

SUMMARY

The main aim of this study was to compile a career interest inventory – the Career Preference Inventory (CPI) – that would succeed in identifying the career preferences or vocational interests of learners from Grades 9 to 12. The specific objectives of the study involved an empirical examination of the content validity, construct validity, as well as reliability of the inventory. A study was also made of the structure of vocational interests of the test groups that formed part of the study.

The study entailed two empirical investigations. When the inventory was administered for the first time, additional items were added to the SAVII and the test group was made up of a representative sample of 1385 Grade 9 and 12 learners in the North West Province. As a result of the item analysis that was based on this sample, 54 of the items in the questionnaire were either changed or replaced. The reliability coefficients of the subfields of the SAVII for the population involved in the first administration were acceptable and ranged between 0,747 and 0,901. After an analysis of the items in the SAVII and the selection of the most suitable items, the questionnaire – by now known as the Career Preference Inventory (CPI) – was administered once again.

The reason for the second administration was to establish whether the amended items met the statistical requirements that had been set. Convenience sampling was used in this part of the study, since it was not possible to draw a representative sample of the population. The sample consisted of 1271 Afrikaans first language speakers, 2699 English second language speakers and 306 English first language speakers. Item analysis revealed that all the items were acceptable. The reliability coefficients of the fields of the CPI were also acceptable and varied between 0,714 and 0,860 for the particular test group. Test-retest reliability coefficients could be calculated for a group of 197 English second language speakers only and varied between 0,689 and 0,863.

A factor analysis was made to determine the constructs or factors that emerged with regard to the CPI. Initially six factors were specified, but since the fields for Clerical-Administrative, Business, and Management manifested within a single

factor, seven factors were subsequently withdrawn to establish whether the two latter-mentioned components could indeed function independently. The following fields or dimensions eventually realised: 1) Human-Communication; 2) Medical and related; 3) Technical-Scientific; 4) Practical-Handcraft; 5) Artistic; 6) Business and Management; and 7) Clerical-Administrative.

The final questionnaire contains 18 fields that are described individually and that are not categorised into 6 main fields. The questionnaire is also supposed to disclose the vocational information in Career Mentor in an ordered and structured manner. The 18 fields are therefore linked to more than 500 occupations and the CPI results serve as a search strategy that unlocks the mentioned occupational database according to specific vocational preferences.

