

# Experiences of Juvenile Offender Learners in Teaching and Learning Support in the Correctional Schools: A Wellness Perspective

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## Abstract

The study explores selected South African correctional school Juvenile offender learners' experiences regarding the support received for improving teaching and learning and wellness. The study uses qualitative interpretive approach; open-ended questionnaire involving 21 juvenile offender learners was utilized to collect data. The theoretical framework applied in the study is Ubuntu and Wellness. Ethical measures were considered before and during the study. Findings revealed that teachers use various forms of teaching and learning in order to support juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools. In addition, security official, teachers, and peers collaborate with various stakeholders to improve the wellness juvenile offender learners. The teaching and learning support meet the needs of intellectual, social, physical, emotional, spiritual and career/ occupational of juvenile offender learners. It also addresses barriers to learning, create favourable learning environment, enhance their wellness and improve their academic performances.

**Keywords:** juvenile offender learners, learning support, social, physical, emotional, career, spiritual, intellectual wellness, Ubuntu, correctional schools

## Introduction

The Department of Correctional Services in South Africa has correctional centre schools across the country which houses offenders that have increased from an average of 153000 during 2013 to 161054 by 2017 (Department of Correctional Services, 2017). In these correctional centres, 25% of the inmates are juvenile offenders. According to Badenhorst (2011) and Zenzile (2008), juvenile offenders are children who break the rules or children in conflict with the law. The Department of Correctional Services (DCS) identifies offenders of ages between 14 and 24 years as juvenile offenders (Department of Correctional Services, 2009). Moreover, the Department of Correctional Services (2009), offers education to juvenile offenders with the aim of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation encompasses a planned intervention in the form of learning and teaching, which aims to transform the juvenile offender

learners' criminality behaviour and avoid recidivism (Schmallegger & Smykla, 2009; Frantz, 2017). The criminality behaviour includes aspects such as attitudes, intellectual process, personality, morals, or human values and wellness (Department of Correctional Services, 2009).

## **Background**

Currently, the Minister of the Correctional Services in South Africa has announced that the role of correctional services is to collaborate with the institution of higher learning to support in developing meaningful learning programmes (DCS, 2018). There should be a scientifically proven risk assessment tool that is offence specific, which would effectively support learning and rehabilitate juvenile offenders. Hence, supporting them with education and skills to survive in the outside world and reduce the level of recidivism. He is following in the footsteps of the former Minister of Correctional Services Sibusiso Ndebele, who announced that primary education has to be compulsory for all offenders in the correctional centre (DCS, 2009). Since then, the DCS has increased the number of permanent correctional schools from one to 14 since from 2009 to 2014 (Davis, 2015).

The correctional school is a set of learning meant for juvenile offenders incarcerated in the correctional centre. The learning includes education in its broad sense to physical education and sports, social education, spiritual activities, cultural activities, vocational education, academic subjects as well as library services (Lobuglio, 2009). Currently, the correctional schools in South Africa offers education in different phases such as general AET level 1 to 4, Further Education and Training (FET) in Grade 10-12, and N1-N3 (Department of Correctional Services, 2017).

According to Costelloe and Langelid (2011), juvenile offender learners face institutional and situational barriers imposed by their confinement. Despite the type or quality of education and training on offer in the correctional school, the juvenile offender learners encounter situational barriers that are of external factors, which are often beyond their control. such as correctional centre systems (Scurrah, 2010). The institutional barriers are the practices and procedures of the institution that prevent or discourage juvenile offenders from participating in education (Francis, 2010). For example, this might involve dealing with application processes of appeal by juvenile offender learners (Braggins & Talbot, 2006). Because of these situational and institutional barriers, juvenile offender learners have little personal power to change the organisation and have very little self-sufficiency. As a result, they are reliant on the system to provide for all their needs and learning support (Scurrah, 2010). For this reason, the support of learning and improvement of wellness for juvenile offender learners must be inclusive in the correctional centre school. This study had intended to explore and determine the experiences of learning support of juvenile offender learners in the correctional centres.

Within the correctional education setting, support involves assistance, strength, help or encouragement rendered to juvenile offender learners to improve teaching and learning. Moreover, support implies to empower them to learn optimally, realise their potential of being rehabilitated, and enhance wellness (Dzulkipli & Yasin, 2010). Support may come from different sources such as family, friends, teachers, community, or any social groups directed to developing supportive learning environments, eradication of learning barriers and improving quality and effectiveness of teaching activities. Support can come in the form of intangible assistance provided by others when needed which includes the appraisal of different situations, effective coping strategies and emotional support (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007). For this study, education support structures and services directed to juvenile learners are referred to as learning support.

Mangena (2016) asserts that to ensure successful learning support, correctional schools have to collaborate with various support structures to support juvenile learners holistically to improve the quality of learning and wellness. Etieyibo (2014), also reiterates that collaboration in learning support promotes social cohesion between juvenile learners, the schools and the community members at large (Etieyibo, 2014). Hence, correctional schools, the teachers, communities and all other stakeholders can put their resources together to help and support juvenile learners to learn, rehabilitate, and promote their wellness (Boderick, 2015; Mulaudzi, 2014). To provide learning support for teaching and learning is an essential strategy for the correctional schools to recognise and address several learning barriers; and creating a conducive environment for effective teaching that enhance juvenile learners' academic performance, social, emotional, spiritual, physical and career wellness (Moore & Mokhele, 2017).

Research conducted in correctional schools by Magano (2015), revealed that adequate support for teaching and learning could indirectly enhance the wellness of juvenile learners. Wellness is defined as an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward a more successful existence (Hettler, 1984). The wellness model consists of six-dimensions, namely, physical, emotional, spiritual, social, occupational, and intellectual wellness. Providing learning support to juvenile offender learners is crucial since it has a link to academic achievement, promote wellness, rehabilitate, and avoid recidivism. For this reason, teachers, security officers, correctional management, families, and community, collectively support juvenile offender learners through teaching and learning has a wide range of benefits in enhancing six-wellness dimension.

### **Problem statement**

The majority of research has been conducted on various topics on juvenile education. However, juvenile offender learners' experiences of learning support and enhancement of wellness in the correctional schools are minimal. Although juvenile offender learners are a commonly studied issue, researchers have not fully paid

attention to the degree to which challenges did the juvenile learners' experience in accessing and utilising the support structure services they were offered. Hence, learning support and wellness achievement of a juvenile offender learner occurs within the constructed environment of a learner (Hollingsworth, 2009).

However, little is explored about the forms of learning support were received by juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools. Minimal documentation about the extent of support structures available or needed to improve the quality of learning and wellness in the environment of confinement. This study hopes to link the gap. Hence, the discussion led to the following research question of the study:

The study addressed the following Research Questions:

What are the Juvenile offender learners' experiences of learning support and enhancement of wellness in selected South African correctional schools?

What were forms of learning support received by juvenile offender learners in correctional schools?

What challenges did the juvenile offender learners experience in accessing and utilising the support structure services they were offered?

What is any other additional learning support did the juvenile learners indicated as needed to improve their wellness and quality of learning?

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework guided the study integrated Ubuntu and wellness as a lens. The wellness model developed by Hettler (1980) defines wellness as a continuous, lifelong process of striving towards the realisation of one's full potential, more successful existence and enhances quality life. The wellness model consists of six dimensions, namely, intellectual, emotional, physical, social, spiritual, and career wellness. These six dimensions of wellness intertwine and influence each other. For this study, the researcher focused on intellectual wellness as a lens to explore the juvenile offender learners' experiences of learning support in selected South African correctional schools. Intellectual wellness, as defined by Hettler (1980), encourages creativity, stimulates mental activities, and extends critical thinking of the juvenile learner. It promotes lifelong learning, the use of resources available within the correctional centre to expand knowledge, improving skills, focus on the achievement, development, application and potential for sharing knowledge with others beyond the classroom and the community at larger (Hettler, 1980). The model assisted the researcher in getting a deeper understanding of the context of learning support in the correctional schools and enhancement of their wellness.

The researcher also used an African lens of Ubuntu in exploring how teachers and other stakeholders collaborate and offer services of learning support to juvenile offender learners in correctional schools. Ubuntu is an African philosophy that emphasises 'being human through other people'. It is a way of life and impacts on

every aspect of people's wellbeing. It highlights the principle of collaboration, solidarity and teamwork with different stakeholders' such as parents, correctional centre teachers, social workers, psychologist, pastors, and community businesses to support juvenile offender learners' learning and enhance wellness (Gyekye, 2002). For this reason, the lens was appropriate in ensuring that the researcher explores learning support experienced and received by juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools.

## **Research design**

The study adopted a qualitative approach that facilitated an exploratory study to gain insight into the participants' experiences and understanding of the phenomenon investigated (Creswell, 2007). The study explored the Juvenile offender learners' experiences of learning support in selected South African correctional schools. The qualitative approach helped the researchers to describe and interpret participants' experiences, actions and events of data rather than assuming or controlling the data (Merriam, 2002). It allowed the participants to speak for themselves and maximise what could be learnt. This is supported by Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004). They state that qualitative research focuses strongly on the meaning and significance of the processes that occur in their natural setting as well as their outcomes. This qualitative approach was flexible in data collection because it allowed the researcher to be directly in the process by observing and recording events as they occurred in their natural setting (Creswell, 2007).

## **Sampling**

Sampling was purposive since only juvenile offender learners in AET level four in the correctional schools participated in the study. The researcher purposively sampled participants and settings for this study that increases understanding of the phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). This sampling is supported by Henning et al. (2004) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005). They concur that purposive sampling assumes that the researcher knows and informed about the participants suitable for the study. Participants were 21 juvenile offender learners doing AET Level 4 from the seven correctional schools selected on availability bases. The 21 participants (three from each school) aged 18 to 24 years from AET Level 4 who were attending classes, volunteered to participate and were ideal for the study. The selected correctional schools are from the four provinces in South Africa, namely: Kwazulu-Natal, Western Cape, Gauteng Province and Orange Free State Province. This distribution was also influenced by the nature of the correctional centres that contain fully-fledged schools with juvenile offender learners attending to the teaching and learning process on a full-time basis.

## **Instrument**

The researcher developed an open-ended questionnaire as a research instrument for data collection. The participants preferred to write their answers confidentially not to participate in interviews. The questions covered by the open-ended questionnaire were aspects such as experiences of learning in the correctional centre, the subject mostly enjoyed, learning support, wellness, academic performance, challenges experienced and other aspects that can be added to support learning. All questions were open-ended and required the participants to elaborate on their answers.

## **Data collection**

Data collection is a process of collecting information from the participants for gathering in-depth information to substantiate the research purpose and objectives (Henning et al., 2004). The study collected qualitative data on personal experiences of juvenile offender learners regarding learning support received and utilised for improving their quality of learning and enhance their wellness. Open-ended questionnaires were utilised in the data gathering process since participants were not comfortable with interviews but preferred to complete questionnaires. No name was written on the questionnaires, for ethics purposes, anonymous. Topics related to learning support and wellness of juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools was addressed. The open-ended questionnaires were conducted in English, and clarified in their language where clarity was requested. Juvenile offender learners answered questions during free periods of approximately 45 minutes.

Prior to data collection, ethical measures were considered. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of South Africa research ethics committee. Furthermore, permission to conduct the study in the correctional schools was obtained from the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), and the seven principals of schools selected for the study. Before the distribution of the questionnaires, participants were provided with written information and explanation about the purpose of the study and its intention. The ethical principles of assurance of confidentiality, the anonymity of participants, voluntarily participation, informed consent and permission to withdraw at any stage of the study were explained. All the volunteered participants completed their questionnaires, and the researcher collected them.

## **Analysis of data**

Analysis of Data collected from the open-ended questionnaires; the researcher utilised steps recommended by Creswell (2007). He suggested multiple reading and reviewing of data to facilitate the initial interpretation of participants' responses. Then the researcher transcribed the data manually, wrote notes on the margins, and got the sense of what participants said. Then followed by colour coding, organising information into units, and categorised all the meanings, which were similar and grouped them. After that, categories were further collapsed into similar meaning, and the following themes emerged:

Correctional schools proffer services to learning support and wellness availability of support structures to address the learning support and enhance wellness Peer support challenges experienced by participants in accessing and utilising the learning support additional learning support participants wish to receive

## Results

The results of data analysis are presented below in terms of the themes that emerged, with supporting quotations from the open-ended questionnaires of juvenile offender learner.

### **Correctional schools proffer services to learning support and wellness**

Data analysis revealed that the correctional schools, security personnel, peer learners, teachers and various stakeholders make an effort to offer learning support to juvenile offender learners. The participants reported that the learning support received at the correctional schools meet their intellectual, social, emotional, physical, spiritual and career wellness.

The correctional centre, security personnel, and teachers collaborate with various stakeholders to support learning and enhancing the wellness of juvenile learners. Participants mentioned that the correctional centre invites their families, community members and motivational speakers to support learning and promote their wellness. Findings revealed that participants are encouraged to read, and write poems, short stories, and drawings, participate in sports activities. Besides, they indicated that to improve and sustain their mental health to achieve and succeed in learning, the correctional centre refers them to social workers and psychological service for assessment on social issues and emotional challenges.

*KZN=D/JLP 9: "SRAC weekly programme we have physical exercises on Fridays it is sports day open field.*

*KZN=C/JLP 7: "We also have NGO Khulisa it rehabilitate offenders from using drugs, behave well, religion and how to deal with anger issues."*

*GP=F/JLP 16: "We have very good physical exercise because of SRAC."*

*GP=E/JLP 14: "Available Support that promotes spiritual wellness is the invited Pastors and spiritual care."*

*WC=A/JLP 3: "We do have outside people who help."*

*FS=G/JLP 19: "We get outside business people to motivate us."*

*E/PT 8: "Educators and external services providers help in this regard."*

## Challenges experienced by participants in accessing and utilising the learning support

From the findings, participants explained that they experience challenges that hinder ample support for learning and enhancement of wellness. For addressing intellectual wellness, they mention the following as challenges experienced: inadequate and erratic time for class attendance and accessing libraries, shortage of security personnel and teachers, English language as learning barrier, violence that disrupts classes, unfavourable learning environment and lack of learning and teaching materials.

Excerpt from the transcript on learning support for addressing intellectual wellness were:

*GP=E/JLP 15: "We do not attend every day. Sometimes teachers are not available; sometimes there are fights at school we are suspended from school."*

*GP=E/JLP 13: "We attend school sometimes two weeks or a month in a term."*

*FS=G/JLP21: "Start from 9 am to 11h30 Sometimes section is closed up early, and we have to leave school for lunch early."*

*FS=G/JLP 20: "Textbooks are not available."*

*GP=F/JLP 17: "Sometimes, I do not attend because of a workshop with the social worker."*

*WC=B/JLP4: "I attend three times a week, and the other days are for the social worker."*

*KZN=C/JLP 9: "We do not write tests during the year, but we write final November exams, but we get no reports that de-motivate me. I do not perform well in English because we do not have a teacher. We have no teachers we are taught by tutors or other offenders I would like to perform well on maths because I like it."*

Findings revealed other challenges that encumber the accomplishment of learning and physical wellness as follows: Substances are not allowed, but some juvenile offender learners to smuggle substance to the correctional schools and use in the cell section.

*FS=G/JLP 19: "I like to use tobacco, I do not go playground. I like church and school work only."*

*WC=B/JLP2: "I smoke, but I hide it only does it freely at the section".*

*WC=A/JLP2: "we almost all smoke here only a few do not smoke some sell cigarettes."*

Participants indicated challenges experience that hinders learning support and career wellness such as lack of skills or training to compete for work when released back to society. For this reason, it might lead them to engage in criminal activities when released back to the community.



*FS=G/JLP 19: "Nothing, I learn nothing for a career; I do not know skills for creating a business, but there is a training centre for medium B juvenile offender learners".*

*KZN=D/JLP 11: "None skills to compete for employment after release".*

*GP=F/JLP 17: "SMME learning about running a business its only theory no practical but nothing training."*

Spiritual and emotional instability is a challenge; participants indicated that they feel undermined by gangsters; they end up taking their frustration on wrong people. They lack comfort and feel hopeless due to long sentences.

*KZN=D/JLP 10: "Feeling depressed sometimes by the other gangs, like taking frustration on wrong people, I want someone to talk to about how I feel."*

*WC=B/JLP 5: "I am encouraged to go pray but do not believe it no hope I have a long sentence here no change".*

The responses above show that juvenile offender learners lack spiritual and emotional support; it might cause resistance to change, feelings of hopelessness, self-centredness, spiritual conflicts with others and self of which it can exacerbate anxiety, anger, and depression of the juvenile offender learners.

### **Peer support**

Findings revealed that participants receive support from fellow juvenile learners in the correctional schools and the cell sections. The learning support meets their emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual and occupational wellness. The kind of support from peer learners focuses on advice, encouragement, information and motivating each other. Peer support that addresses intellectual wellness includes study groups, peer tutors when in class, assistance from peer mentoring in cell sections.

*GP=E/JLP 15: "... taught by tutors or other senior offenders.*

*KZN=D/JLP5: "When we have no teachers, we are taught by tutors or other offenders."*

*WC=B/JLP 6: "To be one society helps when I do not understand in class, I ask my friends, and when other people provoke me, my friends help me. It is tough here without friends."*

*GP=E/JLP 14: "my friends help and show me to write a correct CV and set goals and plan for a better life when I am released."*

Peer support that addresses emotional and social wellness includes sharing information and assisting each other on personal needs.

*GP=F/JLP 16: "our relationships with a peer are good, and we help each other very well."*

*KZN=C/JLP9: "I respect others so that can respect me. I respect them because they help me with other things.*

*KZN=D/JLP 12: "... I open up to my friends when I have problems. In my conflicts, I tell someone to help."*

*WC=B/JLP5: "Social support protects me from being bullied and gangsters here. I ask my friends to help me when I face problems in class."*

*WC=A/JLP3: "Support provided by friend assists me to cope with stress in various situations I face here in the centre."*

Support from the peer to address physical and spiritual wellness, participants mentioned that they motivate each other not to use substances, encouragement to eat healthy meal and exercise always. In addition, they support by singing melodious songs together, inspire each other through inspirational messages that give hope, comfort and spiritual uplift, and that help them to cope eventually improve their learning.

*GP=F/JLP 17: "I play sports and exercise with my buddies. We eat healthy, three meals, and vegetable soup. No substances are used."*

*WC=A/JLP 3: "Singing heals me sometimes we sing with my cellmates in the section, I always feel inspired, have hope and better."*

### **Support structures to address the learning support and enhance wellness**

Results of the study from the seven correctional schools revealed similar responses to their support structures that enhance learning and wellness. Lack of support structure is one of the factors that impede the effectiveness of learning and promoting wellness of juvenile offender learners. However, in this study, findings discovered that available learning support structures include the support from a psychologist, social workers, doctors, and or Non-Governmental Organisations to enhance intellectual, physical, social, emotional, spiritual and occupational/career wellness. The findings revealed that the support structure to strengthen intellectual wellness of juvenile offender learners in the seven schools in the Department of Basic Education in providing them with curriculum (CAPS) document, Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) and assessment of final examinations for AET level 4.

*WC=B/JPL6: "end of the year, I am going to write my final exam externally from the department of education."*

*WC=A/JPL2: "I have registered with the department of education for level 4 if I pass my exams, I get a certificate."*

*KZN=C/JLP 14: "I have joined book club reading for fun and competitions."*

The results showed that the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) provides support for effective learning by escort juvenile learners from the cell section to the classrooms. The DCS create a productive and conducive learning environment by assigning security officers to maintain order and discipline when learners attend classes.

GP=E/JPL9: *“warden safeguard, keep order and discipline while we are learning during lessons in class.”*

Participants mentioned the support structures for meeting social, emotional, physical, occupational/career, spiritual wellness, received in various forms improves their learning, understanding of subjects, motivate, up-lift their spirits, improve their self-esteem, make them work harder, assist in preparing them for examination and in achieving better results. Excerpts from the collected data on learning support were as follows:

GP=F/JLP 17: *“...support from Social worker and psychologist they help us a lot.”*

GP=F/JLP 18: *“Psychologist helps me when I have mental problems.”*

FS=G/JLP 20: *“My relationship with family is well; only mother and little brother they keep on visiting me.”*

FS=G/JLP 20: *“Support structures are teachers, Social workers and other people outside.”*

GP=F/JLP 17: *“SRAC helps in playing sports and exercise ... has enough equipment for soccer. When we need soccer balls and boots, Mark Fish supports us.”*

GP=F/JLP 18: *“Support structures that promote physical wellness are celebrity players from outside come to play with us here.”*

FS=G/JLP 21: *“... Nurses come to check and give me treatment for TB and HIV every time.”*

WC=B/JLP5: *“Entrepreneurs and Business owners from the communities come to motivate us about the importance of starting our own business when we released back to the community.”*

GP=E/JLP 15: *“I attended Anger Management courses for seven days from the NGO.”*

WC=A/JLP2: *“Now and then pastors come here to preach, pray and teach us to meditate so that we cope and release anger, learn to ask forgiveness from others and respect people.”*

### **Additional support participants wish to receive**

From the seven schools, findings indicated that participants wish to receive adequate learning support to improve their teaching and learning and enhance the intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and career wellness. Additional support they wish to receive includes enough supply of learning and teaching material, extra time for learning in schools and accessing libraries, feedback from their examinations regularly. Moreover, to deal with physical wellness, they wish to have enough guards to escort them to the sports field, extra sports activities and coaches. Besides, they wish to receive more spiritual services and social workers to address their social needs and more time for consulting psychologist to address their emotional, personal

needs and problems. To improve learning support on career wellness, they mentioned the wish to receive more lessons on practical or hands-on lessons than theory. They need practical training on skills such as electrician, building or carpentry, and assistance in learning to start their own business after their release.

GP=F/JLP 18: *"We need textbooks and stationery because it is difficult without."*

FS=G/JLP 20: *"I want resources to support learning such as calculators, textbooks for maths,"*

WC=B/JPL5: *"I could pass if I had textbooks for my subjects."*

GP=F/JLP 18: *"... I ask extra time from teachers and correctional management to do the activity in class."*

WC=A/JLP 1: *"I have many activities to write, but I fail to finish in class, so I want extra time at school."*

GP=E/JLP 15: *"We don't write tests during the year, but we write final November exams, but we get no reports that de-motivate me. I wish to get my report every quarter."*

GP=F/JLP 17: *"I want to pray more, meditate and singing songs for comfort and read uplifting spiritual verses for inspiration."*

KZN=D/JLP 12: *"I want to have building or carpentry or electrician courses."*

WC=A/JLP 2: *"I know to write my CV, but I don't have work experience or training to work. I want to be electrician; I will train when I pass level 4".*

GP=E/JLP 13: *"I want to do engineering and to have a licence for a job I want to learn a new skill so that I can look for employment after release."*

GP=E/JLP 14: *"I want to learn a skill of starting a business because I want to do business at home; my dream is to open my company one day."*

From the responses above indicated, even though there is learning support in the correctional schools, the participants wish to receive adequate learning support to improve their learning and enhance wellness.

## **Discussions**

The study explored the juvenile learners' experiences of receiving and utilising the support to improve their learning and enhance wellness. The findings confirmed that Correctional schools proffer services to learning support and improve wellness. Although the focus was on the support of teaching and learning, other wellness dimensions were indirectly addressed. The forms of support facilitated active learning and met juvenile learners' intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual, physical and career wellness. These forms of learning support addressed barriers to learning, enhanced learners' self-esteem and consequently improved their academic performance and social relations. The study adopted Intellectual wellness and

Ubuntu. Intellectual wellness, as defined by Hettler (1980), encourages creativity, stimulates mental activities, and extends critical thinking of the juvenile learner. It promotes lifelong learning, the use of resources available within the correctional centre to expand knowledge, improving skills, focus on the achievement, development, application and potential for sharing knowledge with others beyond the classroom and the community at larger (Hettler, 1980). While, Ubuntu principles emphasises collaboration, solidarity and teamwork with different stakeholders' such as parents, correctional centre teachers, social workers, psychologist, pastors, and community businesses to support juvenile offender learners' learning and enhance wellness (Gyekye, 2002). The findings of the study indicated that learning support could be effectively achieved through collaboration with various stakeholders to support learning.

The results indicated that even in the contexts that are not necessarily well resourced with learning and teaching support material, participants experienced the correctional schools and teachers able to collaborate with various support structures to support them holistically to improve the quality of learning and wellness. This is evident in participants' reports of support structures to address learning support and enhance wellness. These findings are in line with the literature of Mangena (2016). He urges that through Ubuntu principles, communities, and all other stakeholders can put their resources together to help and support juvenile learners to learn, rehabilitate, and promote their wellness.

Although challenges have been highlighted, participants also emphasised the availability of support structures from the various stakeholders such as a psychologist, social workers, doctors, and or Non-Governmental Organisations as significant in the effectiveness of learning support and promoting wellness. The findings concur with Etieyibo (2014), who reiterates that collaboration in learning support promotes social cohesion between juvenile learners, the schools and the community members at large (Etieyibo, 2014). For this reason, the correctional schools need to collaborate with the communities and various stakeholders to support the learning of juvenile learners.

The assistance from the teachers to arrange peer support such as study groups, peer tutors and peer mentors as reported by participants in the study, motivates and encourages the support of active learning and enhances social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual wellness. The findings are in line with Ubuntu principles that embrace sharing of knowledge, strength and expertise to support juvenile learners to engage in meaningful discussions amongst themselves and motivating each other to learn (Mulaudzi, 2014). Furthermore, a study by Etieyibo (2014) has shown that peer support promotes team spirit practise in correctional schools and reduce socio-emotional distress or disengagement in education.

Findings revealed challenges experience that hinders learning support and career wellness such as lack of skills or training to compete for work when released back to

society. Lack of learning support that enhances career wellness might lead them to criminal activities when released back to the community. The findings of the current study coincide with what Boderick (2015) says, that some juvenile offender learners have poor job skills, low education and a poor employment record, which is why they ended up imprisoned. Therefore, it is crucial to create sufficient learning environment for career/ occupational wellness to support and teach learners skills and knowledge to start their own business and be positive to find work after release.

From the findings participants mentioned, they experience challenges that hinder ample support for learning and enhancement of wellness. Aspects that impede successful learning support such as inadequate and erratic time for class attendance and accessing libraries, violence that disrupts classes, unfavourable learning environment, shortage of security personnel and teachers, English language as learning barrier, and lack of learning and teaching support materials are a barrier to teaching and learning. The findings of this study are similar to the research by Magano (2015), who also discovered similar results that correctional schools experience various disturbances regarding teaching and learning. While Moore and Mokhele (2017) articulate that effective learning takes place in a favourable environment; however, the study discovered contrary results. Juvenile offender learners who live in fear of gangsters, bullying and anger for being in the correctional setting, they experience immense psychological strain and emotional pain, which have adverse outcomes in learning support (Moore & Mokhele, 2017).

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study revealed evidence that juvenile offender learners received and used various forms of learning and teaching support from their correctional schools, teachers, security official, peers and collaboration various stakeholders to improve their learning and wellness. The Ubuntu principle shown by the teachers and peer tutors in the correctional schools yielded positive outcomes. The learning support assisted in meeting juvenile offender learners' academic, social, physical, emotional, spiritual and career needs by addressing barriers to learning, creating a conducive environment, enhancing their wellness and improves their academic performances. These support systems need to be fostered and encouraged by the authorities in the Department of Correctional Services and the Department of Basic Education. As regards to challenges associated with the inadequate supply of learning and teaching material, extra time for learning in schools and accessing libraries, feedback from their examinations regularly, participants explained that they struggled. The recommendations here are for the correctional school authorities to add extra time for learning, employ more guards to escort them regularly to classes and sports field for additional sports activities. Also, the researcher feels that there is a need for more lessons on practical or hands-on lessons than theory because participants indicated that they need learning support on practical training of skills such as electrician,

building or carpentry, and assistance in learning to start their own business after their release and to avoid recidivism.

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