



UNIVERSITY OF THE
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UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
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RESEARCH MENU

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

2026

The research interests of the staff members in the Department of Psychology (UFS) include a wide array of research topics. The use of qualitative or quantitative approaches (or a combination of these) in pure or applied research enables us to explore, describe, explain, and predict human phenomena, thus gaining insight into individuals and the shaping of society. In the pursuit of the discovery of new knowledge, we use **systematic ways of finding answers to questions such as:**

- What are the sociohistorical and psychological factors that shape the development and personality of individuals?
- How do cultural and WEIRD vs. non-WEIRD contextual living conditions impact personality development?
- How do individuals define themselves and find their place in the world?
- What are the antecedents and outcomes of optimal human functioning and well-being?
- What are the psychosocial risk and protective factors that influence the psychological well-being of individuals?
- How can cultural variables explain or account for well-being, and how can well-being be promoted across the life span?
- How is mental illness conceptualised in various population groups and what are the various socio-demographic variables linked to well-being and mental health?
- Which constructs best predict the psychological well-being within the student population?
- How do community engagement activities facilitate development in students and community partners?
- What is the journey of becoming a professional within the field of psychology?
- Why does criminal behaviour develop and how do offender populations cope and adjust?
- How can measuring instruments be developed and validated for cross-cultural settings?
- How can research facilitate the development and evaluation of programmes?



MRS KAREN DE VILLIERS

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Highest qualification: MA (Counselling Psychology), 1996

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9772-3310>



Overarching research theme: Technology-enhanced Learning (TEL) for Multilingual Higher education students.

My research interest lies in exploring the efficacy of technology-enhanced learning (TEL) to support multilingual students in South African higher education, particularly focusing on those transitioning from rural schooling backgrounds. I am specifically interested in how Microsoft Learning Tools and Accelerators can be leveraged to provide personalised scaffolds, helping students navigate the challenges of content-dense, subject-specific courses. My proposed research focusses on a dual investigation into the impact of these tools: firstly, examining their contribution to students' academic language proficiency, and secondly, exploring their psychological effects on students' academic confidence when encountering challenging university-level content.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- How do multilingual students at South African universities perceive and utilise the features of Microsoft Learning Tools (specifically Immersive Reader and Translate) to navigate and comprehend complex academic texts in English?
- To what extent does the integrated use of Microsoft's learning accelerators (specifically Speaker- and Reading Coach) impact the academic self-efficacy of multilingual learners?

Research approach

Quantitative ✓	Qualitative	Mixed methods ✓
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Available to act as

Supervisor	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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DR UFUOMA P. EJOKE

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Highest qualification: PhD in Psychology 2019

Post level/rank: Research Fellow

Registration category: Health Psychology

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0960-5722>



Overarching research themes: Psychosocial Well-Being and Adjustment Studies.

My research explores the psychological, social, and contextual processes that shape well-being, resilience, and emotional functioning across diverse and vulnerable population groups. These include students, women, youth, the elderly, socially marginalised communities, and individuals navigating emotional or structural strain. I investigate how meaning-making, psychological capital, identity negotiation, social connection, and cultural context support or hinder adjustment in settings marked by stress, uncertainty, or inequity. This inquiry extends to examining how depression, anxiety, trauma, and emotional distress manifest across student and community populations, and how protective factors, such as social support, personal strengths, institutional structures, and contextual resources, shape recovery and growth. I am also interested in validating measurement scales for African minority samples.

My work additionally considers technology-supported well-being, including the relevance of AI-assisted emotional intelligence, digital coping tools, and nature-based or experiential interventions for individuals facing emotional, social, or developmental vulnerabilities.

Across these themes, my focus is on understanding the subtle, intertwined mechanisms that promote sustainable well-being, reduce inequalities, and foster psychosocial flourishing, aligned with contemporary global priorities in mental health, community resilience, and inclusive development.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- What psychological, relational, contextual, and cultural processes shape emotional well-being, adjustment, and resilience among individuals across the lifespan, including those navigating depression, anxiety, trauma, identity strain, or social instability?
- Which measurement tools are culturally appropriate, valid, and reliable for use with African minority populations, and how can these instruments be strengthened or adapted?

My preferred analytical lenses include integrative approaches from positive psychology, contextual and cultural psychology, social-ecological perspectives, and emotion-focused frameworks, as well as emerging work on AI-assisted emotional intelligence, experiential/nature-based interventions, and culturally grounded well-being models. These perspectives guide my inquiry into how individuals sustain hope, coherence, and emotional stability in environments characterised by change, pressure, or uncertainty.

Research approach

Quantitative ✓

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods ✓

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students ✓

Dr Ejoke is a research fellow in the Department of Psychology. An internal co-supervisor needs to be appointed.

PROF MICHELLE ENGELBRECHT

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology and Sociology), 2006

Post level/rank: Full Professor

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3970-0552>



Overarching research themes:

My research bridges psychology and health systems, focusing on the ways psychological, social, and organisational factors influence health behaviours, healthcare delivery, and well-being. I am interested in how individuals and groups interact with health systems, and how these interactions can be strengthened to improve both mental and physical health outcomes.

- Health behaviour and psychosocial influences: How stress, stigma, and social context shape people's health choices and engagement with care.
- Occupational well-being: Understanding and improving resilience, coping, and job satisfaction among healthcare workers.
- Mental health and chronic illness: How psychological distress affects people living with long-term conditions and how mental health can be integrated into primary care.
- Culture, gender, and health: The influence of cultural values, gender roles, and family dynamics on health behaviours and decision-making.
- Health communication and literacy: How individuals understand and respond to health information, including vaccine literacy and behaviour change.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- How do people's beliefs, attitudes, and psychological factors influence their health behaviours and health literacy?
- What individual, organisational, or social factors affect psychological well-being and coping among healthcare workers?
- In what ways do mental health challenges such as stress, depression, or anxiety interact with chronic diseases like TB and HIV, and how can care be better integrated?
- How do cultural beliefs, gender roles, or communication styles shape people's understanding of health information and their health-related decisions?

Research approach		
Quantitative ✓	Qualitative	Mixed methods
Available to act as		
Supervisor ✓		Co-supervisor ✓
Available to supervise		
Master's students ✓		PhD students ✓



PROF PAUL FOUCHÉ

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Highest qualification: DPhil in Psychology, 1999
(UPE / NMU)

Post level/rank: Full Professor

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9559-876X>



Overarching research theme: Psychobiographical or psycho-historical studies.

My research involves the psychological study of deceased exemplary, iconic, and significant personalities within a socio-historical, political, cultural and religious context.

These personalities may be seen as **outliers** or persons of “**historical significance**”, who have had a lasting impact on their community, society or the world. It entails the psycho-historical study of exemplary and sometimes controversial Africans, Middle Eastern, Eastern, as well as other international figures in the fields of history, politics, warfare, arts, music, literature, academia, science, spirituality, primate conservation and leadership. Most projects are **single case-studies** from a longitudinal-developmental trajectory perspective, as well as analysed from a psycho-historical context be it: WEIRD and / or a non-WEIRD individual, and / or contexts in which they lived.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

What significant societal, political, historical, cultural and religious, as well as psychological & evolutionary factors, shaped the development and personality (**or specific outstanding personal and / or career characteristics and skills**) of the psychobiographical subject (i.e., the chosen persona) under study. My preferred psychological approaches to analyses include **existentialism; archetypes; post-human nihilism; and biophilia (i.e., ecological and evolutionary human citizenship with nature and life-forms).**

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students ✓



MS LUYANDA JARANA



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Highest qualification: M. Soc Sc. (Counselling Psychology)

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9625-8302>

Overarching research themes:

Student well-being (adjustment in the university setting)

Mental health among university students

Psychometry (Assessments)

Specific focus areas:

- Exploring suicide ideation and depression among university students.
- Factors hindering university students from utilising accessible mental health services in their institutions.
- Mental health and well-being among university students.
- Assessing the effectiveness of concessions for students living with learning disabilities.

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods ✓

Available to act as

Supervisor

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students

PROF JACQUES JORDAAN

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2015

Post level/rank: Associate Professor

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3931-7091>



Overarching research themes:

- Psychological criminology which explores the intersection of psychology and criminology, aiming to utilise psychological knowledge to understand, explain, describe, and prevent offending behaviour.
- Assessing the effectiveness of interventions and programmes within the correctional environment.
- Examining the psychometric properties of measurement scales commonly used in offender studies.

My research interest primarily lies in the field of psychocriminology and focuses on various aspects of incarcerated offenders, including their mental health, coping abilities, adjustment, aggression, psychopathy, criminal thinking, victimisation, perpetrator trauma, and risk behaviours. Furthermore, I have a keen interest in conducting studies related to the psychometric properties of measurement scales and questionnaires frequently used in offender studies. Additionally, I am also interested in studies focusing on the development, implementation, and evaluation of intervention programmes within the correctional environment.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- What are the psychometric properties of the Prison Adjustment Questionnaire (PAQ) among male and female incarcerated offenders?
- What are the psychometric properties of the Buss and Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ) among male and female incarcerated offenders?
- What predictors contribute significantly to the variance of recidivism in male incarcerated offenders?
- Which personality traits describes the most significant percentage of variance in the criminal thinking styles of incarcerated offenders?

Research approach

Quantitative ✓	Qualitative	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓
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DR AYANDA KHANYE

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Highest qualification: PhD (Higher Education), 2016

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Educational Psychology



<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3229-0554>

Overarching research themes:

- Career development
- Child psychology

I am primarily interested in research topics regarding career development across the life span, focusing on community-based empowerment and social change, exploring issues of inequality, class, and gender, and how these impact people's career development and career transitioning in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

I am also interested in how children learn, effective child development strategies, strategies to promote early childhood, and play interventions with traumatised children.

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods ✓

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students

MRS TEBELLO MDUDUMA

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Highest qualification: MSc (Counselling Psychology), 2018

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5543-088X>

Overarching research theme:

My research interests' centres around the constructs of well-being and resilience (grounded in Positive Psychology and the Experiential Learning Theory) in two crucial contexts: **Higher Education and Childhood Sexual Violence (CSV)**

Higher Education

My research explores the well-being and resilience of students (could be with other people as well) in Higher Education, with a focus on psychosocial vulnerabilities, resilience and well-being promotion, the role of institutional support structures, diverse student experiences, and strength-based intervention strategies.

Overarching research question: What psychosocial vulnerabilities do university students face, and how do these challenges affect their resilience and sense of well-being?

Childhood Sexual Violence (CSV)

My research examines the long-term psychosocial impact of childhood sexual violence on adult survivors, with a focus on identity development, coping mechanisms, resilience, well-being and recovery, psychosocial functioning, intervention and support.

Overarching research question: How does childhood sexual violence (CSV) shape survivors' resilience and sense of well-being?

Research approach

Quantitative ✓

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students

DR PRAVANI NAIDOO

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2010

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Not applicable

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7094-3181>

Overarching research themes:

- Student well-being
- The positive psychology of disability

Specific focus areas:

- Informed largely by 3rd wave positive psychology, I am interested in mechanisms and processes that promote student well-being, with a focus on mindfulness and mindfulness-based interventions, and self-compassion.
- Within the positive psychology of disability, I am interested in exploring well-being literacy and optimal human functioning amongst persons with disabilities.

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students ✓



PROF LUZELLE NAUDÉ

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2008

Post level/rank: Full Professor

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6660-8885>



Overarching research theme: 'Who am I?': identity development during adolescence and emerging adulthood.

Individuals follow various pathways to answer the pressing question: Who am I? This process is filled with excitement and possibility, but also with challenges and contradictions. I am interested in the ways in which individuals define themselves and find their place in the world. From a lifespan developmental perspective, the journey towards an established sense of self is present throughout life but is especially prominent during the 'third decade of life' when late adolescents and emerging adults have the opportunity to reflect on the past, present, and future. My research agenda includes status and narrative perspectives and is focused on the interface between identity dimensions and socio-cultural contexts (such as family, romantic relationships, social media, and education), with a strong appreciation for the dynamics of diversity in the multicultural milieu of South Africa. I follow mixed-methods, quantitative, and qualitative approaches when exploring topics such as intersectionality and the integration of multiple identities, transformational journeys regarding self and society, and the challenges of forming an integrated identity in contexts of change and transition.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- How do adolescents and emerging adults define themselves? Which identity domains (gender/sexual, ethnic, career/professional, spiritual) are salient in their lives?
- What processes do individuals follow to resolve what Erikson called the 'identity crisis'? How do they explore their 'possible selves' and finally commit to an integrated, but multidimensional understanding of who they are?
- How is identity development informed by contextual aspects such as friends, families, romance, higher-education studies, the workplace, and social media?
- What are the challenges that individuals experience in the process of finding a sense of self?

For more information, please visit the **IDEaS interdisciplinary research hub** at www.ufs.ac.za/ideas-hub

Research approach		
Quantitative ✓	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods ✓
Available to act as		
Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor	
Available to supervise		
Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓	



DR NOMHLE NDIMANDE-KHOZA

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Highest qualification: PhD (Public Health), 2022

Post level/rank: Senior Lecturer

Registration category: Research Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1312-7783>



Overarching theme

My research focuses on the intersection of HIV prevention, mental health, climate change, and behavioural science, with a particular emphasis on adolescent girls and young women (AGYW). I explore the psychosocial and structural barriers that persist despite advances in HIV prevention technologies and examine how individuals make choices and express preferences among emerging prevention options within their social and environmental contexts.

Possible Research questions

- How can family, intimate partners, and peer relationships be leveraged to improve adherence to HIV prevention techniques?
- How do mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, or trauma influence motivation, risk perception, and PrEP adherence and continuation behaviours?
- How do AGYW navigate multiple HIV prevention options such as oral PrEP, injectable PrEP, vaginal rings, when making decisions about prevention?
- What attributes drive preferences among available and emerging HIV prevention technologies?
- What types of climate-related stressors disrupt youth's access to or consistent use of sexual and reproduction health services?

Research approach		
Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods ✓
Available to act as		
Supervisor ✓		Co-supervisor ✓
Available to supervise		
Master's students ✓		PhD students ✓



DR CARLA NEL

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2013

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Clinical Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-0503-4268>



Overarching research themes:

The life stories of eminent, exceptional or exemplary historical figures have often been subjected to psychological dissection, contributing to the discipline's theoretical development. My interest lies in such psychobiographical exploration of single and multiple cases, specifically with the aim of understanding adjustment and achievement within the context of adversity.

Specific focus areas:

- The exploration and understanding of exceptional individuals' personality development and the attainment of psychological well-being within specific socio-historical contexts;
- Utilising psychobiographical research within the context of professional training in psychology;
- Methodological developments within life history research.

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative ✓

Mixed methods

Available to act as

Supervisor ✓

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students ✓

PROF LINDI NEL

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2012

Post level/rank: Associate Professor

Registration category: Clinical Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2440-6895>



Overarching research theme: **Becoming a psychologist – the journey**

My research focus area is *attachment processes and practices* as it relates to various parenting contexts. In this regard, I ask and explore critical questions regarding different family structures, and (de)attachment beyond infancy. This focus area includes ways of relating, methods of attaching and implications for parenting I prefer to work from a psychofortigenic framework – suggesting that most of these topics are explored from a ‘what works well / meaning-making’ approach rather than a ‘what goes wrong’ stance.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- Attachment between caregivers and children – why and how?
- Which practices maintain healthy attachment in various types of relationships?
- Which dynamics, processes, and practices contribute to positive attachment and how is it experienced?
- In considering the development in the field of attachment theory and practice in the context of familial trends (including different family structures), where do we stand, what do we know, and more importantly, what do we *not know*?

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master’s students ✓	PhD students ✓
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PROF KARL PELTZER

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2012

Post level/rank: Professor: Research Fellow

Registration category:

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5980-0876>



Overarching research theme / Focus areas / Areas of expertise:

Health Psychology and Mental health

Research approach

Quantitative

Qualitative

Mixed methods

Available to act as

Supervisor

Co-supervisor ✓

Available to supervise

Master's students ✓

PhD students ✓

Prof Peltzer is a research fellow in the Department of Psychology. An internal co-supervisor needs to be appointed.

DR MPHONGO RAMARUMO

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology) 2014

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Clinical Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2189-9206>



Overarching research theme:

I am interested in the following research areas:

- Substance abuse and intervention amongst youth
- Mental health and well-being of people with chronic conditions like hypertension and diabetes
- Medical negligence and mental health
- Psycho-legal research

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- Substance abuse among young people and the impact substances have on their mental health.
- People with chronic conditions have comorbid mental health issues and interventions tailored to address those needed.
- Professional medical negligence.

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓
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MRS LOUISE ROSSOUW

rossml@ufs.ac.za

Highest qualification: Masters in Higher Education Studies

Post level/rank: Junior Lecturer

Registration category: N/a

<https://orcid.org/>



Overarching research theme:

- Student access with success
- Academic and personal skills needed for success

The research questions I am interested in answering:

I am primarily interested in research topics regarding access to Higher Education Studies, retention rates, integration of developmental skills with academic content, lifelong learning skills development, resilience, emotional intelligence, and stress management.

Research approach

Quantitative ✓	Qualitative	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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MR ANELE SISWANA

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Highest qualification: MA Clinical Psychology

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Clinical Psychology & *IGqirha* (Xhosa divine healer)

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-4269-5692>

Overarching research theme: Cultural perspectives on parenting and mental Health

Anele Siswana is a **decolonial scholar** whose work bridges **African-situated psychology, spirituality, theology, and psychology**. His interdisciplinary scholarship explores **gender and sexualities, queering psychology, and mental health in Africa**. His research on masculinities (*Uwaluko KwaXhosa*), *Ingoma*, *Koma* and **rites of passage (*Umemulo, Intonjane, and other African-centred initiations*)** adopts a psychological and cultural lens. He also has an active interest in **employee wellness and well-being research** and is open to **co-supervision opportunities** in these areas.

Specific focus areas:

- Decoloniality and postmodernism in psychological research.
- Proposed Seminar Theme: Decolonising Research Methodologies

Suggested Topics:

- Decoloniality and the decolonisation of research
- Epistemic disobedience and knowledge production
- Indigenous epistemologies and the place of language in research
- Rethinking research designs through African-centred and postcolonial lenses

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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DR LATOYA C. STONE

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Highest qualification: Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Clinical Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7833-4487>



Overarching research theme:

My research interests are situated within the overarching themes of mental health, trauma, and their role in offending behaviour. I am particularly interested in adverse childhood experiences, untreated or undiagnosed mental health conditions, and the broader social and institutional contexts in which individuals develop and interact. I examine how these intersecting factors may contribute to negative life outcomes, including involvement in offending behaviour.

I have a strong interest in exploring the developmental trajectories of offending behaviour among both males and females, with a particular emphasis on individuals' lived experiences and personal narratives. Understanding these trajectories can help identify missed or inadequate early interventions and inform the development of preventative strategies aimed at buffering against later negative outcomes.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- How are adverse childhood experiences and mental health difficulties associated with trajectories of offending behaviour?
- In what ways do untreated childhood trauma and mental health needs contribute to conduct disorder and subsequent antisocial behaviour?
- How effective are early interventions across different systemic levels in mitigating the long-term effects of adverse childhood experiences on offending behaviour?

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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DR NTSOAKI FLORENCE TADI

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2011

Post level/rank: Senior Lecturer

Registration category: Clinical Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6591-7539>

Overarching research theme: Cultural perspectives on parenting and mental Health

Studies with children enable us to learn more about their development and identify effective ways to help them develop as responsible citizens with the potential to contribute positively to society. My special interest and goal is to collaborate and engage with communities to gain insights and conduct culturally sensitive research.

Specific focus areas:

- Parenting Styles and Mental Health Outcome
- Identifying culturally relevant risk factors for suicide among Sesotho youth in South Africa
- Cultural Perspective on Mental Health – Mental Health Literacy
- Parental Mental Health Literacy

Research approach

Quantitative ✓	Qualitative	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓
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MR HENRY TAYLOR

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Highest qualification: MSc (Counselling Psychology), 2003

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3207-7191>



Overarching research theme:

The relationship between different variables and psychological well-being/satisfaction with life/happiness.

I am also interested in the benefits of creative art therapy/expressive art therapy interventions for health and well-being.

The research questions I am interested in answering:

My particular interest is in the factors (variables) that increase (and/or decrease) people's psychological well-being/satisfaction with life/happiness, since every person strives towards well-being and/or happiness.

- Is there a relationship between variables such as coping, locus of control, spirituality, relatedness to nature, and humour and life satisfaction among students/emerging adults?
- Is there a relationship between personality traits (e.g., the big five) and satisfaction with life/happiness/success or conversely anxiety/depression?
- Different patient populations' (lived) experiences of the effectiveness of art therapy interventions.

Research approach

Quantitative ✓	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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PROF ESMÉ VAN RENSBURG

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Highest qualification: PhD (Child Psychology)

Post level/rank: Full professor: Research Fellow

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5961-4416>



Overarching research themes:

- Child psychopathology and the promotion of psychological health in children
- Psychotherapeutic interventions with children and parents in different contexts, including early childhood intervention, preventative and therapeutic programmes with children and parenting programs.
- Ethics in Psychology: Dilemmas and solutions

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- How does psychopathology in individuals and families impact on later development?
- How can children's well-being in different contexts be promoted and enhanced?
- How can parents be equipped to support children and promote their well-being?
- What interventions can be done in schools in order to facilitate children's psychological well-being?
- What ethical dilemmas are psychologists experiencing in practice and how are such dilemmas solved? Are psychologists equipped to solve ethical dilemmas?

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓
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Prof van Rensburg is a research fellow in the Department of Psychology. An internal co-supervisor needs to be appointed.

MRS ELOISE VENTER

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Highest qualification: MA (Counselling Psychology), 2017

Post level/rank: Lecturer

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-6231-1318>

Overarching research themes:

- Early childhood development (ages three to six)
- Middle childhood development (ages 6-12)
- Developmental psychology from early childhood up to and including adolescence
- Parent-child interactions/efficacy of particular parenting styles or techniques
- Gottman method of relationship counselling
- Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT), and the development of ACT-based interventions
- Neurodevelopmental disorders (ADHD and learning disabilities)
- Scoping reviews
- Court preparation of child witnesses

The research questions I am interested in answering:

- Which factors contribute to optimal developmental outcomes during early childhood?
- Do existing models of understanding early childhood development adequately explain the development of South African pre-schoolers?
- Which parenting styles result in the best outcomes for South African adolescents?
- What is the relationship between parenting style and mental-health outcomes in South African adolescents?
- How does the efficacy of the Gottman method of relationship counselling compare to that of other frequently used relationship counselling approaches?
- How can Acceptance and Commitment therapy processes be adapted for application with children in middle childhood?

Research approach

Quantitative	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
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Available to act as

Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓
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Available to supervise

Master's students ✓	PhD students
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PROF STEPHEN WALKER

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Highest qualification: PhD (Psychology), 2003

Post level/rank: Full Professor

Registration category: Counselling Psychology

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2110-7881>



Overarching research themes:

I have two primary areas of research interest. The first falls within the field of Contextual Behavioural Science, specifically Relational Frame Theory (RFT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). The second area of research focuses on professional issues in clinical and counselling psychology.

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

ACT is a third-wave cognitive behavioural therapy focussed on the development of psychological flexibility. Psychological flexibility is “the ability to feel and think with openness, to attend voluntarily to your experiences of the present moment, and to move your life in directions that are important to you, building habits that allow you to live in accordance with your values and inspirations”.

My research focusses on the relevance of ACT processes and the efficacy ACT interventions in several areas, including psychological well-being, medical psychology, health promotion, meaning in life and, sport and performance. I am interested in these processes and outcomes across age ranges and cultural contexts.

Possible research questions:

- How effective are brief ACT interventions at increasing treatment compliance in chronic illness in under-resourced communities?
- Which psychological processes are associated with psychological well-being and psychological distress among student athletes?
- Which psychological processes are associated with body image and drive for muscularity among males in emerging adulthood?

Issues in Professional Psychology

I have a particular interest in the professional life of practicing psychologists. This includes topics such as professional ethics, practitioner burnout, boundary setting and professional development.

Possible research questions:

- What is the state of professional ethics research in South Africa?
- How do early career clinical and counselling psychologists navigate therapeutic boundaries?
- Which ethical issues are most prominent for psychologists working with children and adolescents in South Africa?

Research approach		
Quantitative ✓	Qualitative ✓	Mixed methods
Available to act as		
Supervisor ✓	Co-supervisor ✓	
Available to supervise		
Master's students ✓	PhD students ✓	

