018 academic year, which is an increase of 2,2% from the 2017 academic year (World Prison Brief, 2020). A total of 451 offenders participated in Higher Education and Training Programmes, and 37 were involved in computer literacy (DCS Annual Performance Plan, 2019/2020).

Observing the impact of incarceration makes it clear that the offenders need time to regroup and organise their life and to identify and choose the means that will provide substantial assistance in social reintegration (Vasiliki & Vasiliki, 2016). The field of guidance and counselling has long been viewed as an area of human service profession geared towards supporting people in variety of contexts (Akyina & Alubokin, 2018). Career counselling is not a popular subject in South Africa, let alone in correctional centres. Therefore, it should form part of the services, especially for those who find themselves in compromising disadvantaged situations, like offenders who want to pursue careers whilst serving time in correctional facilities.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

Following the guidelines of Babbie (2017), this phenomenological study aimed to explore the lived experiences of offenders in the Johannesburg Correctional Centre (JCC) receiving career counselling in a Comprehensive Open Distance eLearning (CODeL) institution. IPA was used to interpret and analyse the data collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews.

### **1.3 Research questions**

- What are offenders' career counselling experiences before or while studying in a CODEL university?
- What meanings do offenders attach to receiving career counselling services and making informed career decisions?
- How do offenders make sense of receiving career counselling services while incarcerated and studying in a CODEL university?

### **1.4 Research aims and objectives.**

The aim and objectives of the study are outlined as follows:

#### **1.4.1 Aims of the study.**

- The study aims to explore and describe the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach and give meaning to the provision of career counselling services at the Johannesburg (JHB) correctional centre.

#### **1.4.2 Objectives of the study**

- To explore the experiences of offenders when making career decisions for the first time when detained.
- To explore the meanings attributed by offenders to the experiences of choosing careers which suit their personal needs and perceptions attached to employability upon release.
- To explore the offenders' understanding of career counselling in a CODEL university.
- To contextualise career counselling in a CODEL within constructivist theory to be in line with UNISA and DCS' memorandum of understanding in providing educational services.
- To propose guidelines on career counselling for offenders enrolled in a CODEL university.

### **1.5 Problem statement**

According to DCS National Commissioner, Zach Modise education and the skilling of offenders as part of rehabilitation has been prioritised by the department to guarantee that upon release, offenders return to their communities as better, changed and law abiding individuals (Mahlangu, 2017). According to the White Paper on Correction in South Africa (2005), the purpose of the correction approach is to provide, maintain and



protect a simple, nonviolent, and secured society by encouraging social responsibility and human advancement of all offenders and persons subject to community correction.

In addition, many underprivileged scholars in South Africa did not have access to career counselling during the apartheid era and the political climate dictated the few options available (Abrahams et al., 2015). In the search for a pertinent rehabilitation process, it should not be forgotten that the correctional centres have teaching and learning challenges, never mind career counselling itself as the core issue in this regard. In addition, rehabilitative programmes equip the offenders with the skills and strengths necessary to thrive in the community after release (Edwards, 2021).

Disadvantaged children and youth leave school without proper skills for employment in the labour market, which increasingly demands greater technical and cognitive skills (Preble, 2017). I have been offering career counselling services in correctional centres in Gauteng where offenders who endeavoured to study showed interest in law enforcement qualifications, for instance, policing or the law (Bachelor of Law, LLB). I then became interested in wanting to understand the meanings attached to the aforementioned interest by the prospective students in the correctional facility. Even though South Africans have had a functioning democracy for above 25 years, career guidance and counselling in schools especially historically black school, continue to be underfunded and undervalued. This problem has expanded as far to other institutions, such as correctional centres, which need the services. Helping someone choose a career for the first time or embark on a new career involves much more than using tests and inventories (Maree, 2010). Instead, the many reasons people desire or do not desire to enter a career may be contradictory and vary greatly based on culture, developmental stages, maturity, and life circumstances.

Reducing re-offending through education and skills development has become a central aim of the South African government's national strategy against crime in recent years. Some suitable offenders are eligible to participate in various adult education programmes at formal, non-formal and informal activity levels as offered by DCS (Johnson & Quan-Baffour, 2015). Furthermore, Johnson and Quan Baffour (2015) also state that many young people who offend the law lack basic employment education, no livelihood source, and thus cannot make ends meet. Through the DCS, the government

has intensified its efforts to break the cycle of crime amongst ex-offenders using an education-focused approach. Although studies show that having a criminal record hinders ex-offenders' employment prospects, the government prioritised the educational skilling of offenders as part of rehabilitation in order to ensure that upon release, offenders return to their communities as better, changed, and law-abiding citizens (Mahlangu, 2017). Costelloea and Warner (2014) argue that educational trainings offered in the correctional centres do not correspond to labour-market requirements, period of employment becomes unreasonably short, and that the digital exclusion which is considered an important requirement for most jobs in the community is prohibited. Ravele (2022) recommends in his study that educational system within the correctional centres need some improvement in order to have effective rehabilitation process.

To the extent that lack of career counselling impacts many, including the offenders, Schmitt and Warner (2011) indicated that a lawbreaking conviction or any term of incarceration could substantially impact future job prospects. Therefore, career counselling should be one of the methods utilised to ensure that the demand and supply question is properly answered and, in this case, focus mostly on the offenders and their possession of a criminal record that may hinder their job application process as well as possibly finding employment. While career counselling in correctional centres has not been fully explored, studies show that qualified offenders struggle to get into the job market (Schmitt & Warner, 2011). Against this background, this study will explore the experiences of offenders receiving career counselling and how the chosen career paths could increase their chances of being absorbed into the labour market.

## **1.6 Rationale**

Between 2017 and 2018, the Johannesburg Regional Service Centre Counselling unit of UNISA visited the JCC for services offered by the institution. The visits were on an invitation basis and personal initiatives before and during applications and registration periods to assist those who would like to apply or register in the institution. Up to 197 offenders (prospective and currently registered students) received different services, including career counselling as our speciality. Career counselling and other socio-economic services are rendered both on a one-on-one basis and through group workshops. Due to the facility's restrictions, the services could only be rendered face-

to-face. Career counselling services offered focused on the subject choice, UNISA's statutory admission requirements for different qualifications, personality, skills, employability, and qualifications that require practical training versus the period of sentencing.

In 2018, a needs analysis was developed to ensure that the services rendered were appropriate to the offenders. The results showed that the offenders needed more career counselling services than any other. This is supported by Chinyamurindi (2016) when he alluded that making a career choice is seen as an important decision in an individual's life. Thus, career counselling needs to be considered a function of student counselling services (Watson & McMahon, 2009). More often, the offenders find themselves in a dilemma of choosing their desired qualifications because they must consider that they are in possession of criminal records, and as a result, that limits their personal choice. In such cases, the offenders must check whether their career choices will not clash with their future employability since they will be in possession of criminal records. The main reason I chose to explore the career needs and counselling experiences of offenders at the JCC is that I am an employee of UNISA in the Gauteng Region based in Johannesburg Regional Service Centre (JRSC), and one of my key performance areas is to provide career counselling to UNISA's prospective and registered students. As I continued to offer the services, I learned that most offenders are interested in studying law-enforcement-related qualifications (LLB, Policing, correctional management). However, they found themselves at a crossroads where they could not understand the implications based on their future careers. Therefore, it is against this background that the study sought to explore the experiences offenders have in making informed career decisions that will not clash with their possession of a criminal record.

### **1.7. Reflective notes**

This has been a roller-coaster emotional journey where lessons around self-discovery were learned. Firstly, having to be exposed to work with offenders on its own was nerve wrecking, however, as I got used to the environment I got relaxed and positioned myself appropriately. The study helped me understand human diversity and the effects of circumstances or situations someone can find themselves. It is clear that not everyone

who finds themselves who gets in trouble with the law is a criminal or had intended malicious acts, however, under unavoidable circumstances the offences were committed on their names. Secondly, the remorseful behavioural acts and willingness to change their lives, offenders evoked some sense of urgency and need in providing maximum academic and career development services to them to ensure that the change they anticipate happen holistically in all the spheres of their rehabilitation and reintegration processes.

The embarkment on this journey has been bumpy, with both overwhelming and positive lessons. My interest on embarking on this journey arose when most of the students showed interest in studying qualifications in the law enforcement field. Upon providing career counselling some were able to change their choices as they realised that their intentions for studying those qualifications will defy their purpose in their career lives. Their choice was more on emotional level as they indicated that the chosen qualifications were based on their experiences with law some indicating that they felt they were not represented fairly whilst others wanted to educate others about the implications of criminal offence. As my passion for working with offenders grew, so was her need to explore more on the provision of career counselling for offenders in the correctional centre.

Before choosing to do this study, I had to undergo intense introspection followed by debriefing sessions with my professional mentor and psychologist to prepare for the journey ahead, both emotionally and psychologically. Choosing the topic and relating to it was indeed an easy task as I have been in the field for up to 10 years and have been providing career counselling services to the offenders in the past five years. I developed a passion for working with offenders and wanted to understand how they operate in their space. As a result, I was compelled to investigate and detail the offenders at JHB correctional centre's perspectives on the value of the career counselling offered there. Although with this passion, having to pen this down has been emotionally strenuous as sometimes I would get stuck with my thoughts and how to effectively research without imposing my preconceived knowledge and therefore sounding bias. This was a journey of million miles with continued learning and self-discovery, and self-development. This study has helped me in my professional level where it will broaden the scope of practice.

In 2020, South Africa and most parts of the world was struck by Covid19 pandemic where many things stood still and as such processes of the study also got delayed. The country was put on lockdown and the university put some restrictions in the processes of data collection. The limitations in accessing the correctional centres and most specifically the offenders affected the research processes and delayed the processes of collecting data, subsequently the completion of the studies. However, having supportive supervisors helped me navigate the study as they kept on advising and encouraging me to continue enriching the other part of the study. It was indeed a blessing to work with people who love, understand, and enjoy their work like my supervisors. They ensured that I understood the study, the jargon, and the processes of conducting the studies in the correctional centres.

Furthermore, as per my expectations, the study unfolded many anxiety-provoking issues that needed clarity. As a researcher and an employee of the institution as a student counsellor, I always came across students who mentioned law enforcement qualifications as their desired qualifications. As this was a perpetual matter, it eventually made me want to explore where their interest emanates. During the career counselling sessions, the offenders would mention that they chose the qualifications because they felt that the law failed them by giving them the wrong sentences. Relating this to the findings in this study, it shows that this is a standing matter, among other reasons. Significantly, the primary objective of the study was to investigate and describe the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach and give meaning to the provision of career counselling services at the JHB correctional centre. Most offenders appeared to have little or no knowledge of career counselling. However, when asked what they understood about career counselling, they were able to share their views which included “being able to help other people to make career decisions”. The offenders have limited knowledge of career counselling. Most of them have never gone through the process of career planning with a qualified person. However, they acknowledge the importance of receiving the services as offenders as it will contribute towards their rehabilitation process. In this regard, I applaud the study for having met the desired outcomes as it shows that the limited services of career counselling have a negative impact towards offenders’ rehabilitation journey.

## **1.8 Significance of the study**

Career counselling is the most essential aspect of a career choice as it helps with career mapping and planning. It is, therefore, important for everyone to go through the career planning process once or even twice in their lives. Career counselling is an overlooked rehabilitation method for offenders as, in most cases, only psychotherapy (or trauma counselling) and social services are offered for offenders. UNISA and DCS have a signed a memorandum of understanding which outlines the educational and administrative services they will offer. On the memorandum, the services that are provided for offenders include, among others, academic support (tutorials, library), examinations and technology-enhanced learning.

Career counselling and development services are not clearly outlined whether they will be offered or not. This is also supported by the need analysis conducted on the offenders as part of the survey to ensure that the counselling unit in Johannesburg provides proper needed services to the offender. The results showed a lack of and need for career counselling in the correctional centre. This study was conducted to fulfil the need for offenders to receive career counselling whilst incarcerated. The provision of career counselling will assist with, among other things, offenders' rehabilitation process, reintegration and making informed career decisions which might help with being economically active after their release from the correctional centres either by being employed or owning their businesses. Career counselling, as another form of rehabilitation and reintegration, can also minimise re-offending as it is noted that most offenders have little or no education.

## **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

The aim of the study was to explore the lived experiences of offenders in the JCC receiving career counselling in a CODEL institution. The study focused on the offenders in the JCC medium C, which is designated as a male section. The target group comprised offenders studying or intending to study in a CODEL institution and around the ages of 20-35. The choice of the group or the centre was drawn from the offender's willingness during the community outreach done by the UNISA counselling unit in the Gauteng region. The focus was on career counselling for the offenders as part of their rehabilitation and reintegration process.

## **1.10 Research paradigm**

Research paradigm is defined as the fundamental model of frame of reference used to organise our observations and reasoning (Babbie, 2010). It is also known as the worldview or the thinking, school of thought, or set of shared beliefs that inform the meaning or interpretation of research data (Kuyini & Kivunja, 2017). In this study, interpretivism was employed as a frame of reference that focuses on the participants' subjective meanings. According to Thanh and Thanh (2015), interpretivism permits the researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants. Thanh and Thanh (2015) further assert that when seeking answers, the researcher, who follows interpretivism, uses the participants' experiences to construct and interpret his/her understanding from the collected information. They further simplified by explaining that interpretivism supports researchers by interpreting the understanding of the individuals (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

## **1.11 Philosophical assumptions**

It is helpful to have some knowledge of the philosophical debates that underpinned the development of social researchers in order to acquire an understanding of the various methods utilised by qualitative researchers (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). The researcher's philosophical stance is their belief in how things are known, learned about and experienced and how they can be researched and investigated (Tai & Ajjawi, 2016).

### **1.11.1 Ontology**

Ontology concerns the nature of reality and what it is there to know about the world (Ritchie et al., 2013). On the other hand, Tai and Ajjawi (2016) ontology is concerned with existence of things, objects, and experiences. In addition, Tai and Ajjawi (2016) state that qualitative researchers are likely to hold a relativist position on this issue. They argue that this means that reality does exist, but that multiple perspectives are accepted and can be accessed through the experiences and interpretations of participants (Tai & Ajjawi, 2016). The theory of interpretivism, which states that reality is socially constructed and subjective and can evolve over time, is the primary focus of this research study (Al-Ababneh, 2020).

### **1.11.2 Epistemology**

On the other hand, epistemology is concerned with the ways of knowing and learning about the world and focuses on the issues such as how we can learn about reality and what forms the basis of our knowledge (Ritchie et al., 2013). Tai and Ajjawi (2016) simplified it by noting that epistemology is a way of knowing or theories of how we come to know and understand things or ideas, subjective meanings, and social phenomena. Focus on the details of the situation, reality details, and subjective meanings motivating actions (Al-Ababneh, 2020).

This qualitative study addresses the lived experiences of offenders when making a career decision and how they attach meaning to their career choices. As a marginalised community, the offenders are deprived of services that might contribute to their rehabilitation and reintegration processes. That is, therefore, in my interest to bring forth career counselling in the correctional centres as part of offenders' rehabilitation by ensuring that they create meaning in their career choice as guided by their lived experiences, other aspects of career planning and personal circumstances.

### **1.12 Research methodology**

This study used a qualitative research approach as it is known to be the science of finding out or the procedures for scientific investigation (Babbie, 2010). The study is a qualitative study where I explored the meanings individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem, in this case focusing on the meaning offenders attach to career counselling (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative research method is selected due to its non-numerical nature (allowing the researcher to select a reasonable number of participants) and its nature of working with quality and seeking to get the meaning, feeling, and describing the situation (Goundar, 2012).

This is a phenomenological study which is described as an approach in philosophy and psychology that relies on participants' lived experiences and draw conclusions about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Researchers using phenomenological research methodology endeavour to discover the fundamental nature of participants' lived experiences and to lay aside their existing conceptions of a phenomenon to genuinely explore the participants' experiences (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018).



The study is qualitative in nature, wherein an exploratory research design was used. This method is frequently used when a researcher studies a fresh area of interest or when the study's topic is still relatively unexplored (Babbie, 2017). Babbie (2017) goes on to say that exploratory studies are generally conducted for three reasons: to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding, to determine and test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study and to develop methods to be employed in any future research. Marshall and Rossman (2011) explain that the exploratory study investigates little-understood phenomena and generates hypotheses for further research.

For this study I used semi-structured interviews to collect data. Semi-structured interviews method allows the researcher to prepare questions that covers the intended scope of interview (Flick, 2011). As I was more interested in gathering information related to career counselling for offenders, such as their career choices and planning, semi-structured interviews were suitable for gathering in-depth information. Observations were also employed as another way of collecting data as their body language also communicated their understanding of career counselling. The questions were pre-arranged; however, they were framed in a way that allowed me to make follow-up questions to explore more and scrutinise the responses.

Offenders incarcerated at the JCC in the Gauteng Province formed the study population. The sample of this research is 12 male offenders from JCC medium C which were interviewed. Sampling means how the research participants were selected from the entire population which involves decisions on which people, settings, events, and behaviours to take into consideration (Durrheim, 2014). For the study I used a non-probability sampling technique. This technique is described as a technique in which samples are chosen in a way that goes against the recommendations of probability theory. Convenience sampling was employed as it seemed to be the relevant sampling technique because it reflects the locations or individuals from which the researcher can easily access when collecting data (Creswell, 2018). Convenience sampling is described as a way for identifying the a nearby source of potential participants who are convenient in their immediacy and eager to participate in the study (Robinson, 2014). As I am familiar with the place and have been offering career counselling services to the

offenders, the convenience sampling technique was deemed feasible as it allowed me to work closely with offenders that were easily accessible.

Semi-structured interviews were employed during the data collection in this study. These interviews took place on a one on one basis with the participants where open-ended questions were asked and regularly complemented by why and how follow up questions (Adams, 2015). Participants responses were recorded using audio recorder. I included qualitative observation as a research method where I took field notes on the nonverbal behaviour and the activities of individuals at the research site (Creswell, 2014). In these field notes, I recorded the activities at the research site in an unstructured or semi-structured way (using the questions that I initially wanted to know) (Creswell, 2014).

One on one face-to-face interviews with the offenders took place in a private office. I ensured that the appointed internal guide (correctional officers) did not overhear or interfere during the interview process. To ensure the privacy and quality of the interviews conducted, the managers were asked to explain to the officials that the research was conducted to explore and describe the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach and give meaning to the provision of career counselling services at JHB correctional centre. Officers were asked not to enter the interview room during the proceedings. The interviews were pre-arranged, and made sure that the interview forms, consent forms and personal protective equipment (PPE) were put in place to ensure proper processes. COVID-19 measures were adhered to. For example, the participants and I wore our masks during the interviews, the sanitiser was presented to the interviewees, and the surface was cleaned thoroughly after each interview.

Data analysis in qualitative research includes among other things the preparation and organising of data (transcripts or photographs that are considered to be data) for analysis; subsequently reducing the same data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or discussion. IPA was employed as a method of analysing the collected data to easily work around the participants' lived experiences. IPA is an approach that was developed within psychology to examine personal lived experiences (Smith, 2017). This is emphasised by Alase (2017) when he alludes that the real meaning of the IPA approach

is to understand and augment the lived experiences of the research participants that the study is investigating. According to Alase (2017), IPA is a participant-oriented method as it gives people who are being interviewed the freedom to share their experiences as they see fit without fear of misrepresentation and punishment. Data for IPA are often gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews from a purposive and homogenous sample of participants (Smith, 2017).

### **1.13 Ethical considerations**

Ethics underpinning this study were observed. First, the ethical clearances for conducting the study were requested from both UNISA and DCS as the study is focused on UNISA students and offenders. Ethical clearances were granted from both institutions. Secondly, it was made clear that participation in the study was voluntary, and the participants are free to stop participating at any time. To this end, it is essential to mention that no single participant dropped their participation in the study. Thirdly, the participants were recruited and made fully aware of the reasons for conducting the study, which was to obtain a master's degree. Fourthly, a psychologist was available and on standby for the participants who might find the questions compromising their mental health, but the interviews ended without any issues. Ethical considerations are discussed further in chapter 3.

### **1.14 Assumptions**

This study is aimed at exploring and describing the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach and give meaning to the provision of career counselling services at the JHB correctional centre. Therefore, it is assumed that it will give insight to career practitioners (career counsellors or career guidance officers) on how to facilitate career counselling services to the offenders, following the right channels and utilising relevant theories applicable to the offender population. The results of the study will assist the offenders to understand the value of career counselling and be conscious of the repercussions of their choices when making career decisions. As for policymakers (UNISA and DCS officials), it is assumed that the study will enlighten career counsellors or practitioners in contextualising the services when incorporated with the existing MoU between the two institutions. This is to ensure that the provision of such

services meets the standard requirements for the offenders' career counselling needs to make informed career choices.

### **1.15 Definition of terms**

**Career counselling** - career counselling can be defined as a mode of service delivery where the counsellor works with a client to help them make an informed career decision. According to the career construction approach (Savickas, 2013), career counselling is about helping clients to construct subjectively meaningful identities, increase their self-reflection, and to help them create their careers according to their personal identity and life story (Hirschi & Froidevaux, 2020)

**Chaos theory of careers** – this is a theory that is grounded on dynamical systems as an alternative and contemporary model of career development that highlights continual, undefined, and non-linear change, the complexity of influences, and emergent fractal patterns in a career (National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, 2012).

**Constructivist theory** - this theory emphasizes the fact that individuals are the creators of knowledge and not passive receptors of knowledge. It also suggests that people are the creators of knowledge through experience and form meanings through such experiences.

**Correctional centre** - the confinement facility where offenders are incarcerated by correctional officials.

**Offenders** - refers to any person who has violated the law.

**Open distance learning** - this refers to learning where the student is studying remotely and responsible for their own learning using correspondence. In this mode of learning, students are not required to be physically at school.

**Rehabilitation** - this refers to restoring someone's life into a normal healthy one through different interventions, including therapy and life skills training (psychological approaches) during incarceration.

**Reintegration** – this is defined as a process of integrating a person into society. For the purposes of this study, it refers to someone who was incarcerated.

**University of South Africa** - refers herein as the institution of higher learning in South Africa.

It is rather imperative to also note that career counselling, vocational counselling, career guidance and career development are normally used interchangeably as they denote more or less similar meanings in this study so that it will be in this study. However, it is also important to also familiarise the reader that the four terms will or may appear in one sentence or paragraph in this study. The similarities in career counselling and career guidance will be extracted from Hirschi and Froidevaux's (2020) study when they compare the three essential terms of the current study:

Career counselling can be seen as a specified approach of counselling psychology. However, career counselling is often misunderstood because the term “counselling” may denote providing someone with distinctive knowledge of something. The term “counselling” could be construed to mean that the clients get to be advised and given information by counsellors who allow them to know about different professions that would best fit them. Based on this conception, the counsellor would provide use their own knowledge to provide information about certain careers on the labour market. The counsellor would also have suggestions on specific career paths that s/he believes will fit the client’s career goals. However, the contemporary view of career counselling contradicts with that perspective. Rather, it goes well with what should be named vocational or career guidance. In guidance, the client is treated as an object that ought to be analysed (e.g., in terms of abilities, interests, and personality) and be recommended the best career path for them.

Vocational guidance thus aims to assist the client find a career that resembles his or her personalities and abilities. In such settings, the career counsellor acts as an expert for assessment and information about the world of work (Hirschi & Froidevaux, 2020). On the other end, career development refers to a set of programmes designed to match an individual’s needs, abilities, and career goals with current and future opportunities in an organisation, where a career plan sets a career path for an employee. Career development allows the employee to be thoroughly equipped with skills that will help him or her to moves up into their next step in their careers or get promoted (Kumar et al., 2017). Based on these approaches, career counselling and guidance is about

assisting individuals make informed career decisions with the assistance and direction of a professional career counsellor.

### **1.16 Overview of the chapters**

This dissertation comprises of five chapters including introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and conclusion.

The first chapter, which is the introduction, provides the reader with a general introduction to the study. It includes, among other things, the background, rationale, problem statement, definitions, research questions, the aims and objectives of the study, research design and methodology, as well as the overview of the chapters.

Chapter two presents the literature review on career counselling and guidance, career development and any other related matters on career counselling. This chapter also investigated the themes which were broken down from the research topic, where the importance of career counselling, the effectiveness of career counselling and many other related topics were discussed. Career counselling as an important aspect of rehabilitation and reintegration was also outlined. The career counselling theories that underpin the study (constructivist theory and chaos theory of careers) were also discussed.

Chapter three, the research methodology, reflects on the research design and methodology to describe the lived experiences of offenders making career decisions for the first time whilst incarcerated. This chapter also outlines the discussion on how the data were collected, their trustworthiness and how the data was analysed using the IPA data analysis method.

Chapter four outlined the lived experiences of offenders in the JCC on their first-hand accounts in the processes of choosing a career, including the study's findings. This includes how the collected data was analysed and subsequently interpreted.

The last chapter, chapter five, outlines the findings, recommendations, and conclusion summary.

### **1.17 Summary of the chapter**

The first chapter was introduction to the study, and it covered topics like the background and the rationale of the study were discussed. The chapter also explained the key concepts and provided an overview of the study, significance and delimitation and also defined the important terms in the study. The next chapter will introduce and outline the literature collected from different authors on career counselling-related matters.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the introduction and background of the study. It also highlighted the rationale and significance of the study, as well as the other important aspects of chapter one. This chapter discusses the literature on career counselling in correctional centres and some valuable information to the reader's interest in relation to the subject matter. The chapter discusses the definitions of career counselling, the background on theories and approaches underpinning career counselling, the study's theoretical framework, career counselling programmes, career counselling around the world and in South Africa, as well as career counselling in the past versus in the present, the development of career counselling in correctional centres and finally the importance of career counselling.

### 2.2 Definition of career counselling

It is important to understand that this study will use counselling and guidance interchangeably. Therefore, it is also essential to note the meanings of the two different terms as specified and defined by Dhal (2020) in his conference paper presented in 2017:

- The word *guidance* may be used in a variety of contexts. The primary goal and purpose of guidance is to assist the child, youth, or adult in understanding himself, his needs, and the environment in which he or she lives. Additionally, guidance assist student in adjusting to their current circumstances and in planning their future in accordance with their interests, abilities, and social needs.
- On the other hand, *counselling* is a mode of service delivery where the client and the counsellor meet on personal face-to-face relationship, in which the counsellor, using relationships and his/her special competencies, offers lessons in which the client is helped to know himself and his present and possible future goals. Furthermore, the client can make use of his characteristics and potentialities in a way that is both satisfying to himself and beneficial to society and further, can learn how to solve further problems and meet future needs.

Career counselling can be seen as a specialised service of counselling psychology, and it is often misunderstood as the word counselling may indicate providing someone with skills and knowledge (Hirschi & Froidevaux, 2020). Furthermore, the authors note the



term counselling may be understood in such a manner that the client learn which careers would be the most suitable for them based on the information and recommendations provided by the counsellor (Hirschi & Froidevaux, 2020).

Career counselling has a variety of definitions which, however, are related and somehow share the same meaning. The following are different definitions as put out by different authors:

- According to Amundson et al. (2009), career counselling is defined as the process in which the counsellor and the clients/students works collaboratively to clarify, specify, implement, and adjust to work-related decisions for the client/student to make informed decisions.
- Nathan and Hill (1992) on the other hand define career counselling as a process that enables people to be aware and make use of their resources for them to make decisions and manage career-related problems.
- Career counselling is psychological in nature whereby the counsellor and client form a relationship that serves as an important function (Coetzee & Roythorne-Jacobs, 2007).

According to the career construction approach (Savickas, 2013), career counselling is about assisting clients in the construction of identities that are subjectively meaningful, increasing the amount of self-reflection they engage in, and assisting clients in the creation of careers that are in line with their personal identities and their stories (Hirchi & Froidevaux, 2020). Career counselling also means exploring students' interests and guiding them to choose their professional careers, keeping in mind their strengths, weaknesses, resources, and opportunities (Arshad et al., 2018). Roy (2020) also asserts that career guidance enables us to better reflect on our own interests, capabilities, aspirations, and qualifications; it also enables us to better understand the production market and the education system, and to connect these concepts to how we understand ourselves and finally, it enables us to better understand how to relate these things to how we learn about ourselves.

### **2.3 Originality and history of career counselling**

The initial career counselling services started to be offered during the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a scientific domain that aimed at assisting clients, particularly youth who had experienced the initial effects of the industrial revolution (Duarte, 2017). Formally,

the history of school counselling began around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, one might argue that the basis of counselling and guiding ideas can be traced all the way back to ancient Greece and Rome with philosophical teachings of Plato and Aristotle (Emmanuel, 2019).

Career counselling has been around for a very long time and has seen a great deal of development since it was first introduced (Hilling, 2017). Unfortunately, the services only accessible to a limited number of people, which coincided with the racist apartheid policies that favoured the country's white minority; as was the case with all other services and privileges, the government of the day made sure that the country's black majority was denied opportunities like these (Pillay, 2020). In addition, various aspects of and accountability for career guidance and training opted for different sectors and separate government departments; this inevitably led to fragmentation, duplication of resources and coordination challenges that could destabilise the quality-of-service delivery (Naidoo et al., in press).

#### **2.4 Background on theories and approaches underpinning Career counselling.**

Historically, the field of career counselling has favoured a more objective and optimistic (positivist) perspective (Maree & Beck, 2004). The practice of career counselling has historically speaking, been associated with a positivist epistemology (Duarte & Cardoso, 2015). The authors further argue that the traditional concept of counselling may in fact be misleading because it is based on the separation between the counsellor, who is seen as the “owner of knowledge”, and the counselee, who is seen as the “object of knowledge” (Duarte & Cardoso 2015). This approach can be found as one afflicted by a relative absence of attention to the issues of conceptual clarity in favour of correspondence between theoretical propositions and evidence given by empirical observations (Duarte & Cardoso, 2015).

The fact that pre-constructed models are used in career counselling despite the fact that reality is invariably more complex than theory and, as such, only represents a small of reality and the context in which individuals act and live, still contribute to the fact that there is a lack of equilibrium between theory and practice in the field of career counselling (Duarte & Cardoso, 2015). In today's postmodern South Africa, career counselling has to move away from a purely objective approach and towards a more

interpretive process (Maree & Beck, 2004). According to the post-modern point of view, an individual should consider his or her career to be very personal. Objective approaches of counselling were frequently utilised in the past, however they would ignore the subjective and personal meaning people attach to their careers (Maree & Beck 2004). Constructivism, systems theory, action theory and succession of fragmented theoretical advancements that stress the relevance of paradoxical thinking are some examples of recent and forthcoming innovations and developments in the field of career theory (Amundson, 2005). He further indicates that some new advances in the field of career counselling practice include a higher emphasis on active involvement, more holistic techniques, an enlarged counselling focus, and an increased emphasis on the counselling effectiveness (Amundson, 2005).

There are many different theories and models of careers, but none of them are adequate or properly place to present the expansive subject of career development (Alpattani, 2019). Models of career counselling would be improved if they acknowledged the human condition as it is experienced in the life of the person struggling with unemployment or work transition. As a result, the models for career counselling include, in practice, a focus on the client's subjective experience of his or her situation (Maglio et al., 2005).

#### **2.4.1 Theoretical framework underpinning the current study.**

In this research, I employed multiple theories or what is called theoretical triangulation in career counselling to give a clear view of the study as it depicts multi-faceted and multiple aspects in individuals and communities. Theoretical triangulation approach was used to guarantee that all aspects of career counselling are covered holistically, focusing the attention on offenders and what could assist counsellors working with offenders to be more effective in their approach. Career counsellors need specialised skills (e.g., ability to differentiate between the offenders' career aspirations, criminality and implications of the criminal record, knowledge of theories suitable for the facilitation of the counselling processes) as compared to mainstream counselling e.g. in the profession that will cover all the aspects of offenders' career needs. The two selected theories are the constructivist theory of the late Dr. Peavy (Larsen, 2004) and the Chaos Theory of Careers (CTC) of Prof. Jim Bright and Prof. Robert Pryor

(McIlveen, 2014). The chosen theories focus on the most important aspects of career decision-making, including meaning-making, power, career planning and goal setting. The use of the two theories connects to each other for assisting with constructing meaning, career planning, empowering, and goal setting through career counselling. Based on the offenders' different criminality, some are at the beginning of constructing their careers, while others are on the verge of changing their careers. The two theories will assist the counsellor in approaching an individual's career decision-making process from the perspective of Dr. Peavy's constructivist theory of meaning-making and that of Prof. Bright and Prof. Pryor's chaos theories of careers on career planning and goal setting. The two theories are relevant to the current study as they help understand how individuals make meaning in their lives and how those meanings influence their careers as well as planning their careers and set goals that will guide them into their lives beyond correctional centre. CTC also helps with being resilient and ability to work on complex situations.

A number of hypotheses have been advanced in an effort to explain the phenomena of career choice (Balas-Timar et al., 2015). Conventional methods of career development often focus on identifying a person's primary strengths and matching those strengths to work settings and situations that are compatible or consistent with those strengths (Bright & Pryor, 2005). This is supported by Van Vianen et al. (2008), when they argue that several career theories emphasise that people look for situations that match their abilities, attitudes, and values (Van Vianen et al., 2008)). According to Bright and Pryor (2009), career theorists are becoming more interested in theories that characterise the human and the environment in ways that are more nuanced and dynamic than the standard person-environment theories. According to some psychological theories, this choice is the end result of interactions between a person's own characteristics (such as their interests, abilities, and personal values) and aspects of the environment in which they find themselves (such as requirements of the labour market and analysis of the consumer's job) (Balas-Timar et al., 2015). For all these reasons, career development counselling is likely to have a vital role in helping the South African population and the nation continue its progress toward increased equality, progress, and prosperity (Pryor & Bright, 2010).

### 2.4.2 Constructivist career counselling approach

According to the constructivist view, each person is not only a passive recipient of knowledge but also a producer of knowledge through his schema and experience (Aysan & Totan, 2009). The concept that there is no one “God’s eye” perspective on reality may be traced back to the origins of constructivist theory, which can be found in the fields of philosophy, psychology, science, and cultural studies. On the other hand, there are other alternate worlds in which the human being is seen as an integrated, self-directing creator of meaning (Peavy, 1995). It encompasses themes such as cooperation, receptive inquiry, pattern retention, and producing meaning through action (Peavy, 1995). According to Bereiter (1994), who is cited in Olusegun (2015), individuals build their own understanding and knowledge of the world by the things they encounter and the ways in which they reflect on those experiences. The individualistic nature of career planning and or career decision-making should be understood with its meaning-making nature. Individuals, including offenders, make career decisions based on diverse personal reasons to help them fulfil their inner being.

Unlike the traditional theories of career development and counselling, constructivism sheds new light on career counselling by promoting lifelong learning, attributing active roles to the clients, perceiving the counsellor as more than an expert, turning the sessions into cooperation between the client and the counsellor, and regarding the clients as their own coaches (Ayshan & Totan, 2009). The fundamental idea behind this concept is that career as a self-conceiving and self-organising systems allows counsellors to concentrate more directly on the ways in which individuals make sense of their working lives within the backdrop of rapid change (Amundson, 2005). Alternate methods of career development and counselling are available within the constructivist theoretical frameworks (Hoskins, 1995). She further asserts that constructivism, which takes a holistic perspective, places a focus on the principles of self-organisation that are fundamental to the human experience (Hoskins, 1995). Under the same notion, Hoskins focused her attention on different approaches for career counselling:

**Meaning making:** The idea that individuals are responsible for the creation of their own meaning is central to the constructivist methodology. One of the premises of the constructivist theory is that the quality of career advice may be considerably improved by making the exploration of personal meanings the primary focus of the counselling

session. These meaning-making processes may take on a variety of forms, all of which serves to raise the client's level of self-awareness on the processes that lay behind meaningful career choices.

**Narrative:** Perhaps the most pervasive meaning-making prospect is that which exists while clients are relating significant events in their lives. Counsellors can significantly enhance their understanding of client self-organising processes by listening carefully to the words and phrases used when clients relate an event or story. Although this appears rather obvious, professionals frequently overlook the positive effect of using clients' own interpretations as evidence of their meaning systems. Meaning making happens when counsellors help clients in becoming informed of the latter's meaning structures connected to create an inclusive life story and how the client interprets events to author a story that has sense, coherence, and viability.

**Power:** Counsellors need to become aware of how they either empower or disempower clients through their counselling approaches. A traditional "test them and tell them" approach to counselling, for instance, can disempower the client when the counsellor assumes an expert position regarding the client's personhood. Therefore, career counsellors must begin by clarifying the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of both the client and the counsellor.

In the 1970s, linear logic, minimalist theories, and logical positivism all saw a decline in popularity (Ayshan & Totan, 2009). Even though the constructivist career theory has shown that there is limited literature on it, it is still a desired theory that answers the needs of offenders' career decision-making process. The theory is more client-centred and helps create meaning and empower the clients through their career decision-making process and planning. Constructivist career counselling generally focuses on planning life (Aysan & Totan, 2009). The hope for each offender is to come out of the correctional centres as reformed and responsible individuals who want to change their lives. Constructivist career counselling theory allows clients to construct meaning through career planning sessions.

### **2.4.3 Chaos Theory of careers (CTC)**

A dynamical systems theory alternative and contemporary model of career development is presented in a form of the CTC as this model places an emphasis on continuous, uncertain, and non-linear change, the complexity of influences, and emergent fractal patterns in a person's professional life (National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, 2012). The application of this approach to career education is sketched out, with the aim of challenging traditional notions of career planning and goal setting and highlighting the importance of creativity, reinvention, and resilience as important outcomes of contemporary career education (NICEC, 2012). This is what is known as a mathematical theory, and it has been effectively utilised in a variety of different areas of natural sciences. This theory is applicable in the field of career counselling as a foundation for practice in the context of assisting clients in coping with ambiguity, uncertainty, and transition (Balas-Timar et al., 2015). A requirement to implementing a chaos theory methodology is accepting that career development is subject to different influences, many if not all of which are constantly shifting at different paces and in different degrees (Bright & Pryor, 2005).

Theory of chaos allows for the integration of concepts such as complexity, connectedness, change, and chance when applied to the formulation of individual career development in terms of complex dynamical systems (Pryor & Bright, 2014). Careers are individualistic and often, if not always, are influenced by significant others, socialisation, economic status, interests, abilities, geographical location, and many other situations one finds themselves in. Career can be influenced by significant others, socialisation, geographical location, and many other situations as well. This is supported by Pryor and Bright (2010) when they allude that when it comes to a person's professional life, they could be affected by a wide variety of factors, such as their health, age, gender, culture, location, emotions, family origins, cultural expectations, socioeconomic status, labour market fluctuations, transport options, educational level and so on. Inherent unpredictability and the capacity to change are shared by all of these and a great many more things (Bright & Pryor, 2005). The counsellor should consider the flexibility and complexity that arise from this change and be willing to holistically assist the clients. As a result of the complexity of the situation, the possibility of change in the interplay between such professional effects is both plausible and unexpected

(Pryor & Bright, 2010). Career counsellors need to be aware of this complexity and should urge clients to think about the many factors that have an impact on their lives (Bright & Pryor, 2005).

Chaos Theory of Careers (CTC) core concepts, according to Balas-Timar et al. (2015) and Bright and Pryor (2005), are as follows:

- **Complexity**- Processes and influences shape each person's life. Understanding the processes and influences, as well as how these have shaped and will continue to shape individuals' experiences of the world, is the primary focus of this section (Bright & Pryor, 2005). Because of the complexity of the influences that might have an effect on a person's career, career counsellors need to steer clear of the typical method of looking for causes or attempting to explain behaviour in terms of one element impacting another (Bright & Pryor 2005). Rather, it is important for counsellors, when assisting clients, to look at the client's wholeness and entirety.
- **Emergence** – the focus of the CTC is on complexity of people's experiences, and this is where patterns emerge. Emergence is an attempt to derive meaning from one's previous experience.
- **Nonlinearity** – implies that even little changes or influences have significant if not disproportionate effect. When looking back on previous events in one's career, it is critical to examine everything, even if it seems to be unimportant, since doing so may assist throw light on the final outcome. Because of the nonlinear nature of these systems, even relatively insignificant occurrences can have disproportionate effect on the outcome. These kinds of ideas can be found in a wide variety of modern scientific fields (Bright & Pryor, 2005).
- **Unpredictability** – the client's professional life will be influenced by random events. Clients will have a better understanding of the unpredictable nature of careers if they are encouraged to investigate the situations. Clients may be helped to recognise and capitalise on the future opportunities with the assistance of counsellors.
- **Phase shifts** – this is where the process of fundamental change of structure and functioning of complex dynamical systems take place either slowly (as in developing new skills through education and training) or as a result of an abrupt change (as in changing companies, having employment terminated or major injury) (Pryor & Bright, 2014).
- **Attractors** – operate as either a pull or a restraint on behaviour, depending on how they are used. The concept of attractors is used to explain the behaviour of complicated dynamical systems within the framework of CTC (Balas-Timar et al., 2015).



Complexity is found at the heart of CTC, which makes it possible to consider a variety of points of view, even those that are in direct conflict with one another (Balas-Timar et al., 2015). The other two primary ideas are self- organisation, which leads to the formation of patterns in systems, and change, which may be analysed in terms of its impact on the capacity for adaptation and resilience (Balas-Timar et al., 2015).

Interventions for career development in the correctional centres setting put emphasis on educating offenders job seeking skills to assist them in finding work in the communities (Bennett & Amundson, 2016). However, it is said that the ongoing developments in the labour market have an effect on job security and, thus, criminal recidivism (Bennett & Amundson, 2016). This is the reason for intensive career counselling for offenders to plan their careers. Bennett and Amundson (2016) further assert that more dynamic methods to career development with offenders are needed to embrace the paradoxical complexities of making career decisions that incorporates notion of flexibility, change, chance, curiosity, and hope in order to ensure successful transition to the community (Bennett & Amundson, 2016). The chaos theory of careers was selected as an applicable theory because it focuses on complexity, change, chance, and hope, among other themes. The desire to use the above theories enables the counsellor to profoundly help offenders to make meaning, be empowered and plan their careers.

## **2.5 Career counselling programmes and interventions**

Young people think about careers in the context of long term life goal frequently than as qualifications and training. These youth take into consideration their lifestyle, relationships, living arrangements, identity, and personal circumstances. However, the most recent version of the education standard does not adequately address these topics (Upoalkpajor, 2020). In order to be successful for clients hailing from variety of cultural backgrounds, career counselling has to encompass a range of distinct element and procedures (Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005). According to Maree (2013), career counselling should be founded on three overarching concepts, which include access (making career counselling easily and freely accessible), equality (without privileging any certain groups), and redress (addressing any wrong doings in the career counselling process). Furthermore, Maree (2013) concludes that career counselling intervention

should help students become more employable, increase their vocational flexibility, and assist them in assuming authorship of their own careers and life stories.

The process of choosing a career is lengthy, requires specialisation and it necessitates that individual participate in a variety of activities (Atli, 2016). Furthermore, he argued that it involves getting feedback in order to define and cultivate awareness of personal characteristics as well as career decisions strategies (Atli, 2016). An effective method of career counselling contributes to the hypothetical career planning of the client by collecting information on different occupations and using proper decision making processes when the client is making a career choice (Atli, 2016). It is also important to note that individual can receive assistance to understand the ins and outs of the world of work in greater depth, the factors that influence opportunities that exist, and how to get a job that matches one's interests and talent through the process of career guidance (Suwidagdho & Dewi, 2020).

## **2.6 Career counselling around the world**

According to the study conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD), the European Commission, and the World Bank, career counselling refers to the services and activities that are designed to assist people of any age and at any stage of their lives during the decision-making process regarding their education and training, occupation, and management of their careers (Milan, et al., 2017). It is crucial to comprehend professional counselling within an international and multicultural framework as career counselling evolves from a western based practice to a worldwide phenomenon, therefore posing as a global phenomenon (Emmanuel, 2019).

For the purpose study, the reviewed literature on career counselling comprises data from six different countries (USA, China, Turkey, Nigeria, Ghana, and Botswana), which share the inceptions and developments in the field. The sub-Saharan African countries' literature is briefly discussed. The literature focuses on general career counselling from primary to tertiary education.

Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States of America (USA) saw the beginning of the professional career services, which evolved through time in response to changes in social structure and the requirements of individuals within it (Yesilyaprak, 2012).

According to Pope (1997) Career counselling emerged in USA in the early 1900 as vocational guidance as a response to societal upheaval, transition, and change that was occurring at that time. The social reform movement in the 1890s was the first of the causes that eventually led to the creation of counselling and guidance in the USA (Emmanuel, 2019). According Ültanır (2012), the beginning of the history of career guidance in USA can be traced back to 1909, when Frank parsons opened the career office in Boston and was widely named as the “father” of career guidance.

According to O’Reilly et al. (2020), the activity is referred to using a variety of words, including, career advising, career coaching, career counselling, career education, career guidance, employment services, outplacement and recruiting. Some of these phrases are interchangeable with one another, however the phrase career development has gained popularity in the USA as a synonym of career counselling (O’Reilly et al., 2020). In the early 1900s, career centres in the USA emerged into community based organisations, and later on, they shifted their focus to become educational institutions (Garis, 2012). The authors further mentioned that over the course of time, career centres moved from community setting such as settlement houses into academic institutions such as colleges and universities as well as secondary school, and less frequently into business organisations as well as government and social agencies (Garis et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the majority of China’s career guidance and counselling theories originated from Europe and USA, especially after 1990 (Sun & Yuen, 2012). To a significant extent, Hong Kong continues to adhere to the British model, in which teachers who are also full time subject teachers are also responsible for providing career counselling (Yuen et al., 2019). However, Tsinghua University which is located in China was the first institution to begin working in this subject in 1916 and the first to form a vocational advice committee in 1923 (Sun & Yuen, 2012). Since 1977, multiple phrases have been used to express career guidance and counselling in government papers and educational settings in Shanghai, representing different understandings at different periods (Zhou et al., 2016). These phrases evolved from job allocation (1977–1992) which was used during that time to vocational guidance (1993–1999) and later to career education (2000–2011) and then eventually current use of career counselling (2012–2015) (Zhou et al., 2016). Every student should have the opportunity to

participate in career education since it's an essential experience when it is well planned and provided (Yuen et al., 2019).

The term counselling was first introduced to Turkey in the 1950s by professionals from USA which included Ruffin, Tomkins, Beals and Mills, through the seminars they gave to students regarding their abilities, interests and needs (Ültanır, 2012,). This is supported by Yesilyaprak, (2012) when he indicated that the counselling movement in Turkey can be traced back to the 1950s and owes its origin, in large part from the progression and development of the counselling systems in USA. Over the course of more than half a century, Turkey has gone through the stages of establishing, exploring, and consolidating its career counselling industry and it is during this time that career counselling has seen a significant development, resulting in numerous important advancement (Yesilyaprak, 2019). Furthermore, it has drawn on valuable international experiences, at first basing itself on theoretical approaches and practices in the USA, but increasingly broadening its purview by drawing inspiration from other countries in the European Union (EU), benefiting from funding and projects that facilitate peer learning, but eventually modelled itself on North American theoretical approaches (Yesilyaprak, 2019). Career counselling in Turkey is incorporated into the teachers' curriculum as day-to-day teaching. In Turkey like many other countries, school counsellors are entrusted with the responsibility of offering career development services as part of the more comprehensive school curriculum (Ozdemir et al., 2019). In Turkey, important decisions about future employment are decided during the student's time in high school (Atli, 2016).

In the Sub-Saharan countries, there has been discernible shift, as well as the accumulation of an ever-growing body of information demonstrating societal problems that children of school-going age confront (Kiweewa, et al., 2018). According to the authors, there has also been an increase in the number of efforts to develop counselling and guidance programmes in schools located in African nations, which is based on the strong evidence that is already available (Kiweewa et al., 2018). The discussion below will focus on the countries that have established career counselling in sub-Saharan countries.

The culture of Nigeria has traditionally included guidance and counselling services for its citizens (Raji, 2019). The beginning of career guidance and counselling in Nigeria can be traced back and be attributed to a number of factors, including an increase in the number of students enrolled in primary and secondary schools after the country gained its independence in 1960, an increase in the number of young people on Nigeria who required assistance, recurring shifts in the educational system, unrest in tertiary institutions, and shifts in the dynamics of home and family life (Omoniyi, 2016). Traditional way of counselling had been used for a considerable amount of time before contemporary approaches were brought to Nigeria in 1958 (Raji, 2019). According to Omoniyi (2016), career counselling in Nigeria began in primary schools, where the focus was to identify the developmental needs of pupils, assisting pupils in identifying themselves as developing individuals, facilitate a smooth transition from home to primary and secondary schools, and encourage pupil to cultivate the right attitudes and values (Omoniyi, 2016). It later evolved to high schools where it focuses on equipping the students with the skills of making informed choices, enabling the students to develop a positive self-image, assisting the students transition smoothly from one educational level to another and further into institutions of higher learning to assist students develop better interpersonal skills, time management and other life skills (Omoniyi, 2016).

A quick examination reveals, with regards to the current educational systems in Nigeria, that guidance and counselling have not been acknowledged, nor have they been given the place that would benefit them at the different level of schools (Omoniyi, 2016). The study conducted by Okolie et al. (2020) concluded that the participants acknowledged that every Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Nigeria had a central counselling unit or centre that provide general guidance and counselling services to students and staff, however, these counselling centres did not specifically offer careers advice, guidance, and counselling (CAGC) services to students, and they were not specifically established to foster Technical Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) students' career development, aspirations, and choices (Okilie, 2022). Participants linked graduates' low career aspirations to a lack of access to CAGC services and programmes (Okilie, 2022).

In Ghana, instituting official guidance and counselling programmes in second-cycle institutions became a reality when the Ghanaian government published a policy through the Ghana Education Service in 1976 (Namale & Awabil, 2018). In 1975, the Ghana

Education Service organised its first guidance and counselling course for 37 secondary school tutors and officers from regional directorates at the University of Cape Coast (Upoalkpajor, 2020). According to the findings of the research carried out by Namale and Awabil (2018), the assessment service was successfully provided, however the consulting, counselling, and information services were not successfully carried out.

In Botswana, research shows a noticeable lack of career counselling (Rukewe & Oats, 2020). The study by Rukewe and Oats (2020) revealed the absence of career guidance in schools. The authors also highlighted that owing to this scenario in the majority of schools, the majority of the participants did not have sufficient knowledge about career options as is anticipated of student who are in the last stage of their second education (Rukewe & Oats, 2020). Furthermore, the study conducted by Makwinja (2017) indicated that the principal education officer (PEO) informed the researcher conducting the study in Botswana that counselling services were not available in the school and that a few teachers both in primary and secondary schools were trained in guidance and counselling and were not professionals (Makwinja, 2017).

At the present time, career development services are provided by professional practitioners with varying skills and knowledge, as they are in many other countries to a broad range of clients in diverse settings such as schools, post-school institutions, government services and civil society organisations (The Department of Higher education (DHET), 2016). It should be noted that career counselling in South Africa is still characterised by a psychometric assessment, which is suitable primarily for cultural groups that were dominant during the Apartheid era in South Africa, namely Afrikaans speaking (mother tongue) and English-speaking (mother tongue) groups (Maree & Beck, 2004). Therefore, the historical backdrop of South Africa has constrained rather than facilitated the career growth of the great majority of its population, and the field of career psychology's knowledge of career development behaviour has been more prescriptive than descriptive up to this point (Watson, 2009). The author further asserts that one factor that contributes to this state of stasis in redefining career counselling is the dichotomous contradiction that exist between the theoretical and professional training of career counsellors and the reality of the South African society (Watson, 2009).

Career guidance and counselling services are not new in South Africa (Pillay 2020); however, the nature of these services is that they are selective. Maree and Molepo (2007) made a passing reference to the fact that career counselling was offered in South Africa to those who had the financial means to pay for such an expensive service, further disadvantaging many non-white groups who were already living in poverty. After 13 years, there hasn't been much of a shift as Pillay (2020) said despite the fact that the services have been accessible in the country for the better part of the last several decades and are common knowledge among some subsets of the community. However, the services were only accessible to a limited number of people which coincided with the discriminatory apartheid practices that were in the country at the time and favoured the white minority (Pillay, 2020). It is important to highlight that the time period after 1994 is characterised by a variety of morphing policies, tactics, and pieces of legislation that all, in their own way, have an effect on the supply of and practice of career counselling in South Africa (Naidoo et al., in press). Literature on career counselling in South Africa has more easily highlighted historically unfavourable limits than it has addressed contemporary negative realities (Watson, 2009).

Poor career choices have a tremendous influence on the economy at the national level, and this is particularly true when it comes to the incapacity of students to finish their education, therefore, students who do not graduate within then allotted amount of time or withdraw from their higher education pay increased fees (Pillay, 2020). There is an urgent need to facilitate career counselling for learners in South Africa, especially in disadvantaged schools, where this facility is nearly non-existent (Maree & Molepo, 2007). Every student who withdraws from a class in countries with a restricted number of possibilities for higher education and professional development represents a chance that was not taken by another person (Pillay, 2020). In addition, it reflects a loss of funding that could have been used elsewhere, including vital services such as health care; furthermore, the scenario like this might entail huge national debt, which can be difficult to pay in countries with lower level of wealth for students who rely on government funding and financing programmes (Pillay, 2020).

In addition, it is essential to acknowledge that the ripple effects of poor career decision making, or lack of career counselling and vocational guidance services influence more than just the person who made the poor decision (Pillay, 2020). These poor decisions

also have negative economic impact on families and country (Pillay, 2020). As a result, it is essential to give serious consideration to the possibility of enhancing the quality of career counselling in schools that have the capacity to do so in order to launch these services in the vast majority of schools that do not already have this kind of counselling accessible (Maree & Molepo, 2007). Furthermore, Pillay (2020) asserts that young people who embark on higher education and training without careful consideration of a long-term career prospects, the job market, and their employability after that, or the suitability of the career to their personality makeup can find themselves in a difficult situation later on life. Molepo & Maree (2007) further indicated that it is important to make the services available in order to empower underprivileged youth to become qualified and motivated professionals, take part in transforming the country, and augment and expand the culture of counselling at training institutions in South Africa (Maree & Molepo, 2007).

It is important to note that there is not much literature to support the notion that South Africa is indeed doing well in providing career counselling. Either it is restricted remarks published in academic publications (with even less recommended practical application) or more recent government-initiated scans of existing career delivery programmes in South Africa, both of which are quite limited in scope (DHET, 2016). DHET (2016) further reveals that, not only in South Africa but also internationally, it has been identified as a cause for concern that the skills and knowledge of career development practitioners are questionable when it comes to the provision and quality of career information, guidance, and advice services, as well as the delivery of public policy such as that related to lifelong learning and labour market. The philosophy and methods of career counselling in South Africa need to be more inclusive, holistic, context based and be suited for individuals as well as small and big groups of people (Albien, 2021). Contextualising career counselling will assist individuals in the marginalised areas in which the focus will be based on the needs of those individuals. The recent steps taken by National Youth Development agency (NYDA), to give more career guidance and counselling at the community level are encouraging and fit well with a lifetime approach to career development (Naidoo et al., in press). It is abundantly known that a significant number of students enrol in higher education and training programmes across the globe, including South Africa, without having a distinct plan for their future lives or careers. This is connected, for some young people to the conditions



of poverty in which a significant section of our population live (Pillay, 2020). Many students believe that furthering their education is the key to escaping their current situations, but they have little to no idea of the specific path to follow, what they are best suited to do as a career, or what job opportunities and market forces are in the field that they are considering working in (Pillay, 2020). Maree (2010) agrees with this statement by emphasising that the days are over when workers fit their lives into their work and wove their very existence around their careers.

## **2.7 Career counselling in the past versus the present**

Frank Parsons is credited with developing the field of career counselling around the turn of twentieth century focusing mostly on selecting an occupation and preparing for the world of work (Yeşilyaprak, 2012). Yesilyaprak (2012) further states that by the beginning of the twentieth century, Frank Parsons opened the Vocational Bureau Boston (USA) and it was recognised as the first organisation to offer systematic process for providing vocational guidance and counselling and he referred to it as “true reasoning”. Since its first introduction, career counselling has undergone significant development while managing to keep the majority of its core components intact (Kapur, 2018). The context in which most people make decisions about their career is one that is constantly shifting: jobs are evolving at a breakneck pace, our society is becoming more multi-ethnic and cosmopolitan, and people need to prepare themselves for career paths that are branching out rather than those are emerging (Alpattani, 2019). Historically career counselling was in a position to present the predictable, linear paths for acquiring employment; this linear was projected on a steady yet growing prospects on job market (Maglio et al., 2005).). Career guidance services are the outcomes of late industrialisation (Watts & Kidd, 2000). Furthermore, the authors argue that historically, one’s family and the surrounding networks into which they were born had a significant impact in determining the labour opportunities that were available to them (Watts & Kidd, 2000).

However, with the inception of economic development, the division of labour eventually extended to a point where such traditional mechanisms of role allocation became insufficient, and formal career guidance services were developed to supplement them (Watts & Kidd, 2000). In the 1960s, the field of career counselling experienced

significant expansion in the area of theory generation, with behavioural, developmental, and psychoanalytic theories of career development developing during period (Yesilyaprak, 2012). In addition to this over the same period, the number of career evaluation tools also increased considerably (Yesilyaprak, 2012). In the 1960s and early 1970s, development of career counselling services started to pick up speed and become more comprehensive (Watts & Kidd, 2000). Our modern society encourages young people to aspire to the best possible jobs and the best possible careers. Furthermore, this is essential to point out that young individuals might potentially acquire certain attitudes about the manner in which they should choose a career path (Van Vianen et al., 2009).

The expansion of educational and vocational opportunities has provided many young people with access to a wider variety of alternatives, which has led to a rise in the need for assistance in navigating these possibilities (Watts & Kidd, 2000). Career development is becoming more significant as a means for exploring career interests and opportunities in this day and age when there are so many different career paths available (Hilling, 2017). Alongside the establishment of the career services as professional organisation, some key changes took place: the first development was the incorporation of the idea of career and technical education into the curricula of educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities (This was linked to the growth of interest in approaches focused on helping students take responsibility for their decisions rather than passively relying on experts' advice) (Watts & Kidd, 2000). Hilling (2017) recommends that for the students to be more prepared for life beyond high school, as well as the transition into adulthood and world of work, schools are required to provide career counselling to learners.

According to findings of research conducted by Alpattani (2019), some of the aspects that have a role in determining one's career paths include one's personality, personal interest, family influences, peer influences, gender, socio-economic background, and kind of school attended. This is also ascertained by Zafar (2019) who found that students' career choices are influenced by a variety of variables such as teachers, social media, self-interests, parents, and societal exposure. In addition, the author concluded that a person's career life is both adaptable and gratifying when the person's traits match those of their chosen career and identity (Zafar, 2019). From its initial stages as a diagnostic and directive discipline, the modern approaches of career counselling have

become conscious and considerate of different needs as per client, focusing on individual strengths, enabling change, contributing to clients' development, and offering action plans towards preferred career or qualifications (Schedin, 2007).

## **2.8 Development of Career counselling in the correctional centres**

Offenders are not an exception to the current economic challenges being experienced in the country (Uche, 2020). Vocational interventions for criminal justice populations have existed for years in various forms but have traditionally not used an interdisciplinary approach and have shown significant limitations in effectiveness (Varghese, 2012). Together, the literature recommends that an effective method to increasing positive career outcomes and decreasing negative criminal outcomes is by changing specific offender characteristics, particularly criminal attitudes, and behaviours (Varghese, 2012). Upon receiving proper counselling, one would expect a decline in re-offending among offenders and a change in their attitude and behaviour (Uche, 2020).

In order to develop successful treatments for offenders that will promote employment and reduce recidivism, it is necessary to have an awareness of the elements connected to lowering recidivism as described in the academic literature on offender justice (Varghese, 2012). Counselling can also benefit offenders by enhancing their social and educational skills (Uche, 2020). Thus, counselling should not only be offered to these offenders, but the community also needs to be guided accordingly in as much as these "born again" societal members (ex-offenders) are concerned (Uche, 2020). The author further alluded that the importance of counselling to offenders can never be over-emphasised as it is a helping service geared towards developing a relationship between the counsellor and the counselee (Uche, 2020).

The provision of guidance and counselling services inside correctional centres would aid offenders in rehabilitating themselves by making choices that are pertinent to their situations, so repairing any shortcomings and allowing them to become useful members of society (Akyina & Alubokin, 2018). Many opportunities for personal development are made available to participants in guidance programmes, including work in correctional centre industries and other institutions; vocational training, treatment for substance abuse; parenting; anger management; and other programmes that teach essential life skills (Uche, 2020). Counselling then helps offenders appreciate that they

can be reformed, and the community can accept them as normal functioning human beings (Uche, 2020). According to Akyina and Alubokin (2018) guidance programmes provide self-improvement, self-awareness such as working in correctional centres and other institutions, vocational training, drug abuse and treatment, parenting, anger management and other programmes that teach essential life skills.

The offenders should also be provided with counselling, psychotherapy training, career counselling, relationship issues, creative training, job development skills and counselling in financial management to the offenders (Uche, 2020). However, it is confirmed that not much has been done concerning implementing career counselling services in correctional centres. According to the Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners in South Africa developed by DHET, DCS offers a non-standardised self-exploration questionnaire, career bursary and institutional information, all of which can be found in walk-in centres and serve to offer career advice (DHET, 2016). The failure to excellently deliver guidance services has mostly led to incorrect career path decisions that have unpleasantly affected the victims (Upoalkpajor, 2020). He further asserts that career guidance offers an important connection between education and the labour market (Upoalkpajor, 2020).

## **2.9 Importance of career counselling**

Career counselling emerged in the context of rapid transformation in the societal and labour market, where the social transformation sought to support people from disadvantaged backgrounds through career counselling (McMahon & Watson, 2020). Researchers and counsellors working in the subject of career psychology, according to Watson and Stead (200), should frequently ask if the work they are doing is important and suitable to the moment and environment in which they are doing it in a world that is always evolving. They further suggest that the characteristics of work and environment in which it takes place are subject to change, which poses a challenge to the prevalent ideas and studies on careers (Watson & Stead, 2002). Career counselling assists students in preparing career plans related to their career search, goal setting, the way to realise goals, and cultivating job searching skills (Arshad et al., 2018).

Additionally, people's careers and places of employment often constitute a significant portion of their life. Many countries recognise the significance of career counselling

programmes in improving the lives of their citizens and the economy of their countries (Balci, 2018). Career counselling may be highly beneficial and useful for individuals' happiness and for resolving work-related issues (Hilling, 2017). As a result of the fact that the primary objective of career counselling is to help clients in overcoming obstacles and making the most of the assistance, career counselling is essential for individuals who are already in the workforce as well as those who are trying to join or re-enter the workplace (Evans, 2019).

The SAQA framework highlights the important aspects of career counselling and development and indicates that it is important for effective learning (South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), 2009). Firstly, if individuals decide on what they want to learn in a well-informed and thoughtful way, related to their interests, their capacities, and their ambitions, and are provided with a realistic information about the opportunities to which the learning can lead, then they are possibly to be more successful learners (SAQA, 2009). Furthermore, government should invest huge amount of money in education and training to ensure much higher educational returns produced from informed career decisions they make (SAQA, 2009). Secondly, it is important for an effective labour market; if people find jobs and career paths that utilise their potential and meet their own goals, they are likely to be motivated and productive and enhance national prosperity (SAQA, 2009). Thirdly, career development is essential to social equity, encouraging equal opportunities and advocating for social inclusion and it can raise the ambitions of underprivileged groups and offer them access to opportunities that might otherwise be denied to them (SAQA, 2009)

People are beginning to see that careers are so much "selected" as they are "constructed" by the accumulation of choices about education and employment that are made by an individual over the course of their lifetime (SAQA, 2009). It is also emphasised in SAQA (2009) research that career development in this sense does not have to be limited to a few selected people, rather, it can, and should be made available to everyone. Recidivism rates may be lowered, and offenders can be prepared for successful reintegration into society if effective intervention programmes are used (Chen & Shields, 2020). As a result, it is of the utmost need to provide effective inside and post-release rehabilitation programmes to formerly incarcerated individuals that target the employment challenges in order to enhance the possibility of those

individuals having professional challenges (Chen & Shields, 2020). Career counselling interventions can help with the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. Vocational and career well-being is of great importance for the successful reintegration of ex-offenders back into their communities, becoming responsible members of the communities who contribute to the common upright of the general society in which they live (Chen & Shields, 2020). It is of essential value for offenders to choose the right careers which will enable them to change and better their lives. This leads us to the next discussion on rehabilitation and reintegration as intervention processes for offenders using career counselling:

### **2.9.1 Rehabilitation**

Wormith et al. (2007) indicate that rehabilitation includes psychosocial programmes, therapy and life skills programmes, and services premeditated to support offenders in focusing on a range of needs related to their offending behaviour and attaining a more productive, satisfying lifestyle. This empowers offenders to become law-abiding, productive members of society (Ifeoma, 2012). In order for the process of rehabilitation to be effective, it is necessary to consider the particular background of the person in question (White paper on corrections, 2005). Moreover, it requires the individual's optimistic dedication and voluntary involvement, as it is a process that others can facilitate but cannot accomplish without the individual's commitment. In this context, rehabilitation refers to all the methods, programmes and other preparatory activities that are carried within correctional centre when the offenders are still incarcerated (Gisler et al., 2018). In order to contribute to the reduction of re-offending and the overall prevention of crime, needs-based rehabilitation aims to influence the offender to adopt constructive and suitable norms and value systems, alternative social interaction options, and to develop life skills and social and vocational skills, in order to assist the person to refrain from habitual crime (White paper on corrections, 2005). Furthermore, Gisler et al. (2018) indicate that rehabilitation includes not only measures and programmes used in the correctional centres but also contributes as an umbrella term for programmes and structures within and outside correctional centres aimed at preparing and supporting the incarcerated offenders for when they return back into their communities.

According to Ifeoma (2012), rehabilitation is important for reducing recidivism (the tendency to fall back into crime despite punishment). Furthermore, it improves the lives of those incarcerated by turning their lives from crime to a positive future and reducing the threat to society by facilitating public safety. In correctional centres, which are the societal institutions for the confinement and treatment of societal deviants, the following functions are carried out: ensuring the custody of offenders and humane execution of sentences; ensuring the welfare of offenders through the protection of their rights and the provision of good medical care, clothing, bedding, feeding, recreation, and library facilities; and ensuring the custody of offenders and execution of sentences in a manner that is consistent with law (Akyina & Alubokin, 2018). Providing offenders with access to variety of correctional education services significantly play a role on the offender's rehabilitation process by ensuring reduced crime and recidivism rates, poverty, and inequality in different societies throughout the world (Vandala, 2019). Furthermore, Vandala (2019) highlighted that some researchers found education to be important as it modifies people's behaviour, improves self-confidence, reduces recidivism rate, and changes offenders into law-abiding citizens.

In spite of the punishing nature of incarceration and forced correction through the judicial system, most offenders are ultimately released after serving their sentences, needing to be reintegrated back into their communities (Chen & Shields, 2020). The authors further state that the more successfully and uncomplicatedly reintegration happens, the highest level of well-being these formally incarcerated individuals would have (Chen & Shields, 2020). Offenders are given treatment based on the belief that justice will be restored, which includes among other the goal of making the sentenced individual mindful of the responsibility for their actions and, after serving a sentence helping them to join society as a common citizen who respects legal norms (Pavelkova, 2019).

The extend to which offenders may benefit from participating in educational programmes offered by correctional centres is a topic of ongoing discussions among academics (Vandala, 2019). However, Chen and Shields (2020) believe that effective intervention programmes may better prepare offenders for successful reintegration into society and reduce the likelihood of future behaviour. According to the current research published in scholarly journals all around the world, correctional centres have been

implementing correctional education in an effort to raise the average level of education and jobs skills among offenders and lower the rate of possible reoffending (Msoroka, 2019). Che and Shields (2020) further argue that it is essential to give effective intervention programmes to ex-offenders both during and after their release that address the professional challenges the ex-offenders encounter in order to enhance the chances of ex-offenders being success in their careers. In this sense, successful reintegration reduces criminality and promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development (Gisler et al., 2018).

### **2.9.2 Social reintegration**

According to Sigh (2016), reintegration is defined as the process of working with the offenders to bring about change and reintroduce them into the society, promoting law-abiding behaviour and prevent continued participation in offender activities. Reintegration involves a multifaceted process of reincorporation back into society (Pavelkova, 2019) and transitioning from incarceration into society (Chikadzi, 2017).

Social reintegration and transformation are frequently formidable tasks impacted by many complex issues and factors (Chen & Shields, 2020). One of the principal goals of the DCS in South Africa is the reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders (nevertheless?), this component is of vital interest to the community and the public at large (Sigh, 2016). Counselling plays an important role in ex-offenders' reintegration after serving their incarceration terms (Musau et al., 2018). Career counselling can support them in understanding how the various roles they identify with interact with each other such as the responsibility of a ‘junky’ and the role of a ‘working man’ (Asiedu, 2015).

Furthermore, by providing career guidance services in the form of treatment and intervention, individuals will develop self-motivation to rise from harsh conditions and get new jobs that fulfil their interests and expertise as well as developing entrepreneurship skills and build passive income (Suwidagdho & Dewi, 2020). Career development interventions within correctional settings pay attention on teaching offenders job readiness skills to in acquiring employment upon release (Bennett & Amundson, 2016). The authors further indicate that the ongoing transformation in labour market trends affect job insecurity and, thus, criminal recidivism. Inclusion of



career counselling in the integration process can help structure career goals which might assist offenders in re-engineering their careers and avoiding reoffending.

## **2.10 Summary of the chapter**

This chapter provides a summary of the data relating to career counselling programmes that are offered in correctional centres. The efficiency of career counselling and its importance in the progress made in providing services in different countries were also discussed. However, it is noted that the literature does not indicate in full the progress and developments of career counselling in correctional centres, especially in South Africa. There is not enough evidence to indicate whether the services are offered and that they can help with rehabilitation and social reintegration. The research methods, designs, and techniques are going to be covered in the next chapter.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The previous chapter discussed the literature on career counselling in correctional centres where we wanted to understand holistically the lived experiences of offenders studying in the ODeL institution, career counselling and how far other countries are on the concept. This chapter reflects on the most relevant research design and methodology utilised in the study. It will also discuss the research design and approach, how data were collected to ensure trustworthiness and how data will be analyzed. It also focuses on the sampling technique, bracketing, reflexivity, and ethical considerations of how to take out the study.

Research methodology also known as the “science of finding out” or “the procedures for scientific investigation” refers to the practices involved in conducting research (Babbie, 2010). This is a qualitative study where I explored the meanings individuals or groups attributed to a social or human problem, concentrating on the meaning offenders assign to career counselling (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative research method is selected due to its non-numerical nature (allowing the researcher to select a reasonable number of participants) and its nature of working with quality and seeking to get the meaning, feeling, and describing the situation (Goundar, 2012). The views of the offenders who participated in this study will be considered the final indication of what career counselling means for offenders studying in the ODEL institution. The research was conducted within the milieu of qualitative research methodology as I pursued to explore the lived experiences of offenders in the JCC on how they attach meaning to the provision of career counselling services in correctional centres.

The term qualitative research refers to an iterative process in which an increased knowledge of a phenomena is attained by a scientific community via a process of creating new meaningful distinctions that arise from getting closer to the thing that is being examined (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Using qualitative research as a technique provides researchers with an additional benefit that enhances their exploratory skills which are necessary for the researchers to have in order to examine and study their research investigations (Alase, 2017). Furthermore, Alase (2017) asserts that qualitative methodology allows researchers to improve and utilize their interpersonal and subjective skills to their exploratory processes of the study (Alase, 2017). In addition to this, it can make teaching and communication between researchers easier, help close the

gaps between qualitative and quantitative researchers, contribute to the resolutions of criticisms levelled against qualitative research methods, and serve as a benchmark for determining the quality of qualitative studies (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This research method permitted the researcher an opportunity to explore the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach meaning to the provision of career counselling services in the correctional centres focusing her attention on the Johannesburg Correctional Centre.

### **3.1 Research design**

A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research (Durrheim, 2014). On the other hand, Fouche and Schurink (2011) affirm that some authors define research design as all those decisions the researcher makes when planning the study (Fouche & Schurink, 2011). The phenomenological research design was chosen as it is a design of enquiry from philosophy and psychology in which the research describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by the participants (Creswell, 2014). Researchers who use the phenomenological research methodology strive to determine the core of the lived experiences of participants and are required to set aside their own understanding of a phenomenon to investigate the lived experiences of participants in an authentic manner (Flynn and Korcuska, 2018).

This is a qualitative study where an exploratory research design was used to serve and satisfy the objective of the study. Since the purpose of this research is to investigate the lived experiences of offenders with regard to how they attach meaning to the provision of career counselling services in the correctional centres, with a specific focus on the JCC, I determined that an exploratory method would be appropriate. An exploratory method is one that typically investigates a new interest or when the subject of the study is relatively new (Babbie, 2017). According to Babbie (2017) the most common reasons for conducting exploratory research are: to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding; to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study; and to develop methods to be employed in any subsequent study.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

A qualitative research approach is utilised in this study. The qualitative approach is method that is used to investigate and get understanding of the meanings that different people or groups attach to a social or human issue (Creswell, 2014). According to Tuffour (2017), this is supported by the fact that qualitative research tries to analyse and comprehend the meanings that individuals give to the experiences they have had, as well as to shine light on meanings that are less obvious and probe the complexity of the universe. This study approach was chosen to explore offenders' experiences in making career decisions and the meanings attached to those decisions.

### **3.3 Techniques**

The techniques of how the interviews were taken are discussed below, including data collection, population and sample, sampling technique, interviews, and study participants.

#### **3.3.1 Data collection**

Qualitative researchers typically rely on four primary methods of gathering information: participating in the setting, observing directly, interviewing in depth, and analysing documents and material culture (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I used semi-structured interviews to collect data. For semi-structured interviews, several questions were prepared that, between them, cover the intended scope of the interview (Flick, 2011). Furthermore, Flick (2011) states that the questions asked during an interview should start a conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to achieve the purpose of the interview, which is to collect the individual perspectives of the interviewees on certain problem. As I was more interested in gathering information related to career counselling for offenders, such as their career choices and planning, semi-structured interviews were found appropriate for gathering in-depth information. The interviews were conducted at JCC, Medium C male section in one of the classrooms normally allocated for career counselling sessions. The interviews were recorded using an audio tape or a voice recorder, and anonymity and non-identifiers were always observed.

I obtained ethical clearances from both the Ethics Committee in the College of Human Sciences at UNISA and the DCS, as the participants were selected from UNISA students and offenders in the JCC. Upon obtaining ethical clearance from the DCS, I wrote a letter to the correctional centre officials requesting to be hosted in the centre for data collection. Upon receipt of the letter, the officials acknowledged the receipt. They invited me to discuss how data would be collected, their expectations and how generally researchers should conduct themselves around the offenders and the safety measures between the offenders and me. The proposed list of questions (see appendix D) and informed consent (see appendix C) were sent to the officials prior to the set date of the interviews for familiarisation purposes and also to identify gaps that might be questionable.

The interviews took place at Johannesburg Correctional Centre, Medium C male section, in one of the classrooms normally allocated for career counselling sessions. With all the Covid19 rules and regulations, the precautionary measures were considered, and I had her PPE equipment ready. The room and all equipment used were well-sanitised prior to each interview.

Semi-Structured interviews were employed during the data collection in this study. These are interviews which one respondent is questioned at a time where open ended questions are often used and are usually accompanied by follow-up why and how questions (Adams, 2015). For the purpose of recording the responses of the participants, an audio recorder was utilised. The participants were also informed on the function of the audio recorder as well as the rationale for its use, and also made aware that confidentiality of the recordings will be maintained by ensuring that the recordings are kept in a safe location to protect their anonymity.

Qualitative observation was included as a research method which is consisting of the researcher taking field notes on the actions and behaviour of individuals at the research site (Creswell, 2014). In these field notes, the researcher documents actions at the research site in an unstructured or semi-structured way (using prior questions that the inquirer wants to know) (Creswell, 2014).

### **3.3.2 Population and Sample**

Population refers to all people in the whole universe who have characteristics that the researcher is looking for when conducting a study (Strydom, 2011). In contrast, sampling entails selecting study participants from the entire population and necessitates making choices on which individuals, contexts, occurrences, and behaviours to investigate (Durrheim, 2014). The sample comprised of a manageable number of individuals who could reasonably be engaged with at locations and within a specific period that would enable the collection of acceptable data (Ngozwana, 2018). Offenders incarcerated at the JCC in the Gauteng Province formed the study population. This study's sample was taken from the medium C section of the JCC, where there were 12 male offenders who participated in the interview process.

### **3.3.3 Selection of study participants/ Sampling technique**

The criteria for selecting the participants were aligned with the approaches used for data collection. A non-probability sampling technique was utilised as it enables every member of the target to participate in the study. These approaches are less objective than probability techniques which are sampling techniques that use probability or random selection of study participants. Rather, the researcher selects the participants, participant is referred to the researcher or they choose to participate in a study (Stratton, 2021). Any method in which samples are selected in a manner that is not recommended by the theory of probability is considered to fall under this category. I employed convenience sampling, which seems to be the relevant sampling technique because it represents sites or individuals from which the researcher can access and easily collect the data (Creswell, 2018). Convenience sampling is described as a process of discovering a close supply of possible participants who are eager to engage, as well as convenient in terms of their location (Robinson, 2014).

Furthermore, Robinson (2014) suggests that the best way of justifying the use of convenience sampling in qualitative research is to define the sample universe as being demographically and geographically local, which limits generalisation to that local level. The study is based on offenders; therefore, convenience sampling was utilised to ensure that the relevant group was chosen. Convenience sampling represents the study because the researcher advertises it, and participants self-select if they wish to

participate (Stratton, 2021). I am familiar with the environment, and rapport has already been established with the chosen group as per prior visitations. The selected participants in the study were either UNISA students or those intending to study at UNISA.

Inclusion criteria are used to define the characteristics that a case must have in order to be included in the study. Exclusion criteria are the criteria used to stipulate the attributes that disqualify a case from the study. Table one below summarizes inclusion and exclusion criteria.

**Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Item	Inclusion	Exclusion
Age	Between 20- 35	36+
Highest level of education	Grade 12	People without matric
Level of studies at UNISA	Undergraduate students	Postgraduates
Gender	Male	Female
Language	South African official languages	Other international languages
Duration of the sentence	Less than 10 years	11+ to life sentence
Understanding/ knowledge of career counselling	None	Those who have knowledge

Age selection tallies well with the duration of the sentence because this will inform me how the chosen career will assist in the job market. The highest level of education was chosen to be Grade 12 as it is the entry-level into the institution of higher learning, and the first-time registered students have no experience of higher institution of learning and making career decisions, therefore, this will give out desirable results. The chosen participants were offenders who had never received career counselling to avoid the biasness of results from those with prior experience.

### **3.3.4 Interviews**

The request for an initial meeting was made, and the meeting was held where I met with the official in medium C to facilitate the possible interview processes. I briefed the officials on the objective of the study as well as my plans for how the interviews should be carried out and structured. Clarity was made regarding utilising personal gadgets, including cell phones and personal computers. A tape recorder was recommended as the appropriate gadget for recording the interviews compared to computers and cell phones.

The officials assisted with the selection of participants. There were 12 participants who were chosen to take part in the interviews, and those interviews took place in a separate room where only the participant and I were present. The centre official remained in another office which has a see-through or transparent window and is soundproof; therefore, they could not hear us or make any interference.

### **3.3.5 Study participants**

In qualitative research the concept of sample adequacy refers to the appropriateness of the sample in terms of both its composition and size (Vasileiou, et al., 2018). Due to its qualitative nature; therefore, 12 participants were selected as they fall under the recommended number of participants when conducting a qualitative study. According to Alase (2017), An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research study should conduct semi-structured and unstructured interviews with as many as twenty-five (25) participants but as few as two (2). Twelve male offenders participated in the study, and all of them were black Africans. They were selected because they met the inclusion criteria stipulated in the table for selecting participants.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

In this study, I used a technique that worked successfully for Greeff in De Vos et al. (2011) when he indicated that the purpose of the analysis is to look for trends and patterns that reappear either within a single focus group or among a number of different focus groups. The process of data analysis in qualitative research begins with the preparation and organisation of the data (i.e., transcripts or image data as in photographs) for analysis; next, the data are reduced into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes; and finally, the data are represented in figures, tables, or discussion. IPA was used as a technique of data analysis to facilitate the lived experiences of participants who are the offenders in the JCC who are currently studying at or intend to study at UNISA. Within the field of psychology, IPA is a qualitative technique that was established to investigate personal lived experiences (Smith, 2017). This is supported by Alase (2017) when he alludes that the core of the IPA approach is to understand and amplify the lived experiences of the research participants that the research project is investigating.



Furthermore, Alase (2017) indicates that IPA is a research method that is participant oriented. It provides the interviewees (research participants) with the opportunity to freely express themselves (their lived experiences and stories) without fear of being misrepresented or prosecuted for doing so. Data for IPA are obtained from a purposive, homogenous sample, and the most common data collection method is in-depth semi-structured interviews (Smith, 2017).

### **3.5. The use of theoretical triangulation**

In this research study, theoretical triangulation was employed as a method of enquiry and analysis. This is to ensure that the study becomes inclusive in the offenders' circumstances. Theoretical triangulation refers to the possibility of exploring multiple theories, as a means of interpreting the same data group (Abdalla et al., 2018). Triangulation, by combining theories, methods, or observers in a research study, can help ensure that fundamental biases arising from the use of a single method, or a single observer are overcome (Noble & Heale, 2019). Theory triangulation relies on various theories to analyse the data (Lemon et al., 2020). This is also detailed on chapter two (where the two theories are discussed) and chapter four (where their significance are discussed).

### **3.6 Trustworthiness of data**

Historically, questions regarding trustworthiness or goodness of qualitative research are drawn from the natural and experimental sciences for direction (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The criteria for quality used in quantitative research, including internal validity, generalisability, reliability, and objectivity, are not suitable for judging the quality of qualitative research. Therefore, qualitative researchers talk trustworthiness, which merely raises the question of whether or not the findings can be trusted (Moser and Korstjens, 2018). Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Gill et al. (2018) insisted that the study is for nought if its trustworthiness is questionable (Gill, et al., 2018). On the trustworthiness of the study, we are going to look at the following:

**Credibility** – is measured by determining if the study results reflect believable information that was extracted from original data provided by the participants and whether or not it is proper interpretation of the original views provided by the

participants (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). According to Moser and Korstjens (2018), credibility is tantamount to internal validity in quantitative research and is concerned with the aspects of truth value and different strategies, including prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation. In this study I was unable to do member checking due to the correctional centre's restrictions, however, to ensure credibility I put long hours into listening to the recordings before and after transcribing. Upon the completion of transcription process, I also listened more as I read through the notes to ensure that what I hear is a true reflection of that transpires on the recordings. My knowledge of isiZulu and isiXhosa is minimal, so I also requested a Zulu/Xhosa transcriber to assist with translation.

**Confirmability**- refers to the extent to which the findings of the research study can be confirmed by the findings of other studies conducted by other researchers (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Confirmability also requires the researcher to recognise the theories or beliefs that shape their research (Gill et al., 2018). This study reflects the correct information from the literature to the data collected. I made sure that I checked the collected data several times and also coded it into small groups to identify similarities. It is, therefore, commendable that other researchers can confirm the findings.

**Transferability** covers the aspects of applicability (Moser & Korstjens, 2018) and the question of whether or not the researcher is able to transfer their explanations or findings from one context to another if there is high degree of fit between the two contexts (Gill et al., 2018). Therefore, academics who wish to satisfy the transferability criterion must be able to provide sufficient detail to contextualise their interpretations of a historical event or what Guba and Lincoln refer to as a database in order to facilitate future judgements about the applicability of the findings to other contexts (Gill et al., 2018). The study was conducted among male offenders, which means that the data can be inclusive of the males in the Johannesburg correctional centre. In ensuring that the views of the participants in this study are transferable, I read the data several times to make sense of the similarities in it. Their views are similar and that can represent the views of the males in the Johannesburg correctional centres, however, it is essential that other researchers can research female offenders and/ or other correctional centres.

**Dependability-** This call for interpretivist researchers to emphasize that their method and process of creating interpretations is dependable, as they are most likely to produce credible results if they display consistency (Gill et al., 2018). Dependability also means that the findings should be stable over a period of time (Korstjens, 2018). Data were collected among the offenders who do not have experience in career counselling. Therefore, the results of this study are dependable as they are a true reflection of what transpired during the interviews.

### **3.7 Axiology and Ethical considerations**

All the necessary procedures for acquiring ethical clearance were followed, and it was applied for at UNISA as the participants were students at the institution before the data collection process commenced. The DCS recognises the vulnerability of offenders in research and thus established a Research Ethics Committee (REC) to promote ethical research to ensure that the participants are adequately protected in all proposed research. I also acquired ethical clearance and permission was granted from the DCS to carry out the study using offenders as participants, as the purpose of the study is to explore the lived experiences of offenders in the Johannesburg Correctional centre receiving career counselling in an ODeL institution.

**Informed consent** means that all people who took part in the study were briefed in advance on the nature and goals of the research before it was carried out (see appendix C). All the necessary protocols for conducting the study were shared with the participants and included:

- I. That it is voluntary for them to participate in the research and that they are free to withdraw their participation from the research at any time if the need arises before conducting the study.
- II. Before taking part in the research, everyone who agreed to participate in the study was given a consent form to sign indicate their agreement to participate.
- III. The interviewees or participants were informed about the nature of confidentiality before conducting the study.

Anonymity is ensured in a research project when the researcher, and not just the people who read about the research, are unable to associate a particular response with a particular respondent. This makes it possible for respondents to remain anonymous. On contrary, the research project ensures confidentiality when the

researcher can recognise a given person's responses but essentially guarantees not to do so publicly (Babbie, 2017). I ensured that anonymity and confidentiality were always maintained. Thus, the participants' data was not in any way linked to their names or any form of identifier. In order to prevent the participants from being identified by their real names, pseudonyms were used in their place.

The rules and regulations of the Health Professional Council of South Africa (HPCSA) were adhered to, and the rights of the participant were protected and honoured in accordance with those rules and regulations. I ensured that the study would in no way harm the participants physically or psychologically. However, a psychologist was on standby to provide debriefing and counselling services to the possible affected individuals (See Appendix E).

In addition, I ensured that the drafted questions would not provoke the participants' emotions. All the participants had no trouble following and comprehending the questions, which also helped bringing up some amusing memories. However, in cases where adverse emotional reactions would be provoked, the psychologist remained on standby as the intervening therapist. I also ensured that prior to the offender engagement, the correctional centre psychologists were briefed for possible referrals.

Data collected was kept in a safe space to ensure the participants' confidentiality, privacy, and protection. To guarantee the confidentiality and protection of the information, data was stored in an encrypted device which uses password to log onto. I am the only person who knows any of the passwords that are used to protect the data that is stored on the university computer, any personal computers or laptops, any hard drive, or any memory sticks. Hard copies or written materials such as interview questionnaires are kept in a secured locked cabinet which will be placed in a room which will be well-guarded and locked to others to ensure the safety of the data and adherence to legal requirements.

### **3.8 Bracketing**

Bracketing is a scientific process that requires the researcher to suspend or hold back any presuppositions, biases, assumptions, theories, or previous experiences they may have had related to the phenomenon (Gearing, 2004). In addition to this, Starks and

Trinidad (2007), quoted in Tufford and Newman's (2010) study describe bracketing as a process whereby the researcher should be authentic and cautious about his or her own perception, pre-existing judgements, and beliefs, and recognises and separate (but do not abandon) their prior knowledge and norms with logical goal of attending to the participants' accounts with an open mind.

Tufford and Newman (2010) outlined different types of bracketing which different researchers adopted:

1. Keeping a journal throughout the entire process of data collection and analysis.
2. Engage in interviews with an outside source to uncover and bring into awareness preconceptions and bias.
3. Reflective journals are used to initiate the process of defining research questions, during which time preconceptions are uncovered throughout the research process.

As it is emphasized, in phenomenologically inspired research, it is important to be strongly aware that one can never completely be excluded from their own sociocultural and socio-structural situatedness (McNarry et al., 2019). In addition, they bring attention to the fact that one can try to “stand back” and keep a critical perspective on the theories, assumptions, and familiar ways of thinking, doing, and interpreting while also exerting one's best efforts to be reflexive and self-critical with regards to the preconceptions and assumptions (McNarry et al., 2019). I have been in contact with the offenders and have an existing relationship which might bring biasness into the study. As a student counsellor, I also have extensive knowledge of career counselling and all the processes involved. Therefore, I ensured that I do not get attached to the participant's responses, thus, they were received and recorded as they were.

### **3.9 Reflexivity**

Reflexivity means turning the researcher's lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one's own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation (Berger, 2015). Ngozwana (2018) further asserts that reflexivity is a constant self-scrutiny by the researcher during the whole process that it is inevitable in research. It is evident that reflexivity contributes to the maintenance of credibility because it contracts the views and opinions experienced by the researcher

with those experienced by the participant as well. Furthermore, because reflexivity is closely linked to trustworthiness as an indicator of research quality, it is also clear that reflexivity helps maintain credibility (Ngozwana, 2018). As researchers, we need to keep in mind our contributions to constructing meanings and lived experiences throughout the research process (Palaganas, et al., 2017). Palaganas et al. (2017) argue that researchers need to recognise that it is impossible to remain “outside of” one’s study topic while conducting research and that this is something that researchers need to acknowledge. As consequence of this, it is necessary for researchers to place a greater emphasis on self-awareness and sensitivity, improve their understanding of the role that the self plays in the production of knowledge; carefully self- monitor the impact that their preconceptions, beliefs, and personal experiences have on their work; and strive to strike a healthy balance between the personal and the universal (Berger, 2015).

Mantzoukas (2005) concludes that qualitative studies are founded on a Wittgensteinian view of the inseparability of the subject or object condition and thus necessitate that the researchers think upon the subjective components they bring into the study. I have been working in the counselling field with the offenders in the JCC, and I completely understands the biasness that this can possibly create. However, I also acknowledge that I could not completely exclude herself and her preconceived knowledge of the study as I understands that research is not entirely sanitized. Therefore, there will always be challenges.

### **3.10 Summary of chapter**

This chapter focused on discussing the method used in conducting the study. The chapter also highlighted the rationale for using the selected qualitative study methodologies. Research technique and design were discussed as well as philosophical assumptions and ethical considerations one should investigate when conducting a study. Data collection strategy was also discussed where inclusion and exclusion criteria and study participant selection were discussed. Bracketing and reflexivity were included in the study to ensure the quality of the research. The data analysis method was highlighted in this chapter. The following chapter will discuss the outcomes and findings of the study.



## CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The preceding chapter outlined the research designs, methodology and approaches, as well as how data was collected and analysed. The study results are presented in this chapter. The findings were constructed from the interviews conducted with 12 offenders in the Johannesburg Correctional Centre's Medium C, focusing on their career counselling, lived experiences, and meaning making when incarcerated. Some different themes and subthemes emerged from the participants' lived experiences. The objectives of the study, theoretical framework and the discovered themes and subthemes were all informed by the literature review.

### 4.1 Findings

The study's findings are aligned with the purpose of the study, which was to explore the lived experiences of offenders enrolled in a CODEL university when making career decisions and the meaning attached to it. The participants shared their overall experience and understanding of career counselling, what it means to them, and the challenges or barriers identified that are considered to have hindered their opportunities to make those decisions. Table 2 below outlines the participants' demographical data.

**Table 2: Participants' demographical data**

Participant	Age	Race	Level of education	Estimated age of release	Level of education before sentencing
Lethabo	30	Black	Current study- Higher Certificate	37	Grade 10
Bongani	25	Black	Completed grade 12	3/ 35	Grade 11
Godfrey	28	Black	Completed grade 12	36	Grade 11
Kgasago	31	Black	Currently in grade 12	38/ 39	Grade 9
Potego	31	Black	Currently Grade 12	Life Sentence	Grade 10
Vusi	30	Black	Current study- Higher Certificate	31	Grade 12
Musa	26	Black	Current study- Bcom Marketing	32	Grade 12
Katlego	39	Black	Current study- communication sciences	41	Grade 11
Patrick	31	Black	Current study- HC in Law	40/41	Grade 12
Bokang	26	Black	Current study- paralegal diploma	31	Grade 11 Completed grade in the Centre
Siya	30	Black	Wrote Grade 12 in 2021	Life sentence	Grade 10- completed grade 12 whilst in the Centre
Lukhanyiso	30	Black	Wrote grade 12 in 2021	34	Grade 9



## 4.2 Description of participants' background information

Using pseudonyms below, I described the participants' background information based on the information received during interviews and observations.

### Lethabo

Lethabo is a 30-year-old black man. He got incarcerated at the age of 21, and his estimated age of release is 37. Before the sentencing, he attended a public school, where he dropped out in grade 10. He completed his Grade 12 in the correctional centre in 2020 and is currently registered as a student with UNISA studying for a higher certificate in Law. Lethabo has never worked, and prior to sentencing. He indicated that he receives support from his family financially, socially, and academically. Lethabo appeared to be a calm person. However, also displayed some anxiety. When asked about what career he wanted to follow, he became a bit alive as one could notice how happy he became when talking about his career. Lethabo was interested in being a plumber. However, due to the lack of resources, he was not able to and was advised to study Law, which he chose out of pressure that has to do with his sentencing.

### Bongani

Bongani is a 25-year black male who got incarcerated at the age of 19. His estimated age of release is 34/35. He dropped out of school in Grade 11. He completed Grade 12 whilst incarcerated. He mentioned that although he passed well, he cannot register since he does not have an ID document. Bongani appeared to be stressed by this issue and he alluded that he requested help from the correctional officials to no avail. He is currently dependent on his family for support. The family provide financial and social support rather than scholastic support, which he deems important at the moment. Bongani appeared to be energetic. One could tell by how he was answering the questions. With a sparkle on his face, he acknowledged the challenges they face in the centre and how he manages them. He highlighted that he has been helping the current learners with their mathematics literacy subject whilst waiting for his ID document matter to be resolved. Bongani appeared to be independent and wanted to do things for himself. Bongani aspires to do music. However, due to a lack of musical instrumentation, he chose to pursue a career in accounting as *he likes playing with numbers*. His views on life in

correctional centres and the importance of career counselling were positively aligned as he acknowledged the impact that career counselling can have on the lives of offenders.

#### Godfrey

He is a 28-year-old black male offender who got incarcerated at the age of 23. His estimated age of release is 36 years old. He is originally from the rural areas of Eastern cape and attended public school until he dropped out in Grade 11. Godfrey completed his grade 12 in the correctional centre. He indicated that he receives partial support from his family, which includes social and financial support. However, academically, he is not receiving any. Before being incarcerated, he used to do garden work to generate income. His career aspirations are in the tourism studies. Godfrey looked like a reserved person who displayed a calm character. However, he became comfortable and provided in-depth answers when he started using his mother tongue. He faced challenges in the centre that made him not to do well in his studies. He indicated that his cellmate would discourage his decision to study, and the emergence of Covid19 played a negative role in his desire to study.

#### Kgasago

He is currently 31 years old black male offender who got incarcerated at the age of 19. His estimated age of release is 39 years old. He is originally from the Northwest province. Kgasago mentioned that he attended a private Muslim school where he dropped in Grade 9. He then completed grades 10, 11 and 12 in the centre. In terms of support, he indicated that he is not getting support as he iterated that, *unfortunately, I am from a very low-income family, and the only support I receive is courage*. Kgasago grew up under the care of a Muslim where his mother used to work since his parents are late. He appeared to be someone who likes helping others. During the interview, Kgasago continually spoke about healing, and when asked his reasons behind that, he said it was because he grew up without his parents and still needed to heal from his parents' deaths. He indicated that he attended therapy to deal with this trauma and is in the process of healing.

#### Potego

He is a 31-year-old male offender who got incarcerated at the age of 25. Potego is serving a life sentence. He is originally from an urban area in the Gauteng province. In terms of family support, he indicated that he is receiving enough from those who are providing support. However, some have drawn back since his sentencing. At the time of the interview, he was waiting for his Grade 12 results as he had just written his exams in the previous year. Before incarceration, he attended a public school where he dropped out in grade 11. He applied at UNISA for Bcom entrepreneurship as his anticipated career upon release. He apparently chose this qualification due to his experience in the catering industry. He initially chose or was interested in studying education; however, he could not continue with it due to the nature of the qualification, as it requires practical work. He said *Sentle sentle nna sester ne ke ratile teaching wa bona. So, it happened gore mona bare teaching nka se kgone go etsa because of bare a gona dipractical abaetse di practicals* loosely translated *Actually my sister, I liked teaching, you see. So it happened that there they tell me I cannot do teaching because it has practicals and here, I cannot do practicals.*

#### Vusi

He is a 30-year-old black male offender who was incarcerated when he was 25. He will be released at the age of 31. Vusi lightened up when asked about his estimated age of release as he is serving his last year. He is originally from rural areas of Kwa Zulu Natal and only receives financial support from his family. He said: *Yeah, maybe financially, yeah, they do support me financially. Kwezinye izinto, ai cha,* which is translated *in other areas like financially, yeah, but other areas I don't receive support.* He indicated that his family is not the kind of family that express themselves emotionally. However, they believe that giving one money is enough. Vusi completed his grade 12 in a public school before sentencing and is currently registered for a higher certificate in Economics and Management Sciences at UNISA. Before incarceration, he used to work as a bartender and also doing government tenders casually.

#### Musa

He is 26 years old black male offender who got incarcerated at the age of 20. His estimated age of release is 32 years old. He grew up in the urban areas of Gauteng, where he completed Grade 12 in a public school. He currently holds a diploma in

marketing management and studying for Bcom in marketing. Musa has an incomplete qualification from the college prior to the sentencing. He also indicated that he wants to complete an MBA, as he still has a few years to serve. In terms of family support, he indicated that he receives enough *Yeah, I'd like to think so. Yes, I am fine in that aspect.* Musa indicated that he worked a few months after completing grade 12, just before going to college. Musa is energetic person and interactive. He shared his experience in receiving career counselling in high school, and he said he enjoyed the experience. The process helped him identify his strengths. However, he also highlighted that his strengths conflicted with his desired career and grade 12 marks. Therefore, he ended up choosing marketing management which was influenced by the public relations people who used to visit his school.

### Katlego

Katlego is a 39-year-old male offender who got incarcerated at age 35. His estimated age of release is 41. He grew up in an urban area where he attended public school. He dropped out of school in Grade 12. Thus, he completed his grade 12 in the centre and is currently studying BA degree with UNISA. Katlego used to work prior to the sentencing for almost five years in a company making pets food. He has been receiving support from his family since his sentencing, which he regards as enough. However, he indicated that relies on word of mouth in terms of scholastic support or career-related matters. He applauded himself for deciding to study while incarcerated, as it helped him deal with “stress”. He acknowledges that the place is stressful as it separates one from his/ her loved ones, however, indicated that when offenders study and behave well, they often receive preferential treatment from the officials.

### Patrick

He is a 31-year-old male offender who got incarcerated at the age of 27. He is on a 13-year sentence and has estimated his release age to be 41 *Because I'm doing 13 years since from 2017. My estimated year of release will be 40 to 41 years -* He mentioned. He grew up in a rural area. However, his family provides him with enough support whilst serving his sentence. Patrick completed his grade 12 before sentencing in a public school, and at the time of the interviews, he confirmed that he completed a higher certificate in Law. With excitement in his eyes, he indicated that he will be starting with

a Bachelor of Law in 2022, as he mentioned that he always loved to do law. However, due to financial problems, he could not further his studies before his incarceration.

### Bokang

Bokang is a 26-year-old male black offender who got incarcerated at the age of 19. His age of release is estimated at 31 years old. He indicated that he grew up in urban areas where he attended public school. He confirmed that he receives family support even though he said it is not enough. He completed his grades 10, 11 and 12 in the correctional centre and is currently doing a paralegal diploma with Intec. After sentencing, he kept himself busy with different courses within the centre, including anger management and other related courses. Bokang was never employed prior to the sentencing. However, he indicated that he wants to see himself as a court officer since he is currently studying. On his career aspirations, he indicated that he used to love business and wanted to pursue a career in entrepreneurship. However, being in the correctional centre, made him change his mind as he believes in giving back to the community, hence choosing Law. Through the interview, Bokang appeared to be someone who understands the dynamics and successes of the profession.

### Siya

He is 30 years old black male offender, and at the beginning of his sentence, he was 25 years old. He is serving a life sentence. Siya grew up in an urban area in the Gauteng province, where he attended private school. Prior to the sentencing, he dropped out of school in grade 10. He completed grades 10, 11 and 12 in the centre, as well as some certificates that are in line with his sentence (e.g., anger management, dealing with trauma). At the time of the interviews, he was among other offenders waiting for their grade 12 results. He used to work in the events management and marketing industry before incarcerated. When asked about his career, he mentioned few careers that excite him, including entertainment, music, and estate agency (property).

Siya sounded and appeared to be a strong guy; however, he would hint at how the sentence affects him psychologically. The one thing keeping him strong is his family, as he indicated they are his source of support. He spoke highly of his mother, sisters, and his late grandmother, who influenced his love of property selling.

Lukhanyiso

Lukhanyiso indicated that he is a 30-year-old black male, and on the day of the interview, he was excited that he would be turning 31 in three days. He got incarcerated at the age of 24, and his estimated age of release is 34. He grew up in Gauteng province, where he attended public school. He dropped out of school in grade 9, and at the time of the interview, he was waiting for the grade 12 results. He appeared excited for his upcoming grade 12 results. Lukhanyiso also mentioned that he did ABET education (which taught him about business) before being incarcerated and had also worked in a construction company. He indicated he is not receiving enough support as he only gets some from his maternal family and none from his paternal family.

#### **4.2.1 Theoretical triangulation on the results.**

Due to the multifaceted nature of both people and communities, I drew a number of ideas allowing me to use the theoretical triangulation in this study. Theoretical triangulation was chosen so that all the aspects of career counselling in line with offenders could be addressed holistically. The two chosen theories will assist counsellors to apply relevant career counselling intervention methods and use proper theoretical framework when counselling offenders. Offenders are a marginalised group which needs special attention when dealing with them. Their choice of careers needs to be unpacked to ensure that it does not affect their future career goals, especially where possible practicals (in their chosen qualification), employability, and criminal records are concerned.

As indicated above, theoretical triangulation was applied to the study where the constructivist theory of the late Dr. Peavy and Chaos Theory of Careers founded by professors Jim Bright and Robert Pryor were utilised. As a response to the precipitously ever-changing world of work, with various client groups and multifaceted and challenging issues facing career counsellors, the field has moved strongly towards the better implementation of constructivist approaches (McMahon, 2017). As such, the constructivist perspective looks on the person as an open system, regularly interacting with the environment and pursuing stability through constant change (Patton & McMahon, 2016). Constructivism is directly emanating from the contextualist worldview in that the 'reality' of world affairs is seen as constructed from the inside out

by the individual (that is, through the individual's own philosophy and processing) (Patton & McMahon, 2016).

Furthermore, constructivists are of the belief that there is no objective truth, and that instead, truth may be found in the way that each person interprets their own experiences and world around them (Watson, 2006). Watson (2006, argues that a client would have a larger participation in the career counselling process if it used a constructivist rather than a conventional approach. This means that during a career counselling session, the counsellor plays the role of the facilitator, whereas the client takes charge of making meaning and their current situation giving direction. According to the constructivist career counselling theory, clients construct their careers and make a meaning out of them. When Godfrey and Vusi were asked about what will fulfil them in their careers and make them a whole, this is what they had to say:

*My chosen career will grant me the opportunity to meet different people from all walks of life and learn about their different cultures as well. That will make me happy- Godfrey.*

*Eish, ngingathini kodwa suster, umusic maan into engiyithandayo vele. Ukulalela umusic already is like I'm living my dream already. Because njengoba ungibona ngihlezi ngikhala ngomusic. So mangi ngena ku music, it's like I don't care if I get, mhlambe I get paid peanuts or even, it's not like for money or anything doing what I love which is translates as Music is my life, if I would be given the opportunity to get into music, it wouldn't be about the money, but doing what I love)- Vusi.*

Godfrey is interested in studying tourism, which he has always wanted to do since high school. Even though he mentioned that he never received career counselling, however, he mentioned *Bengifuna ukuba, like itourism*, which is translated as *I wanted to get into tourism* when asked about the career he wants to follow upon release. He indicated that he chose this career because he enjoys interacting with people, which will allow him to meet different people from all over the world, contributing to his meaning-making. On the other hand, Vusi could not hide away his excitement when speaking about his love for music that he even wanted to sing during the interview. His love for music is transformed into both a hobby (he does not care if he gets paid for it) and a career (he

even describes it as “his life”). He will find meaning in music and will fulfil his career goals.

The chaos theory of careers, which was developed over 15 years ago, challenges the assumptions underlying these approaches, which includes those of coherent decision-making and fairly stable and static decision-makers functioning within a relatively stable and foreseeable environment (Bright & Pryor, 2019). Some theorists dispute whether cause and effect can be properly disentangled in descriptive terms and chaos theorists pointed this issue out (Gün, 2021). An understanding of humans as a structure made up of pieces that interact and mutually impact each other is central to systems theorists’ worldview, and this is what makes CTC a subset of systems theory (also known as complex dynamical systems) (Bright & Pryor, 2019). Accordingly, the chaos perspective is not reductionist but rather must be investigated and comprehended in the context of the complex multivariate interconnection of reality (Gün, 2021). Gün (2021) further alluded that the theory can be understood as an open systems approach that accentuates the interaction and interconnection of effects in ever-changing and systematically nonlinear ways.

CTC emphasises the notion that career choice is influenced by a change in situations. It highlights the importance of not being steady and keeping things in a steady position. With that in mind, some participants indicated that they had to change their careers based on their current situations. Thus, when assisting offenders with their career planning, it is crucial to consider their current situation, however, matching it with their future career goals. Lethabo alluded *that upon my release so ok my sister What I like to me I wanted to do is skills yes skills like Plumbing carpentry building, you see now this prison that I am in they don’t offer those things is only a Unisa School, you see.* However, since the correctional centre does not offer skills development courses, he had to opt for his second choice. *My second option is this one I have registered with UNISA. For a higher certificate of law.* He indicated that he fought for his first career option, where he even requested a transfer to the centre that offers skills development to no avail, hence settling on his second option.



#### 4.2.2 Themes and subthemes

In the section below, I will discuss the themes that are identified together with the subthemes. The study's objectives helped with the themes identification, and the information is constructed from the transcripts gathered from the interviews with the 12 participants. The themes derived from the participants' career counselling lived experiences when incarcerated. Below in table 3 are themes and subthemes grouped accordingly, as will be discussed throughout this section.

**Table 3: Emergent themes and subthemes**

Themes	Subthemes
Meaning attributed to career counselling	Career choice influences among offenders Importance of career counselling Contribution to rehabilitation
Offenders' experiences of career counselling	Understanding of career counselling Correctional management's contribution to career counselling Family support towards career counselling for offenders.
Contextualising career counselling in correctional centres	Being here and studying is not the easiest thing to do. Most offenders hate law, but they take the course so that they can find flaws in the justice system and prove their arrests to be unlawful.

#### 4.3 Meaning attributed to career counselling.

The data collected shows that offenders make meaning in their careers based on their lived experiences. Some chose careers based on their exposure whilst for others was because of lack of resources. Potego highlighted *Sentle sentle nna sester ne ke ratile teaching wa bona (Actually my sister, I liked teaching, you see... that is why ke endupile ke nka entrepreneurship Okay, the reason being why ke inkile le tourism, between entrepreneurship le tourism management (That is why I ended up choosing entrepreneurship. Okay, the reason I also chose tourism, between entrepreneurship and tourism management)*. In part, the study aims to explore discover the meanings attributed by offenders to the experiences of choosing careers that suit their personal needs and perceptions attached to employability upon release. Therefore, it is important to align this objective with the identified theme in the study.

People make meaning through what they know, the experiences they obtain, and their relationships with themselves and others. Meaning-making is defined as the process of how people make sense of knowledge and how experience, relationships, and oneself must be taken into consideration in designing college-curricular environment that supports learning and development (Ignelzi, 2000). In career counselling, people construct their own meanings through their experiences, interaction with others and circumstances they find themselves. Mostly their careers become intrinsic, allowing them to be whom they want to be internally and externally. It is about self-fulfilment, more than just opting for anything that is available. Meaning making develops over time and experience (Ignelzi, 2000). The collected data and results of the study show that, indeed, people construct meaning through experiences. This is confirmed by Bongani when he alluded, *I can say The subject that I was doing then are much different because I just received what I received because I didn't arrive here. I was in Boksburg before I came here actually. In Boksburg prison so the stream or the subject that they are doing there, you don't have the choice you just have to follow what they are offering. So, since I have done economics and what is it and accounting, I still want to improve my marks of accounting now just to see where that can take me.* Because of the subjects that Bongani had to do whilst in the Boksburg Correctional Centre, he chose Accounting as his career, however, his initial career choice was in music.

The sub-themes that cover meaning-making will include career choice influences, the importance of career counselling, career fulfilment and challenges experienced by offenders studying whilst incarcerated. All these will be discussed in detail below.

#### **4.3.1 Career choice influences among offenders**

Among other reasons offenders may choose certain careers, the participants in this study indicated that family, lack of information, their exposure on certain jobs and current situations contributed to the offenders' career choices. Choosing a career involves complex phenomenon that can be better described using the two components: career and choice. Indeed Career guide (2020) defines a career as the word often used to refer to a profession, occupation, trade, or vocation and could mean what you do for a living and range from those that require extensive training and education to those you can perform with only a high school diploma and a willingness to learn. In contrast, the Cambridge

dictionary defines a choice as an act or the chance of choosing (Cambridge dictionary). Furthermore, the definition of choice incorporates two factors: first is the availability of options, which shows an objective reality, and secondly, the act of preference, which involves a particular process (O'zbilgin et al., 2005). Lastly, influence is defined as a force one person (the agent) applies on someone else (the target) to encourage change in the target, including changes in behaviours, opinions, attitudes, goals, needs and values that can impact the behaviour of others in a distinctive direction (Nebguide, 2006).

Various factors influence people's career choices, including family, friends, environment, socio-economic factors, interests, personalities, and educational exposure. However, based on this perspective there are also individual preferences, personality, sense of self, cultural identity and worldview that have a role in shaping their experiences. In contrast, the extrinsic aspects are centred on social contacts, availability of relevant resources, including information and finances, role models, globalization, level of educational accomplishment, ethnic background, and so on (Sharif et al., 2019). The primary determinant of a person's occupational choice, level of educational attainment, and what prompts them to a career change or realign their career path are thought to be the nature of their schooling, their socio-economic background, the influence of the family members and close friends and the expectations that evolve from these interactions (Ukamaka & Mathew, 2019). Offenders are also exposed to different influences that influence their career choices.

Incarcerated offenders are frequently described as poor, unqualified, unemployed (prior and post release from correctional centre), and habitually re-incarcerated (after release from correctional centre) (Zakaria et al., 2018). Even those who want to change their lives are still faced with challenges of what to study during their sentencing so that they choose the right careers that will benefit them upon their release. Making career decisions for offenders is a hard job due to the circumstances, environment, and personal preferences. With the understanding that career is "personal", it is important to note that people often choose careers based on different reasons, who they are and sometimes influenced by the circumstances they find themselves in. Out of emotional imbalance/ anger, some offenders chose careers in law due to their "perceived" misrepresentation or failure by the law to charge them accordingly. Lethabo iterated that *Okay, this career, if I complete my erh LLB degree, as I said, I will be happy to help*

*other guys who have been wronged in their wrong side of the law you see, like myself. He further said Okay. Well, when I'm talking to guys here, most guys that are here in prison they are sentence wrongly you see even me my case is like that I'm sentence wrongly I'm doing sentence that I didn't the case, I don't know it you see. I want to fix those things you see and help other guys when I'm outside, maybe I can help them with their good things. This career influence has two side to it. In one way it can yield good results. However, in another way, it can perpetuate criminalities. The other influence emanates from their level of education. Completing grade 12 in the correctional centre has contributed to their career decision-making. Most offenders completed their grade 12 post their sentencing, and before the sentencing, they had either dropped out or were still in school. This is what the participants had to say when asked about their schooling journey prior to the sentencing.*

**Katlego:** *I came in without a matric, I ended up getting my matric here in prison. Actually, I was not studying anything.*

**Bokang:** *Before I was sentenced, I didn't even have a matric. : I did my grade 10. I did also my grade 11, I did my matric. Then I started with Intec last year.*

**Lukhanyiso:** *Oh, I was, I dropped out in grade 10... Currently: Well, I was doing on my matric last year. So, I'm expecting to get results tomorrow.*

It is also noted that some offenders' families greatly influenced the careers they are interested in since their incarceration. This finding matches that of Koçak et al. (2021) when they indicate that family becomes one of the significant influence on professional improvement, however as the support increases, the young people's professional improvement increases and Ukamaka and Mathew (2019) when they found that among other factors, the family becomes the prime determinant of career choice. Koçak et al., 2021, also found in their study that a high degree of social support from parents has been shown in the research to have a beneficial effect on the career decision-making process.

Family influence is a key factor in career-related decisions and, therefore, it is of paramount important for the researchers and counsellors to develop successful career

interventions for varied population (Fouad et al., 2016). Family can influence one's career based on different reasons like observing the family's trending careers, what they believe you can be good at and their financial background. They can support you and influence what career you choose. Vusi indicated that his family advised him to choose transport and logistics based on their family's business. He indicated that since his uncle has a fleet of taxis, he thinks that upon release, the uncle may give him some taxis to operate as his.

*So, my family advised me to do transport and logistics, outside my uncle's got taxis as well, maybe when I go out see, maybe give me one or two taxis.*

On the other hand, Siya indicated that he was motivated by his grandmother, who used to be a property businesswoman. When asked how he considered selling property as a career, he indicated that he and his family used to converse about it. However, no professional assistance like formal career counselling was provided to him. As he also mentioned that his late grandmother used to buy property for business purposes (which included reselling and investment), Siya's career influence emanates from that. However, the interviewer emphasised the questioning even more to dig deeper if, indeed Siya was not influenced by anyone through a talk, and this is what he had to say:

**Siya:** At home, it's just a conversation, a conversation we were having, and it was inspired by my late grandmother. So, I thought that it might be...

The interviewer interjected and asked if the grandmother used to be the property agent and Siya said:

*Something like that. Yeah. She actually owned property. She was a very unique woman. You know, she didn't earn much, but she owned a couple of houses. So yeah, that's why I thought within property. It's a good investment, lifetime. So, I should go for it.*

Some offenders also mentioned that their exposure to certain jobs influenced their career choice. According to the research conducted by Nyamwange (2016), prior exposure on certain careers is important to develop and nurture interest in some career paths (Nyamwange, 2016). She went on to say that past knowledge serves as a preparation on individual's career which one decides to enter into and furthermore,

knowledge of a career can be attained through research and consultations, training, exposure, and an industrial attachment (Nyamwange, 2016).

Musa said, *When I was still in college, I used to envy the people doing PR*, hence the choice of marketing management as his anticipated career upon release. On the other hand, Siya further highlighted that prior knowledge or exposure from the job could influence one's career decision. He said:

*It was actually influenced by the industry, but what I was hoping to do was to save up some money so I can go to school, because I can't take advantage of okay, I'm working with this and that, why don't I do something for myself? I want to have the proper knowledge concerning this thing I want to do. That's what I was hoping for.*

There are other offenders whose current situation of being incarcerated changed their career goals or their anticipated careers upon release, as it is essential to note that the environment also plays a role in influencing one's career decision. Younyi and Achankeng (2020) indicated that environmental factors are some of the problems students face in their career choices. They further alluded that environmental factors, like any other factors, affect the student's career choices. During the interviews, Potego indicated that he wanted to study Bachelor of Education. However, due to his environment, he was advised not to because his studies would be disturbed due to the practicum modules included in the qualification, as the facility does not offer those practicums. On the same breadth, Lethabo indicated that he wanted to do skills development courses like plumbing, carpentry, and construction; however, since the correctional centre does not offer the courses, he had to choose another qualification. This shows that the lack of opportunities in correctional centres plays a role in the offenders' career decision-making. Offenders get conflicted in making appropriate career decisions based on their desire to study and what is available. Many things influence offenders' career decision-making, including lack of resources, families, and the environment. For instance, Siya was encouraged by his family to take a career that is related to business since the family owns a fleet of taxis.

#### 4.3.2 Importance of career counselling

Participants highlighted the importance of career counselling in the correctional centres which included helping with making the right choice, encouraging offenders to study, eliminating possible drop-out, etc. Vusi remarked that *career counselling would really be of great assistance to us because people would do what they love. Some end up doing things they have no interest in because we have no guidance or information.* Selection of the desired career can be labelled as the topmost significant activity of every individual in the world, and thus, the inaccurate choice of careers leads students towards an unsought future career (Sharif et al., 2019). Exceptionally, professional career counselling assists students in determining their career objectives by examining their interests and abilities and checking the person's hidden abilities through conversation and guiding him or her on whether he or she is a good marketer, a finance person, and a lawyer, and facilitate him through creative career ideas (Akhter et al., 2021). Whereas some indicated that career counselling might not be important for all offenders, most participants believe that most offenders can benefit from career counselling services in correctional centres. The participants highlighted that career counselling is important as it encourages one to study, can eliminate dropping out of school, and eliminate stress and trauma.

**Lethabo:** *I think it's been important? Because they will know on different career fields and how will it help them when, after they are finished with their sentence.*

**Kgasago:** *it is important, and it is good for the inmate to receive this counselling. They needed the this. Some of us we have trauma, you see depression.*

It was also noted that some participants also see the importance of career counselling in correctional centres as it will help offenders make informed career choices, explore different career fields, and keep them motivated in their chosen careers. Keshf and Khanum (2021) indicated that providing students with enough assistance and guidance, as well as addressing their individual requirements, aided in the identification of their interests and subsequent career development. They further concluded in their study that it is difficult for students to choose a qualification and career when they lack knowledge about potential options and are unsure of their own interests, goals, and skills (Keshf & Khanum, 2021). Participants in this current study support the notion as they indicated

that career counselling in correctional centres would enable them to make informed career decisions.

The other important aspect that was highlighted is that career counselling can assist in the offenders' rehabilitation journey and reduction of re-offence. As reported in parliament news, Mokoena (2017) argued that providing offenders with opportunities to learn new skills while they are incarcerated is crucial to their rehabilitation and successful reintegration into society upon release. Godfrey highlighted that *it is important because it will help in making the right decisions for our careers*. The study conducted by Mokoena (2017) and one of the collected data shows that it is indeed important to have career counselling services in correctional centres to ensure that offenders make informed career decisions.

#### **4.3.3 Career counselling contribute to the offenders' rehabilitation process.**

Participants acknowledge the contribution career counselling would have in the rehabilitation process of the offenders. They indicated that if the offenders make right career choices, reoffending will be decreased as career counselling will assist them with the right choices of careers and prospects of better employment. Rehabilitation is a process (not a single occurrence) that create change in the offenders' life and to transform them into well behaved individuals (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). Rehabilitation may play a part in reducing offenders' propensity, desire and/or necessity to re-offend, however, there are risks (antisocial personality, low education attainment, drug and alcohol abuse, unemployment, or lack of employment skills) associated with reoffending that are more specific to offenders' past and/or present lifestyles, including the conditions in which they are held in the correctional centres (Salaam, 2013). In his study on the rehabilitation of youth offenders, Makhurane (2020) indicated that youth offenders required to be rehabilitated and acquire skills that can assist them live fulfilling lives to avoid crime. He argued that young offenders should be provided with career guidance and counselling throughout the rehabilitation process so that they may make more well informed career decisions (Makhurane, 2020). Counsellors and or career psychologists with their professional expertise are in a unique position to help offenders realise their full potential by guiding them towards fruitful educational and vocational choices (Salaam, 2013).



The DCS is in charge of providing and executing rehabilitation programmes for offenders have been given custodial sentences by the courts of law (Cilliers & Smit, 2007). Offenders will benefit from career guidance and counselling since it will assist them to develop skills, identify relevant careers that will help them gain employment after release (Salaam, 2013).

It is essential to note that participants with little knowledge of career counselling acknowledge its contribution to rehabilitating offenders. Some of the responses came as nerve wreckage as they seemed to be out of the subject matter, which appeared to be more emotional. However, still relevant. Some participants indicated that career counselling would contribute to rehabilitation as it will eliminate gangsterism and reoffending and give offenders encouragement and a sense of belonging.

Bongani remarked that it could contribute positively. *Because once you're not focusing on anything, actually no books, no school, we start doing gangsterism in prison.* He further indicated that he had a conversation with a fellow offender who reoffended because he did not do anything positive to change his life on his first offence and returned to serve another 10 years. Bongani also mentioned that his friend was devastated that he does not know what he will do when he gets released after serving another 10 years. According to Bongani, offenders need to be involved in positive rehabilitative activities to minimise the chances of re-offending and involvement in gangsterism. Gangsterism is a popular activity within our South African correctional centre. Gangs in correctional centres are popular and South African' correctional centres are not exempted as they are also affected (Nel, 2017).

On the other hand, it is also noted that those who are not participating in positive activities have a better chance of reoffending. The provision of meaningful rehabilitation programmes in correctional centres is crucial to achieving the ultimate purposes of a sentence of incarceration, namely, to reduce reoffending and improve public safety, as established by the most important and recent set of international standards on what is generally accepted as good principle and practice in the treatment of offenders and correctional management (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2018). On the same breadth, Nelson Mandela Rules argued that education, vocational training, work, treatment, and other forms of assistance that are tailored to

the specific treatment needs of offenders, should be provided by correctional centres administrations and other competent authorities to support the social reintegration of offenders into society (UNODC, 2018). Furthermore, participants are also of the view that career counselling can help with career planning which will contribute positively towards their rehabilitation. This is what Bokang had to say When asked if career counselling can assist offenders in their rehabilitation journey, *it is important because it's part of rehabilitation and draws some intention and interest for inmates inside here to know and to have a certain way of seeing things rather than doing crime. It will allow each inmate to join in, in a good path, and not to get confused of the career path, and not contradict himself or herself in anything that he or she will decide on doing based on a career of his career (slippery of a tongue, maybe choice of his career). So, it will be a good thing.* Based on this study's objectives and the themes, offenders make meaning through different things in their careers, including associating career choices with their ability to contribute to rehabilitation. It is noted that the current data in conjunction with the literature confirms that it is important for offenders to receive career counselling when incarcerated as it will contribute to their rehabilitation process.

#### **4.4 Offenders' experiences in career counselling**

Career counselling is understood as an ever changing profession (Samtz & Joseph, 2021) and it is contextual. Career counselling may take place in a variety of setting depending on the client's needs. Counselling concentrates on an in-depth discussion of problems and sharing information that facilitates relevant knowledge and helps with future decision-making (Okirigwe, 2020). Career counselling works as a way that reinforces and brings new interest in school and other educational interests, including academic advancement (Rhode, 2010). It remains one essential aspect of each person's career journey and can motivate those not eager to study as it brings about opportunities that are usually hidden. Career counselling equips the client to regularly examine their professional objectives in light of the evolving needs and priorities (Sametz & Joseph, 2021)

An important historical consideration is the societal limitation of career development for many individuals (Rhode, 2010). The study by Penney and Cahill (2002) found out that the majority of participants we found to be unemployed, repeat offenders who had not

previously received any form of career counselling. There are various interventions for the offenders that contribute towards their rehabilitation. However, career counselling is still lacking even to this day. Participants confirmed that they chose their careers based on their personal interests and career goals. They have no experience with regard to career counselling. Lukhanyiso said *Truly speaking, at that time was so ignorant. I had no vision. I just did things because life is going. But then now it's different* when asked if he has ever received career counselling. On the other hand, Kgasago highlighted that he made his own research by reading books about his desired career and checking with fellow offenders if his career decision was right.

Even those who received career counselling did so before their high school sentencing. It is also noted that the participants with prior knowledge of career counselling are particularly those who attended school in urban areas. A 32-year-old participant who obtained his grade 12 prior to sentencing and his diploma in marketing and is currently in his final year of Bcom marketing said he went to career counselling twice during his high school years where they used aptitude tests and other career related assessments. With a huge smile on his face, he said *Yeah, it was it was two. The first one was Stellenbosch, where I wrote the Myers Briggs test. I wrote an aptitude test and then I got the, Yoh it was a nice experience, and it also gave me a more in depth look in what careers I could fall into.* Although the assessments showed that he was strong in the engineering field, he chose marketing management as he always loved it and got fascinated by people who used to do promotional work at his former school. Below we will unpack the subthemes that support the offenders' experiences in career counselling, including an understanding of career counselling, correctional management's contribution to career counselling, being here and studying is not the easiest thing to do and family support towards career counselling for offenders.

#### **4.4.1 Understanding of career counselling**

When other participants showed an understanding of what career counselling is, what it entails and the processes involved, on the other hand some indicated that it was for the first time they hear about it from the interview. However, even those who have an understanding, they alluded that it is based on their common knowledge, not that they went through it. Career counselling may benefit individuals by ensuring that they

understand themselves, their interests, values, and skills to fit in the world of work (Sametz & Joseph, 2021). They further point out that knowing oneself will allow them to make knowledgeable decisions throughout their lives regarding the world of work, such what is required, about the opportunities and limitations (Sametz & Joseph, 2021). In order to reach one's full academic and personal potential, counselling is here to assist in gaining insight into issues one may be facing, building emotional resilience, and enacting genuine change (Okirigwe, 2020). Offenders seem to have little or no understanding of career counselling at all. Patrick emphasised that he had never heard about career counselling before. Hence during the interview, he could not say much about that.

*As I've said, it never happened to me that I have been getting counselling in terms of career wise. And it's my first, this one. This is the first one that I get from you. And maybe I can tell in future what is going to work for me-  
Patrick*

Due to their individualistic understanding and knowledge, some participants shared what they understood about career counselling. They indicated that their individual understanding of career counselling is about helping one evaluate themselves, explore different career paths and choose the right careers. *For me what comes into my mind is that career counselling will make you choose the right path of the career you want, are you in a right direction, are there any goals or steps that you follow regarding that career that even if maybe you face challenges will you be able to cope,* Potego remarked. Certain professional careers require one to make intensive research prior to embarking on them. This remark from Potego is valuable as career counselling can assist offenders in unfolding the underlying facts about such careers and let them make informed decisions. For instance, those qualifications that need one to go for practicals (for example, education, engineering). The offenders who are interested in such qualifications must be made aware so that they align the requirements of such qualifications with their sentences.

#### **4.4.2 Correctional management's contribution to career counselling**

The collected that confirmed that offenders receive support from the officials, however it is rather administrative which includes facilitating applications and registration

processes, assignment submissions and making general enquiries in relation to their studies. The support received may not contribute towards offenders' career choices. The participants further acknowledge the moral support that the officials provide. Bongani indicated *some of the officials only motivate them to work hard, instead of doing nothing as maybe school can change them.*

The DCS's goals for sentencing and incarceration is to rehabilitate, reform and reintegrate the offenders into their respective communities. The participants on this The DCS officials' responsibility is not to retain offenders out of circulation in the public arena nor to just carry out sentences given by the court (Murhula & Sigh, 2019). Their role includes identifying the offenders' educational and training needs and presenting the education and training programmes. They (educationists) oversee offenders' classroom tuition, study guidance, assist in preparation of their assessment, the administration of studies, and the presentation of informal educational programmes (Cilliers & Smit, 2007).

The popular challenge among correctional officers is their attitude towards counselling offenders (Okirigwe, 2020). Furthermore, he highlighted that some correctional officers have negative perceptions about offenders and believe in the hard and tight rules when dealing with them, which contradicts the fundamental principle of having positive regard when counselling (Okirigwe, 2020). Some offenders seemed to be holding back some information for "fear of victimisation". In the middle of the conversation, Bongani remarked *"I don't want to talk too much or sound like I do not appreciate"*. The participants indicated that they sometimes struggle with finding someone to accompany them to the UNISA hub, where they access the internet and study facilities. This identified challenge interrupts the offenders' study progress and the possibility of doing research in different career fields,

*Okay. On those cases I can say me I've never got a challenge because every time when I go there in B section, the section that accommodates Unisa, I asked a police officer will ask someone to help me with applications and all these things submitting my things. They there's no problem I would lie. There they help us: Lethabo said.*

Participants also indicated that studying allows them some form of preference compared to someone who is not studying. The officials ensure that their study needs are catered for at times of need. Katlego remarked that:

*because one of the things they make sure of when it comes to studying, even though we get limited time, like you'll get the first preference. Because when you come to, maybe you want to do some copies, they make sure. If you want the internet to do your work, they make sure a. If the time for exams comes, whether there's loadshedding or no load-shedding, they make effort.*

The limited use of internet and computers which is caused by lack of officials for escort purposes also play a negative role in the quest for career counselling support. The participants noted with massive worry that getting limited time to use the internet for research purposes and sometimes when they request for escort, they will be pointed from one official to the other. Lethabo remarked and indicated:

*What affect my studies is going there you must always have someone, you can't go out on your own to others section you must have escort you see sometimes like on Mondays and Friday there is not too many cops maybe there is only two in the section. When asking for escort. This one is pointing this one and this one is pointing this one you see.*

It is important to note that a career is personal, and career counselling is a delicate discipline where not everyone has the necessary skills to take on the duty. Therefore, it is not surprising that the officials were not able to contribute to the offenders' career decision-making.

#### **4.4.3 Family support towards career counselling for offenders**

If we follow the models that attempts to explain the steps a person takes in making a career choice, we can see that the first step is becoming aware of the need to take a decision, and second step is establishing a range of alternatives based on knowing one's own skills, interests, and personal values (Palos & Drobot, 2010). Individual career decision has grown in significance as they increasingly shape the role they will play in future (Humayon, Raza, Khan & Ansari, 2018). In this section, there will be a single

mention of each family member who appears to have played or not played a role in supporting the offenders' career journey. The family of incarcerated offenders include both nuclear and extended family members.

Offenders experience emotional turmoil which may affect their mental health. Incarcerated offenders in the correctional centre are a special population as their mental health level is usually inferior of the general population (Huang et al., 2020). When an individual gets sentenced to serve some time in a correctional centre, their biggest wish is to have a family that supports them in all the spheres of their lives. Family support is one of the most important components of social intervention that can assist an individual on their rehabilitation journey. More than any other support, the offenders perceive social support as one of the needed support as it helps keep them encouraged and motivated.

Many studies have shown that parents who are actively involved in their children's education and career planning are more likely to be supportive of their children's academic and professional development, as well as more knowledgeable about options available to them (Barnes et al., 2020). They further assert that parents shape their children's values, beliefs, and sense of identity by their own actions and the circumstances present at home (Barnes et al., 2020)

Furthermore, many career interventions have also been developed to engage parents and how to best assist their children's professional development (Oomen, 2016). Family plays a huge role in each person's career choice journey. The family's financial capital which can be used to gain access to vocational resources and information-gathering activities, the human capital represented by parents' skills and abilities which are used in the support provided to the child so that the child, in turn, can develop vocational skills, and the social capital represented by the parent-child relationships and interactions, which can be used to gain access to the family's social capital (Paloş & Drobot, 2010). According to the research conducted by Shumba and Naong (2013) the child's future educational chances are significantly impacted by the family's socio-economic situation.

It is noted that families provide support to the offenders in a variety of ways. Some families show social support, whilst others provide financial support. Siya indicated that

his family is supportive, even though it is not enough. Most offenders showed gratitude for the social and financial support they received from their families. However, when asked about scholastic or academic support, they indicated that they do not receive such support from their families. With concern in his eyes, Vusi indicated that his family only provide financial support, which is not enough as he sometimes wishes to receive social and academic support. In his words:

*Yeah, abanye they are far, abanye bakhona la eduze, but umndeni wami maan, angikhulanga nabantu abazi expressa ngaleyo ndlela. (My family is not an openly or freely expressive family), bona mabezokusiza, when they are helping you and when they give you money, they know ukuthi, hayi bakusizile bacedile. (They only give financial assistance, and to them, that is enough).*

Vusi grew up in a family where their support is only shown through material stuff (or money) which translates to him not being enough as he would wish to receive social support through visits and encouragement.

Unfortunately, scholastic or academic support is lacking. With the literature suggesting that family plays a huge role in the child's choice of careers and also through these results that family influences career decision making in many instances, it is also noted that, however, the families are not supportive of the scholastic or academic journey of the offenders. Kgasago remarked,

*unfortunately, I am from a very poor family, so, the only support I receive from them it's courage.*

On the other hand, Bongani indicated that he receives social and financial support; however, when asked about academic support, he iterated,

*academically I cannot say I'm receiving that much support; I don't have at all actually.*



#### **4.5 Does career counselling make sense to the offenders? Contextualising career counselling in correctional centres**

Career counselling has always been based on what the counsellor knows and would give recommendations according to the client's presentation of the career problems. In this regard, the counsellor would share their expertise on the local job market by recommending fields of work and specific career paths that would be a good match for the client (Hirschi & Froidevaux, 2020). The goal of a career counsellor is undeniably to help the client in finding the job they will like going to everyday (McMahon & Watson, 2020). Career counsellors should be mindful of offenders' choice of careers, their current setting, influences (while incarcerated) and the effects of their choices (post-incarceration). This can be possible when the context of how to assist clients becomes diverse and should not be preserved as a one-size-fits-all activity. Career counselling is known to have been a discipline of highly privileged people, which means only a few people could afford it. It was standardised to favour those who can take psychometric assessments to find the right careers. Typical way of exploring one's career relied solemnly upon the use of psychometric inventories, assessments, scales, or an appraisal of vocational interests (Preble, 2017). Musa also indicated that while outside, he went for career counselling, where he wrote an aptitude test. He said:

*Yeah, it was it was two. The first one was Stellenbosch, where wrote the Myers Briggs test. I wrote an aptitude test and then I got the, yoh it was a nice experience, and it also gave me a more in depth look in what careers I could fall into.*

Career counsellors have been put to the test in recent years to modernise their practice due to the rising demand of their services (McMahon, 2017). The recommendation was made because career counselling and development in the early years have received enough attention on research until now (Maree, 2018). As a result, career guidance should be broadened to assist individuals in developing consistent identities throughout work and life (Maree, 2018). This issue has prompted a conceptual movement from modernism to post-modernism in contemporary career counselling models and ideas (McMahon & Watson, 2020). As a result, the story of a persons' career development moves from being externally dictated to be internally constructed, with the individual

having to cultivate self-management abilities in order to adapt to the ever-evolving nature of the workplace (McMahon & Watson, 2020).

#### **4.5.1 Most offenders hate law, but they take the course so that they can find flaws in the justice system and prove their arrests to be unlawful**

I developed an interest in the study following my initial engagements with offenders on career counselling and guidance issues. It was noted during the engagements that most offenders are interested in studying law. This is also evident as per the Businessstech report. According to a staff writer (2018) on Businessstech, 291 offenders registered for university studies, and Bachelor of Law/ Literally Legum Baccallaureus, popularly known as LLB, comes first to be the mostly registered qualification across Gauteng, KZN and Western Cape. It is apparent that based on different reasons, most offenders opt to follow Law as the career of their choice. The reasons for choosing this particular qualification vary from individual to individual; however, the most popular ones are offenders who want to avenge the law. Mostly they feel they were not well represented and are serving unjust sentences. Therefore, choosing the qualification will make the “better” law practitioners and do justice to others.

Vusi remarked:

*Most offenders hate law, but they take the course so that they can find flaws in the justice system and prove their arrests to be unlawful. They also influence each other to take it so that they can take revenge once they are released.*

It was noted that lack of resources also influences the offenders’ choice of qualification or career. Some offenders choose to take this qualification as many of the offenders are doing it. Therefore, they can easily inherit old books from them and also get academic assistance. Bongani and Lukhanyiso had the following to say in support of the latter statement.

Bongani remarked:

*.....but I think since we're struggling here, I think they are getting books from others. So that becomes more easier for them to follow the same thing”.*

Lukhanyiso said:

*Maybe they choose law because there's a lot of people who have already done law, so in terms of research and things like that, maybe help, it will be easier to find people to give them information on whatever they want.*

Lack of career information and guidance in correctional centres can cause offenders to choose qualifications that they do not know much about. Musa indicated that career counselling could change the views of the offenders when making career decisions as they will have enough time to engage with the counsellor on the different careers they choose. He indicated that:

*...it would help inmates a lot, because like you just mentioned, like most inmates just want to do Law. And it's not really their strong point. So, it will help them also, like because there are a lot of career paths available. And it would help to show inmates and teach them of those career paths that are available to them.*

Based on the offender's current situations, they turn to be at the crossroad of choosing what they like and what their circumstances allow them to. Katlego indicated that he had one career in mind, however, he was afraid to take it because he did not understand such a career, therefore, having a career counsellor could enlighten him in guiding him into the right career. He was afraid that the chosen qualification does not yield good career goals due to his criminal record, which may hinder his job prospects. The other participant highlighted that he was interested in doing skills development. However, due to the unavailability of the courses, he was subjected to choose a different qualification. For rehabilitation and reintegration purposes, it is essential that offenders choose careers that will allow them to obtain employment or rather create employment despite their criminal records upon release. The purpose of career counselling should be to eliminate their fears by directing them into the right career paths. The evidence on the collected data and that of the staff writer (2018), is indeed clear that LLB is the most registered

qualification by offenders. With different reasons for the high preference for this qualification, it is crucial for career counsellors to use the model that will work efficiently for offenders.

#### **4.5.2 Being here and studying is not the easiest thing to do.**

The data collected confirms that being an offender and a student is difficult. According to the participants, the offenders are faced with many challenges that make it difficult for them to study, including among others, lack of motivation, lack of resources, limited internet access, etc. Across the world, numerous correctional dominions are struggling to deliver higher education into correctional centres (Farley, 2016). The central feature of incarceration is the (at least largely) restriction of offenders to the correctional centres' buildings, rooms, and facilities (Hammerschick, 2018). ODeL was introduced to complement the conventional educational system and to accommodate the growing numbers and need for higher institutions (Lumadi, 2021). With over 300,000 students, the University of South Africa (Unisa) is Africa's largest ODL institution (Queiros & de Villiers, 2016). Queiros & de Villiers (2016) further assert that online learning reaches disregarded and underprivileged students within South Africa. In this case, the offenders are not an exception. Online education or learning can contribute positively towards their academic journey and, eventually their rehabilitation journey. However, this cannot be praised without the possible shortfalls that those who receive online education come across. Offenders face challenges that hinder their studies.

*Being here, and studying is not the easiest thing to do. People are not the same. And I judge no one. I judge no one who is here for whatever reason - Siya.*

Offenders studying through open distance learning face different challenges or barriers affecting their studies and career decision-making. The challenges are situational, emotional, academic, and attitudinal. Musingafi et al. (2015) conducted research that its conclusion states that ODL students were confronted with a range of obstacles in their course of studies, including lack of adequate time for study, challenges in accessing and using ICT, ineffective feedback, and lack of study materials.

Access to internet seems to be at a forefront in observing effective e-learning, but this can never be achieved if students have inadequate or no access (Mpungose, 2020). The world is progressing towards a digital future, and to provide offenders with the best opportunity of rehabilitation and employment opportunities, they are required to be familiar with the technology that modern society is now taking for granted (Seelig & Rate, 2014). The participants have highlighted with wariness the limitations on the use of the internet and its implications on their studies. During this time when universities are moving gradually online; often, access to the internet is limited or prohibited in correctional environments (Farley et al., 2016). They indicated that they usually have less than five hours per day to use the internet, which seem to be a privilege because after any misunderstanding with the officials then it gets switched off as a way of punishing them.

*... they say it's a lockdown, they close for everybody until the certain period maybe two weeks or three weeks until the situation change has gone down -*  
Lethabo.

According to Mashile et al. (2020), one of the barriers to ODL is limited access to the internet or lack of technology. Thus, devices and connectivity costs represent significant barriers for various students (Mashile et al., 2020). Vusi remarked that:

*They turn off the internet and then they turn it on around 11, and then around 12 o'clock they switch it off again. So, you don't get so good, so much access to internet.*

Due to shortage of resources and ever increasing numbers of offenders, the DCS provides its programmes only on offenders receiving incarceration sentences of more than two years (Murhula & Sigh, 2019). Although the world is evolving into the using technology on daily basis, it is still vital for the learner offenders to receive physical study material for an effective study journey. This acclaims that conventional physical resources are fundamental in tackling the module needs in e-learning (Mpungose, 2020). Furthermore, he asserts that physical resources like textbooks, module/course packs, and other hardcopies can be used alternatively as resources if students have no internet access (Mpungose, 2020). Generally, lack of resources which include stationery, books, computers and etc, has contributed to some offenders selecting

qualifications based on the available at hand information. Offenders opt for qualifications that will be hassle-free to manage as they will get book handouts from their fellows.

*.... Yeah, yeah. And start studying other things, but I think, yeah, but I think since we're struggling here, I think they are getting books from others. So that becomes more easier for them to follow the same thing. Because if I studied law this year, and then you come the following year, I'm going to leave you with my own books that I was using - Bongani.*

Some participants suffered administrative challenges, while others underwent emotional challenges. These challenges can negatively affect the offenders' career journeys and have implications for their morale. One participant indicated that he had completed his grade 12. However, he cannot apply for any institution of higher education because he does not have an identity document.

*I'm from Lesotho I don't have ID I don't have anything actually to carry on and i passed very well, and then I passed my matric very well. Now I was I was including everybody there neh. So, but when it comes to me personally, eh I'm struggling a lot as I stated that I was born in Lesotho then my passport was lost and before I was arrested and everything's yeah so to register to the facilities like Unisa when I'm here to me is a lot of challenge and I'm fighting everyday I've been fighting since I've passed. So, I can say I have one year and couple of months now still fighting for the same thing that I see is not going to work or is going to work because they say I must find affidavit from outside which I did the past week. So, I'm still waiting for the respond from education - Lethabo.*

This elevated the participant's emotional turmoil as this participant sounded and looked helpless during the interview. He spoke with so much aggression of how he has been put from pillar to post as he sees his future flashing right in his eyes because he cannot do what he wants. He furthermore shared another frustration because he wanted to pursue a career in music; however, due to the lack of resources, he could not pursue his dream. The data collected through interviews and literature shows that it is difficult for

offenders to study while incarcerated. The lack of resources, emotional trauma and feeling of being neglected to make it difficult for them to study effectively.

#### **4.6 Summary of the chapter**

The focus of this chapter was on the findings and presenting the results thereof. From the findings, it is clear that career counselling forms part of each individual's career journey and the offenders are no exception. The chapter focused on the biographical data, meaning attributed to career counselling by offenders, family support contributions towards career counselling, and experiences offenders have on career counselling. The themes were outlined in detail, and the subthemes also were discussed to support the main themes in the search for findings. The following chapter discusses conclusions, limitations and recommendations on the study.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The previous chapter discussed the results emanating from the interviews conducted with 12 offenders in the Johannesburg Correctional Centre's Medium C section. The interviews focused on career counselling for offenders based on their lived experiences and meaning making when incarcerated. Different themes and subthemes generated from the collected data were used to find the participants lived experiences and meaning making in career counselling. This chapter will summarise the significant findings and draw conclusions on offenders' career-making decisions for the first time when incarcerated using the study objectives and guidelines from the literature and the collected data. The chapter will also discuss the study's limitations and recommendations.

The subject on helping disadvantaged (learners/students) has been a main concern to educationists. However, on the other hand the offenders belonging to this class are not attended deservingly in terms of receiving intervention services which include education and counselling, rehabilitation, and integration (Musau et al., 2018). Since distance education lacks the face-to-face contact that is present in the traditional education background, essential infrastructure, equipment, and funds should be available to deliver means of communication (which is an integral and most vital component of distance education) to students, especially due to the individualities of their situation as distance learners (Ahimie et al., 2021). Stakeholders in the educational sector should guarantee that all guidance and counselling services are offered in all school settings (conventional and ODL) (Ahimie et al., 2021). None of these questions may be neglected or viewed as more significant than others. Similarly, no educational environment should be seen as superior to any other. It is also important to make sure these services are being used correctly. Therefore, it is important for counsellors to be flexible and prepared to provide guidance and counselling services to ODL student using variety forms of information communication tools and social media sites (Ahimie et al., 2021).

### **5.1 Findings based on the objectives of the study.**

The study aimed to explore and describe the lived experiences of offenders on how they attach and give meaning to the rendering of career counselling services at the JHB



correctional centre. The objectives included, among others, exploring the experiences of offenders on their first career decision making process, exploring the meanings attributed by offenders to the experiences of choosing careers which suit their personal needs and perceptions attached to employability upon release and exploring the offenders' understanding of career counselling in CODeL university. These objectives also subsume the main themes that emanated from the data, which include meaning-making attributed to career counselling and the offenders' lived experiences in career counselling. The objectives and themes are discussed below, with the concluding remarks on the study.

### **5.1.1 Meaning-making attributed to career counselling.**

People make meaning based on their experiences of life and attach those meanings to their day-to-day living. Their interactions with others, the environment, and the situations they find themselves in contribute towards how they perceive their lives or the decisions they make. Families, either immediate or relatives, make us who we are and contribute towards our decision-making, either aware or unaware. It is clear from this current study that family contributes positively towards the career decisions of the offenders. Based on where and how the offenders were raised, their family's socio-economic status and educational background, their families tend to be at the forefront of what transpires in their lives. Furthermore, the primary determinant of a person's occupational choice, level of attainment, and what prompts them to make a career change or realign their career path are thought to be the nature of their schooling, the socio-economic status of their families, the influence of their immediate family and close friends, and the expectations that evolve from these interactions (Okafor & Obijekwu, 2019). In this study, it appeared on several occasions that family influences the offenders' career decision-making. The exposure to their families' career choices and their conversations during their incarceration influenced how they chose careers. However, it was found that families are expected to render support to the offenders either academically, socially, financially, or psychologically (emotionally). Offenders must receive support from their families during their rehabilitation. The current study highlights that families show support in different forms, including social, psychological, and financial. However, academically, the support is not enough. Some offenders only

rely on their families' encouragement and motivation as a form of support, where there is no financial or academic support due to their circumstances at home.

The circumstances people find themselves in also contribute towards their meaning-making. Most offenders choose to study because they are confined to a space that allows them only to do so. In the same breadth, they choose careers closer to their reach based on different reasons. The study's findings show that offenders choose careers not based on their personal preferences, interests and likes but due to the circumstances they find themselves in. The findings also revealed that due to the anger and frustrations relating to their cases or sentences, they chose careers like law in order for them to be in a better position to challenge the law either for themselves or on behalf of others. According to the offenders, some are wrongfully sentenced due to no or poor representation, and as a result, they would not want to see the same happening to others. There are also those offenders who choose careers that go against their career goals due to limited career opportunities available for them whilst incarcerated. For instance, one offender chose a qualification he did not like because the one he was interested in contained practicals, and he was unable to participate in those practicals, which would negatively affect the completion of his qualification and, ultimately, his career goals. Another instance related to an offender who wanted to engage in skills development courses (plumbing, construction, carpentry). However, could not do so because the JHB correctional centre does not offer these courses.

The educational level of the offenders plays a huge role in the process of making meaning through careers. The majority of the offenders are admitted into correctional centres without post-matric qualifications. It is only during incarceration that they think about changing their lives through education. Completing grade 12 in the correctional centre makes offenders think more about the importance of education, the ways in which it can change their lives and, more importantly, their career goals. Prior to incarceration, some offenders dropped out earlier in their secondary schooling, while others dropped out in grade 12. One of the participants indicated that he had never taken education seriously until he was apprehended twice. He said he started considering studying during his second sentence because that was the period where he wanted to change his life. Their current situation changed their views of life where careers were

concerned. However, it is noted that most offenders still do not have prior background in career counselling which plays a huge role in career planning.

Prior knowledge of certain jobs also contributes towards offenders' career-making decisions. Viewing others working certain jobs can influence one to choose a qualification that will ultimately assist in their career goals. Musa indicated that he used to love seeing marketing people who used to visit his college for promotions and became fond of their work, whereas on the other hand, Siya used to draw motivation from his late grandmother, who used to sell properties and he also wanted to make a career out of it. Some people can make career plans out of observing others.

### **5.1.2 Lived experiences in career counselling.**

The results of this research show offenders possess little career counselling knowledge. Only a few have experience in career counselling, even though it was through reading and going through career assessments. These offenders experienced career counselling prior to their sentencing and are the learners who attended schools in urban areas. However, they mostly chose their current studies or qualifications without proper guidance and understanding. The literature found that different types of activities contribute to offenders' rehabilitation. However, career counselling does not form part of that process. Offenders highlighted that ignorance and lack of willingness played a role in their choice of careers in which they would resort to criminal activities. Some also indicated that their families' influence on what career to choose made them aware of what it means to go through the career counselling process to understand clearly what it takes to make informed choices.

### **5.1.3 Correctional management's support contributes towards offenders' career decision making.**

Correctional centre educationists are responsible for ensuring comprehensive and holistic support towards the offenders. One of their roles is to help offenders acquire grade 12 (matric) and enrol in higher learning institutions. They also provide support on the offenders learning activities which include providing learning resources and for those who have passed grade 12 to ensure that they have applied for and registered for their desired qualifications. In their own capacity, they provide motivation to the

offenders and encourage them to study as a form of rehabilitation and proper reintegration in the societies upon release. Lack of support from correctional officials was highlighted in the study as one of the contributing factors towards offenders' inability to make informed decisions as far as career counselling is concerned. Therefore, according to the participants, the current study confirms that the correctional officials' support is not enough where their choices of careers are concerned. The participants alluded that the officials do not provide career support, however, they only encourage them to study.

#### **5.1.4 Limited use or lack of resources in the correctional centre**

Lack of resources in the correctional facility play a huge role in the offenders' career journey. The study participants indicated that they have limited use of internet and computers, and that there are not enough books and stationery to ensure effective studying. These challenges affected the students' career choices as they would normally choose most popular careers, they are familiar with them so that they can inherit study material such as books from other offenders who previously studied or are studying the same qualifications. This challenge limited/stifled offender's broad selection of careers and kept them limited into one bracket of choosing careers. The participants indicated that they do not have enough time to conduct research about their desired careers; consequently, they choose the ones they are familiar with for instance education, law, business etc.

#### **5.1.5 Significance of constructivist theory and CTC to offenders' career choices**

Several aspects in traditional positivist theories normally use the results of personality or interest questionnaires which they still remain relevant and applicable (e.g., taking decisions on academic major after senior high school) (Kaliris & Issari, 2022). According to Kaliris and Issari (2022), career development is no longer a linear process, but rather an "unpredictable journey" with several possible pathways. In this study, this means that there are no timelines for career planning and career choice, implying that at any time and in a given space a person can embark in a journey of career decision making. Essentially most offenders have never made any career decision prior and post their incarceration. They chose careers based on what was available to them, including

the influences (families, lack of resources etc) which were discussed in detail in chapter four. As this research shows, the two theories used here have a substantial impact on offenders' career paths because they may be applied in the correctional context to improve the quality of career counselling provided for offenders. The constructivist theory focuses on meaning making and how people construct their meaning using patterns of experiences in their lives. In order to make sense of one's life and professional paths constructivism advocates that one actively seeks for patterns (Kaliris & Issari, 2022) that may contribute to their career decision making.

On the other hand, CTC depends on narratives and metaphors since they are essential to the classification and the interpretation of the client's "fractals" (personal schemas) in multi-faced forms (Kaliris & Issari, 2022). Furthermore, the authors point out that under CTC both the counsellor and the client strive to keep an optimistic outlook despite the presence of chaotic situations (Kaliris & Issari, 2022). In this current study, the offenders find themselves in a compromised situation where making career decisions becomes a daunting activity. The offenders need to be aware of their current situation and life beyond the correctional facilities as far as acquiring employment is concerned. The chaotic situation is when an offender has to make a career decision against what they like and what their criminal record holds against them. The participants recommended that it is necessary for correctional centres to have career counselling services where complex matters (subtheme in chaos theories of careers) are outlined. The use of the term chaos may imply a lack of order or coherence in one's career life; however, in chaos theory of careers, the writers recognise the value of change and chance influences. Therefore, providing career counselling services to the offenders will provide with the opportunity to change their lives and ensure that they join their communities as reformed individuals.

This study would like to promote offenders' self-actualisation on their career planning to help them integrate well in their communities after release. The use of the two theories was useful as both addressed meaning making (constructivist theory) and lived experiences (chaos theory of careers). The theories also focused on decision-making, empowering and career planning for the offenders based on their current circumstances. As part of bringing hope into the lives of offenders, it is deemed important to utilise

theories that address and are in context with the offenders' current and future circumstances.

### **5.1.6 Contextualising career counselling in the correctional centres.**

Career counselling services are still lacking in south Africa and their developments are on slow paces. The services are mostly offered in the institutions of higher learning and in some schools around the country. These are also the most needed services by the offenders in the correctional centres. The 12 participants on this study indicated that the services are currently not available, and their wish is to have someone who will mediate between them and the institution. They acknowledge the fact that most offenders choose wrong careers because of lack of knowledge and information.

As it was discovered and discussed above (on chapter 4), career counselling services is not in line with the needs of the offenders. Using psychometric assessments to facilitate career counselling and the restrictions put in place to access the correctional centres or using gadgets, remains a call for concern on how the services can be navigated to reach the offenders. Models suitable for rendering such services should be put in place to ensure that offenders receive comprehensive career counselling services. The use of theories on career counselling should align with the policies of the distance learning and as well as those of the DCS for the provision of the services.

## **5.2 Limitations of the study**

This purpose of the research was to explore the lived experiences of offenders in the JCC receiving career counselling in an CODEL Institution. The study focused on the offenders incarcerated at the JCC medium C, which is a male section, and the target group were offenders who are studying or intending to study in an CODEL around the ages of 20-35. The choice of the group or the centre of choice was drawn from the willingness the offenders during a community outreach conducted by the counselling unit in the Gauteng region. The focus was on career counselling for the offenders as part of their rehabilitation and reintegration process.

A potential limitation of the study is how the sample of the study was selected. Only male offenders in the medium C JCC were selected which might influence the

generalisability of the results to the female counterparts who had not received career counselling. Due to lack of participants or relevant information needed, some participants' ages were above the required age group, some participants' sentences went above the 10 years maximum (included those serving life sentences), and some were attending school in different institutions, whereas it was recommended that the participants should come strictly from UNISA. Consequently, the results might have been affected as they will inadequately address the limitations encountered by incarcerated UNISA students. Their ages and sentences might have also not tallied well where the employability is concerned since, according to South African law, one is more suitable for employment below the age of 35, and the inclusion criteria clearly stated that. In addition to this, some offenders met the inclusion criteria, however refused to participate in the study due to personal reasons which needed to be respected. Due to these dynamics and challenges in recruiting study participants, it was impossible for me to do member checking, which might have also negatively affected the results. Member checking is relevant insofar as it makes thorough reference towards the initial data by ensuring that the data are correctly recorded and captured. Not having a member checking on the data means that the information cannot be thoroughly validated, as I was not given the opportunity to correct errors that might have occurred during the first attempt at collecting data.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

It is essential to note that poor career decision making, or the lack of career counselling and guidance services does not only have an individual impact, however it also affects the economy (Pillay, 2020). It is recommended that career guidance and counselling services be provided to students studying in a CODEL institutions by using diverse forms of ICT tools which will eventually help them cope with the demands of studying from a distance and outside pressures resulting from family, workplace, and environmental factors (Ahimie et al., 2021). Students in a CODEL institutions are confronted with variety of pressures and distractions outside their studies, therefore it is crucial that no counselling services be overlooked.

For offenders to make the most of the educational services provided, DCS and UNISA must ensure that their individual educational requirements are identified, addressed, and

satisfied (Matilwane, 2017). The unemployed, people with disabilities, contract employees, women, laid-off workers, and other workers experiencing harsh working circumstances are among populations who might benefit from career interventions that go beyond catering to the needs of corporate and middle-class clientele (Naidoo et al., 2006). Career interventions should be extended beyond corporate and middle-class clients and must also address the need of marginalised groups such as the unemployed, disabled individuals, contract workers, women, laid-off workers, and other workers facing oppressive working conditions (Naidoo et al., 2006). SAQA (2009) further emphasizes that this kind of career development should not be reserved for an elite few but should be made available to everyone.

Recommendations made by participants include that career counselling be offered for all the offenders to choose appropriate careers and explore different options, which in many cases, they are apprehensive about doing due to limited knowledge on what can contribute positively towards their careers, rehabilitation, and reintegration. The participants also recommend that offenders get easy access to UNISA services with maximum use of the internet, which will help them make research their desired qualifications before they embark on their career journeys and have enough study time so that they can produce good results and be competitive. Lastly, they recommended that correctional officials be thoroughly trained so they can provide the appropriate necessary support to the offenders.

Above are some of the recommendations made by participants which can contribute positively towards the effective rehabilitation journey of the offenders. It should be noted that offenders be provided with holistic rehabilitation, which includes vast intervention methods for them to join back the society as well reformed people and members of society. Over and above, the study asked questions that include what offenders' career counselling experiences before were while studying in a CODEL university, what meanings they attach to receiving career counselling services and making informed career decisions and how they make sense of receiving career counselling services, while incarcerated and studying in a CODEL university. The study results shows that the offenders do not have enough experience in career counselling, and those who have did not receive it whilst incarcerated. Furthermore, their sense of meaning-making is related to career planning, making informed career decisions,



rehabilitation as well as reintegration. They indicate that making informed career decisions will assist with their rehabilitation and reintegration process. Lastly, they recommend that correctional facilities receive other services related to rehabilitation. They should also receive career counselling services, so it also contributes to their holistic rehabilitation.

As a researcher and also someone working in the counselling profession, I have realised that career planning requires a lot of elements. Therefore, it is imperative for career counsellors to take note of such, especially working with offenders. Career planning or choice requires one to be mindful of their abilities, skills, interests, personality, values and most importantly, employability. In this current study, I also took note that the client's (offender) environment also plays a role in career counselling. There have been noticeable challenges for offenders to make career decisions that are based on their current environment. For instance, for an offender to choose a qualification or career in social work, they need to check the feasibility of doing practicals when they are incarcerated or the duration of their sentence if it will allow them to complete their practicals upon release to complete their qualification. Observing these challenges and the eagerness of the offenders who want to change their lives through education, as well as the results emanating from the data, I recommend that correctional centres have intensive career counselling services. This will promote a holistic rehabilitation process and subsequent reintegration. An informed career decision, under the assistance of a professional career counsellor, will lead into possible employment and entrepreneurial services for offenders upon release.

#### **5.4. Summary of the chapter**

This is the last chapter of the study where the findings, limitations and recommendations were discussed. The chapter discusses the meanings offenders attach to career counselling, their lived experiences when making career decisions and the influential factors affecting their decision making process. It provides clarity on the correctional management support for the enrolled offenders and as well as the implications on what the limited resources have on the offenders' educational enrolment in a CODEL environment.

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# Appendix A



## COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

26 June 2021

Dear Ms. Mamashu Gleda Mabowa

**Decision:**  
Ethics Approval from 26 June 2021  
to 26 June 2024

NHREC Registration # :  
Rec-240816-052  
CREC Reference # :  
61567841\_CREC\_CHS\_2021

**Researcher(s):** Name: Ms. Mamashu Gleda Mabowa  
Contact details: [61567841@mylife.unisa.ac.za](mailto:61567841@mylife.unisa.ac.za)  
Supervisor (s) Name: Mr. M Mdakane  
Contact details: [emdakam@unisa.ac.za](mailto:emdakam@unisa.ac.za)  
Name: Prof. E Fourie  
Contact details: [fourime@unisa.ac.za](mailto:fourime@unisa.ac.za)

**Title:** *The lived experiences of offenders enrolled in an ODeL university: A Career Counselling perspective in Johannesburg Correctional Centre.*

**Degree Purpose:** Masters

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for three year.

The **low risk application** was reviewed by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the



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confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date (**25 June 2024**). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **61567841\_CREC\_CHS\_2021** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Signature :

Prof. KB Khan  
CHS Research Ethics Committee Chairperson  
Email: [khankb@unisa.ac.za](mailto:khankb@unisa.ac.za)  
Tel: (012) 429 8210

Signature : PP

Prof K. Masemola  
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## Appendix B



### correctional services

Department:  
Correctional Services  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA  
Tel (012) 307 2770, Fax 066 539 2693

Dear Ms M Mabowa

**RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF OFFENDERS ENROLLED IN AN ODEL UNIVERSITY: A CAREER COUNSELLING PERSPECTIVE IN JOHANNESBURG CORRECTIONAL CENTRE**

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- This ethical approval is valid from **11 November 2021 to 11 November 2024**
- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioner where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide is **Director –Formal Education** based at Head Office, you are requested to contact her at **012-3058778** before the commencement of your research
- You are requested to contact the Area Commissioner before the commencement of your research
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document/passport and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting regional offices/Correctional Centres.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) and Correctional Services Act (No.111 of 1998) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centres" not "Prisons".
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- Comply with COVID - 19 safety and hygiene procedures during data collection processes
- Ensure that all participants have been duly screened for Covid19 according to DCS screening protocols
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the REC Administration for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2894/95.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully

**ND MBULI**  
**DC: POLICY COORDINATION & RESEARCH**  
**DATE: 11/11/2021**

## Appendix C

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of the Participant), confirm that the researcher has explained to me the purpose of the study I am about to participate in, including what the research interview will involve, namely that the interview will be recorded, including any potential risks and benefits.

Clarity was given where needed and all my questions were answered satisfactorily prior to engaging in the research questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from this study at any time without having to give an explanation.

I understand that the information I provide will be treated with austere of confidence and that all potentially identifying personal information will be withheld.

I have been informed that the results and findings of this research will be compiled into a report, and progress of this project will be discussed with the researcher's Supervisor.

I freely give my consent to participate in this research study and to be given a copy of this form for my own safe-keeping. I also give permission to the researcher to record the sessions and use the recording for the proceedings of her data collection and analysis.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and surname of participant: (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and surname of researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix D

### Proposed interview questions

#### Personal Background

1. Age/ date of birth
2. Age at the beginning of the sentence
3. Estimated age at release
4. Ethnicity
5. Residential details
6. Family support

#### Scholastic/ educational background

7. Level of education
8. Level of education prior to sentencing
9. Type of school attended prior to sentencing
10. Post matric qualification prior to sentencing
11. Any qualification/ certificate acquired post sentencing

#### Employment background

12. Any employment history prior to sentencing
13. Economic sector
14. Salary range
15. Anticipated career upon release

#### 1. Offenders' career counselling experiences before or while studying in an ODeL university

- Have you ever received career counselling before incarceration?
- Have you ever made career decision prior to sentencing (at high school or higher institution of learning)?
- Have you ever made career decision post sentencing (whilst in correctional centre)
- What are the Challenges you experienced in studying as an offender in an open distance learning?

- What is the Scholastic/academic support provided by correctional management that contribute towards your career decision making?

#### 2. Meanings offenders attach to receiving career counselling services and making informed career decision

- What is your interested field of study?
- What does career counselling mean to you?
- How will your qualification or the career of your choice fulfil your future dreams?
- How important it is for offenders to receive career counselling whilst incarcerated?

#### 3. How does it feel to receive career counselling services while incarcerated and studying in an ODeL university?

- How important it is for you to have career counselling services in the correctional centres
- How will career counselling assist or contribute towards your career and rehabilitation journey?
- How will the provision of career counselling change the views of the offenders when making career decisions?

## Appendix E

**to whom it may concern**

Re: Intervention during research interviews

I, Mr. Fhatuwani Makahane (student counsellor) at University of South Africa (Gauteng Region) agrees that I will be the counsellor assisting with intervention should the need arise during Ms. Mabowa (Masters Psychology student) interviews with the participants on her study.

The intervention will be done as per request by the student and she will be the one dealing with the administrative issues involved (i.e. setting up appointments). The services will be performed as part of my duties in the institutions therefore, they will be rendered for free.

I understand the ethical implications and the vulnerability of this matter; therefore, I promise to follow all the necessary measures and scope of practice as guided by the Health Profession Council of South Africa. The intervention will be on the best interest of the participant, therefore all the discussions made during the time will remain confidential and rendered as per the participant's consent.



Mr. F Makahane  
Student counsellor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
25 August 2021

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PRC- 0017574