UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

# Departmental Research Focus Areas

## RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS AND TOPICS

| Broad focus area | Specific areas | Identified topics |
|---|---|---|
| Cognitive & biological psychology | Neuropsychology<br>Psychomotor performance<br>Psychophysiology | Psychometric analysis of performance on computerized neuropsychological tests.<br>Neurobiological bases of temperament and character and psychopathology.<br>Neurobiological bases of temperament and character and neuropsychological outcomes.<br>Traits and characteristics of individuals suffering from burnout<br>The relationship between chronic fatigue syndrome and burnout<br>Post traumatic stress disorder in police officers<br>Mapping psycho-physiological processes associated with stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, arousal, curiosity<br>The relationship between spirituality and anxiety, depression, stress<br>The relationship between the primitive brain, frontal lobes and non-verbal behaviour |
| Research methodology | Science theory<br>Teaching research methods<br>Discourse analysis<br>Qualitative and quantitative methodologies<br>Narrative research methods<br>Feminist and postructuralist research methodologies<br>Action research | |
| Psychopathology | Adult psychopathology<br>Cultural and critical perspectives in psychopathology | Bullying<br>Substance abuse |
| Counselling, psychotherapy and training | Family psychotherapy and training<br>Supervision and training in therapy<br>Group therapy and counselling<br>Adventure therapy<br>Animal assisted therapy (AAT)<br>Cognitive behaviour therapy<br>Narrative therapy | Immigration/emigration and the family<br>Family murder<br>Group psychotherapy, group dynamics, group analysis, group facilitation, transcultural groups.<br>The relationship between AAT and mindfulness<br>Suitability of AAT to different individuals<br>Psychophysiological responses to different animals in AAT<br>Discourse analysis of career counselling |
| Psychology and wellness | Positive psychology<br>Forgiveness<br>Spirituality<br>Health psychology and fortology<br>Health and illness<br>Sport psychology<br>The "Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment" approach to sport | Promotion of emotional well-being in groups and individuals<br>Traits and characteristics of participants in extreme sports<br>Psychophysiological reactions to continuous secretion of adrenaline in extreme sports participants.<br>Increasing performance in athletes using the "Mindfulness-Acceptance-Commitment" approach.<br>Using the approach to increase performance in athletes, working with their trainers / parents. |
| Critical and theoretical psychology | Discourse analytic studies, genders and sexualities<br>African perspectives in psychology<br>Participatory action research<br>Postcolonial and post-structural perspectives | Constructions of female sexuality and masculinity.<br>Deconstruction and career psychology<br>Psychologies of oppression and liberation<br>The indigenisation of psychology |
| Community psychology and relevant social issues | Environmental psychology<br><br>The development of community | Measuring the impact of energy efficiency intervention<br>Qualitative analysis of experiences of mothers in a |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | structures to enhance mental health<br><br>Violence<br><br>HIV/AIDS<br>Cross cultural psychology / multiculturalism<br>Mental health issues | mother-child intervention to promote the resilience of children - data is available, just need analysis (Masters)<br>□ Establishment of infrastructure to provide psychological help to pre-school children in resource-poor environment (M or PhD)<br>□ Evaluation of an early childhood development programme (M or PhD)<br>□ Disclosure of maternal HIV status to children - data available, should just be analysed (masters).<br>□ Violence in schools / families in townships<br>□ HIV/AIDS prevention strategies – development for a variety of target groups, HIV testing, community stigma<br>□ Family structures in a changing community<br>□ Social aspects of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS as mental health issues with emphasis on the following:<br>□ Situational and needs assessment<br>□ Prevention and intervention using Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (collaborative research project), Programme development, monitoring and evaluation,<br>□ Adolescents' mental health issues |
| Itsoseng projects | Creative arts therapy in a community clinic setting (at this stage these are focussed on children in groups but may be extended to include adults) | □ Experiences of volunteers and clients in art therapy groups<br>□ Developing art therapy groups for children who have been exposed to abuse<br>□ Experiences of music therapists and clients in music therapy<br>□ Experiences of facilitators and participants in therapeutic and/or psycho-educational drama groups<br>□ Development of therapeutic library and reading groups for children<br>□ Experiences of participants in therapeutic reading, story-telling and/or creative writing groups<br>□ Using art, music, drama or reading groups to screen for referral for psychological and other interventions<br>□ Experiences of participants in a creative sewing group<br>□ Creative therapy and psycho-education with puppets |
| | Therapeutic training in a community clinic setting | □ Experiences of trainee psychotherapists and counsellors in a community clinic setting<br>□ Experiences of trainee psychotherapists and/or counsellors working across language barriers<br>□ Experiences of trainee psychotherapists / counsellors working with interpreters<br>□ The development of working relationships between trainee therapists / counsellors and interpreters |
| | Volunteerism in a community clinic setting | □ Experiences of volunteers working in a community clinic |
| | Youth leadership development projects in a community clinic setting | □ Experiences of facilitators and/or participants in a youth leadership project |
| | Presenting problems in a community clinic setting | □ Exploring the different meanings of presenting problems such as “learning problems”<br>□ The development of a mathematics support group |
| | Statistical data pertaining to a community clinic | □ Further development and analysis of a relevant statistical data base in the clinic (client profiles, treatment, demographics, etc.) |
| | Psychological assessment in a community clinic setting | □ Critical and explorative investigations into the use and relevance of norms of different assessment instruments in the clinic, for example the Ravens Progressive Matrices and MCMI |
| | The interface between a community clinic and its network of collaborators in the community | □ Developing collaborative projects together with SOS village in Mamelodi<br>□ An exploration / further development of the referral network of the clinic<br>□ Psychological dimensions of community support for the clinic, for example experiences of donors, referral agents, community leaders and clients |
| | Preventative community projects in a community clinic setting | □ Development of community-centred psycho-educational and preventative projects |
| | HIV/AIDS prevention and counselling in a community clinic setting | □ Client and counsellor experiences of HIV/AIDS counselling<br>□ Development of community-based HIV/AIDS projects |