

**Educators' perceptions of barriers to learning in a Correctional
Centre in the Western Cape region**

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Declaration

I, Nombulelo Margaret Stamp declare that the thesis entitled: 'Educators' Perceptions of Barriers to Learning in a Correctional Centre in the Western Cape Region' is my own work and that all resources used in this thesis have been acknowledged by means of completed references.

Signed this day.....of.....20.....at.....



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Dedication

This work is dedicated first and foremost to my loving mother Lydia Anta for her confidence in me, her encouragement, the expectations she had of me and the love and care for education she shared with me.

The second dedication goes to the memory of my son Kai-kai Stamp for the expectations he had of me. His encouragement, love and patience made this dissertation and everything else in my life a possibility.



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- the Area Commissioners of both management Areas: I am grateful for their enthusiasm that ensured procedures were executed timeously.

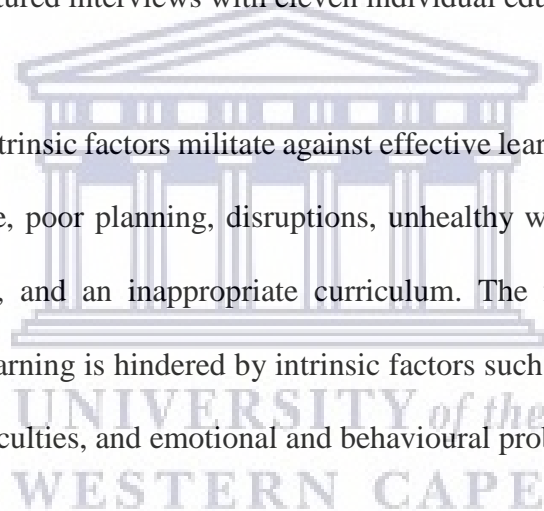
Abstract

In South Africa and elsewhere all correctional centres offer educational programmes today with the aim of rehabilitating offenders by giving them the opportunity to further their studies and to develop vocational skills. However, reports show that the dropout rate is very high.

This study thus explores educators' perceptions of factors that hinder effective learning in South African correctional centres. It also examines barriers and probes strategies with the aim of finding out how deficiencies may be addressed. To this end the enquiry relied on a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews with eleven individual educators.

The findings reveal that extrinsic factors militate against effective learning and teaching. These include poor infrastructure, poor planning, disruptions, unhealthy working relations, lack of capacity, lack of support, and an inappropriate curriculum. The findings also show that successful teaching and learning is hindered by intrinsic factors such as disability, knowledge gaps, communication difficulties, and emotional and behavioural problems.

The study makes two key recommendations. The first is that correctional educational programmes be reviewed in order to bring them into alignment with the prison context and the needs of offenders. The second is that the educational and psychosocial environments in correctional centres are improved.



Acronyms

ABET : Adult Basic Education and Training

AET : Adult Education and Training

ANC : African National Congress

CAPS : Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

IT : Information Technology

SACE : South African Council for Educators

NCV : National Certificate Vocational Education

NCSNET: National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training

NCESS: National Committee for Education Support Services

FET : Further Education and Training

SBA's : Sub Based Assessment Tasks

HoC : Head of Centre

KBC : Kaki Bukit Centre

DCS : Department of Correctional Services

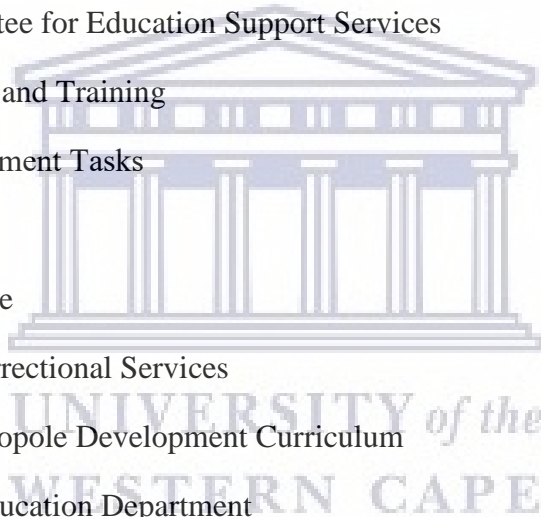
EMDC : Educational Metropole Development Curriculum

WCED : Western Cape Education Department

DoE : Department of Education

OSD : Occupational Specific Dispensation

SASA : South African School Act



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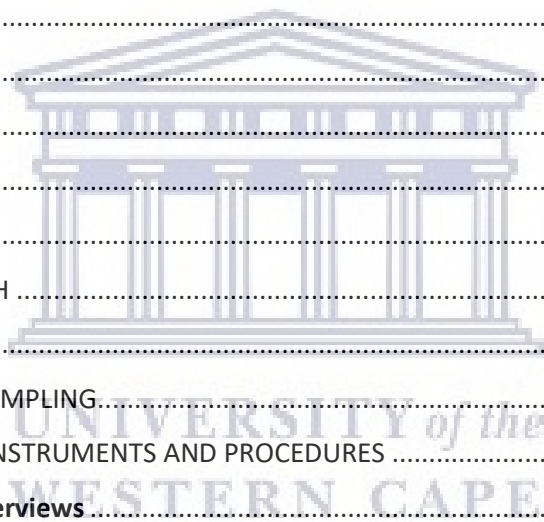
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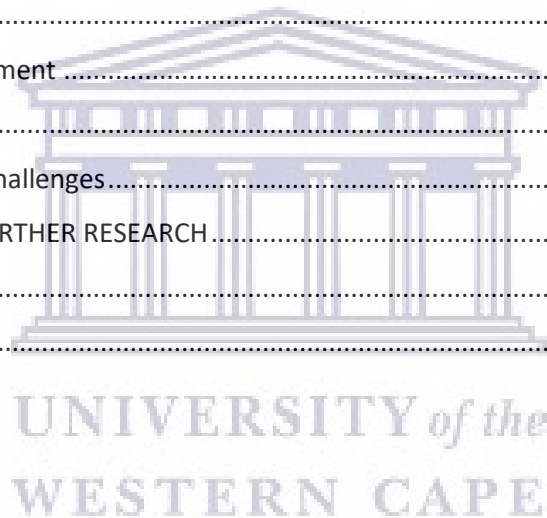
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction and background to the study. International instruments indicate that education in a correctional environment must be in line with the educational system of the general society. Provision should be made for the continuity of the educational activity of people incarcerated in a correctional centre and for those released on parole (Department of Correctional Services, 2005, p.137). In the period after 1994 marking the election of the first democratic government, the South African constitution facilitated significant bureaucratic or administrative shifts. In prisons such changes were meant to focus on education as a route to rehabilitation, in place of the mainly punitive, spiritualized approaches of the past.

Currently, in South Africa a correctional centre is expected to offer educational programmes that will enable offenders to further their studies and to develop vocational skills. However, the injunction that education in correctional facilities be equivalent to what is offered in mainstream schooling appears to have been largely overlooked. Recent assessment has shown insufficient progress in the fulfilment of these educational objectives, as well as ongoing recidivism. Despite efforts to use education as a rehabilitative resource, reports show that the dropout rate is very high in these centres.

1.2 BACKGROUND: HISTORY AND CURRENT PRACTICE

The South African democratic government sought to transform the prison system. Through a strategy known as New Beginnings prisons were to be renamed ‘correctional services’

(Department of Correctional Services, 2005). In the wake of this shift in institutional culture, academic education and vocational training became features of the rehabilitative path offenders had to walk towards becoming productive and law-abiding citizens (Department of Correctional Services, 2005). Today the provision of education by the South African Department of Correctional Services is set out in Section 29(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No.108 of 1996). Here it is stipulated that: "everyone has a right (a) to basic education, and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible." This constitutional imperative for schooling is a right which may not be negated by incarceration (DCS, 2005, p.137).

The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in compliance with Section 29(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides education programmes for offenders according to their specific needs and as a rehabilitation tool. Within the Department of Correctional Services, a highlight of the new Constitution in post-apartheid South Africa is that for the first time the rights of offenders are acknowledged. Offenders' rights are enshrined in the Bill of Rights along with the rights of other South African Citizens (Rozani, 2010, p.1). Rehabilitation is a right of the offender. Whilst the government has a right to punish for an offence, the offender has an equal right not to be disadvantaged by the experience of punishment (Robinson & Raynor, 2006, p.339).

Consequently, any assessment of the success of specific programmes designed to decrease instances of offending behaviour has to take into account the criminal proclivity of offenders at the time when they exit the correctional centre. The purpose of rehabilitation programmes is ostensibly to turn bad people into good people or hardened criminals into law-abiding citizens (Matthews & Pitts, 1998, p.400). In other words, rehabilitation is intended to curb recidivism,

a term which refers to offenders who have been incarcerated more than twice on previous occasions (Flanagan, 1994, p.25). Recidivism appears to be reduced through participation in correctional education programmes (Gordon & Weldon, 2003, p.200).

Despite certain major political changes, according to the former Minister of Correctional Services Sibusiso Ndebele, South Africa has the highest population of prisoners in Africa (Mail & Guardian, 2013). Added to this, in South African prisons the number of children below the age of eighteen who have committed crimes is on the increase. The most recent statistical record for juveniles stands at 0,4% of the total prison population of 153000 (International Centre for Prison Studies,2012).

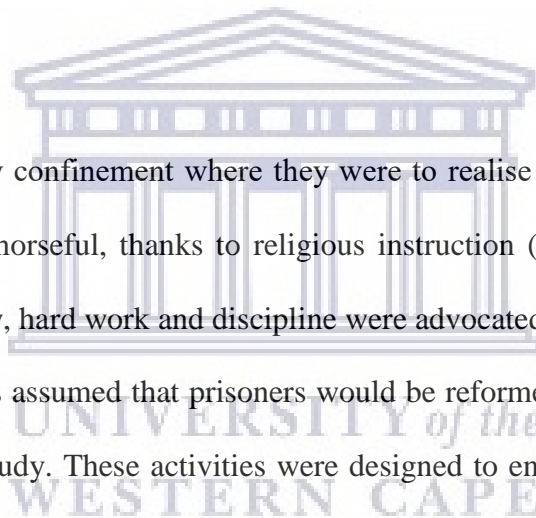
However, juveniles in South African prisons do receive support to facilitate their reintegration into the society and prevent recidivism. The programmes in prisons are designed to enhance their wellbeing and to restore their lives holistically (SA Corrections, 2009). Furthermore, in keeping with the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, which South Africa ratified in 1999, education, training and personal development are compulsory. (SA Corrections, 2009).

Similar support is rendered in the European Network for Research, Action and Training in Adult Literacy and Basic Education (1991) which recommends that in the teaching of the prisoners' curriculum a broad and holistic approach should be followed. It advocates that the intervention programme should be relevant to prisoners' needs and abilities and that it should facilitate re-socialization into society. Echoing this ethos, the South African former Minister of Correctional Services, Mrs Nosiviwe Mapisa Nqakula's address during Corrections Week (September 2009) conveyed concern that no provision had been made for the necessary

capacity to provide education facilities for juveniles. This alert remains important when the holistic development of juvenile offenders is at stake. And thus it becomes imperative to scrutinize both the programmes and the professional development of those who offer them.

Historically, prison education was conceived of as spiritual development, reliant on the reading and mastery of biblical excerpts. Classes were held at night or on Sunday, with the chaplain “standing in the semi-dark corridor before the cell door, ... a dingy lantern over the grated bars, ... teaching ... the wretched convict in the darkness beyond the grated door, elements of reading or numbers” (Lewis, 1922: 341). Offenders were thought to have required time to reflect on their crimes and to repent.

They were kept in solitary confinement where they were to realise the “error of their sinful ways” having become remorseful, thanks to religious instruction (Gerber & Fritsch, 1995; Teeters, 1955). Bible study, hard work and discipline were advocated as the main constituents of prison education. It was assumed that prisoners would be reformed through meditation on their offences and bible study. These activities were designed to enable prisoners to find an “inner light” by which to correct their criminal behaviour (Normandeau, 1972). However, the focus of education programs changed from religious instruction to basic literacy and communication skills when the reformation era began. According to Reagan and Stoughton (1976), Zebulon Brockway proposed his theory of rehabilitation in the first conference of the American Prison Association. From that time academic education has been a cornerstone of correctional programmes. Brockway pointed out that the goal of the reformatory was to reform youth.



With this aim in mind, reformatories were to be designed to provide physically and mentally healthy environments where youth would have access to academic education and extensive vocational training. According to Reagan (1976) and Stoughton Brockway believed that law-abiding behaviour was attainable through legitimate industry and education. Educational programs became a correctional rehabilitation feature during this time. By 1930 academic and vocational educational programs were operating in most prisons in the United States, where they were considered to play a primary role in the process of rehabilitation (Mackenzie, 2006). Today most correctional facilities offer educational programs.

In South Africa too academic education is legally mandated for youth and adults. The most commonly offered programs are basic education (including English as a second language, special education, and literacy classes), high school and post-secondary education/college. Many facilities also offer life skills programs and vocational education. Life skills programs, also called social skills, are sometimes part of other curricula such as basic adult education or vocational education (Harlow, 2003).

While security prescriptions of the Department of Correctional Services have to be complied with in learning and teaching activities, an added responsibility, according to the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1999) is that this Department among others also be a conduit for realizing the aims and objectives of education. It should thus provide a safe and appropriate environment that is conducive to enabling offenders to learn and to adopt a positive, appropriate value system. It is held that creating a desire in them to lead productive law-abiding lives when they are released into the community should inspire them to achieve their academic goals (Republic of South Africa, 1999).

The word 'safe' in the correctional education context can pose serious challenges to education. The reason for this is that one of the most important institutional functions is the water-tight safe and secure containment of offenders against possible escape. There is thus a tension necessitating that correctional officials and correctional education officials reconcile their interpretation of what constitutes safety. Otherwise offenders who are classified as high risk (Cavadino & Dignan, 2007, p.208), those housed in super-maximum security facilities (Schmalleger & Smykla, 2005, p.207), and those who are viewed as a threat to the safety of society (Luyt & Du Preez, 2000, p.38) might suffer prejudice by being denied access to education in the quest for safety and security of a particular form.

The Department of Correctional Services has been charged with the responsibility to transforming the criminal justice system from the discredited illegal system notoriously known for targeting opponents of apartheid and criminalizing what society glorified, to one resonating with the aspirations of its people (African National Congress, 1994, p.63, 2006, p.104). Such aspirations were informed by the introduction of the Reconstruction and Development Programme of the African National Congress which promised to develop an integrated system of education and training to provide equal opportunities for all (African National Congress, 1994, p.61).

Redress of historical imbalances and inequalities was thus at the heart of the imperative for education for all historically disadvantaged South Africans, and offenders were no exception. This education was designed to give direction to the full development of individuals and the community in order to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (African National Congress, 1994, p.62). In accordance with this directive the education of offenders was formalized to establish parity with mainstream education. This policy was adopted in the

light of the idea that equal opportunities encouraged people to take charge of their lives and to achieve what apartheid had denied them, especially education.

There was, however, a niggling concern that the idea of education for offenders was not new in South Africa. According to Venter (1959) it had existed not only in the Apartheid era but from as early as 1830 (Venter, 1959, p.56). Noteworthy is Venter's (1959) observation that although education and training of offenders had started then, it had not been organized.

Act 111 of 1998 of the South African Correctional Services, the strategic document of the Department of Correctional Services, was drafted in order to guide the process by which the business of correction, as opposed to imprisonment was to be carried out. Unfortunately these guidelines did not provide a blueprint in keeping with the one used in mainstream education. Act 111 of 1998 whose promulgation was dubbed "a milestone in the history of Correctional Services," provided only a framework for the treatment of offenders' development and support services. This document merely emphasized the social responsibility of the department (the Republic of South Africa, 1997 and Department of Correctional Services). It left the processes by which the education of offenders would run open to as many interpretations as there are correctional centres. The assumption was that any cognitive training on its own might afford substantial benefits in efforts towards the reduction of crime.

What seems to have been overlooked is that education requires educational leadership. Such an overseeing role may take the form of an educational manager. But the objective is to create an atmosphere which enhances interaction in the process of teaching and learning. In order for students to thrive a certain culture is required within which education may be sustained (Walker & Dimmock, 2002, p.1). The organizational culture fostered by the Department of Correctional

Services is not conducive to the new challenges of ensuring safe custody under conditions that sustain human dignity and encourage behaviour change. This is the case because the current prisons were not designed with correctional education in mind (Republic of South Africa, 2005, p.32). It means that the correctional system as an organization within which correctional education is to take place, is by virtue of its culture repulsive to correctional education. In other words it favours organizational 'correction' at the expense of 'correctional education'.

According to Luyt (1998), while the control structure of correctional education has implications for the correctional education policy formulation and implementation, the control structure of the correctional system is not only important for political and operational decision-making. It also plays a role in staffing and in determining the processes by which correctional education programmes are provided (Luyt, 1998, p.59). The complexity of the relationship between correctional education and the correctional system as a whole thus calls for the integration of the role of leader and manager at the helm of correctional education. The reason for this is that such a person will be in a position to negotiate and maintain a sustainable, free-flowing and mutually beneficial relationship between the mother body and her tenant organization namely, correctional education. It is uncommon that interchangeably, managers are called administrators, chairpersons, coordinators and leaders, depending on the task they are called upon to execute at a given moment in any organization they find themselves managing, not only within the sphere of prison education (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt, 2009, p.29).

In part these diverse roles 'managers' fulfil is reflective of the fact that education in the South African juvenile justice system entails more than just the formal classes and the curriculum offered to young offenders (Gast, 2001). The compulsory aspect of educational programs

offered inside South African prisons is therefore typically dependent on and managed by the system of the prison in question.

Notwithstanding the potential of this situation to undermine education in prisons, the extension of choice to one who has offended raises additional concerns since it carries the potential to curtail correctional effort meant to rescue the offender from their offending inclinations. Given the element of choice, failure in such a vital initiative could endanger the maintenance of safety in society against recidivist criminal activity. In sum, in the life of an ex-offender correctional effort manifests as rehabilitation.

Thus the attitude of offenders who do not participate in the correctional educational programmes towards those who do is still a concern. For offenders to refuse to participate in the correctional education programme is a violation of correction. One theory that identifies this violation is that advocated by Raynor and Robinson (2005) in which they argue that correction is a right of the offender for the benefit of potential victims and communities. From a slightly different perspective, scholars such as Schmallegger and Smykla (2005) among others describe incarceration as an act of retribution which literally means 'paying back', and dictates that the offender pay the debt they owe, to both their victim and society. Correctional education is thus a means to enable offenders to pay the debt also to themselves by addressing the cognitive causation of their criminal behaviour, namely ignorance (Schmallegger and Smykla, 2005, p.74).

A recent study funded by the United States of America's Department of Education found that participating in state correctional educational programmes reduces the likelihood of re-incarceration by 29% (Tolbert, 2002, p.7). Findings from other studies revealed that society

can save money and even earn a return on its investment by providing education to incarcerated individuals (Keeley, 2004, p.291). In addition, receiving a higher education qualification makes finding employment easier, which decreases the inclination towards criminal behaviour, and consequently reduces re-offending behaviour (Schirmer, 2008, p.25). It is thus a challenge to educational leaders to find ways by which to discharge the right to correctional education to all eligible offenders.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

I am employed as a vice-chairperson on the parole board appointed by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services. As an educator I see education for the Youth in this country as one of my top priorities. I believe that this country is in need of dedicated patriotic and action-oriented young intellectuals, who will contribute to building the kind of society we envisage. As an education practitioner I came to realize that Correctional Services would render this service best with the contribution of other significant stakeholders and citizens, such as education experts and members of the business sector who could monitor the progress of correctional education and skills development according to the trends and requirements of mainstream education.

According to the Republic of South Africa (1997), the core responsibility of correctional education is the provision of development programmes for offenders in order to facilitate their rehabilitation and successful reintegration into the society. Yet Silverman (2001) points out that correctional education programmes are often subverted by custodial staff who prize security, order and discipline as the highest goals of imprisonment (Silverman, 2001, p.390). This suggests that there is a need for an idealistic education managerial leader at the helm of

correctional education. S/he would influence attitudes and initiate change in the entire prison in a way that appeals to custodial staff, so that the organizational climate of the prison becomes conducive to development.

Through my assessment of offenders' readiness to reintegrate into communities, I found it strange that some offenders cannot read and write despite having been in prison for a very long time. Some started schooling inside but dropped out, failing to see the need to continue. Others do not see education as a tool by which to survive at present, but view work inside the prison as a priority – to survive and to keep busy while completing their sentences.

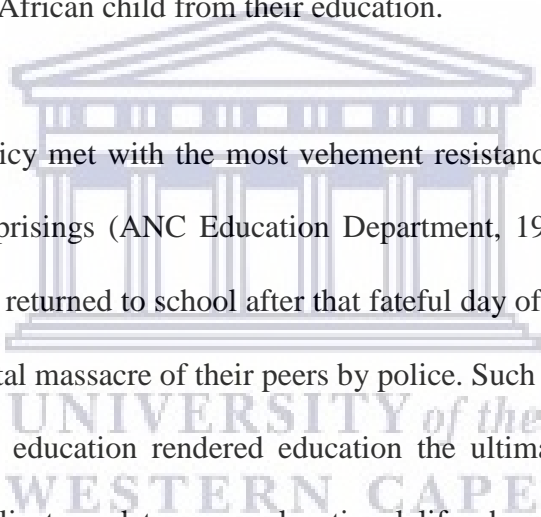
My interest is to discover what might ensure that offenders who are in conflict with the law nonetheless receive an education that improves their cognitive skills, inspires their thinking and refreshes their approach to things. As a member of the board, I am also interested in exploring factors that hinder effective learning in correctional centres.

It is envisaged that the findings of the study will inform the innovations and improvement of education programmes and so contribute to preventing crime and recidivism. The findings may also contribute to policy and decision-making in the Department of Correctional Services.

On a personal level, this research may help me and other researchers to gain a deeper understanding and increased knowledge of how to provide more effective educational opportunities inside Correctional facilities. The Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Correctional Services, governmental and non-governmental organizations, professionals and other researchers dealing with these challenges may also find this research helpful. Barriers to effective learning in Correctional Centres and evidence of what discourages learners from furthering their education are likely to emerge.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Africans are indigenous South Africans, having been distinguished from non-European groups such as 'Chinese', 'Coloureds', and 'Indians' together with whom collectively they were called 'black'. This racial exclusion left Africans poor, uneducated and highly motivated to resist oppression. The abuse of language had been highly instrumental in the perpetuation of the academic deprivation of Africans in that when they finished primary school, a 50-50 policy applied. This policy meant that English and Afrikaans became equal mediums of instruction for children who were exposed to neither of these languages outside of school hours. This had the effect of alienating the African child from their education.



But in 1976 the 50-50 policy met with the most vehement resistance, which resulted in the renowned 1976 Soweto uprisings (ANC Education Department, 1994, p.34, Martin, 2005, p.23). Some learners never returned to school after that fateful day of June 16th 1976 whereon they had witnessed the brutal massacre of their peers by police. Such developments combined with a radical outlook on education rendered education the ultimate casualty and further aggravated the already delicate and tenuous educational life chances of African children. Redress in the form of education was indeed a welcome relief if not the only relevant and viable option after parents had lost control of their school-going children and out-of-school youth, some of whom had ended up in prison, not only for political reasons.

Initiatives within the correctional education sector have since demonstrated valiant efforts to institute rehabilitation, yet both the rate of offending and that of recidivism have been escalating since the conversion of prisons into correctional centres. Added to this, the

demographics of offenders are disturbingly indicative of the historical disadvantages meted out to indigenous people classified African.

It is not well understood why inmates are not progressing with schooling inside correctional centres as education is considered to be one of the tools of rehabilitation. A news article in The Star has claimed that in South Africa in excess of 80% of people – notably youth – drop out before finishing matric and resort to committing occasional crime ('Staff Reporter' Star newspaper, 2003.02.08). Equally startling is that the recidivism rate in South Africa is placed at between 80% and 90% according to a scan of criminal justice literature (Open Society Foundation Report on recidivism and re-offending in South Africa, November 2010). This scan reveals researchers have expressed concern that after long periods of incarceration – up to twenty-three years – some offenders still emerge with a low standard of education. What meaningful employment can be gained with little or no education? To find out about factors that may hinder effective learning in a particular correctional centre, this study will examine both intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning and teaching.

1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

As already indicated, the main aim of this study is to explore educators' perceptions of factors that hinder effective learning in a Correctional Centre. The following questions directed the investigation:

- What are teachers' perceptions of the intrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in the Correctional Centre?
- What are teachers' perceptions of the extrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in the Correctional Centre?

1.6 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS

1.6.1 Barriers to learning and development

The National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) define barriers to learning as those “factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision” (Department of Education, 1997, p.12, 2001). According to the report, these factors may be located within the learner, within the classroom, within the school or within the broader social economic and political context (Swart & Pettipher, 2005). Walton, Nel, Hugo and Muller (2009) describe ‘barriers to learning’ as a phrase used to explain why some learners do not experience success in learning.

1.6.2 Prisoner /offender

According to the Correctional Services Act, an offender is any person, whether convicted or not, who is detained in custody in any prison, or who is being transferred to custody, or who is en route from one prison to another prison (Department of Correctional Services, 2001; Jonker, 2011). An offender in this study refers to any person sentenced by a court of law and kept in the custody of the Department of Correctional Services.

1.6.3 Correctional centre

According to the Correctional Services Act No.25 of 2008, "a correctional centre" is any place established under the Correctional Services Act as a place for the reception, detention, confinement, training or treatment of persons liable to detention in custody" (Department of Correctional Services, 2008). Jonker's (2011) description extends this somewhat, stating that

a correctional centre is any place established under the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998 as a place of reception, detention, confinement, training or treatment of persons under protective custody to which any such person has been sent for the purpose of imprisonment, protection, detention, labour or treatment.

1.6.4 Correctional Services

The White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (Department of Correctional Services, 2004) arose from the need for a long-term strategic policy and operational framework that recognizes correction as a societal responsibility. It facilitated a transition in the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) directing all its activities towards serving a rehabilitation mission. Through delivery of appropriate programmes this undertaking was to ensure that the people who leave correctional centres have altered attitudes and appropriate competencies which should enable them to integrate back into society successfully as law-abiding and productive citizens (White Paper on Corrections in South Africa, 2004).

1.6.5 Correctional education

According to Clear and Cole (1994) correctional education programmes include any structured activity that takes offenders out of their cells and expects them to perform instrumental tasks. According to these theorists education may occur in any task performed anywhere (Clear & Cole, 1994, p.345). According to Rotman (1990), a human being will not change by having been worked with spiritually only; an intervention has to engage the mind as well. He explains that correctional education should be set up to view an offender holistically and identify individual needs for change, which in this context is rehabilitation through cognitive, affective and spiritual development.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Due to its design various limitations accompanied this study. The sample size, although appropriate for qualitative case study design, limited the results of this study. In addition the position of the researcher as an employee at one correctional centre constituted a limitation because research procedures may have been viewed by participants as valves for giving vent to frustrations, or may have caused them to withhold information. Thus the results of this study cannot be generalized for all correctional centres. However, they do provide insights into the barriers to learning experienced by students in maximum prisons.

1.8 CONCLUSION/ SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the background and rationale that underpin the key questions on which the study is based. These centre around barriers that prevent academic progress in correctional centres and strategies that may be used to overcome those barriers. As has been indicated, the study is focussed on educators' perspectives.

The chapters that follow have been set out in the following order:

- Chapter One introduces the study and presents the background
- Chapter Two presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks used in the study
- Chapter Three explains the research methodology used in the study
- Chapter Four analyses and discusses the findings of the study
- Chapter Five presents the conclusion and makes recommendations based on the findings.

CHAPTER 2

BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As explained in Chapter 1, this study focuses on the barriers to learning experienced by students enrolled in educational programmes in correctional centres. This chapter provides an overview of some of the barriers to learning which learners in educational institutions may encounter. The chapter begins with an exploration of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks underpinning the concept of barriers to learning.

It is my contention that even the pathological perspective, which focuses on barriers within the student, does not provide sufficient explanation for understanding the learning difficulties experienced by students.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Camp (2001) defines a conceptual framework as a structure of what has been learned that best explains the natural progression of a phenomenon that is being studied. Miles and Huberman (1994) categorized the conceptual framework as a system of concepts, assumptions, and beliefs that support and guide the research plan. Specifically, the conceptual framework lays out the key factors, constructs, or variables, and presumes relationships between them (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.440).

The conceptual framework offers a logical structure of connected concepts that help provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in a study are related to one another within the theoretical framework. It is not simply a string of concepts, but a way to identify and construct for the reader an epistemological and ontological worldview and approach to the topic of study. It also gives an opportunity to specify and define concepts within the problem (Luse, Mennecke & +represents the researcher's synthesis of literature on how to explain a phenomenon. It maps out the actions required in the course of the study given their previous knowledge of other researchers' points of view and their observations on the subject of research. The conceptual framework lies within a much broader framework called the theoretical framework (Regoniel, 2015).

2.2.1 What are barriers to learning?

It is acknowledged in the literature that barriers to learning are a result of a complex interplay of many factors (Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009, p.107). A range of research exists in this area. This includes studies undertaken in the correctional centres by Bathi (2010), Watts (2010), Shethar (1993), Muntingh and Ballard (2001), Imhabekhai (2002), Parrota and Thompson (2011) and Jovanic (2011) which tend to focus on specific, extrinsic barriers rather than on a multiplicity of barriers.

Barriers to learning are generally described as learning difficulties that arise in the education system as a whole, at the learning site and within the life of the learner. These barriers block access and hinder learners' ability to learn and develop. The National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) define barriers to learning as those "factors which lead to the inability of

the system to accommodate diversity, which leads to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision” (Department of Education, 1997, p.12).

According to the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) report, obstacles to learning may lie with learners themselves emanating from their personal lives or life crises. ‘Beyond’ this, inside the teaching and learning environment, learners may confront other blockages to their academic progress. And such educational obstructions may be yet further related to the broader social, economic and political context which determines much in the lives of all inhabitants, notably those aspiring to develop their critical faculties. (Swart & Pettipher, 2005 and Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2013). In their exploration of the idea, Walton, Nel, Hugo and Muller (2009) use ‘barriers to learning’ as a term to explain why some learners do not experience success in learning.

2.2.2 Classification of barriers to learning

Researchers who write about barriers to learning acknowledge that barriers may arise from a number of sources. These may be intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) to learners, or they may involve an interactive relationship between the two. As indicated earlier, these barriers include the learner’s biological and psychological systems as well as a number of overlapping contexts in their physical and social environment (Stofile, Raymond and Moletsane, 2013).

Hence, there are different ways of categorising barriers to learning. Some theorists categorize them as cultural, structural and personal; situational, institutional and dispositional (Laal, 2011). The Department of Basic Education (2010) has categorised barriers to learning as systemic, societal, pedagogical and intrinsic. Here intrinsic barriers include cognitive, learning, and sensory impairments, health problems, behavioural, psychosocial, and emotional

problems. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010) provide another interesting way of grouping these barriers to learning. Their categories are represented in terms of particular individuals, the curriculum, the learning environment, the home environment and the local or wider community.

Against the backdrop of the foregoing conceptual descriptions, the focus of this study is intrinsic and extrinsic barriers to learning and the interplay between the two.

2.2.2.1 Intrinsic barriers

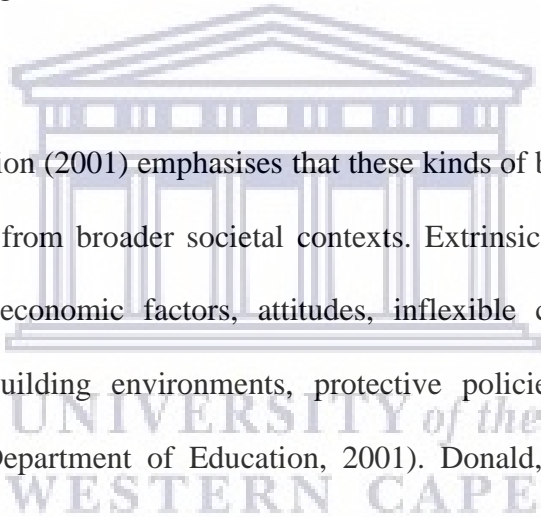
An intrinsic barrier is generally understood as a personal feature of an individual learner which interferes with some aspect of learning. It may be a physical, sensory and/or neurological impairment, or a chronic illness; it may involve psychological disturbances, and/or uneven cognitive variation (Department of Education, 1997; 2001; Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2013; Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009). The effects in such instances are evident in the constraints disabilities or impairments may place on learning as outlined in the list that follows.

- A lack of motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive abilities have been shown to impact on academic success and retention (Clement, 2016; Domenech-Betoret, Abellan-Rosello, Gomez-Artiga, 2017; Department of Education, 1997).
- Impairment of vision and visual processing can mean “that the shape, size, position, orientation and even colour of objects, including most critically, letters, may be distorted or even indistinguishable” (Pritchard, 2010, p.59).
- Impairments to hearing and auditory processing may mean that the voice of the teacher is not heard accurately, aspects of the instruction are not detected at all, and the subtle

discrimination of letter sounds may be lost or altered in some way (Pritchard, 2010, p.59).

2.2.2.2 Extrinsic barriers

Extrinsic barriers are those factors that arise in the learner's environment. These may be located in educational, social, cultural, political and economic contexts. Family dynamics (neglect, violence, divorce), school organisation (management, policies, cultures, practices) and curriculum (content, teaching methods, learning environment, assessment) may constitute extrinsic barriers to learning.



The Department of Education (2001) emphasises that these kinds of barriers derive from both the education system and from broader societal contexts. Extrinsic barriers to learning are hence reflected in socio-economic factors, attitudes, inflexible curricula, language and communication, unsafe building environments, protective policies and legislation, and development strategies (Department of Education, 2001). Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, (2010) also claim that extrinsic barriers or impediments are located in the learner's immediate or larger societal cultural environments, where learning might be hindered. Literature shows that these environments may obstruct learning in ways outlined in the list that follows.

- Classrooms that are overcrowded limit the active learning strategies educators can employ and the amount of individual attention learners can receive (Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2013).
- Social conditions can impact negatively upon a learners' social and emotional well-being. Conditions such as sexual and substance abuse place the learner at risk of learning-failure (Department of Education, 1997, p.14).

- The pressure students experience from other students and in the wider community affects teaching and learning negatively (Department of Education, 1997).
- A curriculum that is irrelevant to the diverse needs of learners poses serious barriers to students' success (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2010; Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2013; Oliva, 2016)

As this thesis will show, extrinsic barriers to learning sharply affect learning and teaching in the correctional services education sector.

2.2.3 Key barriers to learning in South Africa

The NCSNET and NCESS report identifies a range of factors that may create barriers to learning. These include socio-economic factors such as, lack of access to basic services, poverty, under-development and other factors that place learners at risk; negative attitudes; inflexible curricula; language/communication differences. They incorporate inaccessible and unsafe built environments, inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services, lack of enabling and protective policies; lack of parental recognition and involvement; disability; and lack of human resource development strategies (Department of Education, 1997, p.11-16; 2001).

2.2.3.1 Socio-economic barriers

In various domains research in education indicates that effective learning is fundamentally influenced by the socio-economic conditions in society. It follows that poverty in particular, contributes to learners' inability to access the existing educational provision as well as other services that might contribute to their learning. These include schools, libraries, welfare,

intervention facilities, communication services, and health clinics (Department of Education, 1997-2001).

2.2.3.2 Attitudinal barriers

Barriers in education may also be found in attitudes towards teaching and learning. Negative attitudes towards learners who experience barriers to learning can cause or encourage teachers to ignore, undermine or to expect less from particular learners. One implication is that the label learners are given might automatically result in their being excluded from the mainstream schools and placed in specialised learning contexts.

Another barrier to learning associated with attitudes relates to negative attitudes of the learner towards learning, which can hamper the teaching and learning process as well. Learning also requires effort on the part of the learner; without effort it is unlikely that learning will take place (Pritchard, 2009).



2.2.3.3 Inflexible curriculum

One of the most significant barriers to learning is the school curriculum. The content of the curriculum may be inappropriate to some learners' situation thus making learning extremely difficult for them (Department of Education, 1997-2001, p.19).

2.2.3.4 Language and communication

For many learners in South Africa teaching and learning take place through their second or third language. A language is generally regarded as a tool that facilitates the learners' thinking

and understanding of what is being taught. Learners who have a limited ability to understand and communicate through the language of teaching and learning are likely to experience difficulties that can contribute to their learning breakdown.

2.2.3.5 Inaccessible and unsafe built environments

Many schools and classroom environments are not conducive to learning, thereby creating significant barriers to learner motivation (Department of Education, 1997; 2001). Many schools in South Africa have been found to be physically inaccessible to a large number of learners, educators and communities. One such instance lies in the fact that the majority of school buildings have not been designed for wheelchair users or people who use other assistive devices and this kind of inaccessibility poses a danger to learners with physical and sensory impairments.

However, the problem extends beyond the needs of learners with physical impairments. The unsafe conditions found in many South African schools, particularly in townships and rural areas, pose health and safety concerns for all learners.

In this thesis I shall show how unsafe and inappropriate built environments affect the teaching and learning of student inmates in correctional centres.

2.2.3.6 Lack of human resource development strategies

A lack of attention to the career development of educators and education service providers has been a long-standing concern in South Africa. The shortage of human resource development strategies has been identified as a critical barrier to learning. In the NCSNET and NCESS report it is argued that the absence of on-going in-service training and upgrading the training of

educators often leads to insecurity, uncertainty, low self-esteem, and a lack of innovative practices in the classroom. Unfortunately this may result in educators holding negative attitudes towards learners who experience learning breakdowns (Department of Education, 1997, p.19).

Moreno (2007) contends that teaching challenging content to learners who bring diverse experiences to the classroom depends on the capacity of practitioners to create a variety of learning experiences that connect to what students know and how they most effectively learn. In other words, if the capacity is lacking then the teaching and learning will not be effective.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework serves as the guide on which to build and support the study, and provides the structure by which to define how the dissertation as a whole will be approached – philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically.

It consists of selected theory (or theories) that undergird/s the thinking with regard to how to understand and plan the research according to the topic, as well as the concepts and definitions from that theory that are relevant to the topic (Eisenhart, 1991, p.205). Merriam (2001) proposes that it is the researcher's lens through which to view the world. The theoretical framework provides a grounding base for the literature review and, most importantly, for the methods and analysis (Merriam, 2001).

There are different theoretical orientations that seek to explain the causes of learning difficulties. Amongst these, Terzi (2005) asserts that there is much theoretical contention “in the factors causing the difficulties experienced by some learners either throughout or at any time during their school career” (Terzi, 2005, p.4444). The subsections below explores different perspectives that explains where barriers to learning can be located.

2.3.1 Prisoner learning theory

Whilst it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the model of prisoner learning in detail, a snapshot of systems that facilitate or hinder prisoner learning is given. According to the Cooksey and Gates (1995), human beings can learn and manipulate their environment, but they are also subject to a wide variety of constraints – environmental, biological and cognitive - which affect the extent to which they can successfully accomplish their goals.

The model of prisoner learning demonstrates the role, which different stakeholders play in influencing the provision of prisoner learning through the interacting systems (Oxford, 2018). This viewpoint enables one to see prisoner learning as being changed by and changing through the interplay between the individual, learning, organisational, social and environmental systems and their stakeholders. (Cooksey and Gates, 1995). Each system comprises a complexity of interacting influences and paradigms, which create changes within the system itself. These five systems, along with multiple and varied stakeholders, influence prisoner learning. The individual system focus on the internal processes which shape prisoner learning. This includes previous educational experiences of prisoners (Callan & Gardner, 2005), learning difficulties and disabilities (McClelland, & Berends, 2007), motivation (Edwards-Willey & Chivers, 2005) and literacy issues (Golding, 2002).

The social system signposts the impact of the social environment on prisoner learning focusing attention on the ways in which prisoners are influenced in their learning by others including their peers, family and staff, the stakeholders (Oxford, 2018) and the social networks (Kearns, 2004). Literature shows that the organisational system covers issues such as prison as a learning environment (Braggins & Talbot, 2003). The environmental system is concerned with the

larger community and political issues and policy, which influence prisoner learning (Oxford, 2018); operational and structural issues (Braggins & Talbot, 2003) and reintegration (Walsh, 2004). The learning system is reflected in issues such as the hidden curriculum (Braggins & Talbot, 2003) and outcomes of learning (Callan & Gardner, 2005).

The model of prisoner learning shows that changes in the interactions within the systems affect prisoner learning and the complexity of prisoner learning “involves multiple potential outcomes including those unforeseen, an everchanging mix of resources and human inputs, and hidden relationships between circumstances and human agents” (Pierson, 2010, p. 195).

The models makes one to conclude that barriers to learning in prison or correctional centre can be located in the interaction of the five systems. Figure 2.1 presents prisoner learning

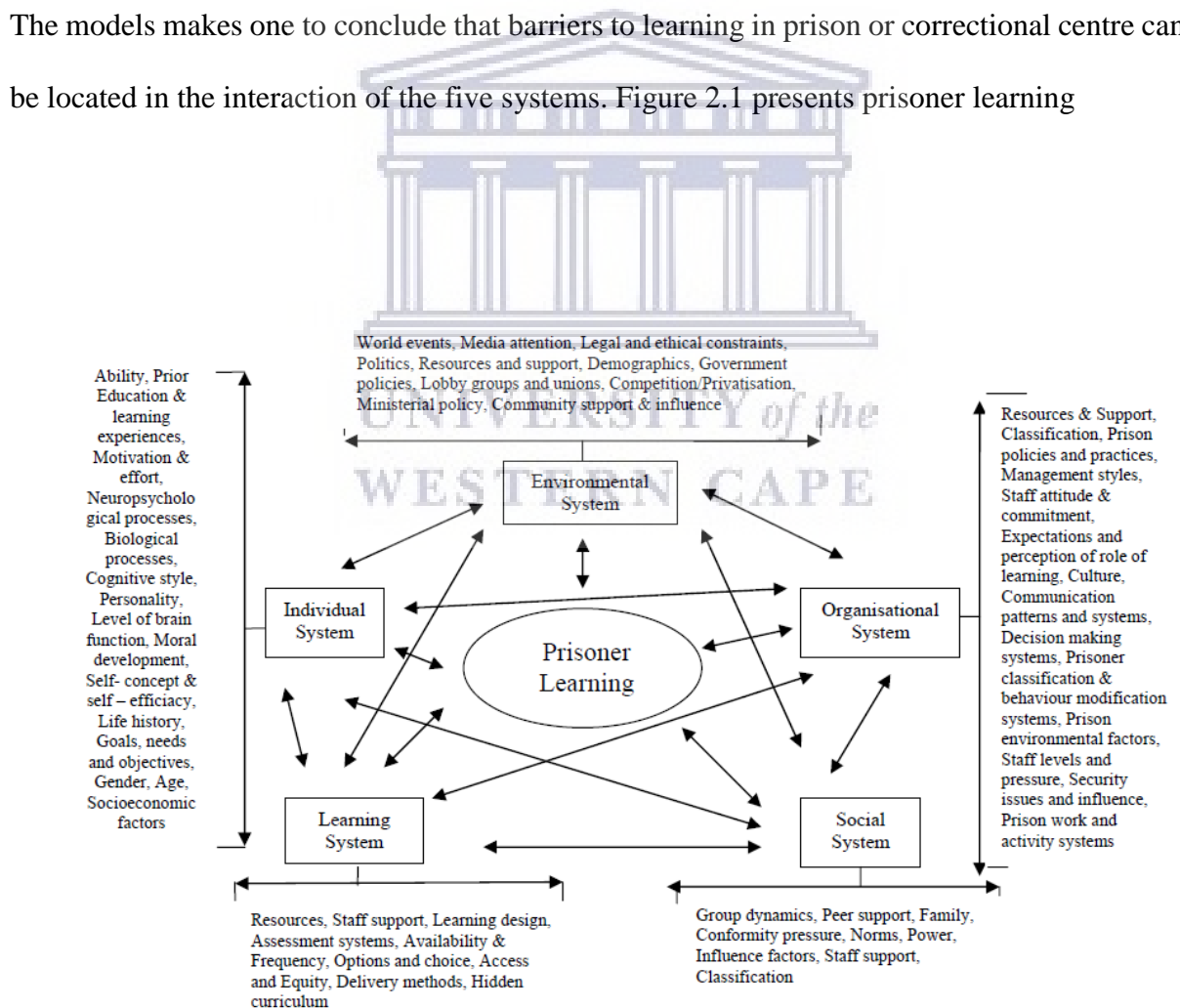


Figure 2.1: Model of prisoner learning Adapted from Cooksey and Gates (1995)

2.3.2 Explanatory models of disability

Certain theoretical positions on the causes of disability provide explanatory frameworks which are pertinent to the discussion in this thesis. The medical model of disability, the social model of disability and the bio-ecological model of disability are often used to justify why learners experience learning difficulties or disabilities.

While the focus of thesis is mainly on the social model of disability, as determined by the site in which the research took place, this model is better understood within the context of other models, which are therefore also introduced in the section that follows.

2.3.2.1 Medical model of disability

According to Matra (2006) "the medical or (biomedical) model considers disability as a problem of the individual that is directly caused by a disease, an injury, or some other health condition and requires medical care in the form of treatment and rehabilitation" (Matra, 2006, p.238). Support for this view may be found in Jackson's (2018) belief that the central tenets of the medical model of disability are that a person's pathology can be diagnosed, cured, or at least rehabilitated by modern medicine. The interventions would be provided by knowledgeable professionals.

However, the debates challenging this model are characterised by positions that object to the view that disability and special needs are caused by individual limitations and deficits (Terzi, 2005). Stofile's critique (2008) is that the medical model promotes the notion that it falls upon the individual disabled person to adapt to the way in which society is constructed and organised rather than the other way round. From this perspective she questions why within the medical

model, learning difficulties are located in the learner, and learners who experience learning difficulties are defined by their academic performance.

The medical model promotes the view of a learner with learning difficulties as dependent and in need of remediation, while it justifies the way in which learners with learning difficulties have been systematically excluded from the schooling system (Stofile, 2008). Researchers who adopt this view are likely to focus on the factors that are intrinsic (within the learner) to explain why learners fail academically or drop-out (Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2013).

Along this critical trajectory Carson (2009) points out that the medical model of disability also affects the way disabled people think about themselves. Many disabled people internalise the negative message that all disabled people's problems stem from not having 'normal' bodies. This internalised oppression can result in lowering the likelihood of disabled people challenging their exclusion from mainstream society. As these critical perspectives lean away from the medical model, simultaneously they tend towards what is referred to as the social model of disability.

2.3.2.2 Social model of disability

The social model of disability is generally described as a reaction to the dominant medical model of disability. In other words, it is regarded as an alternative to the medical model, which looks at disability in a rather narrow and clinical way. This model asserts that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment (Bampi, Guilhem, Alves, 2010). Bailey, Harris and Simpson (2015; p.14) who are proponents of the social model of disability state that "the disability that a person with an impairment experiences is due to the physical, structural and cultural barriers they face, and is separate to the impairment."

The social model identifies systemic barriers, structural barriers, negative attitudes and exclusion from society as the main contributory factors in disabling people. The same socio-structural elements may be cited in explaining learning difficulties. While physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychological variations may cause an individual to exhibit functional limitations, these do not have to lead to learning breakdown unless the education system fails to take account of and include learners regardless of their individual differences. It is thus clear that the critical paradigm of this model incorporates the wider society and environment.

2.3.2.3 Bio-ecological model

It is generally acknowledged that the learning and development of children and youth is influenced by a wide range of factors. These include the learner's biological and psychological systems as well as a number of overlapping contexts that the individual experiences. The most comprehensive and widely used model explaining the dynamic interactive relationships between and amongst all these systems is the ecosystemic model proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1997, 1999; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Bronfenbrenner's framework suggests that human development is a product of different factors operating within a learner's biological system, affected and modified by the individual's immediate physical and social environment as well as by broader social, political and economic systems. This ecological model looks at a learner's development and functioning within the context of the system of relationships that forms his or her environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006, p.797). Although Bronfenbrenner's theory is based on human development, it is relevant in that it shows how barriers to learning can be located.

According to Bronfenbrenner (2002) a school is a system with different components, such as its staff, its students, its curriculum and its administration. To understand the whole system, the relationships between its different parts should be examined. All systems add value to each other and each system has an impact on the other. Balance is required within the whole system in order for the system to be maintained.

Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model is made up of four interacting dimensions the first of which is constituted by personal factors; these refer to the intrinsic characteristics of a person. The second is composed of process factors, which refers to the dynamics in interaction between systems. The third is context, and this, for example, could refer to correctional centres. The last dimension is time – chronosystem – based on the principle that all interactions change over time. He describes these four interactive dimensions as proximal interaction: **Process, Person, Context and Time (PPCT)**. Bronfenbrenner's model defines proximal processes as the key factor in human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Development is progressive. It manifests in growth, interaction and development amongst family members, in the social surroundings and in the environment. Development is thus a process centrally involving of people. When Bronfenbrenner (2005) acknowledges the relevance of the biological and genetic aspects of the person in relation to development, he pays particular attention to the personal characteristics that individuals bring with them into any social situation. He categorizes these characteristics into three types: demand, resource, and force characteristics.

Demand characteristics refer to personal stimuli such as age, gender, skin colour and general physical appearance which may influence initial interactions because of first impressions. Resource characteristics are related partly to mental and emotional resources, such as past experience, skills, intelligence and social and material resources, such as access to good food, housing, caring parents, educational opportunities appropriate to the needs of the particular society. Force characteristics are those relating to differences in temperament, motivation, persistence and so forth (Bronfenbrenner, 2009).

So while children may have equal resource characteristics their developmental paths might differ significantly: one may be motivated to succeed and persevere in tasks and the other may be unmotivated, leaving tasks unfinished. (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Bronfenbrenner points out that change could begin by the person being relatively passive as they change the environment simply by being in it. This implies an interplay between the characteristics outlined here. Hence the level of responsiveness may shift from demand characteristics such as age, gender, and skin colour, to the ways in which the person changes the environment due to their resource characteristics, whether physical, mental or emotional. The person may then progress to the most active level of response.

The extent to which the person changes the environment is linked, in part, to the desire and drive to do so, or what Bronfenbrenner calls force characteristics. According to Bronfenbrenner's theory (1997) development in a child should be seen as taking place within four nested systems. Firstly, there is the microsystem comprising the child-family unit, which is the environmental system in which the child/learner spends a good time engaging in particular activities with people around her/him, such as parents, teachers and friends. The

impact of these interactions on the child is not constant but changes as the child grows, changes schools and progresses from primary to high school.

Secondly, the mesosystem comprising peers and teachers contains the interrelationships amongst the child's microsystems. The mesosystem is a framework for analyzing the parent's relationship with their child's teacher, relationships amongst the child's siblings, and with children in the neighbourhood. The more interconnected these systems are the more the child's development is likely to be supported in a clear and consistent way.

Thirdly, the exosystem refers to the sphere of education and includes formal and informal social structures with which the learner may not function directly but which nonetheless influence elements of his/her microsystem. Such social structures include the neighbourhood, the parents' work, the mass media, agencies of government, service delivery, communication, transportation facilities, and other informal social networks. For example, the parent's workplace determines the amount of time parents will have with their child/children to assist with homework or projects.

Finally, the macrosystem refers to the community or culture, in other words to the broad institutions – including subcultures – to which the child is exposed. These include economic, political, educational, social and legal systems that implicitly or explicitly influence particular agencies, roles, activities, social networks, and their interrelations (Bronfenbrenner, 1999).

These elements reflect the prevailing attitudes and philosophical orientations of the larger culture and can have a significant impact on the other levels within the ecosystemic model. For example, if the education system advocates that teachers should be solely responsible for

teaching learners, such an ideological tenet is less likely to allow for other structures' support of teachers. This in turn affects the way teachers teach. The teacher's inability or ability to carry out that responsibility effectively is likely to affect the learner.

All systems outlined in the foregoing section are subject to the chronosystem. The chronosystem refers to the fact that developmental processes are likely to vary depending on political-historical events as these impact upon individuals at any particular stage in their development (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield & Karnik, 2009, p.201).

This means that as children grow older, they may respond differently to environmental changes. For example, different groups of children in South Africa may experience the effects of 'racism' differently because they experienced these events at different intervals in their lifetime. The bioecological theory of human development looks at children's development and behaviour within the context of the systems of relationships that form their environment. It views the person or group at different levels of the social context (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002, p.50).

One of Bronfenbrenner's critics notes that in his earlier work he does not focus much on the individual child. He focuses on systems, self-discipline, responsibility and control. According to the foregoing theory, the relationship between Bronfenbrenner's systems was not effective or reliable in cases where a state offender had lost their parents in the early stages and dropped out of school, resulting in their offending behaviour. However, it is necessary in dealing with the problems of learning, to look at the different levels of the system associated with an offender's education, such as school management, institutional culture, and so on.

The ecosystemic model proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner is thus relevant to this study since it provides a framework for the analysis of both intrinsic and extrinsic barriers that influence the learning and development of offenders based in correctional centres. It facilitates a systemic understanding of the issue being investigated rather than an individualistic one. Here an unrelated but apt diagrammatic representation facilitates discussion. It is one devised by **Bukatko and Daehler (1995)** who provide a useful summary of where barriers to learning can be located in the system as graphically represented in the diagram that follows

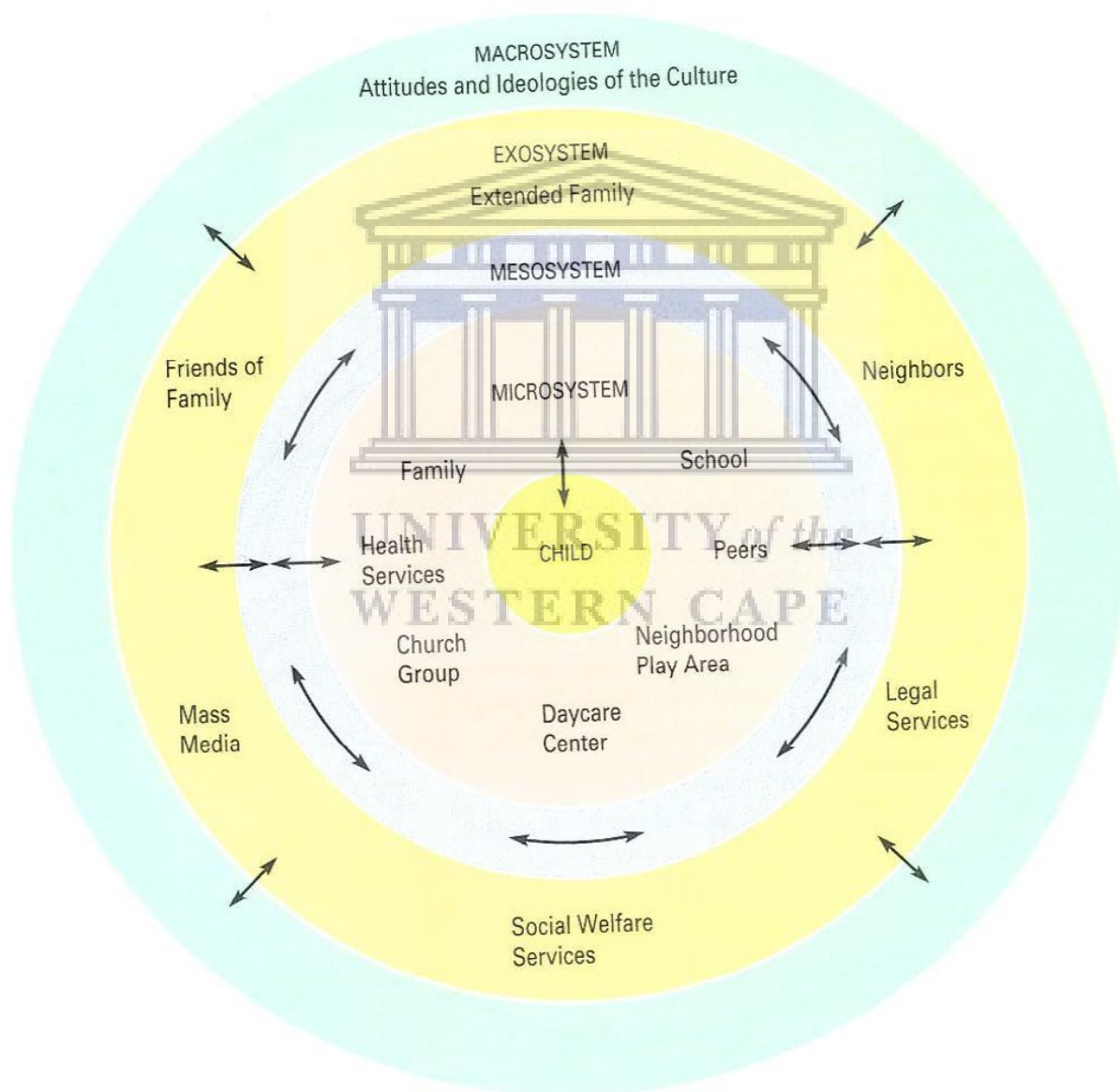


Figure 2.1 Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Model Source (Bukatko & Daehler, 1995, p. 62)

2.4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ON BARRIERS TO LEARNING IN CORRECTIONAL CENTRES

Certain extrinsic factors are observable in the educational context and conditions in which learning and teaching is to take place in a correctional services facility. In this section I outline some of these key elements in the physical/ material circumstances which impinge on education, and how these affect the students, the teachers, and access to resources. My reliance on other research in this domain is evident throughout.

To begin with, entering a Correctional Centre especially a high-security one, to provide tuition is a challenge for several reasons. Right of entry requires long waiting times at reception areas, the checking of identity documents, the blocking of cell phones and the process of contacting the education section within the Correctional Centre (Watts, 2010, p.59). (I shall refer again to these practical encumbrances later.) But even more significant is the range of contextual challenges affecting students, and the teaching and learning process.

Equipping offenders with skills that will assist them to secure jobs or reintegrate into communities in a pro-social and lawful manner involves a gradual process of acquiring new skills and reducing offending behaviour (Griffin, 2000, p.20). Offenders therefore need educational programmes not only to teach them to read effectively but also to give them the motivation that encourages them to contribute positive change to society on their release. However, in correctional centres, furthering one's studies at a tertiary level is a challenge as it is seen by both inmates and correctional centre management as an elite activity.

The main intention of the educational programmes is thus to help ease the transition back into society, as well as to decrease the likelihood of recidivism (McKinney, 2011, p.175). In

agreement with this statement Wade (2007) refers to sequential links between illiteracy, poverty and criminal behaviour. He advises that correctional educational programmes should promote rehabilitation, help offenders to find jobs on their release, and in these ways decrease poverty by assisting them to become law-abiding citizens (Wade, 2007, p.27). However, the success or failure of programmes may be determined by the values and attitudes of people in management positions; it may be affected by overcrowding and an insufficient budget for educators (Vacca, 2004, p.297).

2.4.1 Physical constraints: Management

As a learning and teaching context the Correctional Centre environment is unique because of security lockdowns and head counts as these procedures make teaching and learning difficult (Watts, 2010, p.57).

According to Watts (2010) headcounts vary in their duration depending on the circumstances of the particular day. Sanford and Forster (2006, Poole, 2015; Hancock & Jewkes, 2011) claim that correctional officials sometimes disrupt classes to do headcounts, fire-drills and lockdowns. Their intrusion into classrooms breaks into the interactive order and undermines efforts to create a democratic classroom. According to O'Neill, Mackenzie and Bierie (2007), drill instructors who manage daily routines prioritize drill, ceremony and obedience to authority over education. The lack of support and heavy emphasis on punishment rather than rehabilitation marginalizes education in a correctional environment and as a result, it is seen by some as superfluous (Watts, 2010, p.57).

According to Parrot and Thompson (2011, p.171), other barriers to learning in the correctional centres concern transfers and discharges or student inmates being released before having

obtained a qualification. These authors observe that the movement from centre to centre affects the process of learning and teaching negatively. In certain instances a few offenders may be sent to the Correctional Centre schools midway through the school term and this would mean that educators would not have sufficient time to complete the syllabus to help these learners prepare for the National Examinations (Tam, Heng & Rose, 2007, p.135). Based on their own studies, Tam et al. (2007) confirm that the length of learners' stay in a Correctional Centre is determined by the courts, not by their academic needs

This means that in a Correctional Centre classes are dynamic in nature, with learners entering and leaving programmes due to court commitments, institutional transfer, parole, and reassignments. In some instances, despite the school requiring the enrolment of students, competition for the offenders' time may exist between work, education and behaviour programmes. Consequently, Correctional Centre management has to work out a plan to attract more learners for education programmes (Batchelder & Pip-pert, 2002, p.271).

These conditions have led Sanford and Forster (2006) to report a lack of support for education delivery as one of the barriers to successful curriculum delivery and learning.

2.4.2 Students

According to Watts (2010), participation in education programmes to obtain qualifications is not an immediate priority for offenders who have to go through some of the traumatic effects of being incarcerated, such as isolation, separation from family and friends, bullying and court appearances for further charges. As a result, a majority of school-going offenders dislike school, have difficulty attending classes and display disobedient social behaviour (Zan, 1998, p.127).

In this regard, literature reveals that the levels of education attained (or not attained) before incarceration become a barrier to tertiary correctional education because most offenders have not completed high school or an equivalent qualification (Schirmer, 2008, p.25). Many lack motivation and there is a prevalence of individuals with learning disabilities (Tam, Heng & Rose, 2007, p.130).

This situation is compounded by revelations in the research conducted by Tam, Heng and Rose (2007) in Singapore, which reveals that in the correctional centres students lack a suitably quiet place for studying after school hours and a space for group work. Furthermore, students do not have a quiet time to focus on their homework and study material. Moreover, there is insufficient infrastructure to facilitate the completion of school tasks; cells are restrictive and in most cases are shared with one, or a number of inmates. In bigger housing units bunk beds that are arranged in footlockers at the bases, but there is insufficient space for a desk or table for homework (Sanford & Forster, 2006, p.607).

Added to this, according to Watts (2010) the teaching space itself in correctional centres is often too small and messy, and this makes it difficult for students and facilitators to settle down to teaching and learning. Overcrowding too has been identified as one of the factors which has a negative impact on the delivery of education programmes within the Correctional environment (Tam, Heng & Rose, 2007).

Educators variously teach in kitchens, gymnasias, converted housing spaces, space dedicated to religious activity, and space formerly used as washrooms. Thus in a correctional environment,

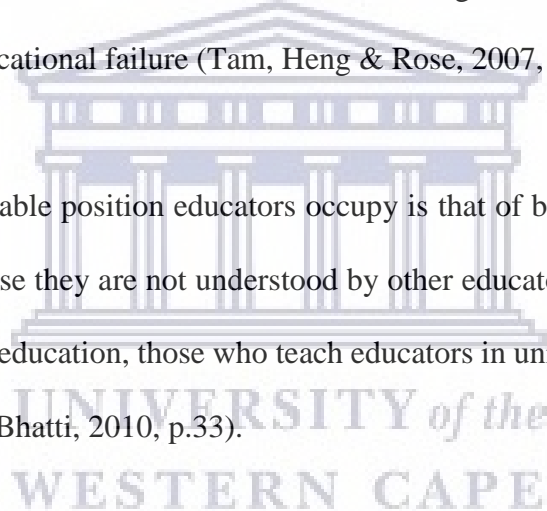
teaching often takes place in rooms not reserved for teaching, over which correctional educators have no ownership or authority (Sanford & Forster, 2006, p.606).

2.4.3 Teachers

Jovanic (2011) asserts that the shortage of qualified educators or other educational professionals in a correctional environment affects effective learning (Jovanic, 2011). He extrapolates on this point stating that the majority of correctional centre schools around the world face substantial challenges to educational achievement. Many correctional centre educators struggle with an eclectic mix of learners of various ages who have lower educational levels and a history of educational failure (Tam, Heng & Rose, 2007, p.130).

In addition, the uncomfortable position educators occupy is that of being marginalized. They do not feel included because they are not understood by other educators, including those who teach adults in colleges of education, those who teach educators in universities, or indeed their own children's educators (Bhatti, 2010, p.33).

Research on correctional educators conducted at Virginia in Australia reveals that the educators' preparation programmes focus on content only, equipping educators with little information about the reality of teaching in a correctional environment (Jovanic, 2011, p.80). Literature reveals that in a correctional environment, inadequate educator training could contribute to numerous challenges pertaining to the effectiveness of learning. According to Tolbert (2002) educators are not given any induction with regard to teaching in a correctional centre. This author makes the significant point that educators have to learn to be educators of offenders.



2.4.4 Resources

The primary (and obvious) purpose of the education section within correctional centres is to enable offenders to learn effectively. Yet learners studying in correctional centres have no access to resources and will thus have limited learning experience (Watts, 2010, p.61). Where educational vocational training and libraries are provided for this purpose therefore, these should be managed efficiently and effectively to meet the identified needs of as many individuals as possible, and agreed to in a contract between lecturers, educators and students.

Libraries are no longer just book exchange places but are becoming increasingly multi-informational, multi-media centres with computers, magazines, newspapers, listening tapes and electronic mail systems to support leisure and study activities. However, Watts (2010), Farley and Doyle (2014) reveal that tertiary education students in correctional centres have no access to modern technology because the primary concern of the Department of Correctional Services is potential security breaches, also insufficient resources and staff for this purpose, and inadequate implementation, maintenance and monitoring of the technology (p.357).

Moreover, learners struggle with a shortage of updated, relevant materials and simple supplies such as dictionaries, notebooks, pens or pencils, and access to a sufficient number of educators (Sanford & Foster, 2006, p.608).

2.5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the literature I reviewed has provided insight that I believe enables me to address my research questions. I have explored various aspects pertaining to correctional education and barriers that may hinder effective learning. These incorporate institutional barriers,

psychological, personal and social obstacles, a shortage of resources and funding, curriculum inaptness, security matters, staff shortages and obstructionist policies. However, until participants in correctional education express their views according to their experiences perceptions and the meaning that they make of their educational situation, I cannot conclude from the literature alone whether or not barriers to learning are affecting offenders.

The next chapter is devoted to a presentation of the methodology that formed the basis for gathering research data.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed literature related to the study. This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology employed to collect analyse and interpret data in the study. The main aim of the study was to explore educators' perceptions of factors that hinder effective learning in a Correctional Centre. The following questions guided the investigation:

- What are teachers' perceptions of the intrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in this Correctional Centre?
- What are teachers' perceptions of the extrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in this Correctional Centre?

The following components are discussed in this chapter: research approach, research design, study population and participants, instruments used for data collection and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

According to Creswell (2013) qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This approach was regarded as appropriate for data gathering in this study because of its potential to provide insight into the lived experiences of participants in the case study (Bourke, 2007).

A qualitative research methodology is thus concerned with exploring and interpreting the significance people give to their experiences in the world (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell,

2017, Merriam, 2002, Oxford 2018). It is generally understood as an approach that enables researchers to understand the “participants’ perspectives, the event, situation, experience and action they are involved with or engaged in” (Abrzah & Ruslina, 2010; Maxwell, 2005, McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, Oxford 2018).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design process in qualitative research begins with assumptions that the researchers make in deciding to undertake a qualitative study. A research design is regarded as a very important component of the research (Mudhovozi (2010), and as a methodological decision made by researchers before commencing with data collection. McMillan and Schumacher (2001), Babbie and Mouton (2001) posit that a research design is a “road map” or “blueprint” that describes the procedures to be followed when conducting the investigation. This view is shared by Henning et.al (2004) who define it as the manner in which the research is visualised and carried out and the findings eventually put together.

Similarly, Nieuwenhuis (2007) describes a research design as an overall strategy by which to conduct the research. According to this author, the design incorporates a specific methodology describing why and how the research was performed; in other words, laying out the relationship between the primary problem statement, data gathering techniques and data analysis.

As already stated, this research project adopted a qualitative case study research design. In part it is reflective of what Leedy (1997, p.17) defines as case study research, or descriptive research in which data is collected directly from individuals or groups in their natural/familiar environment in order to study their attitudes, interactions or characteristics.

Similarly, Yin (1994) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, arguing that the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events Yin (1994:13). Case study methods are appropriate when researchers aim to define topics broadly, cover contextual conditions and rely on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1993)

In this research project, I deemed it appropriate to use the exploratory case study because my intention was to obtain the views of a particular group of participants. According to Oxford (2018: 44) “a qualitative case study research is concerned with trying to preserve the multiple realities and the different and sometimes contradictory views of what is occurring, however, the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized.”

Qualitative case studies are intensive descriptions and analyses of a bounded system (Merriam, 1998). In this case the bounded system is a Medium-A educational centre where young and old, male and female offenders attend school. Students are between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five and the oldest is forty-five. Academic programmes in the centre comprise Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) which consists of four levels. Pre-ABET (Grade 1) has a total number of twenty-five inmates, Level 1 has seven; Level 2 has nine; Level 3, fifteen; and Level 4, twenty-two. The curriculum assists offenders with learning to read, write, and to perform basic mathematical computation.

The second category is the ‘National Certificate – Vocational’ (NCV), which comprises three levels and represents a continuation of the foregoing levels. Hence, NCV Level 2 is the equivalent of Grade 10, NCV Level 3 is the equivalent of Grade 11, and NCV Level 4 is the equivalent of Grade 12.

In the context of our study, the participants work with student inmates who are enrolled as follows: eighteen for NCV Level 2 (Grade 10); nine for NCV Level 3 (Grade 11); and four for Level 4 (Grade 12).

The third category is Further Education and Training (FET) for those who are doing engineering (Department of Correctional Services, 2010). Table 3.1 outlines the NCS Curriculum and shows the total number of student inmates registered in these programmes.

Table 3.1: Student enrolment per programme

Programme	Number of students
AET Level 1	07
AET Level 2	09
AET Level 3	15
AET Level 4	22
Pre-ABET	25
Grade 10(NCV-Level-2)	18
Grade 11(NCV-Level-3)	09
Grade 12(NCV-Level-4)	04
Total	78

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) define the population as a group of elements or cases from which a sample is taken. The ‘population’ may thus be objects or people that meet the

criteria from which one intends to analyze the results of the sample. According to Eldredge, Weagel and Kroth (2014), the description of the study population should offer a clear definition of who might belong, and who should be excluded from the study population. In this case correctional services educators were considered appropriate as a population for the area of study because, as stated in Chapter One, they are responsible for teaching offenders in the correctional centre. Most have several years' teaching experience and were therefore best positioned to furnish the researcher with information in response to the research questions.

There are 240 prisons in South Africa. For my sample I purposively selected one prison of the forty two in the Western Cape Province. This prison was selected because of its record of poor academic performance and high drop-out rate. Fifteen educators who teach in the correctional centre were purposively selected as participants because they were regarded as relevant people who could shed optimal light on factors that contribute to poor performance and withdrawal from the education programme there. The following inclusion criteria were used:

- being in the employ of the Department of Correctional Services
- being in possession of a teaching qualification
- having taught for at least one year in the centre.

Since the study involved educators as participants, the researcher had to apply for an ethics clearance from the University of the Western Cape and request permission from the Department of Correctional Services. As required by the university approval process, the information sheet was sent to the participants, outlining clear aims and objectives and research questions. A face to face contact session was held where the objectives of the study were

explained to the participants. Profiles of participants were captured for reference in the research. Table 3.4 provides profiles of the participants recruited for the study.

Table 3.4: Participants’ biographical data

Gender		Teaching experience		Highest qualifications	
Females	Males	0-10 years	11-20 years	Degree	Diploma
10	5	8	7	9	6

3.5 DATA COLLECTION: INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

Data collection methods encompass the different ways in which the research information is generated (de Vos et al., 1998). The study used individual semi-structured interviews and three focus group discussions as data-gathering instruments.

3.5.1 Focus group interviews

Having considered the focus group as a potential instrument for this research, I elected to use it for the reasons outlined in the paragraphs that follow.

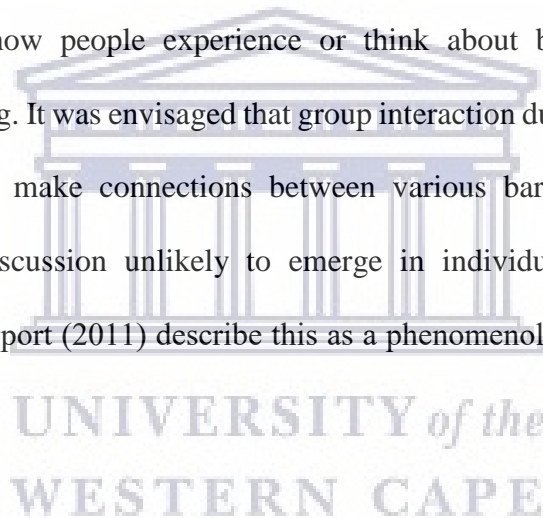
Focus groups are generally described as group interviews that give the researcher the scope in which to capture in-depth information more economically than they might in individual interviews.

According to Wilkinson, (2004) focus groups are informal discussions amongst a group of selected individuals about a particular topic. Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2008: 375) define focus groups as ‘collective conversations’, which can be small or large. According to

Liamputtong (2011) the primary aim of a focus group is to describe and understand interpretations of certain questions from a selected group of people. Its purpose is to gain an understanding of an issue from the perspective of the group of participants. Hence, a successful focus group discussion depends on the:

development of a permissive, non-threatening environment within the group where the participants can feel comfortable to discuss their opinions and experiences without fear that they will be judged or ridiculed by others in the group. (Hennink, 2007, p. 6).

For these reasons, the focus group was employed as one of the instruments in this study. It was to provide insight into how people experience or think about barriers to learning and development in their setting. It was envisaged that group interaction during focus groups would encourage participants to make connections between various barriers to learning in the correctional centre, in discussion unlikely to emerge in individual interviews. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delpont (2011) describe this as a phenomenological approach to focus groups.



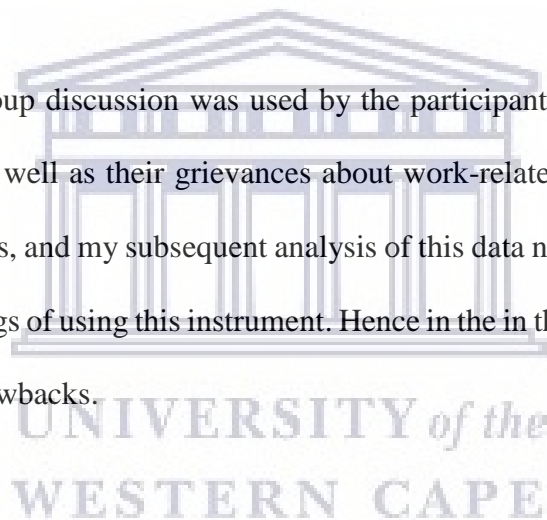
Careful planning preceded the selection of participants, the securing of the interview venue and preparation of the interview questions – as suggested by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delpont (2011). Prior to the focus group discussions participants were fully informed of the research in which the interview was to be used (Henning, 2011). The participants then gave their consent to participate in the discussion and to have it recorded. Unfortunately, one participant took ill and was unable to participate in the discussions. Two focus groups of seven participants were formed according to the programmes in which participants were involved.

The discussions were conducted in English and each session ranged from forty-five to sixty minutes. Although the focus of the study was on the participants' perceptions of factors that might act as barriers to students' learning and development, participants discussed the learning challenges faced by students as well as their own teaching challenges.

The discussion commenced with teachers' experiences of teaching students in the centre. It then continued in an exploration of their perceptions of environmental factors or conditions that hinder students' learning, and concluded with overviews of intrinsic student factors that constrain teaching and learning.

Interestingly the focus group discussion was used by the participants as a space in which to share their experiences as well as their grievances about work-related issues. My presence in the focus group discussions, and my subsequent analysis of this data necessitated an awareness of the possible shortcomings of using this instrument. Hence in the paragraph that follows I set out some of these drawbacks.

While focus groups do provide researchers with insights into the views of a collective who work in the same context with the same issue, they are often criticised for yielding a shallower understanding of an issue than might be obtained from individual interviews (Hopkins, 2007; Krueger & Casey, 2009). Another criticism relates to the fact that some participants, due to the presence of other members in the group, may be reluctant to share their views or may simply conform to the dominant ideas presented by other members (Hopkins, 2007). This may be attributed to the presence of dominant and aggressive personalities.



Hence, to give all participants the opportunity to share their own opinions and experiences without fear of intimidation and disclosure, individual semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the same participants.

In the section that follows, I expand on the rationale behind this decision.

3.5.2 Individual semi-structured interviews

Interviews are generally described as a conversation between two or more people where questions are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements. They are regarded as a useful tool for obtaining responses that reside with the participants. Kelly (2010:297) describes interviewing as a more natural form of interacting with people, which gives us an opportunity to get to know them and understand how they think and feel. Concurring with this appraisal of the interview as a research tool, Kvale (2007), De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005), and Anderson (1998) regard interviewing as an attempt to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to understand the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world.

In this study, individual interviews were used to follow up on the focus group interviews.

Thus an interview schedule was developed, piloted, revised and finalised before interviewing commenced. It was intended to guide the investigation. Thus it comprised participants' biographical data, their experiences of teaching students in the correctional centre and their views on factors that impinge on effective learning.

Interviews were conducted in the correctional centre after the tuition sessions, with each interview lasting between thirty to forty-five minutes per participant. As indicated earlier,

before the start of the interview participants were enlightened about the study and their rights within the process before they each completed the consent form.

The challenge the researcher experienced was that due to the priorities of the correctional centre, interview times were frequently postponed without warning and this prolonged the research process. Of the fifteen participants who had agreed to participate, four became unavailable due to personal problems and work-related responsibilities.

Eleven participants were thus interviewed in English, as agreed. An audio-recorder was used to record the interviews so that analysis might be based on accurate information (Hove & Anda, 2005). The data was transcribed verbatim and sent back to the participants for verification. Of the fifteen transcripts, twelve were returned to the researcher with minor corrections.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is viewed as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos et al., 2005). The focus group discussions and individual interviews were thus analysed qualitatively, according to the research questions.

The researcher used thematic analysis defined by Braun and Clarke (2006:79) as a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data. The purpose of using thematic analysis was to identify patterns of meaning across data that provided analytical material for probing the research question. Hence the study adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis. This involved the six-phase process represented in the points that follow.

1. The first phase in the study involved familiarisation with and scrutiny of the data.

2. The second phase involved the generation of codes relevant to answering the research question.
3. The third phase concerned the examination of the codes to identify themes.
4. The fourth phase was the review of themes.
5. The fifth phase involved the final naming of the themes.
6. The last phase was spent writing up the participants' accounts of barriers to learning

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A balanced view emanating from all stakeholders involved in the education programme might have added more validity to the findings in this study. This is to say the correctional regulations did not allow the researcher to use students (offenders) as participants in the study because of security reasons and this could be regarded as a limitation of the study. Also, the study could be conducted in only one correctional centre and this may be viewed as a limitation because the findings cannot be generalised. However, the advantage in this may be that it adequately captured the context of the correctional centre studied.

The researcher intended using participants' students' reports to obtain information relating to the latter's academic performance and their challenges, but security regulations in the correctional centre prohibited the researcher from gaining access to the documents. Documentary analysis might have been used to triangulate elements in the study.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Trustworthiness refers to the demonstration of integrity and competence in qualitative research. It is established through attention to detail and accuracy to assure authenticity and soundness

in the research process (Babbie, 1998; Tobin & Begley, 2004; Twycross & Shields, 2005). In this context, “trustworthiness” will be assured through an audit trail, member checks on transcripts, data analysis and interpretation. In my view, insight is obtainable when participants are enabled to express their understanding of their experience since it is their life world that forms the subject of the study. Validity of information will depend on the meaning assigned by the participants during the interviews. Peer supervision and feedback will be an important aspect of the research as well.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics are a set of moral principles which are widely accepted as rules and behavioural expectations about the correct conduct in relation to participants. Prior to commencing the study, a research proposal was submitted to gain entry into the Masters’ program of the University of the Western Cape. An ethics application was then submitted to the Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. A submission requesting approval from the Director of Community Corrections and from the Department of Correctional Services.

Ethical codes applied in this research include: the avoidance of emotional or any other form of harm, timely sharing of complete information about the purpose and procedures of the research, informed consent from all participants, assurance of confidentiality and privacy. Throughout the process the researcher remained committed to report correctly on the analysis of the data and the results of the research (de Vos et al., 2005).

In Merriam and Simpson’s (1995) words, “where practice involves the social world and people in it, research is particularly value-laden (and) hence ripe for ethical conflict”. An attempt was thus launched in this research to make the basis of all interaction mutual trust, acceptance,

cooperation, kept promises, the upholding of necessary conventions and wherever possible the fulfilment of expectations between parties involved in the research project (de Vos et al., 2011, p.113).

In keeping with Kvale's (2007) injunction that informed consent entails informing the research subjects about the overall purpose of the investigation, main features of the design and the possible risks and benefits from participation in the research project, these precepts were upheld. As indicated, the researcher ensured the voluntary participation of teachers in the correctional centre, informing them about the focus of their input and their respected right to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to explain why they wished to do so.

According to de Vos (2007) nobody should ever be coerced into participating in a research project, because participation must always be voluntary. Therefore adequate opportunities were given for participants to ask questions before the study commenced, as well as during the investigation. On the understanding that ethical guidelines about informed consent cannot anticipate all possible problems, the researcher was prepared to handle unforeseen situations in the most ethical manner possible. The researcher was committed to obtaining informed consent, to ensuring the subjects'/ participants' full comprehension of the requirements, and their cooperation, while also being willing to resolve or relieve any tension, aggression, resistance or insecurity amongst the subjects (de Vos, 2007).

Confidentiality in research implies that private data identifying the subjects will not be reported (Kvale, 2007). As Henning et al. (2004) state, confidentiality implies the treatment of information in a confidential manner. He goes on to say that under the 'confidentiality ethical guideline' any harm to participants should be avoided. He warns that this includes putting them

in a situation where they might be harmed – physically or psychologically – as a consequence of their participation. Such harm may include causing them embarrassment or discomfort about questions.

Yet according to Cohen et al. (2007), there is a distinction between privacy and confidentiality in that privacy relates to an individual's personal space and confidentiality relates to the handling of information in a manner that is confidential (Cohen et al., 2007, p.50-65). Participants were informed in writing of their right to privacy and confidentiality.

Medium –A is a small community and thus confidentiality is a vital issue, which must be considered. Maintaining anonymity within such a small community is difficult as it becomes easier for readers to identify or believe that they have identified others (Oxford, 2018). Issues of confidentiality and anonymity were difficult to address entirely, as Medium-A correctional centre staff would be aware of which persons were participating in the research due to the need for community corrections to introduce their clients. Interviews were held in private rooms or at the person's residence to reduce the risk of community corrections staff overhearing the interview. Codes were used to keep the identities of the interviewees confidential. This was motivated by de Vos' statement that (2007), the more sensitive the information or more concealed the manner in which the information was gathered, the greater the responsibility of the researcher and all concerned to treat the information as extremely confidential.

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter describes the research design and methodology followed to address the primary research problem and related research aims. The chapter includes commentary on the nature of interviews, data analysis, limitations, ethical considerations and trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology used in this study. In this chapter a descriptive analysis accompanies the data. As stated earlier the aim of this study is to explore barriers that affect effective learning in a selected Correctional Centre in the Western Cape. The following research questions were used to guide the investigation:

- What are teachers' perceptions of the intrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in the Correctional Centre?
- What are teachers' perceptions of the extrinsic factors that hinder effective learning in this Correctional Centre?

The research questions and the themes that emerged from the data are used to organize the presentation of the findings.

4.2 FINDINGS

4.2.1 Demographic characteristics of the participants

The results of this study show that most participants were mature and experienced educators. Their average age was forty-even. Educators were fairly well qualified to teach: one has a Bachelor's degree, three have Honours degrees one holds a Master's degree. Table 4.1 which follows indicates further demographical details of the participants.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the participants

Participants	Age	Gender	Higher qualification	Teaching experience
P1	47	M	B.Ed.Hons	24
P2	50	M	B.Tech/Diploma	21
P3	32	M	Matric	6
P4	36	F	Diploma (Std);ACE	7
P5	52	M	Diploma Teaching	17
P6	55	F	Diploma Teaching	33
P7	46	M	B.Ed Hons	24
P8	45	M	B.Ed.Hons	14
P9	41	F	M.Ed.	20
P10	55	M	Diploma, Teaching	5
P 11	57	M	Diploma,Teaching	34

4.2.2 Extrinsic barriers to learning

Participants identified a variety of factors that hinder effective teaching and learning in their correctional centres. During the analysis stage of this study, these factors were separated into two broad categories, namely intrinsic and extrinsic barriers. Intrinsic barriers refer to internal factors that can be located within student's responses. Extrinsic barriers refer to external factors that arise outside in the student's environment, and also constrain his or her learning. Based on participant responses, the themes that emerged in the category 'extrinsic barriers' are summarised in Figure 4.1 which follows.

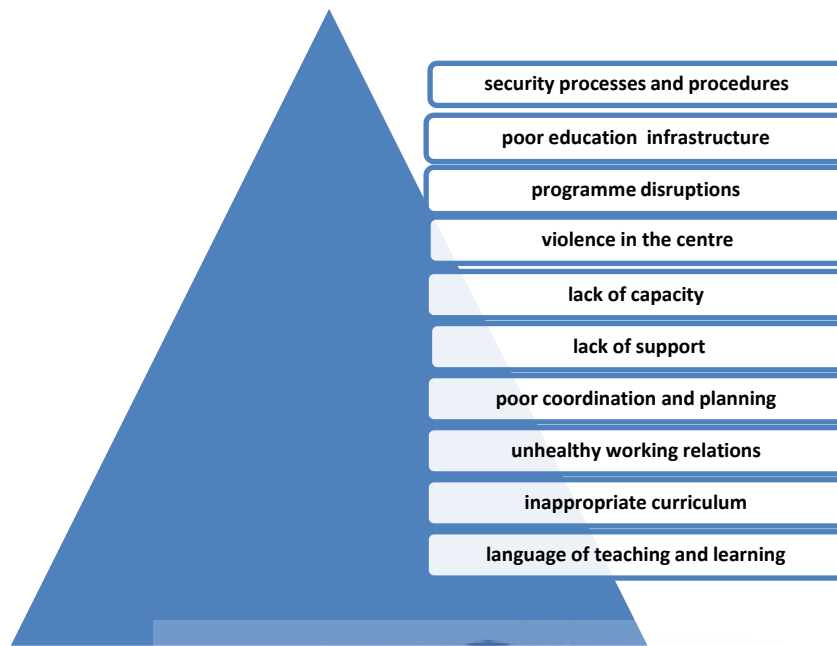
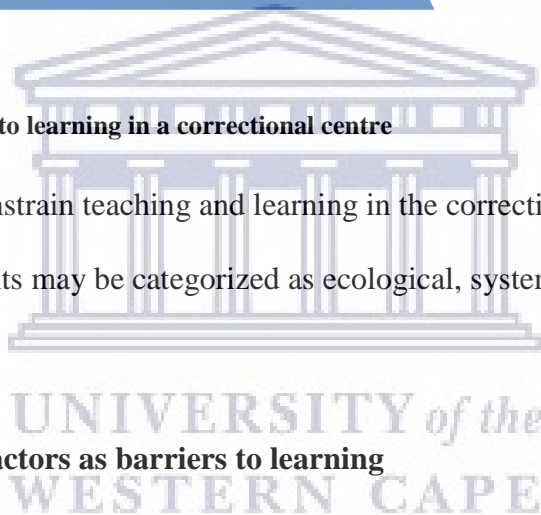


Figure 4.1: Extrinsic barriers to learning in a correctional centre

Extrinsic elements that constrain teaching and learning in the correctional centres, as identified by the participants may be categorized as ecological, systemic and structural.



4.2.2.1 Systemic factors as barriers to learning

Security priorities on the site of study represent a component of the systemic extrinsic barriers explored in this investigation.

a) Security processes and procedures

The majority of participants indicated they understand that one of the main functions of a correctional centre is to correct offending behaviour in a safe, secure and humane environment. However, they felt that these goals also imply security processes and procedures which often disrupt tuition time.

They illustrated this by pointing out that security operations for sentenced inmates are performed by escorting these offenders, intensifying searches at entry and exit points of cells, limiting offenders' externally focused activities, minimising movements of high-risk inmates and conducting impromptu searches to confiscate illegal substances.

Participants explained that when security guards receive information about the presence of drugs in the prison cells, all students are required to leave school to return to their units for control and stability measures, or they have to leave classes early in compliance with prison regulations. So while classes are supposed to commence at 8h30, due to delays involving searching, head counts and escorting students to the venues, classes regularly begin very late.

These variables affect participants' teaching and learning targets negatively. Consequently, they do not cover the prescribed content by the end of the year. As three participants explained:

Our centre security is always a challenge in the sense that programmes are being disrupted, for example where there needs to be searching sometimes the shortage of staff members to escort students to school, sometimes there is an incident inside the centre, then all offenders have to go back to the centre. (P2)

and,

Every day offenders must be counted day and night and searching is also taking place before they leave their units. All that delays the time to go to school and school starts 8h30 but they will be at school by 11h00 sometimes not pitched up at all. (P4)

The arrival time of students for teaching and learning is not consistent, sometimes very late or not pitch up at all that makes us not teaching effectively. (P5)

Another constraining factor is the shortage of security guards. Participants indicated that security procedures are so important in correctional centres that on days when members of the Department of Correctional Services are off duty, students are not escorted to school and this

constrains learning. They reiterated that when searches take place in the correctional units, teaching is suspended.

Also, students' independent learning is inhibited by the fact that correctional services rules and regulations prohibit students from getting internet access, and engaging in outdoor learning activities required to develop subject specific competencies. This limits the students' ability to search for information relevant to their projects. Participants thus felt obliged to search for information on behalf of students so as to generate ideas or spoon-feed them. They claimed that they coddle students and they regard this as a barrier to their learning and personal development. Two participants claimed that:

It is a must to take tourism students to the tourist attractions like Mandela's statue, but red . tape security procedures bureaucracy prevents educators from doing that. (P8)

and,

Shortage of personnel affects teaching as students depend on security guards to escort them. Students are part of security. (P11)

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This finding has been confirmed by literature which states that “education in a correctional centre is subordinate to the need for security and labour and is utilized as a mechanism for sorting, judging and controlling” (Shethar, 1993, p.359). Watts (2010) also contends that the correctional centre culture is unique and correctional centre management's focus on security measures such as lockdowns and head counts constrains the possibilities of learning.

Added to such challenges, as Walton (2010: p. 59) points out, is that entering a correctional centre for teaching is very difficult, particularly at high-security correctional centres because admission entails long waiting periods at reception, the checking of identity documents,

blocking of cell phones and the arduous process of contacting the education section within the correctional centre.

Walton's findings concur with participants' experience in this study, as indicated earlier.

4.2.2.2 Structural factors as barriers to learning

Apart from programme disruptions on the site of study, structural extrinsic barriers, which emerged in this investigation, include poor infrastructure, violence and lack of capacity.

a) Poor infrastructure for education

Participants regard correctional education centre infrastructure as the most basic element critical to ensuring effective structured teaching and learning. They believe that it is the infrastructure which enables students and teachers to access services and resources that support learning and teaching. However, the majority of participants reported that the prison infrastructure is not conducive to teaching and learning.

In relation to the physical learning environment, all participants claimed that they teach in a dining-hall in close proximity to a noisy kitchen, and that sometimes even this accommodation is not available for teaching purposes. They describe the unbearable noise made by aluminium trolleys and pots as impinging significantly on teaching and learning. It is thus often hard for students to hear what educators explain, and sometimes students' engagement in learning activities is disrupted.

The building used for teaching is depicted as old and dilapidated. According to the participants, it has a leaking roof, broken windows, doors that do not close properly and pot holes. Resources

are equally lacking as participants reported that there is no chalkboard, and there are no desks, chairs or tables on which students can do their work. Students have to sit on long benches and this affects their ability to concentrate and write properly.

Participants reported that in an attempt to create space for learning the correctional services management team had provided mobile shipping containers as classrooms. While participants acknowledged and commended the effort and intention of the management team, they found that shipping containers are not conducive to learning and teaching. These venues are described as very hot in summer and very cold in winter. They have no electricity, no air conditioner, no windows or durable flooring.

Participants shared the view that these appalling conditions contribute to students' absenteeism in winter and in summer particularly. The comments that follow indicate their observations.

Students getting sick winter time and felt very cold to attend school. (P11)

It is worse in the primary classes on the other side where there are only 4 classrooms with the roof falling apart. It took ages before the classrooms could be repaired. (P2)

Infrastructure is very old and there are no classrooms, hence it was meant for the workshop. (P5)

No space or classroom to teach. (P7)

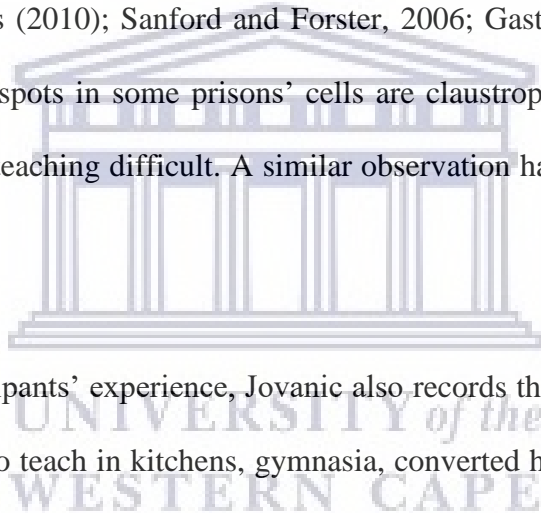
Participants also revealed that they have no offices in which to do their administrative duties or to prepare lessons for the day. Added to this, access to learning and teaching support materials and technology proves to be a challenging undertaking in the centre. They use the photocopy and fax machine belonging to the Head of Centre, facilities which are mostly

inaccessible when the Head of Centre is off duty. As there are neither chalkboards nor textbooks for students, educators photocopy materials for students and this is where resource-related difficulties are keenly felt as the Head of Centre is not always in their office.

Added to this, participants saw how the unavailability of the library and the computer laboratory limited students' opportunities to study independently and to drive their own learning. Participants felt that there were few opportunities for them or their students to integrate technology into the curriculum.

In a related concern Watts (2010); Sanford and Forster, 2006; Gast, 2001 also Imhabekhai, 2002 report that teaching spots in some prisons' cells are claustrophobic and untidy spaces which make learning and teaching difficult. A similar observation has been made by Jovanic (2011: p. 80).

In keeping with our participants' experience, Jovanic also records that in correctional centres sometimes teachers have to teach in kitchens, gymnasias, converted housing, areas designated for religious rites, and space formerly used as ablution facilities. Muntingh and Ballard (2012, p.23) confirm knowledge of the practice of dining-halls doubling up as classrooms and programme facilities in correctional centres. Making a case against such ad-hoc arrangements, Yasin, Toran, Tahar, and Bari (2010) assert that the provision of adequate and accessible facilities for students' needs should be of such a quality that students become motivated to continue learning.



b) Programme disruptions

Participants reported that despite the existence of a school timetable, educators have no control over what else might occur in the time allotted to tuition. Thus according to the participants, the rate of disruptions during tuition time is very high in the Correctional Centre. Their assessment is that education is not prioritized. Classes are suspended if events such as church services and union meetings are scheduled unexpectedly because students would fail to be escorted to school for the day. The participants reported that the management frequently held unplanned meetings which affect teaching and learning negatively.

Also, participants claimed that whenever fighting erupted amongst inmates inside prison teaching and learning would be disrupted because such incidents dictate that all students are obliged to return to their units with immediate effect. Drug-smuggling and being caught with a cell-phone also disrupt teaching and learning in that instead of teaching, the educator has to follow procedures including providing a statement to security. As one stated:

If drug smuggling is discovered in the classroom, you have to stop your lesson and entertain that and that delay teaching as all procedures has to be followed. (P4).

According to the participants, fights in class amongst students also disrupt teaching and learning. These fights evoke anxiety in some students and trigger aggression in others. Consequently, all education programmes are suspended until the Heads of Centre and Security decide there the threat is over. The situation, according to the participants, affects teaching and learning because it takes two or more days for such an incident to be finalized – before students are allowed to return to school.

Participants reported that meetings also interrupt the school programme. These take the form of visits by psychologists, nurses and social workers who request sessions with the students, or have to prepare offenders for court cases. This finding is indirectly related to those of Bhatti (2010); Schirmer (2008); Tam, Heng and Rose (2007); Sanford and Foster (2006) who all recount in their respective studies that students in correctional centres are likely to be transferred from the correctional facility without notice. A consequence of this is that they sometimes miss out on a crucial part of school tuition while they attend court hearings, doctors' appointments, and behaviour management programmes.

It is clear that the decision to release offenders – and the processes related to it – are administrative and beyond the control of classification personnel and correctional educators (Flanagan, 1994, p.28).

c) Violence in the centre

All the participants indicated that gangsterism and violence are rife inside the prison cells/units. According to the participants, students suffer both physically and psychologically. The physical effects of violence range from small cuts to severe and incapacitating injuries which keep students away from classes and/or result in hospitalization.

Such exposure clearly has a negative impact on students' learning and academic performance. The psychological violence and the psychological impact of physical violence, participants reported, results in cases where students speak of having developed insomnia and anxiety-related problems such as irrational fear and suicidal thoughts. Consequently, they find it difficult to concentrate on their studies and some eventually drop out of school. It was also

reported that due to these gang activities some students become hostile and lose focus. As some participants indicated:

There are gang activities that are taking place especially at night which makes students arrive late or not attending at all for that particular day. When students which at school you can see that they are tired which means they have not slept due to gang activities, he struggles to concentrate and participate in the class. (P2)

The participants thus perceived violence as having a negative impact on participation in educational activities and academic performance. One may argue that violence not only disrupts participation; it overwhelms people with feelings of anger, powerlessness and a sense of being isolated. The prevalence of incidences of violence in correctional centres is confirmed by Coetzee (1995). This author observes that gang activities are one of the greatest problems in the South African Correctional Services system because they are responsible for the unrest in Correctional Centres, the high percentage of assaults, the smuggling of drugs, and sexual malpractice. Is the question does violence and trauma impact students' learning?

Evidence of the negative effects of violence has been presented by McGaba-Garett (2013, p.1) who asserts that “exposure to violent environments, as well as injury due to violence, contributes to both reduced academic progress and increased unfocused classroom behaviour”. Presenting a similar argument, in their studies Perkins and Graham-Bermann (2012) link violence to problems with mental health, cognitive processing and language development. There is therefore sufficient evidence that people who “have experienced trauma are at high risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other negative emotional, behavioural and mental health outcomes (Gillies, Taylor, O'Brien & D'Abrew, 2013, p. 1004).

d) Lack of capacity

Common to all interviews was participants' account that at certain times they lack the capacity to deliver and manage the education programme in the correctional centre.

Educators who leave the school, retire or die are not replaced and this, according to the participants impacts negatively on the quality of curriculum delivery and the programmes the correctional centre offers. As some participants stated:

Department of Correctional Services does not make education system a priority in filling posts instead it down-scales programmes because they could not appoint some staff. (P10)

In 2012, I have to write a memorandum to the Area Commissioner to phase out our NCV for the simple reason that there is no sufficient manpower to offer all these educational programmes. In my first couple years, I have asked myself why is the Department not advertising educational posts? Unfortunately, I am just an ordinary teacher not part of the higher top manager. (P1)

and,

When they finished ABET level-4, they have to stop as NCV has phased out due to a shortage of educators. Educators are stuck in core business which is AET which is the formal curriculum education that we are offering to students. Even the way we are treated and remunerated is pathetic. (?)

In relation to the question about capacity building, all participants alleged that educator development is not prioritized by the Department of Correctional Services. They reported that there are no continuous professional development opportunities by which to upgrade knowledge, to re-skill or to keep educators abreast of developments in education.

Participants also asserted that there is a lack of teacher development focused on addressing students' special needs. As one participant commented:

Educators are left in their own devices. You either sink or swim and nobody cares.

(P.1)

Participants indicated that there were no qualified educators to respond to the needs of students with impairments or disabilities. Consequently students are not accommodated if they struggle with reading and writing skills because of specific difficulties. One of the participants claimed that:

None of these educators has been trained to work with these students who have Special Needs. Due to lack of resources and a shortage of qualified teachers, students with special needs are not accommodated. It is even difficult to do placement tests.

(P10)

No remedial teachers to assist those students who struggle to read and write and those who really need that intervention. (P7)

Participants were also concerned that even when in-service training workshops had been arranged the needs of educators remained unaddressed.

The workload allocation for education across correctional centres was regarded as another barrier to teaching and learning. Participants explained that some correctional centres have fifty students with a staff establishment of ten to twelve educators, while other centres have two-hundred-and-eighty students with only five educators.

Furthermore, educators confronted with unrealistic workloads are also challenged by being given large and diverse classes and this affects learning. Participants reported that some students need individual attention because of their experiential backgrounds and knowledge gaps and this is not possible when educators teach large classes, and at different levels.

This perspective seems to be consistent with literature which reveals that in a correctional environment the lack of training among staff regarding developmental issues could result in a number of problems in the day to day management of juveniles (Tolbert, 2002, p.19).

e) Lack of educational and psychosocial support

All participants in the study felt that students receive inadequate psychological and educational support from both the management within the DCS and from the Portfolio Committee in Parliament. The participants reported that the only time the Senior Managers from Head Office and Regional Office make an appearance at the school is in January when results are released – to congratulate educators; and the Portfolio Committee appears only when something bad happens to offenders, such the death.

One participant expressed his belief that the Portfolio Committee of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in Parliament provides adequate financial support for the employment of nurses, social workers and psychologists, but very little money is allocated for the education programme. Furthermore, the participants felt that Parliament's Portfolio committee which deals with Correctional Services does not visit prisons, and hence neither identifies challenges nor supports educators. Participants 2, 8 and 1 made the statements that follow.

Educators are getting no support and the same treatment as other professional staff such as social workers, spiritual workers, nurses and psychologists. (P2)

Lack of resources with regard to teaching material. In prison, the budget for education system is so low. They come up with all these concepts of 'belt tightening' now this year they call it 'Cost Containment'. (P8)

When it comes to financing educational programmes, every year we need to submit multi-team estimation as to what money we need to run our school but we never get even half of it. Due to limited resources in terms of manpower, financial resources and as well as the equipment limits, you have to provide school or education as in a normal school and that become frustration for educators. (P1)

In the interviews all participants claimed that the budget allocated for Learner-Teacher Support Materials for the school is insufficient. They say the school is running short of answer sheets and pens. There are no textbooks at all; and, as indicated earlier, there is one photocopier and one computer which belong in the Head of Centre's office. The situation makes it difficult to produce worksheets for the students. Participants 2, 7 and 4 comment on the hindrance this is:

Educators struggle for offices, computers, photocopier and Teaching Material. We are sharing one computer out of six educators since 2010. (P2)

Challenge is textbooks. There are specific books to teach Adults from the stretch the ones who do not know alphabets. (P7)

We don't have textbooks and we must buy from your own pocket and hunt teaching material from outside colleagues/friends. (P4)

Regarding psychological support, the participants spoke of working under extremely difficult conditions, particularly for those working with 'maximum offenders' (a reference to serious offences). Participants felt that the situation is very risky and they sometimes feel unsafe as they cannot confirm that the students have been rehabilitated from their offending behaviours.

This uncertainty often affects how they interact with the students, and this in turn negatively affects students' learning. The participants feel they do not receive adequate emotional support.

Participant 8 stated:

We are teaching very high profile, maximum students and we don't feel safe. (P8)

Similar findings appear in the Sanford and Foster (2006) study which shows that there is no official and practical support for education delivery in correctional centres. Watts (2010, p. 57) too argues that there is a lack of support for education in correctional centres citing the reason as their focus on punishment and rehabilitation. According to this author, this has the effect of sidelining educational programmes in a correctional environment.

f) Improper planning

The majority of participants reported that education programmes are not planned and so – as alluded to earlier – educators are called to impromptu meetings that do not even discuss the education challenges that affect teaching and learning. These meetings are seen to derail activities and disrupt tuition time. Consequently, participants are unable to complete the set education programme and students are unable to meet the curriculum requirements. The participants believe that proper annual planning could avert unnecessary tensions, delays and confusion caused by unplanned activities.

Participants also reported that there are no contingency plans to deal with crises or impediments such as special meetings for security officials. It was reported that escorting students from prison units to classes has always been a challenge because educators are not allowed to handle keys to the gates and cells when security officials are unavailable. In these instances, the school programme is affected negatively as tuition starts very late:

When there is a meeting there is no school or school will start very late. When there is a searching inside the prison, the school will start late. (P6)

If dangerous weapons have been confiscated, there is in school and you are running short of time in regard to teaching. (P4) Participants suggest that planning is the foundation on which one constructs programme execution. Without a strong and proper foundation, the programme is very likely to fail and result in students' academic failure. Similarly, Sonia (2000) regards planning as of critical importance to the implementation of education programmes because it provides the school with the parameters within which their goals can be achieved.

g) Communication challenges

As the findings show, the majority of participants report that there are no proper communication channels between educators, the Department of Education, and the Correctional Centre management team.

The participants feel that communication with educators is lacking concerning changes or innovative ways of delivering the curriculum content, or discussing approaches to assessment. As a result, they always teach outdated content. This they warn prevents the correctional centre students from competing favourably with their counterparts in mainstream education facilities. Moreover, the participants find that no platforms have been created for them on which to interact and discuss educational issues with the Department of Education. Certain participants' observations pertinent to these points are captured in the statement that follows:

No workshops [are run] to address the needs of educators. A platform [is needed] to discuss very important issues, plan together and discuss issues that affect our teaching with other centres. Sometimes the top management sends us information getting from the

Department of Education, each educator has his/her own interpretation on that, instead of calling a workshop and explain it holistically for us to understand. (P9)

It was reported that sometimes students are relocated without educators being informed. The participants indicated that in most cases the decision is taken without consulting the school principal.

This absence of communication is evident in educators' exclusion from decisions about other school matters too, including the education programme itself. They claimed that they are not informed when students are suspended from attending classes because of violent behaviour inside the units. The consequence in such cases may be that students have been disbarred from attending school for three or more days. In other instances, participants reported that the school is not informed of the release of students inmates.

In a different scenario, the refusal to allow cell phones inside the Correctional Centre for security reasons makes it very difficult for the Department of Education District Office to contact the school principal for emergencies if the latter is attending to other matters within the school. The participants claimed that poor communication has a negative impact on school programmes and on teaching and learning.

The Department of Education, unfortunately, are not providing that information or not on the path with the quickness of getting what we need. (P11)

Research studies have shown that communication and information sharing are critical for the successful implementation of any education programme. Information ensures that everyone concerned is knowledgeable about changes or is au fait with new information, and thus the prospect of any uncertainty and fear of the unknown is greatly *neutralized*.

h) Unhealthy working relations

The participants indicated that working relations amongst educators and managers/management are unhealthy. Participants claimed that when tensions arise no staff meetings are organised to resolve the issues. The situation affects the participants' ability to collaborate or interact with one another. Such tensions cause educator absenteeism. This matter is raised by Participant 5 as follows:

We never had meetings to resolve issues. Our supervisor does not know how to resolve issues around educators. (P5)

Participants expressed further dissatisfaction with the manner in which educators are being treated within the Correctional Centres. Participants reported that they experienced a lack of respect, also expressed in exclusion, discrimination, prejudice and negativity. Participants indicated that they felt under-valued and that this had led to staff resignations in the past. They ascribed their being unmotivated to the foregoing factors, noting how those affect their passion for teaching in the centre, which in turn affects students' learning.

Participants claimed that educators are always reminded that:

“This is a correctional centre, not a school”. (P 2)

Participant 2's report signifies both a lack of acknowledgement of the rights of inmates, and a weak relationship between the teaching staff and the general correctional centre staff. The need for improving such interaction is underscored by Day and Gu (2010) who advocate that good quality relationships are important for maintaining wellbeing and effectiveness in daily work and lives. Jordan (2006) argues that the importance of these relationships is not just that they

offer support, but that they also provide an opportunity to participate in a liaison that is growth-fostering for the other person as well as for themselves (Jordan, 2006, p.88).

i) Inappropriate Curriculum

The majority of participants reported that there have been so many changes to the curriculum that this has had a negative effect on learning and teaching. Often the information reaches the educators late when they have already done their planning for the following year. Two participants attested to this fact stating that:

You have to restructure again your planning and we must also work according to both the Department of Education and the Department of Correctional Services rules and policies. (P7)

and,

Curriculum from WCED is not catered for prison but mainstream normal school. (P9)

In the interviews all participants claimed that there is a curricula mismatch between the National Education public school setting and the Correctional Services context. The participants believe that the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) implemented by the schools, is not appropriate for the students in the correctional centres. The participants indicated that it is difficult to implement certain aspects of the National Curriculum Statements (NCS) because of the complexities of the correctional system, its policies and procedures.

These views suggest that the education curriculum offered in correctional centres is not designed with offenders and a prison context in mind. The excerpts which follow present pertinent participant views:

WCED curriculum is designed for normal schools and not for prison school. (P11)

and

Some of the books are not up to the standard such as 'khaRiGude'. There are specific books to use when teaching Adults from the stretch, the one who does not know alphabets to appoint to study. We use to teach pre-ABET teaching basic alphabets and putting sounds. (P7)

and

Sub Based Assessment Tasks is not specifically meant for people that are incarcerated, hence some projects require to do research which they cannot as they are in prison and the sub-levels, specifically level-1, is difficult for them. The curriculum is not designed/structured in accordance to accommodate prison system. (P4)

and

Specific needs of educators in different subjects and learning areas. Few educators are been exposed to this curriculum development but they are not part of it, they are just moving with what has been provided and there is a platform for them to create for them to make an input to curriculum development. (P5)

and

Majority of educators teaching ABET level 3-4 only two can explain in Afrikaans and the Afrikaans teachers whose mother tongue is Afrikaans are not able to explain it in Xhosa so that for me is a challenge. (P1)

These findings resonate with studies by Stofile, Raymond and Moletsane (2013), and the Department of Education (1997) who assert that an inflexible and inappropriate curriculum is one of the significant factors that create a breakdown between learning and teaching.

4.2.3 Intrinsic barriers to learning

In the participants' responses, five themes emerged and these were categorised as intrinsic barriers. The themes are presented in Figure 4.2.

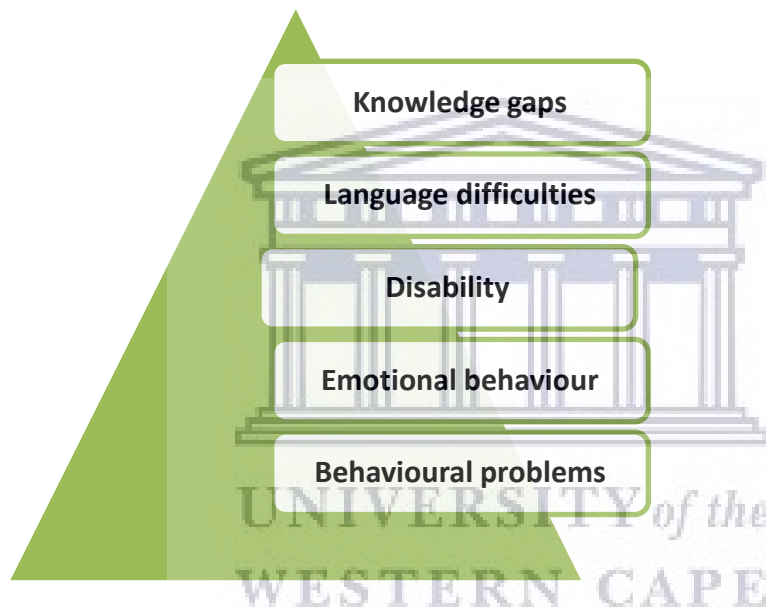


Figure 4.2: Intrinsic barriers to learning in a correctional centre

4.2.3.1 Knowledge gaps

Most participants reported that they regularly receive students who do not have report documents reflecting their academic achievements. Participants accounted for this by noting that some students had been transferred from other correctional centres in the course of the year. Others had dropped out in grade 2 prior to their arrival at the correctional centre. Some had never been to school and yet others do not even remember the last grade they attended.

Four participants stated that they struggle to gauge students' level of schooling, their skills, and the knowledge they bring to the learning environment. The participants believe that knowing the students' academic level can help educators shape both the subject content and the scope of the educational experience. As one indicated:

I really don't know how to identify gaps. This knowledge can help me to plan my lessons better. (P5)

Participants explained that they have observed students are at different levels of functioning and do not always have the embedded knowledge required by the subjects they choose. Sometimes the gaps are so wide that designing the learning experience or support is extremely challenging.

A few participants claimed that students are not the only ones with knowledge gaps; this also affects educators. The participants claimed that identifying competency gaps is more challenging to them because there are no set guidelines that constitute standards for what a student should know or be able to do before they are admitted to a particular programme. The participants believe that being competent in this area could potentially improve their curriculum delivery. Such expertise would enhance the development of learning objectives and the instructional design of the learning activities.

Some participants indicated that they had been trained in the old education system and so are neither confident nor comfortable in teaching certain learning areas. Some learning areas had been phased out due to educators' knowledge gaps.

Bear in mind we are trying to run normal situation with an abnormal situation. Some of the educators have that old education background same as students where gaps need to be filled. (P1)

Participants reported that students' frequent absenteeism – whether due to illness or court attendance – creates learning gaps. This situation puts pressure on educators as they have to repeat what was taught previously instead of moving forward with the planned lesson content. According to the participants, this absenteeism retards the learning progress of other students and some become bored and lose interest in their studies. As one participant explained:

Educators have to fill in gaps for students who decided not to be at school for reasons known by the head of centre and his unit managers. (P2)

As stated earlier in the context of communication, when students are transferred from one correctional centre to another, this disrupts teaching and learning because educators have to fill the learning gaps for the newcomer. A participant explains:

It disrupts it in the way that each educator know a number of his/her students and how far has educator cover the syllabus now educator has to start afresh with new students of which you are not sure how long will these students been in your class before being transferred again (Participant 3).

4.2.3.2 Language difficulties

The interview sessions revealed that the majority of participants regard language as one of the major barriers to learning in the correctional centre.

According to participants, the correctional centre has adopted English as the language of teaching and learning. This continues to pose a challenge to most isiXhosa and Afrikaans speaking students who struggle to express themselves and to understand the concepts presented in English. The majority of educators are Afrikaans-speakers so they too find it difficult to explain concepts in English. The comments that follow indicate participants' experience of language as a barrier to learning and teaching in this context:

As an educator, you can see when the student is struggling to understand because you want to explain with the language of his/her mother tongue, but you don't understand it as well. (P.10)

No one is listening to their problems due to the language barrier and lost interest in schooling. (P.1)

A medium of instruction which is English is a challenge, especial ABET levels 1-2. (P.1)

Most of the students cannot read and write and you want to motivate them to be patient and attend school but the problem will be the language to you as a teacher and to them.

Afrikaans educator is not so good in English as well as student Afrikaans speaker. (P4)

Language is a challenge to both educators and students. Majority of educators are Afrikaans speakers which to students majority are Isixhosa speakers, few foreigner speakers and Sisuthu. (P2)

Mathematics is done in English, although is done on a very low level they still struggle with terminology because it's their second language. Language barriers and the speed

of work and the amount of work from level 1-2 that tempo. We even struggled to motivate students due to language barrier. (P7)

Language is also a challenge as Afrikaans is dominated language, so those speak other languages suffer. (P6).

4.2.3.3 Disabilities

Half the participants revealed in interviews that there are students in class who present with symptoms of a learning disability. These include interpersonal communication difficulties, severe memory difficulties, information processing as well as language processing difficulties. Participants have observed that reading and mathematical calculations present a major challenge for this category of student because they lack skills for understanding what they read, so they frequently avoid reading. This response also applies to assignments that require reading. Participants revealed that it is difficult for them to address the needs of these students because they themselves have not been trained to deal with specific reading and mathematics difficulties. Participant 9 expresses this sentiment in the excerpt that follows:

Teaching and learning is a challenge even to students with special needs. We don't have educators specializing to teach students with disabilities. (P. 9)

4.2.3.4 Emotional Problems

The majority of participants reported the presence of students who had experienced emotional trauma. The participants pointed out that some students experience flashbacks of traumatic incidents which had occurred prior to their incarceration, and that these resulted in emotional breakdown during lessons. The participants claimed that some students externalize their

emotions or act out their negative thoughts through unacceptable behaviour. Two commented that:

When they don't feel lekker inside, they lash out. (P.4)

Some who committed mass murder, claim to have flashbacks and they start act strangely in the classroom. They cry or respond with anger even in situations that are not threatening in the classroom. (P.6)

In some instances, the emotional effects of their past are expressed in their decision to leave school. Thus there have been reported cases of student inmates dropping out of school due to the sustained effects of emotional trauma.

In addition, participants claimed that gang activities, bullying and violence inside the prison also psychologically affect students' learning. The incidents evoke withdrawal behaviour, anxiety and aggression in some students as they are not sure what will happen to them when they go back to the units. For them, naturally safety is more important than learning. As one participant claimed:

There are gang activities that are taking place especially at night, and that makes the student feel worried and angry. (P.2)

Participants also pointed out that some students present with symptoms of depression. Sometimes this happens after abuse by inmates in the units, or upon receiving messages relating to the loss of their family members, spouses or children. This category of student has been described as sad, sometimes hysterical, as having lost interest in learning activities. Some express their disappointment because their own families do not visit them.

Participants claimed that these students do not perform well at school and sometimes regress.

In the words of one participant:

Some offenders getting a visit from family members others not. Those who get visit sometime they received bad news of the loss of family member and that news traumatised him even those don't get a visit that is traumatized on its own. (P8)

There is no doubt that our thoughts and emotions can strongly affect our motivation to learn. In the interviews, participants indicated that some of these students do not share their problems with them as educators; the only way educators pick up that they have problems is through poor performance and their being too quiet in the classroom. As Participants 9 and 5 state:

The student will express his/her frustration and anger in the classroom by not performing well/drop performance. (P9)

Due to lack of resources and a shortage of educators specializing in that field, students with special needs are not accommodated. Students got despondent in staying in one level while others are progressing because we don't have that expertise to address their needs. (P5)

The majority of participants believed that some of the younger students at the school need a lot of motivation and encouragement because of low self-esteem. They reported that the absence of parents seems to affect some students negatively. As one participant indicated:

Some are still juveniles and feel the absence of their parents. (P1)

4.2.3.5 Behavioural problems

The findings revealed that students in the correctional education centre are incarcerated because they have failed the community, and have been convicted by a Court of law. They come from different backgrounds. Some are still struggling to rebuild their lives. Others express their difficulties by engaging in conduct which is disruptive to classroom functioning. Their behaviour is often characterised by extreme non-compliance, negativity, violence and an unwillingness to cooperate during lessons. Participants regarded such behaviour as harmful to themselves and others in the classroom. They explained that there was:

no moral support from correctional officials that will motivate/uplift their spirit; instead discrimination/stigma that leads to aggression. (P5)

and,

Some students are very aggressive, violent and don't want to comply with class rules. Some of them are defiant and they don't want to write anything. It's really frustrating because they disrupt classes and this really affects their learning. (P9).

4.3 CONCLUSION

The findings in this study uncovered a wide range of factors that act as barriers to learning in the correctional centre. These factors affect not only learning but teaching as well. The findings also reveal that intrinsic and extrinsic factors – as well as the interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic factors – constrain learning in the correctional centre. Contradictions between the way the schooling system is organised and structured by the correctional centre and the expectations and regulations of the Department of Education were clearly seen as a major barrier to learning in the centre.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presented and discussed the findings of the study. This chapter provides a summary of the findings. It puts forward recommendations for policy makers and educators in the correctional centre, signposts domains for future research in the same area and draws conclusions by reflecting on the research findings.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal that managing an educational programme within a Correctional Services environment is challenging, due mainly to the infrastructure and practice in these institutions. The facilities, together with the poor levels of support for staff preparedness, and reliable routines for students, are un conducive to teaching and learning (Nkosi, 2013). The study thus shows that the correctional services environment currently lacks adequate resources for the delivery of education programmes.

The findings also show that because the education programme in the correctional centre is offered in collaboration, and in accordance with the edicts of the national and provincial departments of education, it is bound by the directives and curricula of these departments. Their control extends to examinations. The perception that this arrangement is a barrier to learning was unanimously expressed by the participants in this study.

In this research, the majority of participants reported that despite the existence of a school timetable, educators have no control over what else might occur in the time allotted to tuition. Security protocols and processes – such as frequent lockdowns, headcounts and hearings – frequently interrupt the establishment of consistency and continuity in classes. The number of

disruptions to education programmes in Correctional Centres is described as being very high. The findings also reveal that gang activities inside the prison/cells/units have a negative impact on students' performance and on their physical and psychological well-being.

Common to all interviews was the acknowledgement that at certain times participants lack the capacity to deliver and manage the education programme in the correctional centre. Participants were thus concerned that even when in-service training workshops were arranged, the needs of educators remained unaddressed. There was also a perception that neither the management within the DCS nor the Portfolio Committee in Parliament provided adequate psychological and educational support for students in the correctional centre.

Findings show the absence of proper communication channels between educators, the Department of Education, and the Correctional Centre management team. It was specifically reported that students get relocated from one correctional centre to another without the knowledge of the educators. Additionally, the deficit of a full teaching complement in correctional centres was reported as one of the key barriers to teaching and learning.

In relation to curriculum delivery, there is a perception that the National Curriculum Statement is not relevant for students in correctional services. This includes the content and the language of teaching and learning. The findings also reveal that students are at different levels of functioning and do not always possess the requisite knowledge in the subjects they choose. Sometimes the gaps are so wide that designing the learning experience or supporting it is extremely challenging.

In addition, the findings indicate that there are students in class who present with symptoms relating to learning disabilities. These include difficulty with interpersonal communication, with information and language processing as well as severe memory difficulties. The participants in the study perceived students' behavioural and emotional difficulties as factors constituting barriers to learning and development.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Emanating from the findings in this study, the recommendations that follow are proposed for the Department of Correctional Services.

5.3.1 Curriculum

It is recommended that the needs of the individual prisoner be placed at the centre of prison education endeavours. This will involve introducing flexibility of provision which would still be consistent with mainstream education.

5.3.2 Educator development

The Department of Correctional Services should be given the power to develop educators. The school principal should ensure that an educator development plan is scheduled at the school. S/he should set up mechanisms for nurturing and stimulating educators' potential in order to enhance effective teaching and learning (Mathibe, 2007, p.523). This recommendation is in line with the Personnel Administrative Measures Policy (PAM) which clearly states that 'one of the responsibilities of the school principal is the development of staff training programmes. These should be school-based or school-focused as well as externally-directed. Their purpose is to assist educators – particularly new and inexperienced ones – in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school.

5.3.3 Lack of capacity

The process of educator recruitment should be prioritized by the Human Resources Division so as to fill vacant posts timeously. In addition, recruitment and retention of high quality education staff, supported by a structured programme of continuing professional development and a rigorous inspection framework would be integral to ensuring progress. Advertised posts should be in line with the school curriculum needs and the entry-level salary should be aligned with the criteria stipulated in the Personnel Administrative Measures of 1999. This might assist in attracting qualified educators for scarce skills subjects like mathematics and accounting, and

prevent the migration of educators from the Department of Correctional Services to the Department of Education.

5.3.4 Communication challenges

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that school management should be notified about students who have been released so that their names may duly be removed from the school attendance registers. In addition, educators should be approached by officials from the Department of Correctional Services before such students are released, to facilitate proper placement in schools within communities.

6.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

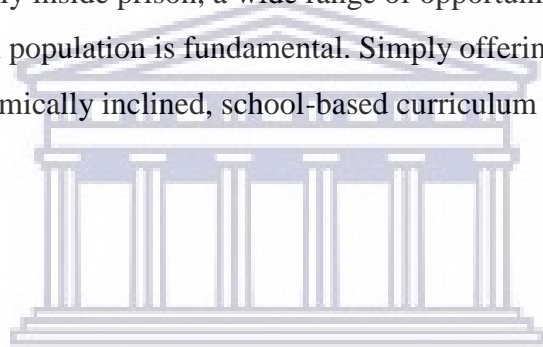
The research into this topic provides insight into potential domains for future investigation which have not yet been well-researched, and might assist in directing further study. In particular, areas for further research are outlined in the list that follows.

- It would be useful to replicate this study using a larger sample, selected to represent all educators in all correctional centres in the Western Cape. Alternatively, a wider range of responses – preferably from different correctional centres in the region – would also extend this study.
- A tracer study that tracks the career paths of rehabilitated offenders who had undergone correctional education and obtained qualifications, would illustrate the long-term benefits (if any) of correctional education and rehabilitation.
- Further research should be conducted with students to ascertain their perceptions to barriers to effective learning and teaching in correctional centres.
- Furthermore, the paucity of qualitative data from the perspective of inmates indicates a need to engage their voices to more fully comprehend how educational programs affect those who participate.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the barriers to effective learning and teaching in a Correctional Centre. Understanding the barriers to learning which prisoners face is both possible and worthwhile, because the outcomes of prisoner learning, beyond prison, can create a better life for individuals, can help to create better families and better communities.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of this study is that prisoners' experience of barriers to learning is complex; it involves the interaction and interplay of all five systems in the model of prisoner learning. Prisoner learning experiences will be enhanced only if staff work together to critically analyse and break down these barriers; and if they establish improvements in communication, policies and procedures within the prison. In order for prisoners to learn effectively inside prison, a wide range of opportunities that reflects the diverse needs of the prison population is fundamental. Simply offering more of the same relatively inflexible, academically inclined, school-based curriculum will not work.



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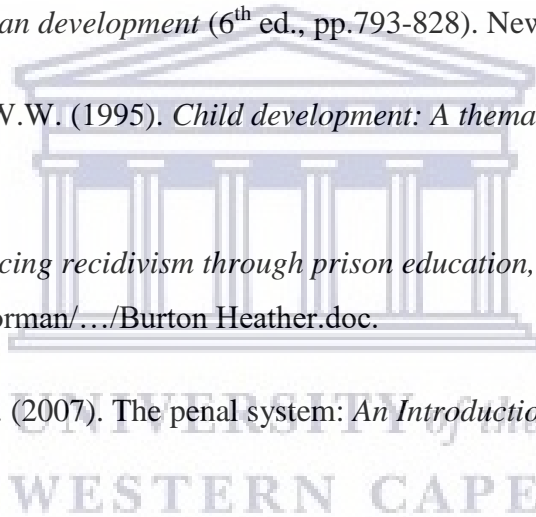
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APPENDIX A

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X 17

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7000

26th March 2016

The National Commissioner

Department of Correctional Services

National Office

P/B X136

Pretoria

0001

Dear Sir/Madam



UNIVERSITY of the

**RE: APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT POLLSMOOR
MEDIUM-A SCHOOL: CORRECTIONAL CENTRE, WESTERN CAPE REGION.**

I am a MEd (Masters in Education) student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of the Western Cape under the supervision of Dr Sindiswa Stofile. The aim of my study is to explore the educator's perceptions of barriers to learning and development at one of the Correctional Centres. It is envisaged that the findings of the study will inform the improvement of education programmes in order to prevent crime and recidivism. It will also contribute to policy development and implementation.

Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect the data from educators. The duration of the interviews will be 50 minutes and this will be arranged at a time

convenient to the educators. Programme reports and other relevant documents will be analysed to explore barriers to learning in the centre.

I will ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Participants will be free to withdraw from this research at any time as it is voluntarily. I promise to abide to all conditions applicable to research done in the Department of Correctional Services.

Please find attached an interview schedule that will be used during the interview process as well as the copy of the Research Proposal that outlines the aims and procedures to be followed in the research.

Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Sincerely

.....
RESEARCHER: STAMP N.M

SIGNATURE: -----

DATE : -----



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

RESEARCHER:

Margaret .N. Stamp

Student Number: 9334017

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SUPERVISOR'S DETAILS

Dr Sindiswa Stofile

sstofile@uwc.ac.za

University of the Western Cape

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APPENDIX B

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Educator

PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I am a Masters student in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of the Western Cape under the supervision of Dr Sindiswa Stofile. The title of my intended study is: **“Educator’s perceptions of barriers to learning and development at Polls moor Medium –A school”**. The main aim of the study is to explore educators’ perceptions of factors that hinder effective learning in a Correctional Centre. It is envisaged that the findings of the study will inform the improvement of education programmes in the correctional centres. It will also contribute to policy and decision making in the Department of Correctional Services.

Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect the data from educators. The duration of the interviews will be 50 minutes and this will be arranged at a time convenient to the educators. Programme reports and other relevant documents will be analysed to explore barriers to learning in the centre. The following considerations will be made:

- I will ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
- Pseudo names will be used in all publications
- Participants are free to withdraw from this research at any time as it is voluntarily.
- I promise to abide to all conditions applicable to research done in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours sincerely

RESEARCHER: STAMP N.MARGARET

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APPENDIX C

EDUCATOR CONSENT FORM

**Please Initial
Box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.
4. I agree to the interview / focus group / consultation being audio recorded
5. I agree to the interview / focus group / consultation being video recorded
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Margaret Stamp

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Supervisor

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APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS

INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete SECTION A
- Answer all questions in SECTION B

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Teaching experience: _____

Teaching Subject: _____

Highest qualification: _____

Teaching qualification _____

Number of learners in your class: _____



SECTION B: BARRIERS TO LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

1. What would you regard as successes in your teaching?
2. What are the factors that facilitate effective teaching in your centre?
3. What would you regard as factors that hinder effective teaching in your centre?
4. What are the intrinsic (within the learner) factors that hinder learning and development in your centre?
5. What are the extrinsic (outside the learner) factors that hinder learning and development in your centre?
6. What can be done differently to improve teaching and learning in your centre?



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