

Investigating first Year Students' Abilities to Make Appropriate Career Choices

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ABSTRACT The choice of a career is one of the most crucial challenges currently facing adolescents in South Africa. The purpose of the present study was to investigate first year students' abilities with regard to career planning, awareness of their career interests, career decision-making and exposure to career information. A cross-sectional survey design was used. Four hundred and thirty (430) participants were randomly selected from a population of first year students in a historically Black university. The data was collected through a self-constructed questionnaire and analysed by means of the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results indicated that students were not fully informed about the 'realistic' type of careers, that is, careers where they use hands, tools and machines. In addition, students were found to lack self-knowledge with regard to their career interests. The recommendations were provided to the university, especially the Student Counselling and Career Development Unit, to address the issue of career guidance in secondary schools in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.