



The significance of the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme on the spiritual and general well-being of farmworkers in the Christiana district in South Africa: A quantitative study¹

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Abstract

The main focus of this article is to determine the significance of the LIFEPLAN® programme by employing quantitative research such as questionnaires distributed to selected candidates. The participants were the farm workers (N=151) between 21 and 62 years (mean age=35.81, SD=10.407) who attended the LIFEPLAN® training and who forms part of the intervention programme. An exploratory, interpretive as well as descriptive quantitative contextual design was followed. The results from this quantitative pattern indicated that participants are convinced their life is on the right track after the LIFEPLAN® intervention. In conjunction with this belief, participants indicated that their life has gained a sense of direction or meaning due the LIFEPLAN® programme. Their spiritual well-being, for example, are enriched where 80% indicated that they have a personally meaningful relationship with God. According to participants this meaningful relationship contributes largely to their sense of well-being.

Keywords

significance; LIFEPLAN®; training; equipping; programme; well-being; farmworkers; rural areas; Christiana; South Africa

1. Introduction

In this article, a description is given of the empirical process to determine specific deductions by using a quantitative research design. The empirical

1 This article is part of a larger study, see Freeks 2018

data were interpreted with the holistic missional outreach to the contemporary youth of South Africa in mind (*cf.* Freeks 2018). Against this background, critique and evaluation is addressed and the LIFEPLAN® programme was also assessed and its strong and weak points investigated in a previous article (*cf.* Freeks 2017:8).

The most suitable and recognised design for this research is the model of Osmer (2008). This model provides a clear method to move from an existing praxis to a new one based on a theological and situational analysis. In the present study, the new praxis focused on the role of a missional vision in youth ministry in previously disadvantaged communities who struggle with challenges of poverty, unemployment, immorality and criminality.

The objective of this empirical research was to evaluate the LIFEPLAN® programme and its significance and effectiveness as a tool for churches to reaching the youth and communities, who are facing the above-mentioned multiple challenges. This purpose forms part of the descriptive-empirical task of Osmer (2008:31).

In this article, the empirical research is closely connected to theological theories. Therefore, is it essential to make use empirically of other sources additional to literature, i.e. questionnaires. The first part of the chapter describes how a research design is structured. From the research method that was used a discussion follows where the research results are explained.

2. The LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme

2.1 The origin of the programme

The LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme is the brainchild of social sciences and are related to the model of community development described by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Bonthuys et al. 2011:421; Freeks 2017:1). The faculty of health sciences under the research unit AUTHeR (Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research), as part of research that focus on the needs of South Africa (Bonthuys et al. 2011:421; Vorster 2006), developed and designed the programme upon commission as a socio-behavioural intervention that includes a marginal faith-based, that is, Christian, component. The objective was to train and equip farm workers with a view to stimulate behavioural modification among young

people and farm workers in their choices regarding destructive behaviour and behavioural challenges. The primary design intent was not as a church programme to promote theological knowledge. The ultimate reason for this programme was to address poverty and improve well-being among farm workers. LIFEPLAN® never intended, nor is it the appropriate instrument, to measure destructive behaviour such as crime, murder, robbery, assault, theft, burglary, hijacking, kidnapping, rape, pregnancy and many others. In fact, the programme targets negative social values, assuming that negative behaviour will change (*cf.* Freeks 2017). The LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme supports the youth to make healthy and quality choices for their lives. Its contributing role is in strengthening, motivating, inspiring and developing young people, especially with their choices and decision-making regarding behavioural challenges (Freeks 2008).

2.2 The history of the programme

The North-West University aspires to be a pre-eminent university in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge innovation and community involvement to contribute in providing solutions for reconstruction and development of communities. Through guided interventions the LIFEPLAN® (Life Inequalities amongst Persons addressed by means of Purposeful Living and Nutrition interventions) programme was implemented and presented (Freeks 2017:2-3). The presenting of the programme started in 2008 and has been running for the past ten (10) years. The programme had reached more than 2000 participants who were trained and equipped with a variety of life skills. The LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme was accredited on the 14th of September 2010 by the Institutional Committee for Academic Standards (ICAS) (Freeks 2008).

2.3 What is LIFEPLAN®?

According to Freeks (2008), is LIFEPLAN® – a community engagement and intervention programme designed for rural communities with the focus on the youth to make quality choices for their lives (Freeks 2016:213; Freeks 2019:1). LIFEPLAN® follows a path of core lecturing exercises and activities that build knowledge, promote interpersonal skills and trust through contact and sharing, build thinking and planning skills, build motivation and commitment to action (Freeks 2016:214). Furthermore, the programme was compiled based on the hierarchical needs' assessment scale and the in-

depth research of Maslow (Schultz & Schultz 2013:246; Freeks 2016). The programme activities comprise such as presentations, interactive activities, discussions, sharing and exercises (Freesks 2008, *cf.* also Freeks 2017:3).

2.4 The aim, layout and design of LIFEPLAN®

LIFEPLAN® is specially designed to guide and to assist participants and facilitators when offering or conducting training and developing sessions for the youth, illiterate and semi-literate individuals and farm workers who want to be equipped and who want to become knowledgeable and self-sustainable. Quality of life is directly affected by people's physical health, the availability or absence of health services, quality of health services, available money and money spending practices, family violence and people's coping mechanisms to deal with life and all its facets that also, to a large extent, determine mental health. Therefore, the activities focus specifically on the holistic promotion of health in context, i.e. restoring, maintaining, and promoting bio-psycho-social health and health systems, as to add to the best possible quality of life and well-being for the population, youth intervention through training and equipping through research (basic and applied), training (building capacity) and enhancement of service delivery (Freesks 2008).

The framework for the LIFEPLAN® education and training programme was compiled, based on the Maslowian hierarchical needs assessment scale and in-depth research. Maslow's theory proposed a hierarchy of five innate needs that activate and also direct human behaviour (Schultz & Schultz 2013). The theory of Maslow is widely used in educational areas. Maslow himself published some of his work in educational studies. The LIFEPLAN® programme addresses poverty amongst the most vulnerable through human development and training in life skills, in order to improve their well-being in terms of health, nutrition and choice, all combined in a model where sustainability in terms of family and social support networks and structures, behavioural, hygienic and nutritional practises and financial impact can be tested (Freesks 2008).

LIFEPLAN® has a prerequisite training and developing manual for each group of volunteers who wants to take up the opportunity to be equipped, to be trained and to be developed so that they can be skilled, self-sustainable, independent and hardworking. The goal is that after

completing LIFEPLAN® participants will have developed a valid self-image to take healthy pride in their personal ability, capability, potential, skills, experience and co-operation and develop a concern to care for others in their communities. An additional advantage and privilege for these participants is the opportunity to start their own businesses and to direct their own lives (Freeks 2018, Freeks 2017; Freeks 2016; Bonthuys, Botha, Nienaber, Freeks & Kruger 2011; Freeks 2008).

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research design

In the present research, an exploratory, interpretive and descriptive quantitative as well as contextual design was used (Thorne 2008). An exploratory approach investigates the experience of the participants (farm workers). Such a research was necessary since, to date, this experience has not been investigated yet. The researcher attempted to explore the experiences of participants (farm workers) by using questionnaires. Farm managers and farm workers were contacted telephonically to arrange the completion of questionnaires and questionnaires were closed ended with a 1-3 scale format (Freeks 2018:59; 259 annexure D). This 1-3 scale format don't allow any pre-empt result or outcome. The physical setting where questionnaires were completed was at the various farms in the private training areas of the participants' choice. The settings were private, pleasant and comfortable with little or no distractions (Pinkoane 2005). A descriptive approach is normally followed for quantitative research design (Vyhmeister 2008). All studies present some descriptive data while others break down the entire unit into smaller and diverse sections that could be studied (Babbie & Mouton 2001; Sheridan & Kisor 2000).

According to Evans (2014) and Burns & Grove (2005) it is preferable that research on a phenomenon takes place within the relevant context. Thus, by conducting the present research, the feedback of managers from the various farms was described within the unique context of their farm workers (participants) who attended the LIFEPLAN® programme.

Linked to this above-mentioned approach, the model of Osmer (2008) was used. This model offers four distinctive steps or tasks to missiology

as a model with guides to interpret incidents, situations and events into which a situation may unfold. These four (4) steps is an answer to a specific question:

Descriptive-empirical task – *What is going on?* This step analysed the current situations and contexts of the youth in rural areas in South Africa enabling the researcher to describe and understand them. This investigation was conducted firstly through quantitative (questionnaires) research focusing on youth in rural areas. Interpretive task – *Why is this going on?* This investigate the reasons for what is going on, for example interpreting why the present situation exists and how it impacts participants through a specific training and equipping programme. Normative task – *What ought to be going on?* The researcher views the Bible as the authoritative and the normative standard. This provides the basis for evaluating what is going on and suggesting appropriate responses and feedback. Relevant biblical principles were applied to the situation of the youth in rural areas and communities in South Africa. Pragmatic task – *How might we respond?* An interpretation of the situational and normative data, suggests and provides a tool for churches that help them reach the youth and communities who are struggling with the mentioned multiple challenges. It is envisaged that this will impact and influence the current situation and lead towards desirable outcomes for the youth and communities in these rural areas.

The focus of this article is on the normative as well the pragmatic task. The model of Osmer used in the present study correlate with other models such as that of Zerfass (1974), Browning and Van der Ven (1993), Heitink (1999), Lotter (2007) and Swinton and Mowat (2007). These models help missionaries and practical theologians understand and gain insight in the lives of people to whom they are ministering (Lotter 2007).

The phenomenon that was explored and described was about the evaluating of the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme from a Missiological perspective to its significance and effectiveness as a possible tool for churches in reaching the youth and communities in rural areas. The context of this study is within the Christiana District with the participants (farm workers) who attended the LIFEPLAN® training in the various farms in this region. Here, the LIFEPLAN® programme was

offered to ten (10) different farms for approximately 486 participants (farm workers) (Nieuwoudt 2013).

3.2 Research method

The method of research used to gather data was a quantitative design (questionnaires) involving 151 participants (farm workers).

3.3 Permission to conduct research

Permission to conduct the quantitative research with participants was granted by the following stakeholders: Research Committee of the Faculty of Theology, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee, the municipality of Christiana, the police department in Christiana and the individual participants and managers who partook in the study. Permission was granted by the individual participants and managers through informed consent (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi & Wright 2010). Letters was written to each participant and manager in the broader Christiana District explaining the study. Thereafter each participant and manager were requested to sign a consent form that they would partake in the research voluntary.

3.4 Sample

The researcher attempted to explore the personal experiences of participants (farm workers), using questionnaires.

3.4.1 Sampling

Participants (farm workers) were selected since they were trained and equipped with the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping programme.

3.4.2 Sample size

The participants (farm workers) for the quantitative research (questionnaires) were 151 in total.

3.5 Data gathering

The researcher and the coordinator for the various farms identified the participants (farm workers) from the selected farms in the Christiana District. They were contacted telephonically, and an appointment made

for the time and place where questionnaires were going to be completed. Factors were discussed beforehand such as anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, risks, withdrawal and even possible termination (Botma *et al.* 2010).

The quantitative research consisted of five questions (i.e. general well-being, 10 sub-questions; relationships, self-image and self-esteem development, 10 questions; emotions, 10 questions; quality of life, 16 questions and spiritual well-being, 12 questions). These questions and sub-questions were formulated from the themes of the LIFEPLAN® programme. The researcher also conducted a pilot study testing the questionnaires with 5 participants in each of the identified populations. The data were found to be usable and were included in the total data set.

3.6 Data analysis

The quantitative research (questionnaires) were analysed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The data are presented in tables and figures.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the research process

Trustworthiness of the quantitative study was ensured by adhering to the ethical considerations described below.

3.8 Ethical considerations

3.8.1 Informed consent

Before the research commenced the researcher approached the various farms, participants (farm workers) and farm managers, and explained their crucial involvement and participation. Thereafter, the researcher held different meetings with the participants and farm managers where he explained to them the letter and consent as vital proof of their permission to be part of this valuable study. The researcher also explained the ethical considerations and provided participants with information on the purpose of the research, its procedure, and general details about the protection of confidentiality).

3.8.2 Right to self-determination

The right to self-determination is based on the ethical principle of respect for people. In this regard, the researcher treated all participants as autonomous agents who have personal freedom and rights. The researcher also informed co-researchers about the proposed study and that their participation was completely voluntary. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without a penalty (Brink 2007).

3.8.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher handled participants' information confidentially. This was done by protecting their anonymity after participants had given the necessary authorisation for the researcher to use and disclose their personal information (Strydom & Delpont 2004).

3.8.4 Privacy

The researcher respected each participant's right to privacy, especially when they shared highly personal information. He also ensured that the participants' names were not be mentioned as part of their responses.

3.8.5 Right to fair treatment

The researcher treated all participants fair and with dignity, whether they were young or older (Burns & Grove 2005).

4. Results of the research

4.1 Introduction

This article discusses data collected from the quantitative research (questionnaires). The data is presented by way of figures and tables. Based on the findings, this article evaluates the LIFEPLAN® programme in terms of its critique. This article used a quantitative approach involving participants of the various farms in the Christiana District in South Africa.

4.2 Results of the quantitative research

4.2.1 Demographic information: Gender and age

In the present study both male and females participated in the research. This information is presented in table 1 below.

Table 1: Gender

| Gender | N | % |
|--------|-----|------|
| Male | 87 | 57.6 |
| Female | 64 | 42.4 |
| Total | 151 | 100 |

From table 1 above it appears that 23 more male participants participated in the quantitative research (questionnaires). The male participants were the dominant group with 57.6% against the 42.4% of female participants. This is demonstrated by table 2 below.

Table 2: Age

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. deviation |
|-----|-----|---------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Age | 151 | 21 | 62 | 35.81 | 10.407 |

The age according to table 2 above is 21 years minimum and 62 years maximum. The youngest participant was 21 years old and the oldest 62 years old. Average age of participants was 35.8 years old.

4.2.2 General well-being

This specific question in the questionnaire investigated the effect of the LIFEPLAN® programme on the general well-being of participants. Participants had to indicate whether they disagree (1), slightly agree (2) or strongly agree (3) on the questions regarding the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping programme. The results can be seen in table 3 below.

Table 3: General well-being

| Questions | Disagree | Slightly agree | Strongly agree |
|-------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| Bright | 3.3% | 11.9% | 84.8% |
| Satisfied | 0.7% | 14.7% | 84.7% |
| Future | 2.0% | 12.1% | 85.9% |
| Right track | 1.3% | 11.4% | 87.2% |
| Failure | 2.7% | 14.0% | 83.3% |
| Interest | 2.7% | 8.7% | 88.7% |

| Questions | Disagree | Slightly agree | Strongly agree |
|--------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| Clear goals | 0.7% | 17.9% | 81.5% |
| Good relationships | 2.0% | 11.3% | 86.7% |
| Fun | 2.0% | 10.8% | 87.2% |
| Strength | 3.3% | 6.6% | 90.1% |

From table 3 above about general well-being only 3.3% of the participants disagreed that their life seems brighter after the LIFEPLAN® programme; 11.9% slightly agreed against the 84.8% who strongly agree that their life seems brighter after the training programme. Participants indicated further that their life is on the right track (87.2%), full of interest (88.7%), enjoying good relationships (86.7%), and their life is so much fun (87.2%) after the programme. It is significant that 90.1% (strongly agree) and 6.6% (slightly agree) indicated that they find strength in their faith and spiritual beliefs after the programme was presented.

4.2.3 Relationships, self-image and self-esteem development

On the questions of relationships, self-image and self-esteem development, participants indicated not at all (1), somewhat (moderately) (2) and certainly (3) on their answers. The results are presented in table 4 below.

Table 4: Relationships, self-image and self-esteem

| Questions | Not at all (1) | Somewhat (moderately) (2) | Certainly (3) |
|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Positively | 4.0% | 14.7% | 81.3% |
| Emotional | 5.3% | 15.9% | 78.8% |
| Solutions | 2.0% | 19.9% | 78.1% |
| Hobbies | 4.6% | 27.8% | 67.5% |
| Unpleasant | 2.0% | 16.0% | 82.0% |
| Something good | 4.6% | 15.2% | 80.1% |
| Feeling sad | 3.3% | 16.0% | 80.7% |
| New friends | 8.6% | 21.2% | 70.2% |
| Getting friends | 6.0% | 21.2% | 72.8% |
| Pray or meditate | 0.7% | 11.9% | 87.4% |

According to table 4 above regarding participants' relationships, self-image and self-esteem, 81.3% was very positive about themselves in contrast to the 4.0% who were not and 14.7% who were moderately positive about themselves. From the 151 participants, 78.8% indicated that they get emotional support from their family and friends, and 82.0% mentioned that they take their mind off unpleasant thoughts. Most participants (80.7%) keep themselves from feeling sad. It is further striking that 70.2% of participants indicated that they make new friends, whereas 8.6% do not, and 21.2% make new friends moderately. It is also significant that 87.4% of the participants pray or meditate when they have a problem against the .7% who do not, and 11.9% who moderately pray or meditate when they experience a problem.

4.2.4 Emotions

On the questions of emotions, participants have indicated never (1), once or twice (2) and almost every day (3). These were their responses on their feelings in the past three months after the LIFEPLAN® programme was implemented. The results regarding the emotions are presented in table 5 below.

Table 5: Emotions

| Questions | Never (1) | Once or twice (2) | Almost every day (3) |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Satisfied | 1.3% | 26.0% | 72.7% |
| Interested | 0.0% | 11.9% | 88.1% |
| Happy | 1.4% | 15.5% | 83.1% |
| Important | 7.3% | 37.3% | 55.3% |
| Community | 9.4% | 24.8% | 65.8% |
| Better place | 6.0% | 18.7% | 75.3% |
| Direction/meaning | 3.4% | 7.4% | 89.2% |
| Basically good | 5.4% | 28.9% | 65.8% |
| Personality | 1.3% | 4.0% | 94.7% |
| Society | 6.0% | 29.8% | 64.2% |

In table 5 above, 88.1% of the participants indicated that they feel interested in life, almost every day, against the 11.9% who feel interested in life, once or twice. Most of the participants (83.1%) asserted that they felt happy in the past three months, and 55.3% feel almost every day they have something important to contribute to society. This contrasts with the 37.3% who had this feeling once or twice. It is evident that most participants (65.8%) felt that they belong to a community, whereas only 9.4% never felt that way.

From the 151 participants, 75% remarkably indicated that they feel their society and communities are becoming a better place to live with other people, against the 6.0% who never feel that way. Significantly, 89% of participants feel that their life has a sense of direction or meaning, against the 3.4% who do not feel that way. It is also striking that 97.7% of the participants indicated that they liked most parts of their personality, in contrast to the mere 1.3% who did not.

4.2.5 Quality of life

On these questions, participants have indicated aspects such as health, self-image, goals, money, learning, helping others, love and friend as the most important elements in the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping programme. In this case, participants had to gauge the elements as not important (1), important (2) and very important (3). The results are presented in table 6 below.

Table 6: Quality of life

| Questions | Not important (1) | Important (2) | Very important (3) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Important health | 1.3% | 11.3% | 87% |
| Satisfied health | 2.0% | 11.9% | 86.1% |
| Important self-esteem and self-image | 2.0% | 10.6% | 87.4% |
| Satisfied self-esteem and self-image | 2.7% | 10.0% | 87.3% |
| Important goals and values | .7% | 11.3% | 88.1% |

| Questions | Not important (1) | Important (2) | Very important (3) |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Satisfied goals and values | 1.3% | 21.2% | 77.5% |
| Important money | 0.7% | 17.2% | 82.1% |
| Satisfied money | 4.0% | 44.7% | 51.3% |
| Important learning | 1.3% | 7.4% | 91.3% |
| Satisfied learning | 1.3% | 17.2% | 81.5% |
| Important helping others | 0.0% | 17.9% | 82.1% |
| Satisfied helping others | 2.6% | 10.6% | 86.8% |
| Important love | 0.0% | 9.3% | 90.7% |
| Satisfied loving others | 0.0% | 15.2% | 84.8% |
| Important friends | 2.6% | 43.0% | 54.3% |
| Satisfied friends | 0.0% | 40.4% | 59.6% |

From table 6 above the focus falls on the four core aspects for quality of life, namely health, money, learning and helping others, seeing that these form the fundamental and basic foundation of the LIFEPLAN® programme. Of the 151 participants, 87% indicated health is very important, against the 1.3% who claimed that it is not important. As many as 86.1% confirmed that they are satisfied with their health, whereas 2.0% were very dissatisfied. Regarding money, 82.1% of the participants indicated that money is important, in contrast to the 0.7% who indicated that it is not important. Only 4.0% of the participants indicated that they are very dissatisfied with the money they have, against the 51.3% who indicated that they are very satisfied with the money they have.

Remarkably, 91.3% of the participants indicated that learning is very important, whereas only 1.3% indicated that it is not important. Surprisingly, regarding the question of helping others no participant indicated that it is not important. From the 151 participants, 82.1% indicated very important and 17.9% indicated that it is important to help others. Participants were

also very satisfied (86.8%) in helping others, against the 2.6% who were very dissatisfied in helping others.

4.2.6 *Spiritual well-being*

This specific question was based on the importance of God, one’s relationship and one’s faith in Him. Participants differentiated in their responses as follows: not at all (1), somewhat (2) and certainly (3). This is indicated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Spiritual well-being

| Questions | Not at all (1) | Somewhat (moderately) (2) | Certainly (3) |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Loves and cares | .7% | 3.3% | 96.0% |
| Who am I? | 1.3% | 3.3% | 95.3% |
| Impersonal | 63.5% | 14.9% | 21.6% |
| Personally | 6.0% | 6.7% | 87.2% |
| Personal strength | 54.7% | 20.0% | 25.3% |
| Problems | .7% | 9.9% | 89.4% |
| Relationship | 46.4% | 13.2% | 40.4% |
| Feel lonely | 2.7% | 4.7% | 92.6% |
| Well-being | 2.6% | 7.3% | 90.1% |
| Purpose | 2.0% | 4.0% | 94.0% |
| Ancestral spirits | 27.8% | 21.9% | 50.3% |
| Traditional healers | 47.7% | 17.2% | 35.1% |

In table 7 above, questions 3; 5; 7; 11 and 12 about God is impersonal: they do not get personal strength and support from God; do not enjoy a relationship with God. In these responses, ancestral spirits and traditional healers are indicated low, while questions 1; 2; 4; 6; 8; 9 and 10 indicated high.

It is notable that 96% of the participants indicated that they believe God loves them and cares about them, against the 0.7% who do not believe this at all. However, is it disappointing that 21.6% believe that God is impersonal and not interested in them, in contrast to the 63.5% who do not believe

this at all; and 14.9% who moderately believe that God is not interested in their life. Even regarding personal strength and support from God, 25.3% indicated that they certainly do not get it from God, against the 54.7% who do not agree.

However, from the 151 participants, it is comforting that 95.3% indicated they know who they are and where they came from, which is a central theme in the LIFEPLAN® programme. Participants also indicated that 87.2% of them have a personally meaningful relationship with God, in contrast to a mere 6% who do not have a relationship and 6.7% who moderately have a relationship. About God being concerned with their problems, 89.4% indicated that God is, whereas the 0.7% believe God is not and 9.9% who moderately believe God is interested. It is further overwhelming to see that 90.1% indicated that their relationship with God contributes to their sense of well-being, and 94% who believe that there is a real purpose for their life.

In contrast with the above, 50.3% honour, worship and ask blessings from their ancestral spirits (badimos), against 27.8% who do not and 21.9% who moderately do. The same scenario occurred regarding the traditional healers (sangomas and inyangas): 35.1% indicated they consult them for advice about their life and future, against the 47.7% who do not and 17.2% who moderately do that. In general, seemingly, for a number of the participants' spirituality is not as important as the other aspects.

4.2.7 Reliability and descriptive of factors

Regarding reliability and descriptive factors, Cronbach's alpha was indicated in percentages. All sub-scales were reliable; therefore, it was possible to calculate the sub- scales. The spiritual factor was divided into twoaspects due to the different belief systems of the participants. The first aspect was taken as the participants' Christian perspective and the second aspect their ancestral perspective. The reliability and descriptive factors are presented in table 8 below.

Table 8: Reliability and descriptive factors

| Descriptive factors | Cronbach’s alpha | Mean | Std. deviation |
|---|------------------|------|----------------|
| Well-being | 0.719 | 2.83 | .252 |
| Relationships, self-image and self-esteem development | 0.726 | 2.73 | .280 |
| Emotions | 0.677 | 2.71 | .261 |
| Quality of life | 0.793 | 2.78 | .223 |
| Spirituality (God) | 0.620 | 2.71 | .276 |
| Spirituality (spirits) | 0.725 | 2.05 | .780 |

From table 8 above, it was clear that the following factors were close to a 3-point scale: well-being (2.83); relationships (2.73); emotions (2.71); quality of life (2.78); and spirituality (God) (2.71). These factors were marked very important, very satisfied and certainly for participants. Spirituality (spirits) (2.05), however, measured on a 2-point scale, which was indicated as moderately or somewhat important to participants.

4.2.8 Correlations between the descriptive factors

Table 9 below indicates the correlations that were found between die descriptive factors.

Table 9: Correlations between descriptive factors

| Descriptive | Age | Well-being | Relationships | Emotions | Quality of life |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------------|---------------|----------|-----------------|
| Well-being Correlation coefficient | 0.072 | 1.000 | 0.538** | 0.342** | 0.286** |
| Relationships Correlation coefficient | 0.173* | 0.538** | 1.000 | 0.534** | 0.506** |
| Emotions Correlation coefficient | 0.195* | 0.342** | 0.534** | 1.000 | 0.609** |

| Descriptive | Age | Well-being | Relationships | Emotions | Quality of life |
|---|--------|------------|---------------|----------|-----------------|
| Quality of life Correlation coefficient | 0.201* | 0.286** | 0.506** | 0.609** | 1.000 |
| Spiritual (God) Correlation coefficient | 0.037 | 0.192* | 0.203* | 0.049 | 0.084 |
| Spiritual Correlation (spirits) coefficient | 0.093 | 0.016 | 0.012 | 0.034 | 0.020 |

The correlations between descriptive factors in table 9 above point out high and low relations between the factors.

The following factors scored high: age and relationships (0.173*); age and emotions (0.195*); and age and quality of life (0.201*). It seems that age has a definite influence since the older participants gave higher importance to sub-scales in the research than the younger participants. This could be due to the older participants’ experience, decision-making and quality choices. Between the factors of relationships and well-being, the scores indicated 0.538**, which is high. The same applies to well-being and emotions (0.342**); and well-being and quality of life (0.286**), which also scored high. Relationships and well-being (0.538**); relationships and emotions (0.534**); and relationships and quality of life (0.506%*8) scored very high. Emotions and well-being (0.342**), emotions and relationships (0.534**) and emotions quality of life (0.609**) also scored high.

Significant relations were also found between quality of life and well-being (0.286**); quality of life and relationships (0.506**); and quality of life and emotions (0.609**). Between spirituality (God) and well-being (0.192*) and spirituality and relationships (0.203*) the scores indicated a high relation.

This means that all the above-mentioned sub-scales were inter-related. However, spiritual (spirits i.e. ancestral spirits such as badimos and

traditional healers such as sangomas and inyangas) were not correlated with any of the other factors.

4.2.9 Difference in gender

The difference in gender was measured and scored by considering the descriptive factors: well-being, relationships, emotions, quality of life and spirituality. The results are presented in table 10 below.

Table 10: Difference in gender

| Gender | N | Mean | Standard deviation | P-value | Effect size |
|------------------------|----|--------|--------------------|---------|-------------|
| Well-being | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.8255 | 0.23165 | >0.05 | 0.09 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.8514 | 0.27885 | | |
| Relationships | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.7347 | 0.27256 | >0.05 | 0.02 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.7406 | 0.29207 | | |
| Emotions | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.7020 | 0.26063 | >0.05 | 0.10 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.7281 | 0.26418 | | |
| Quality of life | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.7696 | 0.19231 | >0.05 | 0.13 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.8039 | 0.26109 | | |
| Spiritual (God) | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.6862 | 0.26456 | >0.05 | 0.15 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.7313 | 0.29213 | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|----|--------|---------|-------|------|
| Spiritual (spirits) | | | | | |
| 1 M | 87 | 2.0402 | 0.79321 | >0.05 | 0.03 |
| 2 F | 64 | 2.0625 | 0.76894 | | |

Evident from table 10 above, no significant difference was found between the male and female participants.

5. Critique and evaluation of the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme

LIFEPLAN® in its current state is effective particularly in the South African context, where 80% of the population identified themselves with the Christian faith, especially those living in poor previously-disadvantaged areas and districts of South Africa. The programme was developed only to be used in the context of African young people, therefore its success and effectiveness in rural areas. From the 151 participants who participated in the LIFEPLAN® training, 90% and more indicated that they experienced a positive significance from the programme in their lives. However, LIFEPLAN® do not deal effectively and explicitly with the fundamental aspect of spirituality (cf. Bonthuys et al. 2011). It was only when a missional approach was applied in presenting of the programme that a strong spiritual significance had emerged. From the empirical research, it was clear that spirituality is not that important to a number of participants in the Christiana District. The programme may not have the same significance and effectiveness in other countries with a different religious demographic context than the Christian faith. Therefore, the programme was not tested nor placed within other contexts to measure its effectiveness and significance in an urban context. It should also be adapted for other developing countries, and even First-World countries such as the Netherlands, Portugal, or Brazil.

The programme was not tested in the *Two-Thirds World*, *Three-Fourths World* and *majority world* in Africa, such as the main Southern African states where it may be beneficial. This reason is that LIFEPLAN® is based on Christian as well as general living values. The feedback and results received

from the LIFEPLAN® programme were not all positive. Some of the results stated the following: “LIFEPLAN® taught me nothing”, “I learn nothing from the programme”.

The question remains whether LIFEPLAN® can be effective within a context where participants show higher levels of literacy. The current programme was designed, developed and compiled to support participants who are under-developed, unemployed, illiterate, semi-literate. They are trained and developed to become skilled, self-sustainable, independent and hard-working to direct their own lives. The programme may develop more guidelines and a training manual for facilitators of the programme. In such a manual the underlying philosophical goals and expected outcomes must be explained in more detail to motivate the facilitators in their presentation of the programme. In contextualising the programme, it may be necessary to consider the different learning styles of people from diverse backgrounds, i.e. *field dependent* and *field independent* learning styles².

6. Limitation of the study

An obvious limitation to the study includes the fact that the traditional LIFEPLAN® programme was not applied on the control groups, it was only applied to the experimental groups. This was a great lack in the study.

7. Findings

It is significant that more than 90% of the participants strongly agreed that they do find their strength in their faith and spiritual beliefs. Most of them pray or meditate when they are confronted with problem situations as

2 When adding the findings of educational psychologists who are concerned with describing *how* people learn through behaviour, two learning styles emerge, which appear to correspond well to the functions of the left and right-brain. Based on the social environment preferred by each style of learning, these two basic learning styles are called “field-independent” and “field-dependent”. The field-independent learners “approach their tasks analytically, separating the elements. They pay close attention to internal referents and are less influenced by social factors” (Earle and Dorothy Bowen, “Contextualizing Teaching Methods in Africa,” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, July 1989, p. 272). On the other hand, field-dependent learners “approach situations ‘globally,’ that is, they see the whole instead of the parts. They rely on external referents to guide them in processing information. They have a social orientation.

pointed out to the effectiveness of the programme. It must be considered that wider cultural issues impact the lives of people, including racial and ethnic traditions, inter-racial conflict, gender, equality, discrimination against people because of sexual preference, and issues related to technological and post-industrial economic changes. An important Christian characteristic or biblical guideline is to help others, which more than 87% of the participants indicated as important to them. Also significant in this study, is the fact that a similar percentage of participants (87%) indicated that they do have a personally meaningful relationship with God and that this relationship contributes to their sense of well-being, as enhanced by the LIFEPLAN® programme. In contrast to this relationship toward the Christian faith, is more than 50% of the participants indicated that they honour, worship and ask blessings from their ancestral spirits such as the badimos, sangomas and inyangas. Irrespective of this outcome, LIFEPLAN®, may function as a *buffer* against the challenges and problematic issues that most of the participants (farm workers) face and it may be of service to churches and Christian ministries for possible future interventions to deal further with the challenges such as ancestral spirits (badimos) and traditional healers (sangomas and inyangas) helping them enhance more outreach in the current South African society.

8. Conclusion

From the empirical investigation (quantitative research) it was found that the participants (farm workers) comprehend the essence of the descriptive factors that LIFEPLAN® pointed out. These were, namely general well-being, relationships, self-image, self-esteem development, emotions, quality of life and spiritual well-being. Hence, the practical aim of theology in the LIFEPLAN® programme is to make informed interventions about the lives of people who are facing life transitions, stresses and crises. Furthermore, the LIFEPLAN® programme may provide a significant opportunity for the North-West University to partner with churches, schools and other community structures to transform broken communities, youth challenges in rural areas, but more research and community interventions are needed. Nonetheless, the LIFEPLAN® Training and Equipping Programme

appeared to have significant and positive effects on the participants (farm workers).

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