

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEAN: PROFESSOR M MUSEMWA BA Hons (Zimbabwe) MA (Cape Town) PhD (Minnesota, USA) MASSAf

Doctor of Philosophy

BARBER, Nancy

Speech-Language Pathology

THESIS: Flipping Clinical Education for Speech-Language Pathology Students:

A Mixed Method Study Exploring the Role of Inquiry-Based Learning in the Development of Critical Thinking Skills

This study employed a mixed method approach to explore the introduction of inquiry-based learning in speech-language pathology clinical education within South Africa's complex higher education context. Findings showed some improved critical thinking among second- and third-year students, linked to enhanced self-reflection. The study emphasised the significance of feedback, educator-student relationships, academic emotions, and theoretical grounding. A clinical education framework and an adapted extended pillar integration process were developed, offering insights to bridge the theory-practice gap and guide future clinical education in the field.

Supervisors: Associate Prof J Neille, Professor J Watermeyer and Dr K Coutts

BOLARINWA, Obasanjo Afolabi

Demography and Population Studies

THESIS: Understanding the sexual health outcomes among women with disabilities in sub-Saharan Africa

I commend Obasanjo Afolabi Bolarinwa for this important research on understanding sexual health outcomes among women with disabilities in sub-Saharan Africa. His work offers critical insights into an often-overlooked population, contributing to inclusive health policy and practice. Congratulations on this significant and impactful achievement.

Supervisor: Professor C Odimegwu

CASOOJEE, Aisha

Audiology

THESIS: Speech-Language acquisition and scholastic outcomes of children with hearing impairment following early intervention in South Africa: A comparative study

Through a robust comparative analysis of two therapeutic approaches, Aisha Casoojee's study offers critical insights into cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children. Her work informs policy, promotes equity in service provision, and strengthens the evidence base for early intervention in LMIC contexts. She has demonstrated academic excellence, methodological rigour, and presented this with careful attention to detail - says examiners. She impressively published 3 chapters and 5 peer reviewed accredited articles as part of her PhD

Supervisors: Professor K Khoza-Shangase and Associate Professor A Kanji

CHAUKE, Hasani Freddy

Media Studies

THESIS: Perpetuating Tribalism in Community Radio Coverage: The Case of Malamulele FM and Vuwani FM in Limpopo Province, South Africa

This research examined the role of community radio in post-apartheid South Africa, using Limpopo's Malamulele FM and Vuwani FM as case studies. In 'democratic' South Africa community radio was given the mandate to unite cohabiting disparate ethnic groups within previously racially homogenized spaces by promoting multilingualism and social cohesion. The study thus interrogates how language functions ideologically in community radio broadcasting to privilege dominant ethnic groups and perpetuate tribalism. It fundamentally recommends the realignment of community broadcasting language policy to foster social cohesion, reflecting a multilingual and inclusive South African society by ensuring equal representation of tribes instead of majoritarianism in programming.

Supervisor: Professor P Govenden

CHIHOBHO, Akulina

Education

THESIS: Investigating the use of translanguaging in reading literacy among multilingual first-year tourism students at a university of technology in South Africa

This thesis revealed that simultaneous use of more than one language for learning and teaching is the most optimal way to improve reading literacy outcomes and academic performance in tourism related subjects. It challenges higher education monolingual bias and offers a model for multilingualism as a resource to be leveraged.

Supervisor: Professor L Makalela

DE BEER, Welma

Drama

THESIS: A proposed arts-based model: developing and implementing a healing-centred, professional development program for teachers to address trauma and build resilience in South African schools.

This PhD thesis addresses the crisis of adverse childhood experiences and trauma resulting in low educational outcomes in South African schools. De Beer has piloted an arts-based model for implementing a healing-centred, professional development program for teachers to address trauma and build collective resilience. Through a practitioner research approach, the work has contributed to the existing literature on teacher professional development, by suggesting culturally adaptive, arts-based methods and pedagogical practices to collectively address traumatic experiences while mitigating re-traumatisation

Supervisor: Ms L Draper-Clarke

DORKIN, Maxine Liza

Industrial Social Work

THESIS: A Multi-Perspective Study of Transitions of Marginalised Youth to Employment in South African Contact Centres

The primary aim of the study was to explore the dynamics of the youth-organisation interface in order to develop a practice model for occupational social workers in South African workplaces. Adopting a phenomenological design, the transition experiences of twenty marginalised youth working in call centres as well as the perspectives of Human Resource professionals, supervisors/managers and industry leaders' views were analysed. The model developed contributes to both theoretical advancement and practical applications for occupational social workers addressing youth employment

Supervisors: Ms F Masson and Associate Professor T Graham

ENU, Rene Ayuk

Political Studies

THESIS: Diaspora movements and the quest for self-determination in post-colonial Africa: The case of British Southern Cameroons (Ambazonia)

The study explores the role of diaspora movements in the quest for self-determination in Southern Cameroons. With its theoretical and historical grounding, and extensive research, the thesis not only contributes to knowledge but also serves as a framework for dialogue and conflict resolution in Southern Cameroons and similar cases.

Supervisors: Dr M Jana and late Professor SJ Louw

JACOB, Lizanne Leslie

Education

THESIS: Constructing knowledge is more complex: Opposing the uncritical adoption of pop psychological fads and neuromyths in Education among teachers in private schools in Midrand, South Africa

This PhD thesis examined adoption of Pop Psychological Fads and Neuromyths in Education among teachers in private schools in South Africa. The study was informed by Feuerstein's Mediated Learning Experience and the Constructivist Learning Theories. The study concluded that misinformation-based strategies often do not improve learning outcomes compared to scientifically validated methods, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and evidence-based decision-making. The thesis presents a framework for continuous professional development to help address misconceptions from neuromyths and fads among teachers.

Supervisor: Dr P Aloka

KAFU, Catherine Nasambu

Media Studies

THESIS: Exploring media framing of abortion content on Kenyan Television: A focus on adolescents

Catherine Kafu's study investigated the framing of abortion in Kenyan televised news media, with a focus on adolescents' perceptions and experiences of such coverage. The study established that abortion reportage showed women as victims of a law that compromised their safety, while also exposed men as perpetrators of reproductive coercion and abuse against women. A strong legal and policy framework; acknowledgement of abortion as a public health issue and involvement of the youth in policy development are among suggested recommendations.

Supervisors: Associate Professor D Ligaga and Dr J Wachira

MAGORO, Kgopotso Ditshego

Interdisciplinary Digital Knowledge Economy Studies

THESIS: Investigating cultural knowledge systems, Mandhwane and mind mobilisation for rural communities in the digital era

This study of Digital Mandhwane theorises the meaning of a transformative state of digital being, through human agency, in the context of the evolving digital knowledge and learning economy, advancing beyond ICT4Development theory and technology dependency. In an era where scholars call for more inclusive, context-specific approaches to digital transformation, this study makes a contribution by integrating Afrocentric perspectives and reshaping narratives relating to the participation of communities in resource-constrained environments in an African context.

Supervisor: Associate Professor L Abrahams

MAKDA, Fatima Mahomed

Education

THESIS: Virtual Teaching and Online Learning Ecosystem: Harnessing the Power of Digital Education for Equitable Educational Experiences

This research aimed to gain understanding and provide insights into the opportunities offered by virtual teaching and online learning in the context of South Africa. The study drew from Socio-Technical Theory, Ecological Systems Theory, Transactional Distance Theory and the Community of Inquiry Framework to ground its analysis, which included thematic and statistical analysis. Key contribution was the notion digital innovation in teaching and learning, and the Virtual Teaching and Online Learning Ecosystem Framework for Higher Education Institutions.

Supervisor: Professor R Dlamini

MAPINE, Sandisiwe Hombakazi

African Literature

THESIS: Black Celebrity Auto/Biography and The Mapping of Possibilities

This dissertation offers a critical reflection on contemporary Black South African celebrities' life writing. It considers how life writing functions as a site of identity formation and a vehicle for discursive intervention in public life. It demonstrates the promise of life writing as a powerful resource in unlocking different forms of capital for these celebrities in the context of the neoliberal South African economy. Its examination of the complexities of co-authorship offers generative insights into the modes of life-making and self-making available to Black South African artists.

Supervisor: Associate Professor G Musila

MAZHINYE, Rudo

Education

THESIS: Work-based learning for occupational competence

Rudo's thesis investigates how work-based learning influences the development of occupational competence in hospitality education. Grounded in Wenger's social theory of learning, it explores the dynamic interaction of socio-cultural engagement, hands-on practice, and the use of reified artefacts. Drawing on rich empirical evidence, her study highlights the value and complexity of learning in authentic work settings, making a critical contribution to understanding how students become competent professionals within the South African TVET hospitality education context.

Supervisors: Dr P Ramsarup and Professor V Wedekind

MDENA-THIBEDI, Linda

Drama

THESIS: Bodies in crisis: exploring how the body, as a tool in Drama Therapy and Dance Therapy, offers insight into the effects of teaching online.

This research study examines the effects on the body of teaching on-line during the Covid-19 epidemic. The study draws upon relevant professional literature in the fields of drama and dance therapy which are viewed as having similar processes in play with regards to embodied engagement and its effects in both the teaching and learning experience. In addition, interviews with both local and international faculty experts, lend their voices in collating theory with practice and offering suggestions for future studies.

Supervisor: Ms V Marcow-Speiser

MDLALOSE, Sithembiso Tobias

Sociology

THESIS: Necroaesthetics: Essays on Apartheid, Documentary Film and the Black Filmic Image

'Necroaesthetics' explores the unrepresentability of Black 'social death', and the resulting violence that inheres in the visual production and consumption of Black suffering in anti-Apartheid documentary film. Mdlalose argues that images are not free of deceit and unjustifiability and that the camera appends (and reinscribes) anti-Black violence.

Supervisor: Professor S Ally

MLILO, Silindile Nanzile

Migration and Displacement

THESIS: Political Subjectivities in Post-colonial States: Identity and Belonging Among Botswana's non-Tswana Migrant Descendants

This thesis presents a nuanced narrative account of the hybrid, ambivalent and tactical nature of contemporary citizenship in Botswana, as contested and practised by citizens who have migrant origins. The thesis contributes to debates on citizenship beyond legal frameworks. By centering interpretations of citizenship from the margins, it demonstrates multiple, fluid forms of citizenship as enacted and lived. It offers novel theoretical concepts such as ambivalent and tactical citizenship, reinterpreting existing concepts such as hybrid identities, showing that these are not just signifiers of identity, but also are instruments of political citizenship.

Supervisors: Professor L Landau and Dr JP Misago

MNISI, Nomsa

Education

THESIS: Citizenship education and learners with mild-intellectual disabilities in South Africa: A critique of post-apartheid citizenship education policy

On a global and regional scale, citizenship education reflects three features, i.e., legal status, feeling of belonging and active participation. The central target of her critique is the state liberal policy's approach to educating learners with mild-intellectual disabilities in post-1994 South African schools. Using post-apartheid citizenship education policy as a focal point, the candidate argues that effective citizenship education for learners with mild-intellectual disabilities is an ongoing struggle that is rooted in communitarianism (group solidarity) strengthened by civic-republicanism (duties and responsibilities).

Supervisor: Dr T Mathebula

MOSS, Linda Louise

Psychology

THESIS: What makes adolescents diagnosed with ADHD Tik (Tok)? The lived experience of ADHD in online and offline worlds

This phenomenological study utilises narrative and visual methodologies to explore the experiences of adolescents diagnosed or self-identified with ADHD. For participants, school is a place of anxiety and alienation but medication flattens affect and alters their sense of self. By contrast, the online world provides these young people with imaginative spaces for identity play, connection and agency. The examiners praised the thesis as a 'rare example of interdisciplinary research' describing it as 'elegant', 'thoughtful and creative' and 'rich and innovative'.

Supervisor: Associate Professor J Bradbury

MOTHEOGANE, Mmabatho Millicent

Education

THESIS: Digital Technology Enabled Education: Exploring Digital Education Affordances on Student Performance Through the Community of Inquiry Framework and the mixed methodological research approach, this study examined the effects of the swift transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic on student performance in South African universities. The emphasis was on equitable access to digital education and comprehensive support systems. The study aimed to elucidate solutions for enhancing resilience and accessibility of tertiary education during pandemics to ensure academic continuity that is inclusive. This research contributed new knowledge on digital technology-enabled education.

Supervisor: Professor R Dlamini

MOTLHAMME, Jeffrey Thabang

Film and Television

THESIS: Filmic imaginaries and myths from Nigeria and Senegal: Exploring representational tropes (of Africa and Africans) in three films

This study seeks to explore the ways in which three prominent Africa films, Tatu (2017), Atlantics (2019), and The Lost Okoroshi (2019) imagine and mythologise Senegalese and Nigerian life. The investigation is concerned with how cinematic imaginaries confront issues of identity within the context of the African post-colonial situation and globalized Western cultural hegemony.

Supervisor: Dr Y Koba

MUKOMANA, Saziso

Education

THESIS: An investigation of ICT usage in English second language teaching and learning in Zimbabwean rural secondary schools

The thesis by Saziso Mukomana presents quantitative and qualitative findings on ICT usage in the teaching and learning of English as a second language in Zimbabwean rural secondary schools. The findings show that while ESL teachers and learners found ICT-oriented pedagogies useful in enhancing O'Level learners' acquisition of core English language skills, barriers such as inadequate ICT infrastructure and lack of ICT training hampered full maximisation of ICTs for T&L. Recommendations made addressed these challenges pragmatically.

Supervisors: Professor N Nkealah and Dr Q Kemende Wunseh

MUYUNDA, Rhodes Simasiku

Education

THESIS: The role of indigenous languages for improving academic performance in an EAP course at an African university

This thesis positions translanguaging as an anchor for epistemic access and academic success in African universities. It demonstrates how the inclusion of indigenous languages enhances comprehension and participation, challenging monolingual norms in academic literacy and advocating for a decolonial, multilingual pedagogy.

Supervisor: Professor L Makalela

NDAYISENGA, Zenon

Critical Diversity Studies

THESIS: The Value of De Sousa Santos' Concepts of Epistemicide, University Knowledge, and Pluriversity to the Decolonial Discourse in/on South African Universities

This thesis deployed Boaventura de Sousa Santos's tridimensional concepts of epistemicide, university knowledge, and pluriversity knowledge to demonstrate how South African universities can genuinely be decolonised. Drawing on a conceptual-philosophical analysis, the thesis demonstrates how pluriversity knowledge, in particular, allows for the future projection of a genuinely decolonised university that has the potential to prevent the repetition of the Fallist protests of 2015/2016.

Supervisor: Associate Professor S Dube

NKRUMAH, Frank Kwarteng

Education

THESIS: Collaborative learning and knowledge building in a Mathematics teacher educator professional learning community in Ghana

Dr Nkrumah investigated the complex and under-researched area of mathematics teacher educators' (MTEs') knowledge and practice, focusing on one course in a teaching college in Ghana. His findings confirm previous research that content-focused, domain-specific professional learning is crucial for MTEs' development. He also showed that collaborative learning in professional learning communities and critical friendships amongst colleagues enhance professional knowledge and practices substantially. This study will promote increased attention internationally to the knowledge and practices of those who prepare future mathematics teachers.

Supervisor: Professor C Pournara

NYAMAPFENE, Lorraine

Publishing Studies

THESIS: Self-publishing trade books in South Africa: opportunities, challenges, and implications.

This study examines self-publishing in South Africa, analyzing author motivations, experiences, and stakeholder implications. Using qualitative methods, it finds that authors self-publish due to rejection, financial incentives, creative control, and prestige. While autonomy is highly valued, financial success is rare, and quality varies. Challenges include stigma and distribution barriers, yet self-publishing remains vital for diversifying voices. Publishing service providers help maintain standards, but traditional industry constraints limit reach. The research offers insights for authors, publishers, and service providers in South Africa's evolving publishing landscape.

Supervisor: Professor M Titlestad

PATEL, Rabia

Psychology

THESIS: Intrapsychic and socio-political representations of self and identity in vertically infected HIV-infected adolescents

This thesis explores how the self and identity are defined through early object relations and socio-political raced subjectivities in a series of psychoanalytic interviews with four vertically-infected HIV-positive adolescents. Using an interpretive phenomenological analysis, this study illustrates how psychoanalytic and postcolonial theory are seamed together through intersubjectivity and the unconscious in this unique group. The narratives reveal a complex raced ambivalence in relation to the Black maternal HIV-positive body, profound loss and grief, and nuanced emergent sexualities.

Supervisor: Associate Professor T Graham

SAWASAWA, Cynthia Ngiyazi

Speech-Language Pathology

THESIS: The help-seeking experiences of caregivers with children living with cerebral palsy in Tembisa, a township in South Africa.

This study explored the lived experiences of help-seeking among caregivers of children with cerebral palsy (CP) in Tembisa, using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Findings reveal the complexities of navigating formal and informal help sources and support systems, highlighting the challenges they face in accessing healthcare and education services. The study emphasizes the importance of community-based support and hybrid communities of care, advocating for a shift towards a holistic approach to care that prioritizes both the child and caregiver's well-being

Supervisors: Professor J Watermeyer and Dr K Masuku

SCHULER, Greta Jane

Creative Writing

THESIS: Tricky Business

For her PhD in Creative Writing, Greta Schuler has written a work of creative non-fiction that tells the fragmented, moving story of a young Zimbabwean woman who is a sex worker in Johannesburg. Years in the making, this complex narrative is about an unusual life, but also an exploration of the challenges of telling such stories.

Accompanying the creative work is an essay on representations of sex workers in the novels of Zimbabwean writers, Yvonne Vera and Novuyo Rosa Tshuma.

Supervisors: Professor J Vearey and Associate Professor B Law Viljoen

SEEKO, Limakatso Marcelina

Education

THESIS: Accounting for the missing link in the philosophical theorisation of Gender-Based Violence: A poignant focus on discourse

The candidate's research examines and critiques the theorisation of gender-based violence (GBV) within the analytic tradition of philosophy. Having provided this critique, the candidate moves on to develop a theoretical framework for the study of GBV from a philosophical perspective. Underpinned by the critical emancipatory paradigm, and drawing from moral philosophy, feminist philosophy and sociolinguistics, the theory is aimed at filling the gap in the philosophical theorisation of GBV and contributing to the discourse on the redress of GBV.

Supervisor: Dr T Letseka

SIBANYONI, Morefaith Naledi

Education

THESIS: Attachment and social competence: How Sedibeng west township schools can be secure bases for all learners

This PhD study investigated attachment and social competence among learners in Sedibeng West Township schools, Gauteng. The study was informed by the Attachment Theory, and the Ecological Systems Theory. The multiple case study research design was utilized. The sampling frame comprised 6 teachers, 18 grade 10 learners, and 3 deputy principals. The findings revealed that most learners exhibited insecure attachment patterns. The findings led to a development of a model tailored to assist learners from insecure attachments.

Supervisor: Dr P Aloka