

# The Support of Juvenile Offender Learners in Correctional Centre Schools: A Spiritual Wellness Perspective

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## Abstract

This qualitative, phenomenological study, explore the support of juvenile offender learners in correctional schools from a spiritual wellness perspective. The study aimed to explore ways in which supporting juvenile offender learners' spiritual wellness can enhance teaching and learning, rehabilitate, and reduce recidivism. Twenty-one juvenile offender learners and seven teachers were selected from seven correctional schools in South Africa on the bases of availability and willingness. The study intergraded Ubuntu and spiritual wellness frameworks as a lens to understand the current study. Findings revealed that teachers support juvenile learners' spiritual wellness and it enhances teaching and learning, thus, resulted in a positive behavioural change of the juvenile offender learners. The study recommends that teachers and security official be trained on how to identify the spiritual challenges of juvenile learners and address them in order to improve their learning and rehabilitate. The DCS can do this through collaboration with various stakeholders who have knowledge and expertise in the spiritual wellness scope.

**Keywords:** spiritual wellness, support, moral values, recidivism, rehabilitation, juvenile offender learner, correctional schools

## Introduction

In South Africa, the Department of Correctional Services offers education to juvenile offender learners with the aim of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is meant to reform and remoulds an individual positively, to conform to societal needs, avoid criminality and to lower recidivism (Department of Correctional Services, 2008). To achieve the aims, the correctional centres have schools that offer formal and non-formal learning programmes to educate juvenile offender learners. The formal programmes are Adult Education And Training (AET) Level 1-4 where they are trained basic literacy and numeracy; FET (Grade 10- 12) where they are further enhanced in numeracy and literacy and broaden the curriculum. Thirdly is the Vocational Education. In these programmes, they are hands-on (Department of Correctional Services, 2018).

Additionally, the non-formal learning programmes include offence-focused programmes that help the juvenile learner to reduce recidivism and address issues that compelled them to commit the crime. The non-formal programmes include thinking skills, life skills, anger management, religious studies and substance abuse treatment (Hawley, Murphy & Souto- Otero, 2013). At the same time, Grayling (2012) recommends comprehensive broad-ranging concept of education such as physical education, social education, creative and cultural activities and religious programmes as essential in the correctional schools.

As declared in the Constitution of South Africa (1996), all learners are entitled to high education, relevant curriculum, appropriate assessment, equivalent and valued opportunities. Thus, correctional schools need programmes that support and strengthen rehabilitation as opposed to punishment (Schirmer, 2008). For this reason, juvenile offender learners' needs should be at the centre of teaching and learning in the correctional schools. Therefore, the study attempts to understand the role of supporting spiritual wellness in enhancing teaching and learning in the correctional schools.

According to Rasmussen, Northrup and Colson (2017), teaching and learning is a process where the teacher assesses learning needs, establishes specific learning objectives, develops teaching and learning strategies, implements plan of work and evaluates the outcomes of the instruction. Hence, the correctional schools should promote an environment that accommodates juvenile offender learners' diversity, including varied learning needs, to maximise each offender's potential, wellness and to rehabilitate. While, Magano & Ramnarain (2015) urge that teaching and learning that enhances spiritual wellness link to the achievement of learning, rehabilitation, self-discipline and reduce recidivism. For that reason, promoting spiritual wellness can enhance rehabilitation, change the lives of juvenile offenders, and bring sustainability of teaching and learning in the correctional schools (Magano & Ramnarain, 2015).

### **Support of Spiritual wellness in the correctional schools**

The support of spiritual wellness is very much crucial for juvenile offender learners in correctional schools. Studies have shown that deficits in spiritual support have many problems amongst juvenile learners and the teachers in the correctional schools. However, spiritual practices help juvenile learners to intergrades the body, mind and spirit and enhance intellectual, emotional, social and physical benefits (Myers, Sweeney & Witmer, 1998). Witmer, Sweeney and Myers (1998), from multiple disciplines, suggest wellness as a way of life oriented towards optimal health and well-being, of the body, mind, and spirit, in which the juvenile offender learners lives more fully within the community in the correctional school.

The study by McConnell, Pargament, Ellison and Flannelly (2006) highlight that lack of spiritual support causes learning barriers such as resistance to change, feelings of

hopelessness, self-centredness, ill-discipline, spiritual conflicts with others and self of which it can exacerbate anxiety, anger and depression of the juvenile offender learners. Therefore, it is essential to provide spiritual support to juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools to assist them to find purpose and meaning of their life so that they can learn and turn away from committing the crime.

Hettler (2000) elucidated that the fundamental goal of spiritual wellness is to engage juvenile offender learners in learning about the process of seeking meaning, realistic beliefs and purpose in existence (Hettler, 2000). Spiritual wellness assists them to adopt positive and appropriate morals, norms and values, and discover alternative social interactive. That includes learning to appreciate the depth and expanse of life and the universe (Frantz, 2017). Mucina (2011) also, coincides that spiritual wellness is a guiding voice that protects and guides the juvenile learner into moral ways of living, dignity, respect and pride shared with other people.

Besides, spiritual wellness has been recognised to be the foundation of equanimity in the classroom. Astin (1993) argues that equanimity is a sense of calm, peacefulness, centeredness and most importantly self-transcendence that provide juvenile learners with the ability to rise above or move beyond the limits of personal experience in the correctional schools. Thus, this study is to understand how the support of spiritual wellness could play a role in bringing about successful teaching and learning in the correctional schools.

### **Spiritual wellness enhances teaching and learning.**

Support for spiritual wellness has been recognised to have a significant impact on the academic achievement of juvenile learners. Since spiritual wellness is linked to the achievement of learning, rehabilitation, self-discipline, change the lives of juvenile offenders, and bring sustainability of teaching and learning in the correctional schools (Magano & Ramnarain, 2015). Juvenile learners who have sufficient support for spiritual wellness adopt positive and appropriate morals, which promote and maintain discipline in the classroom.

Moreover, the spiritual support received by juvenile learners could help to promote norms and values, and discover alternative social interactive, thus, helping them to interact positively, assist each other in study groups and perform well in academic life (Frantz, 2017). The idea is supported by Ballentine (2010), who asserts that learners with higher levels of spirituality have improved social relationships and coping skills in the correctional schools.

Myers, Sweeney, and Witmer (1998) also concur that spiritual wellness enhances harmony with the self and others, gives unity, that could help them excel in their studies and cope with any psychological disturbances that might be brought by being incarcerated in the correctional centre. Furthermore, it teaches juvenile offender learners to respect, live in harmony, and successfully reintegrate in the community after their release. Therefore, teachers should support spiritual wellness of juvenile

learners by educating, inculcating principles, morals, harmony, norms and values that are built upon kindness, reaching out, caring for others and ensure there is cooperation among them.

Likewise, it has been recognised that support of spiritual wellness assists juvenile learners to increase the quality of life by finding purpose, meaning, and goals in life, which is essential in successful teaching and learning in the correctional schools (Gold, 2010). It improves compassion and hope in life. It includes learning to appreciate the depth and expanse of life and the universe (Gold, 2010). On the contrary, those who are not happy with their spirituality have difficulties concentrating in the classroom and therefore, could have a decrease in academic success (Ballentine, 2010).

Moreover, in Dzulkipli and Yasin (2010) study reports that spiritual support enhances juvenile learners with high equanimity, thus, tend to get better grades in school, and are more satisfied with their overall school experience.

Furthermore, Gold (2010) advocates that support of spiritual wellness enhances understanding of peace and serenity. Thus, it assists juvenile offender learners to understand the sense of calmness, equanimity, and peacefulness and avoid conflicts with others in the classroom. It facilitates the development of positive self-conceptions and social skills, responsibility and competence and impulse control, less misconduct and less delinquency amongst learners, which would produce significant effects on academic achievement. Since supporting spiritual wellness is very much crucial to juvenile offender learners in the correctional schools, this study will also help teachers; correctional management, security personnel and families to understand their roles in helping learners to rehabilitate, improve their wellness and succeed in teaching and learning.

### **Theoretical framework**

The study is theoretically underpinned in an African lens of Ubuntu in looking at how spiritual wellness is enhanced. Mbiti (1992), Gyekye (1997), Ramose (1999) and Shutte (2001) pointed out that in African philosophy, an individual extends from family and the community they live in and a collective way of life, impacts on every aspect of people's well-being. Ubuntu as a lens posits that an individual, the family are interdependent to a community. Ubuntu places 'being human through other people'. It emphasises the principle of collaboration, solidarity and teamwork to support juvenile offender learners' wellness, with different stakeholders' such as parents, correctional centre teachers, social workers, psychologist, pastors, NGO and CBO (Gyekye, 1997). Hence, Ubuntu is applicable in supporting juvenile learners' spiritual wellness in regards to teaching and learning in the correctional centre.

I also used a wellness model by (Hettler, 2000) in looking at how is the support of juvenile offender learners' spiritual wellness in regards to the success of their teaching and learning. The wellness model has six dimensions that are intertwining,

namely, social academic, emotional, spiritual, physical and career wellness. These six dimensions of wellness influence each other. Witmer, Sweeney and Myers (1998), from multiple disciplines, suggest wellness as a way of life oriented towards optimal health and well-being, of the body, mind, and spirit, in which the juvenile offender learners lives more fully within the community. Spiritual wellness implies an understanding of own values, morals and beliefs leading to a sense of meaning or purpose and a relationship to the community as an integral part caring for another and that binds all community members together (Mulaudzi, 2014). The lens was applicable in assisting the researcher to explore how spiritual wellness can bring change and success in juvenile learners' learning and teaching while they rehabilitate and avoid crime.

### **Research Questions**

How can the support of juvenile offender learners' spiritual wellness bring change and success in the learning and teaching in the correctional schools?

What roles teachers play to support juvenile learners' wellness?

What are the support structures perceived to be supportive and effective?

### **Methodology**

The study is embedded within an interpretive paradigm to assist the researcher to get a deeper understanding and meanings of the social world that participants live in (Henning, van Ransburg & Smit, 2004). The researcher views the participants in their natural social setting because they have a better way to define and interpret their situation (Creswell, 2007). Thus, the researcher viewed the juvenile learners in correctional schools, as it is suitable for the study to explain their behaviour and lived experiences. The qualitative design was used to collect data because this method is flexible and allows the researcher to be directly involved in the research process by observing and recording the event in their natural settings. The qualitative design allows the teachers and juvenile offender learners to speak for themselves and maximise what could be learnt.

Moreover, it assisted the researcher to obtain in-depth description and understanding of actions and events of data, rather than to assume or to control the data (Merriam, 2002). The case study was used as an approach to explore the support of juvenile offender learners. The case study involves a bounded system or case, which can be a person, a group of people or an event to be investigated in-depth using several data-collecting sources in the setting (Henning et al., 2004). In this study, the case is the seven correctional schools with juvenile offender learners attending classes in AET level 4 on a full-time basis.

### **Instruments**

In this study, the researcher designed two instruments, which enabled one to gather data on the support of juvenile offender learners in correctional schools. The semi-

structured interviews were open-ended questions to be used for teachers. The questions covered in the semi-structured interview were aspects such as experiences of teaching particular subjects, their roles of supporting the wellness of juvenile learners, challenges that they experience in a correctional school, what support structures for teaching and learning are available for supporting wellness, and how juvenile learners perceive the support. The interviews took place after lessons during their spare time for approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

For juvenile offender learners, the researcher provided open-ended questionnaires so that indepth data would emerge. The questions were different from the teachers. Juvenile learners' instrument focused on how they perceive the support of wellness in the correctional school, how it enables them to rehabilitate, enhances purpose and meaning in their life, and what they enjoyed the most in support of their wellness. The juvenile learners completed the questionnaires during one period approximately 45 minutes and returned the completed instruments.

### **Sampling**

According to Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), purposive sampling assumes that the researcher is well informed about the kind of participants suitable for the study. In this study, Purposive sampling was used to select 12 teachers and 21 juvenile offender learners who were attending classes in AET level 4 on a full-time basis from the seven correctional schools in the four provinces in South Africa. Ethical measures were considered, and ethical certificate to carry out the research was issued from the University of South Africa, the Department of Correctional Services and the research site which are the seven schools from Kwazulu-Natal, two in Western Cape, and two at Gauteng Province and one from Orange Free State Province. All participants were informed about privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and their rights to withdraw from participating in the research (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007; Creswell, 2007).

### **Data analysis**

Analysis of the data collected from the teachers' interviews and juvenile learners' questionnaires was organised into codes, compile similar information into cluster groups, and categorise similarities and differences into emerging themes (Henning et al., 2004).

The themes emerged from the data collection of teachers' interviews, and open-ended questionnaires of juvenile learners were written separately and used as the basis for discussing the findings. The themes emerged were written as sub-headings in discussing the findings.

Themes From juvenile learners:

spiritual wellness enhances teaching and learning and behavioural change

Support for spiritual wellness induces hope and aspirations.

Themes from the teachers are as follows:

Spiritual wellness as a Rehabilitation tool

Roles of teachers in supporting juvenile learners

Challenges that threaten spiritual wellness

Availability of support structures and Collaboration with stakeholders

### **Findings of the study**

#### ***Spiritual wellness enhances teaching, learning, and behavioural change***

Most participants mentioned that teaching and learning received at the correctional schools have a significant impact on their behavioural change. They expressed satisfaction in changing their behaviour because of the education and the spiritual support received. From the finding juvenile learners convey that, a personal guideline has been imparted to them, helps and teaches them to believe there is purpose in all situations in life, thus prepares them for reentry into their communities.

*"I am Christian I value being human and learnt to ask for forgiveness from those I wronged in the community. I have learnt that I have a better purpose in life than committing a crime."*

*“.spiritual teachings up-lift and help me cope in here, I sing songs and pray every day”.*

*“Singing heals me sometimes we sing with my cellmates in the section, I always feel better.”*

The above responses emphasises the fact that education that supports spiritual wellness in the correctional centre schools benefits positive moral values, forgiveness and discipline so that they can change and avoid committing crimes.

#### ***Support for spiritual wellness induces hope and aspirations***

Results revealed that spiritual support inculcates hope and aspirations in juvenile learners' life. They uttered that the inspirational messages taught to them by pastors who often visit in the correctional school inspire them to value life and have a sense of meaning to life. They also mentioned that the support of spiritual wellness brings forth a sense of purpose in their life. They stated purpose such as to advice and guide youth not to commit a crime.

*“When I sing, I feel better and get hope to change from the bad things I did in the past.”*

*“The pastor inspires me to be a good person in my community. I want to be a pastor also and show young people not to do bad things to other people.”*

*“ I sing songs to relief stress, I pray and meditate yes, and I feel proud about who I am now.”*

*“I sing to get comfort and pray for success in my life.”*



*"I pray every morning and evening to know who I am and what I need in life and takes talent to the next level of Redemption. In here, I learn to live like other people outside going to church every day and pray all the time. I am praying to God to give me a long life like Nelson Mandela."*

Based on the above findings, they are taught and given time to pray and meditate. They value being human and still feel they have a second chance in life, as they are inspired to change. They learnt to have compassion for others, relieves stress, anxiety, and depression; thus, chances of rehabilitating are high.

### **Spiritual wellness as a rehabilitation tool**

From the seven correctional schools, findings indicated that teachers perceive spiritual support as a rehabilitation tool that plays a vital element in teaching and learning. It brings about the personal growth through knowledge, development and behavioural change of juvenile learners. Teachers indicated that juvenile learners who are not happy with their spirituality have difficulties concentrating in the classroom, ultimately, a decline in academic success. They indicated that they support various spiritual programmes that juvenile offender learners belong to since it helps them to have self-discipline, positive outlook and cope more effectively in the correctional school. They expressed sufficient support on spiritual wellness promote positive morality, personal discovery, understanding and discontentment, which is an essential factor for rehabilitation and avoid recidivism.

*"Some are positive here for their deeds outside influence their behaviour."*

*"Yes they do belong to spiritual programmes, but some are not like normal society."*

*"Yes, spiritual support assist them to change positively; once they stop participating in spiritual activities, they join gang activities."*

*".supporting spiritual wellness of juvenile learners is crucial because it helps them to change and rehabilitate."*

*"We teach and support spiritual wellness in order to emphasise personal growth and development through imparting knowledge."*

*"Juvenile learners who engage in spiritual activities can understand and tolerate each other."*

*"...they have changed since they arrived here they are not wild anymore but calm".*

Findings discovered that teachers educate, encourage and support juvenile learners to work on their humanity personal character up until they realise the importance of harmony, morals, and right attitude.

It was evident from the teacher in Western Cape, who mentioned that,

*"...teach juvenile learners to value and respect their beliefs systems, values and to value being human and respect other people in life..."*



One teacher from KZN correctional school had this to say:

*"juvenile learners who attend or belong to any spiritual groups have changed since they arrived here they are not wild anymore but calm. Unlike those who do not, in most cases, are reluctant to change, show feelings of hopelessness, anger and selfishness".*

From school E in Gauteng Province also the teacher had this to say:

*"...positive effort in life is being encouraged and to search for harmony with others..."*

It was clear from the findings that spiritual support teaches juvenile learners positive behaviour such as humanity, morals, increased sense of empathy and increased insight and understanding of their purpose in life, which is required for rehabilitation.

On the other hand, teachers indicated that juvenile learners who are not happy with their spirituality have difficulties concentrating in the classroom, and therefore could have a decline in academic success. As a result, teachers need to teach and encourage juvenile learners to respect their beliefs, values and to value being human and respect for others in life. These values are crucial for learning to tolerate other people and understanding the moral values needed for rehabilitation.

### **Roles of teachers in supporting juvenile learners**

The study seems to suggest that most teachers in the correctional schools make an effort to support, encourage and motivate the juvenile learners to attend classes and get educated in order to change their lives and live positively in the community. Regardless of the harsh conditions they experience in the correctional schools, teachers encourage them to engage in different spiritual and religious programmes available in the correctional schools in order to learn and enhance their spiritual wellness and rehabilitate.

Participating teachers from KZN correctional schools had this to say:

*"I encourage juvenile learners to respect their beliefs, values and to value being human and respect other people in life. They have changed since they arrived here they are not wild anymore but calm".*

*"Juvenile learners who do not attend or belong to any spiritual groups in most cases are reluctant to change, show feelings of hopelessness and selfishness. As a teacher, I always encourage them to attend church, sing and I quote bible verses when I teach."*

For example, in some schools, teachers expressed that they participate in religious and spiritual activities such as worship, read the Bible, Quran, sing, and pray with the juvenile learners every morning before classes commence. The participants believe that when they support juvenile learners on spiritual wellness, it recuperates moral values and reaching a state of inner peace and a sense of wholeness, which is necessary for rehabilitation.

In Gauteng correctional schools, they expressed that:

*“It depends whether a teacher is a Christian or not, but I encourage participation”.  
“Encourage juvenile learners to belong to one of the religious groups.”*

However, participating teachers affirmed that their role is not to propel juvenile learners to join Christianity only, but they encourage them to belong to a spiritual group of their choice because it gives them hope in life and reduce anxiety, anger and depression than can cope in class.

It was evident from the teacher at school G in Free State Province, had this to say, *“encourage them to belong to religious and spiritual groups of their choice because it gives them hope in life, help them to cope in class and reduce anxiety, anger and depression.”* In Western Cape, the two schools, namely, A and B, there is evidence that teachers' role of supporting spiritual wellness of juvenile learners is crucial because it helps them to change and rehabilitate.

*“Motivate them to pray, meditate, sing songs and read uplifting spiritual verses from the Bible to give them hope in life. After they had spiritual activities, they demonstrate signs of peace and serenity.”*

*“Juvenile learners who do not attend or belong to any spiritual groups in most cases are reluctant to change, show feelings of hopelessness and selfishness. As a teacher, I always encourage them to attend church, sing and I quote bible verses when I teach.”*

From the above response of teachers, it shows that the role of teachers of motivating juvenile learners to participate in spiritual activities helps them to minimise conflicts with others and self; and lessen anxiety, anger and depression. Support assists juvenile learners to get answers to reality regarding life struggles and make meaning of their life experiences.

### **Available support and collaboration with stakeholders**

The findings of the study revealed that teachers collaborate with various stakeholders to support juvenile offender learners in correctional schools. The participating teachers allude that they have various denominations and religious groups such as Shembe, Roman Catholic Church, African Christian Zion, Muslims and other denominations as part of spiritual support structures. Findings further revealed that the correctional schools invite pastors and other spiritual care services, motivational speakers and different religious organisation to teach about moral lessons, encourage, motivate and to enhance the spiritual wellness of the juvenile learners in the correctional schools. Besides, other support structures such as Bible colleges, various NGO (Heartlines or Khulisa) guide and teach juvenile learners morals, values, prayers, meditation and other forms of the intermediary through correspondence until they receive certificates. Excerpt from the seven participated correctional school on spiritual wellness were:

*“Availability of Support structures that promote spiritual wellness of learners are Pastors and spiritual care”.*

*"We have NGO's coming to the correctional centre it is very supportive and effective."*

*"Availability of Support structures that promote spiritual wellness of learners are Pastors and spiritual care".*

*"Yes, we do have [a] Bible College that teaches our offenders through post until they receive certificates. We have Shembe pastors, holy Quran readers and Bible College who comes and conduct services inside the centre."*

*"Religious, spiritual care services and social work programmes teach about moral lessons."*

*"Priest and pastors come to promote the spiritual wellness of learners."*

*"We have our chaplain to promote spiritual wellness in the centre, and we also welcome pastors from different churches."*

*"Some learners get spiritual material through the post office."*

*"The centre invites pastors and other spiritual care services to motivate learners."*

*"We have a strong support structure of spiritual wellness here. Different religious groups and churches from the community come to motivate and teach moral lessons to our learners."*

From the above responses, it was clear that the Ubuntu principle is practised in the correctional schools. They collaborate with the various support structure to enhance teaching and learning and promote the spiritual wellness of juvenile learners. This collaboration with stakeholders and the correctional schools is necessary for the support and promotion of spiritual wellness of juvenile offender learners to change to better citizens.

It was clear that these support structure available in the correctional schools are effective in assisting juvenile offender learners to value and increase insight and understanding of their purpose in life, which is necessary for teaching and learning and rehabilitation.

### **Challenges that threaten spiritual wellness**

From the findings, it was revealed that there are challenges that are a threat to spiritual wellness. These challenges, such as negative pressure from peer, family and society, influence the juvenile offender learners. It was revealed that juvenile offender learners who are reluctant to participate in spiritual programmes, they most likely to be pressured to join gangsters in the correctional school.

This was evident from the statement said by the teachers in schools.

*"...Some juvenile learners are not like a normal society; if they stop participating in spiritual programmes, they act wild and show unacceptable behaviour."*

*"..participation depends on the juvenile offender learners' family background, and some juvenile offender learners do it for changing their behaviour while others do it to impress friends or teachers."*

The findings indicated that insufficient participation in spiritual programmes juvenile learners is a challenge that might jeopardises positive morality and positive learning environment, which are essential for learning and rehabilitation.

## **Discussion**

From the findings, it was clear that encouraging and teaching juvenile offender learners to attend various spiritual programmes helps them to have a positive outlook in life, guidance into moral ways of living in dignity, personal and academic growth and cope more effectively in their learning and teaching at the correctional schools. The current findings coincide with what Mucina (2011) articulate, that spiritual wellness is a guiding voice that protects and guides the juvenile learner into moral ways of living, dignity, respect and pride shared with other people. Ballentine (2010) study also asserts that juvenile learners with higher levels of spirituality have improved social relationships, self-discipline and coping skills.

Teachers need to collaborate with stakeholders, in supporting, teaching and encouraging juvenile learners to respect their beliefs, values and to value being human and respect for others in life. These values are crucial in learning and teaching, tolerate other people and understanding the moral values needed for rehabilitation. These findings resonate with the framework of Ubuntu that accentuates the collaboration of community members together as an integral part on supporting juvenile learners, to value being human, display positive values, morals and acceptable behaviours in the society (Mulaudzi, 2014).

Generally, the collaboration with the stakeholders is viewed as positive for the success of education imparted to the juvenile offender learners. This collaboration of stakeholders and the correctional schools is necessary to support of spiritual wellness and enhance teaching and learning of juvenile offender learners.

From the findings, it was clear that spiritual support inculcates hope and aspirations in juvenile learners' life. The inspirational messages imparted to them gives hope and motivate them to change as they have a second chance in life. These findings are supported by Gold (2010) who emphasises the fact that education that supports spiritual wellness in the correctional centre schools benefits positive moral values getting a meaning and purpose to their life so that they can change and avoid committing crimes.

Moreover, spiritual support focuses on assisting the juvenile offender learner to search for the meaning and purpose of existence. For successful teaching and learning, teachers must teach and encourage juvenile learner about moral values and

reaching a state of inner peace and a sense of wholeness, respect one's beliefs and values (Dzulkifli & Yasin, 2010).

Findings revealed challenges faced by teachers in teaching and learning in the correctional schools. Some of the challenges include negative influence from peers who do not participate in spiritual programmes, previous negative experiences from family and society. It was revealed that juvenile offender learners who loath to participate in spiritual programmes are pressured to join gangsters, lack discipline, and eventually, they become vicious in the correctional school. These findings resonate with McConnell, Pargament, Ellison and Flannelly (2006) highlighted that lack of spiritual support causes 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.

Similarly, a study by Specht, King, Willoughby, Brown, and Smith (2005) concur with the current findings. They articulate that juvenile offender learner who lack spiritual support exhibit lower levels of anxiety, stress and depression, unsuccessful in learning, and averse to rehabilitate.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the current study provides important information related to the support of juvenile offender learners' spiritual wellness in correctional schools. The findings of the study indicated that the support of spiritual wellness enhances teaching and learning and behavioural change; it induces hope and aspirations of the juvenile offender learners. This finding further supports the importance of promoting spiritual wellness as a tool for rehabilitation that prepares juvenile learners for re-entry in their communities as productive and better citizens. Teachers and the correctional centre management should be aware of the importance of supporting juvenile learners' spiritual wellness and the existence of challenges that impede the support of spiritual wellness so that these challenges might be under control. Therefore, teachers should support spiritual wellness of juvenile learners by educating, inculcating Ubuntu principles that are built upon harmony, kindness, compassion, morals and values, caring for others and ensure there is cooperation among them (Mulaudzi, 2014).

By knowing how spiritual support could help juvenile offender learners to excel in their teaching and learning and cope with any learning disturbances, much information could be derived to enhance the amount of support provided. Hence, this study hopes to contribute to the research on how to support and enhance juvenile learners' learning and teaching, academic achievement, promote spiritual wellness, and rehabilitation.

## Recommendation

The study, therefore, recommends that teachers and security official attain proper training on how to identify the spiritual challenges of juvenile learners and address them in order to improve their learning, wellness and rehabilitate. Also, the Department of Basic Education should frequently support teachers with in-service training, monitor the quarterly performance of juvenile learners' assessment to make their teaching and learning more meaningful.

The Department of Correctional Services can do this through collaboration with various stakeholders who have knowledge and expertise in the spiritual wellness scope. Even more, the DCS should promote Ubuntu through collaborating with other stakeholders and other government departments since 'it takes a whole village to raise a child'. In this way, the Ubuntu theory will be realised in supporting juvenile learners in correctional schools.

Specifically, the study recommends that correctional schools to engage daily or regular teaching on the importance of morals, values, purpose in life because it is crucial for rehabilitation and enhance spiritual wellness. This can be in a daily correctional schools' programme such as morning assembly. Besides, integrating spiritual wellness across all curriculum or subjects can also enhance the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional wellness.

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