



CoE-HUMAN NEWSLETTER September 2024



September - Heritage month

Heritage Day is a public holiday that is celebrated annually on the 24th of September, to commemorate cultural diversity, traditions and heritage in South Africa, which is a symbol of a rainbow nation. With over 60 million people, this population expresses its cultural identity through language, food, music, and dance. Heritage month not only brings focus to South Africa's rich and diverse cultural heritage, but it has an immense contribution to the country's social, economic, health, education and scientific wellbeing particularly rural, township and peri-urban communities.

Below, we look at some of the various studies that CoE-HUMAN researchers/grantees have conducted on health, education, and climate change, which are some of the factors that serve primary importance in understanding the role cultural heritage plays within a society .

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How health, education and climate change impact our everyday lives

Integrated health system intervention aimed at reducing type 2 diabetes risk in women after gestational diabetes in South Africa (INDIAGO): A randomised controlled trial protocol



Prof. Shane Norris

The purpose of Prof. Norris et al.'s trial (2024) is to assess an intervention that lowers the risk that women with recent gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) may experience in the future when they acquire type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). In order to reflect the diversity of GDM management currently practiced in South Africa, where the population has a higher prevalence of diabetes and a lower socioeconomic status, the trial will be conducted in urban public health services settings in Cape Town and Soweto.

Approximately 370 participants diagnosed with gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) who have never had type 1 or type 2 diabetes before, will be recruited into the study between 24 and 36 weeks of pregnancy, when the first round of data collecting will occur. After delivery, data will be collected again after a period of 6-8 weeks and 12 months. Women with GDM diagnosed at Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH), Mowbray Maternity Hospital (MMH), New Somerset Hospital, Tygerberg Hospital, and Chris Hani Baragwaneth Academic Hospital (CHBH) in Soweto who are getting prenatal treatment will be study participants.

All partnering institutions have granted ethics approval (University of Cape Town (829/2016), University of Stellenbosch (N17/04/032), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (M170228), and University of Montreal (2019-794)), and permissions have been obtained from all relevant authorities prior to participant recruitment. Prior to randomisation, the recruiting staff requests written informed permission from participants. The trial's findings will be shared with key stakeholders through presentations and publication in peer-reviewed journals. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2023-073316>

Understanding Why Youth Drop Out of School in South Africa



Dr. Rachana Desai

In order to better understand why students drop out of school, Rachana et al. (2024) interviewed 41 out-of-school youth (OSY) who were between the ages of 13 and 20. This study was carried out in the metropolitan district of the City of Cape Town, which is part of the Western Cape, South Africa's fourth-largest province, between January and September 2018.

The participants in this study were 22 women and 19 men. The participants' average age was 18. There were numerous causes for leaving school, which were divided into three major themes: school performance and vocational aspirations, social interactions at school, and family-related reasons for leaving school. Attitudes towards dropping out of school were also documented.

The results show that the elements that influence a learner's decision to drop out of school are complexly correlated with interpersonal, home, and school-level factors. The main causes of school dropouts, as reported by OSY in this study, were family-related factors like financial difficulties, falling pregnant, lack of family support, and poor academic performance. These findings are consistent with earlier research from South African studies (Branson et al., 2014; De Wet & Mkwanzini, 2014; Desai et al., 2019; Flisher et al., 2010; Porteus et al., 2000; Townsend et al., 2007, 2008).

The authors recommend further investigation in order to fully understand the impact of peer networks on school dropout rates in South Africa.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231219080>

The effect of local climatic conditions on household consumption: A case study of South Africa



Dr. Calvin Mudzingiri

Mudzingiri et al. (2024) investigated the causal effect of local climate factors on consumption by households in South Africa. The study makes use of the nationally representative 2017 National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS), wave 5 data, and 2017 climatic Research Unit (CRU) climatic data.

The results of the study demonstrate that South African locations with severe weather patterns typically have lower household consumption expenditures. This demonstrates how climate conditions can perpetuate household poverty in a contextual or neighborhood-bound manner. Extreme temperatures and limited rainfall are examples of harsh weather that affect South African households' spending habits.

The authors conclude that the impact of climatic conditions on household per capita consumption can be lessened by implementing inclusive development policies and initiatives. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03167-2>

NRF AWARDS 2024



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NRF AWARDS 2024

Celebrating 25 Years of Research, Innovation, Impact and Partnerships

Societal Impact Award

In recognition of research with impact that has resulted in improvement in the quality of people's lives.



FINALIST FOR 2024: The DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Human Development is a virtual academic centre that enables researchers to collaborate across disciplines and institutions. Researchers have made novel contributions to the global, regional and local repository of knowledge, with important impacts on policy.

The NRF Societal Impact Award is a new Special Awards category that the NRF has launched.

The DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Human Development was shortlisted for this award, along with the SA Centre for Epidemiological Modelling & Analysis and the CoE for Biomedical TB Research.

The awards ceremony, which took place at Sun City Resort on 22nd of August 2024, honoured and celebrated the scientists who conducted the outstanding research in South Africa.

Read more about the awards here: NRF Awards – [National Research Foundation](#)

CoE-HUMAN



Publications

1. Loss, G., Naicker, S., Richter, L., & Fink, G. (2024). Early life determinants of social disparities among young adults: A longitudinal study in vulnerable communities in South Africa. *World Development*, 175, 106465.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106465>

2. Hartwig, F. P., Ataullahjan, A., Adair, L., Gonçalves, H., Horta, B., Lee, N., Martorell, R., Menezes, A. M. B., Dos Santos Motta, J. V., Norris, S., Ramirez-Zea, M., Richter, L., Bhutta, Z., Stein, A. D., Victora, C., & COHORTS consortium. (2024). Women's health and well-being in five birth cohorts from low- and middle-income countries: Domains and their associations with early-life conditions. *Journal of Global Health*, 14, 04137. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.14.04137>

