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The Relationship between Gender Identity Development and Career Decision-Making Process among High School Learners

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) by coursework and Research Report in the field of Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

2008

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

_____

Lara Letlhogonolo Rammutla

_____

Date

DEDICATION

To my two treasures, Kelebone and Neo, you are the inspiration behind everything that I do. I love you dearly. Mom

To my dearest mother, Kgomotso, you truly are a woman of noble character.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the following people:

My Supervisor, Joseph Seabi, for your ingenious insight, guidance, support, and the long hours of supervision that made this project a success. Your valuable input is highly appreciated. Thank you again for conducting the statistical analyses with patience and unfailing availability.

Mr Jeffrey, thank you so much for allowing me to conduct the research in your school and for your generosity in printing off the questionnaires for me.

Louise Erasmus, for helping me out by encouraging the learners to volunteer to participate in the study and for organising venues at your school for data collection.

Anne Lansky, for the invaluable support that you offered me throughout the year and for believing in me.

My dearest sister, Mercy, thank you for volunteering to take care of my children during the course of this year. You have made this year possible for me.

My class mates for the year 2008, you have been great.

My family, a very special thank you for your prayers, your unwavering support and love and your understanding when I was not available to you this year.

ABSTRACT

According to Erikson (1968), adolescents and young people are greatly engaged in the process of identity development with the intentions to evade a state of diffusion and role confusion. Not much research in the areas of identity formation and career development has explored the possible relationship between these two phenomena. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether there is a relationship between gender identity formation (identity statuses) and career decision-making process among high school learners. In addition the study explored if there are gender differences between males and females on identity statuses, as well as on career decision-making process. A sample of 156 Grade 12 learners participated in the study. The Revised Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (Bennion & Adams, 1986) and the Study Choice Task Inventory were administered to the learners. Findings of the study showed correlation between the identity statuses of Diffusion, Foreclosure and Moratorium for males and females and the career decision–making process. No statistically significant differences were found between males and females on the variables, namely, identity statuses and aspects of career decision-making processes. Implications for theory and practice and recommendations for future research are provided.

Key Words: Adolescence, identity statuses, gender, decision-making process, study choice, decisional task

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