

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE NEWSLETTER

Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria



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CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE INTERVIEWING SEMINAR

VISITING PROFESSOR BRIGITTE SMIT

On 8 April 2022, the Centre for the Study of Resilience welcomed Professor Brigitte Smit for in-depth training with the team members of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) on the theoretical and practical process of conducting interviews. This knowledge aims to assist the team with their in-person and telephonic interviews for the Enabling Schools project. Prof. Smit presented the team with knowledge on the importance of interviews along with the different kinds of interviews. During the session, Prof. Smit introduced the team to multiple techniques on how to make participants feel at ease during their interviews and provide the interviewer with the necessary rich information. She also shared suggestions of multiple readings for the team to further their knowledge on the concept of interviews before ending the session with practical examples of doing an interview along with advice on questions and concerns raised from the team members.

Prof. Smit is an Assistant Adjunct Professor from the University of Alberta, Canada as well as a visiting Professor from the University of Johannesburg. Additionally, she is an independent academic and research consultant who focuses on the interview process.



***Back right row from the left Mr
Stephan Dippenaar, Ms Monique
Oosthuizen, Ms Princess Mabota-
Rapholo, Prof. Brigitte Smit, Ms
Marike de la Rey, Ms Linah
Masombuka, Dr Carien Jonker.
Front row from the left Ms Liz-
Marie Basson, and Ms Kanye
Rampa.***

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE: RESEARCH CAPACITY

INTRODUCING FIELDWORKERS IN AN ESRC-FUNDED STUDY

Martha Ashley Mutonga

My name is Martha Ashley Mutonga – a daughter of Chris Mutonga and Late Alice Grace Siyakisa. I live in Majemantsho village, Mafikeng, North West Province. In the fullness of time, I would like to see my name written after the phrase “Doctor of Philosophy”. Hence I always thrive whenever ‘Education’ crosses my road.

I studied, but did not complete N5, Electrical Engineering at a TVET college in Potchefstroom. In 2019 I enrolled at the Faculty of Education, North West University. Currently, I am in my final year of part-time studies. I am very proud of how far I have come in this Education course.

In 2021 I worked as an Education Assistant at Lomanyaneng Primary School, North West Province. This role really made me fall even more in love with the teaching profession.

The role as Fieldworker in the Enabling Schools Project is a blessing. I have been entrusted with major duties which allow me to use all of my strengths and talents. I appreciate the opportunity to be part of a dynamic project. I have learned so much and enjoy centralised dialogue weeks with principals, teachers and community reading champions.



Nomhle Mboneni

My name is Nomhle Mboneni and I like and prefer to be called Nomi. I live in Mocosing village in Mafikeng in the North West Province. I live with my beloved mother and brother.

I am a North West University Sociology Graduate. Currently, I am studying for a Post Graduate Certificate in Education with Stadio.

Previously I have worked as a student assistant at North West University, acted as a supervisor on a project in a Non-Profit organization and as an Education Assistant.

So far, the experience of being a fieldworker is so amazing as I have learnt a lot – especially about myself and capabilities that I was not aware of. The role has taught me that as a team leader you need to be open to learning to enhance team performance and good leadership skills. As John Wooden once said: “The best leaders are lifelong learners”.



Lebogang Sekgalo

My Name is Lebogang Sekgalo. I reside in a village, Madibe Makgabana, about 30km's from Mafikeng town. I stay with my mother and my younger brother.

I completed my Matric in 2010 at Seleje Secondary School. I studied Human Resources Management (N4) at Taletso TVET College. Previously, around 2015, I worked in an Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a General Worker.

What I have experienced in this position is that learners don't have enough time to learn and read. This project is helping a lot as their level of understanding is not the same. The project needs to be expanded to other schools. All schools in South Africa really need this kind of project. The project is also helping with unemployment because some of us are earning something and gaining experience as well.



Lerato Muriel Boipelo Ramatlhape

My name is Lerato Muriel Boipelo Ramatlhape. It's a mouthful, I know. I am a mother to my beautiful daughter and a wife to my loving husband.

I'm a communications graduate from the North West University, Mahikeng Campus. I am also the founder of Sapphire Caelum enterprise which specializes in events planning.

Lerato Muriel Boipelo Ramatlhape

I started work in my early days as a pageant manager and later moved on to retail. In 2018 I landed an internship at the North West Province Department of Education.

Soon after I was lucky enough to join the amazing "Reading for Joy" team as a fieldworker. Through this journey, I have learned a lot. I realized I have leadership skills and can think on my toes. I've been privileged enough to lead a group of hardworking individuals who share the same mission and vision as me: namely to a better and brighter future for our communities through reading.



Modiegi Magdeline Moleloatladi

My name is Modiegi Magdeline Moleloatladi but most known as Tshegofatso. I'm a mother to my one and only daughter. I stay in Magogoe village in Mafikeng, North West province with my mother, daughter and my brother.

I was enrolled, but did not complete, a N6 Human Resource Management course. I have certificates in Computer Administration and Internet Training, as well as a NQF Level 2 Certificate in Mixed Farming Systems. In the past, I have worked as a cashier at the Fashion For You retail store. I was also an Education Assistant at Tau Primary School.

My experience as a fieldworker has been very amazing. I got to learn more about leadership skills and working with different people with different perspectives. Through the Reading Cycle project, I was able to realise the capabilities I have in leadership. I have also been able to interact with kids. I learned to deal with kids and help them love reading. This is something that will help me with my child and kids around me in future.



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Through the Reading Cycle project, I was able to realise the capabilities I have in leadership.

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CONGRATULATIONS DR CLEOPATRA CHAMBATI

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE COLLEAGUE GRADUATES HER PHD

Dr Cleopatra Chambati received her doctoral degree under the supervision of Professor Ronél Ferreira and Co-supervisor Prof Liesel Ebersöhn. Dr Chambati wrote her thesis on “A teacher-to-teacher intervention on school-based vegetable gardens to support resilience” and the paper was accepted with minor changes. Dr Chambati described her experience as being a “humbling experience full of growth and rich experience in knowledge both on a professional and personal level”. She goes on to say “I am absolutely excited and looking forward to a future beyond imagination. Through this experience, my view of the world of work and learning has progressed to practically understand how the world continues to extend as a global work village. Gaining a doctorate has extended my window of opportunity to work and support young children and vulnerable communities in whichever part of that world I can physically and/or virtually access”.

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CONGRATULATIONS DR CARINE JONKER

CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE COLLEAGUE GRADUATES HER PHD

Congratulations from the Centre for the Study of Resilience to Dr Carine Jonker for completing her doctoral degree under the supervision of Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn and her co-supervisors, Prof. Marien Graham and Prof. Surette van Staden. Dr Jonker’s thesis on “Pre-service teacher self-efficacy and teacher efficacy in a challenged education context” was accepted with minor changes. On her experience, Dr Jonker wrote “I have immense gratitude for all role-players, in particular my remarkable supervisors, colleagues and loved-ones, that enabled this achievement. The privilege of completing a doctoral degree was an enriching professional and personal journey. As an Educational Psychologists in private practice, school settings and in an academic context, I aspire to use this journey to contribute to the enhancement of practical and theoretical knowledge within the global teacher resilience sphere.”



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The privilege of completing a doctoral degree was an enriching professional and personal journey

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CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE COLLABORATOR

PROFESSOR MAHLAPAPHLAPANA THEMANE, UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

Professor Mahlapahlapana Themane, University of Limpopo, a longtime Centre for the Study of Resilience collaborator, more recently partnered on an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project. During monthly visits to Mahikeng, Prof. Themane leads sessions with principals from 10 primary schools in the Mahikeng subdistrict.

Prof. Themane has five primary research interests, the first being curriculum studies, particularly in curriculum theory where the focus is on what theory/theories can inform an understanding of a decolonised education system and, inclusive and localised research. Secondly, Prof. Themane is also interested and involved in research on HIV and AIDS with a focus on the inclusivity of learners diagnosed with HIV and AIDS in schools. The third research interest includes Schools as Enabling Spaces and child-friendly schools together with the fourth research interest of inclusive education where the “Teaching for All” initiative is followed and learning materials are developed. The last research interest includes reading, specifically on methods of teaching reading.

Prof. Themane is a leading expert in his field of leadership training.



***Professor Mahlapahlapana Themane
from the University of Limpopo***

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON VISITING RESEARCHERS

PROFESSOR QING GU & DR HUIMING DING

The Centre for the Study of Resilience was thrilled to welcome Prof. Qing Gu and Dr Huiming Ding from the University College London (UCL) for a research visit in February and May. Prof. Qing Gu together with Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn are the lead investigators of the three-year, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded project “Schools as Enabling Spaces”.

Prof. Gu is the director of the UCL Centre for Educational Leadership and a Professor of Leadership in Education. She is the Past Chair of the British Association of Comparative and International Education, Co-Editor of *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Associate Editor of the *International Journal of Educational Development*, and a member of the Research Evidence and Impact Panel for the Leadership College for UK Government. Professor Gu has directed and co-directed many government and research council funded projects in the areas of teacher professional development, school improvement, and systemic reform and change.

Some of her books have been translated into Chinese, Japanese and Spanish. Her co-authored paper on the impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes was given “The William J Davis Award” by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in 2016 – the first awarded paper written by authors from England since this scholarly award began in 1980.

Dr Huiming Ding is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University College London (UCL) Centre for Educational Leadership, supporting research activities of the Economic and Social Research Council project “Schools as Enabling Spaces to Improve Learning and Health-Related Quality of Life for Primary School Children in Rural Communities in South Africa”.

Her current research interests are mainly in using educational assessment (together with other quantitative and qualitative data sources) to further the understanding of and fostering student development. She has published and presented papers in the areas of international large-scale assessment data interpretation, the impact of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and language testing. Before starting her PhD, she worked with PISA data at the China PISA National Centre.

Of their field trip to the North-West, Prof. Gu commented that *“after a couple of years’ COVID lockdown, it feels like a dream had come true when I finally landed in South Africa. What touched my heart most was the friendliness and kindness of the people and their immense pride of their culture and country. It brought tears to my eyes when I witnessed how dedicated and committed our Community Reading Champions are. The joy in their voices and in their eyes because they knew they had made a difference to the young learners in their classes was truly priceless!”*

“
After a couple of years’ COVID lockdown, it feels like a dream had come true when I finally landed in South Africa
”



Prof. Qing Gu

Dr Ding felt that her first visit to South Africa was a wonderful experience, mentioning that *“Besides having the wonderful experiences of working together with our committed research team, I was very impressed by the spectacular landscapes, amazing wild animals and diverse cultures of this beautiful country. The local people I met were truly welcoming and friendly. I really liked and also learned from their values, respect and love for nature.”*

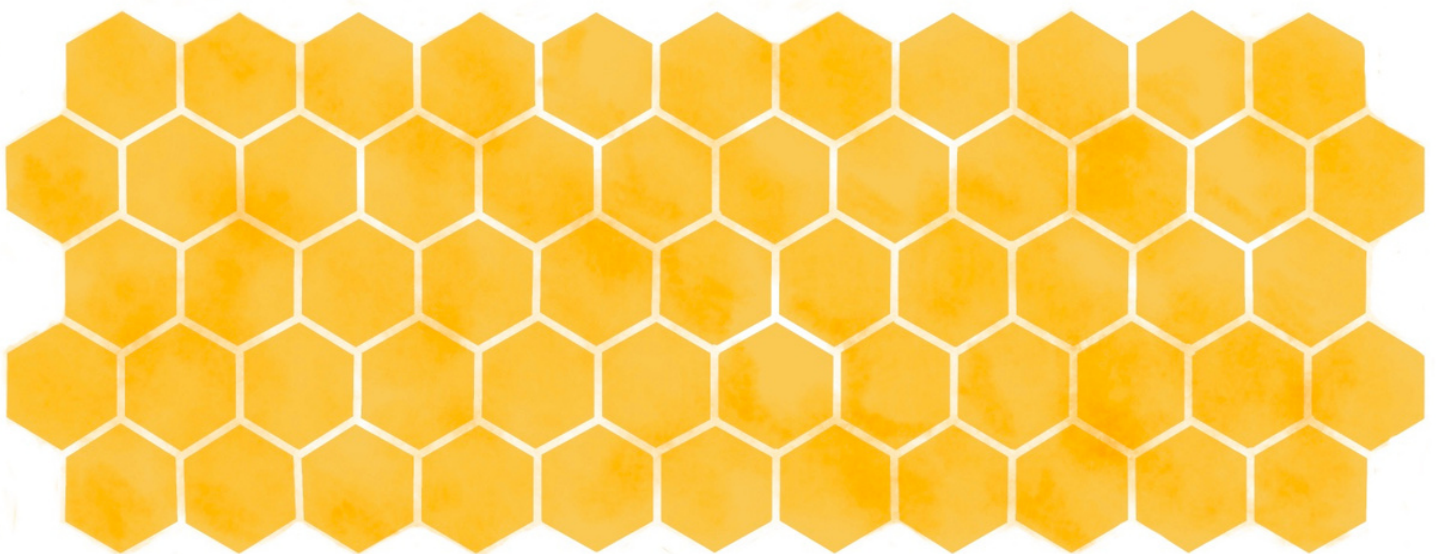


Dr Huiming Ding

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SETTING AN AGENDA FOR AN ANTI-RACIST PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

INVITATIONAL AERA SMALL CONFERENCE

Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn was invited to participate as a discussant in an American Educational Research Association (AERA) Small Conference at Pennsylvania State University on 4 and 5 April. The goal of the conference was to connect experts in the field of Educational Psychology with scholars focusing on equity, pedagogy, and critical race theory to provide constructive feedback and suggestions on the matter of establishing an anti-racist programme of research in Educational Psychology.

The conference aimed to improve the learning experiences of students, specifically students of colour, to ensure quality, inclusive education in a diverse nation and set the course for developing an anti-racist programme for Educational Psychology.

Invited participants include editors of leading journals in the field of Educational Psychology, researchers who pursue anti-racist research within the field of Educational Psychology, and, scholars actively working with critical-race and culturally-responsive perspectives on educational practice. The conference focused on two fundamental questions. The first theoretical question, asked about what is understood by anti-racist research in educational psychology focusing on the aims and values of anti-racist Educational Psychology research and how theories in the field can be reimagined with this goal in mind together with how methods in the field can be reimagined to become antiracist. The second applied question asked how researchers in a field occupied by mostly white researchers, develop an anti-racist program of research in Educational Psychology specifically focusing on individual steps that can be taken to reconceptualize their research program, the support required to achieve this vision, and how graduate and undergraduate teaching and mentoring of Educational Psychology can become antiracist. Prof. Ebersöhn shared her knowledge and expertise in the field of resilience based on her international perspectives.



EDUCATIONAL BOOKS DONATED

COLLABORATION WITH BOOKS FOR AFRICA

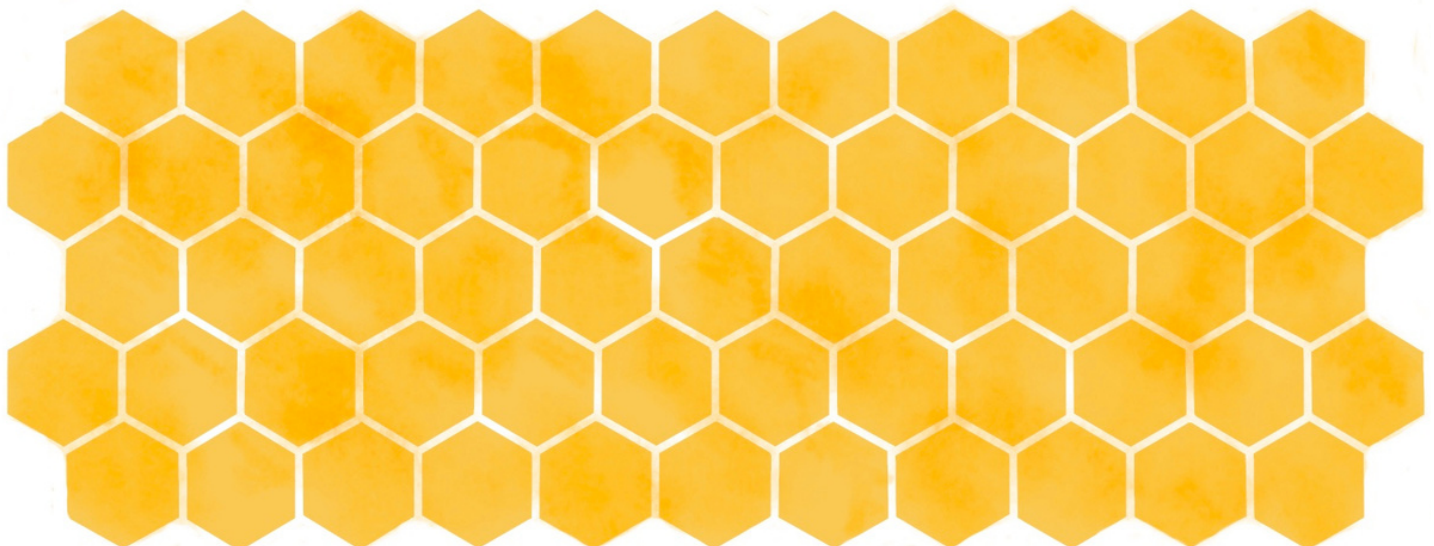
The University of Pretoria collaborated with Books for Africa to donate educational books to the Pepps Motheong independent Pre-, Primary and Secondary School in Atteridgeville and the Botshelo Ba Sechaba After-School centre run by retired teachers from Atteridgeville. The After-School Centre is the former home of retired Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke. The Chief Justice donated the home to be converted to the Education Peace Centre in 2021 after retired educators saw a need to support learners after harsh lockdown periods that left learners falling behind on their school work due to attending classes on alternating schedules. The After-School Centre centre starts operating from 13:00 each day to receive learners dropped off by transport and assist them with homework and school tasks.

The staff members of Pepps Motheong and Botshelo Ba Sechaba were overjoyed when they received the wide range of books covering subjects from science, literature, mathematics, biology, and, history.



Ms Princess Mabota-Rapholo (on the left), a Senior Research Assistant at the Centre for the Study of Resilience, with some of the retired teachers from the Peace Education Centre (on the right)

Ms Berrange -Principal of Motheong Pre- Primary and Secondary School with Ms Princess Mabota-Rapholo from the Centre for the Study of Resilience



COLLABORATION ON A TRANSDISCIPLINARY STUDY

THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE JOINS THE ARUA LELAPA CONSORTIUM FOR A STUDY ON FAMILY HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

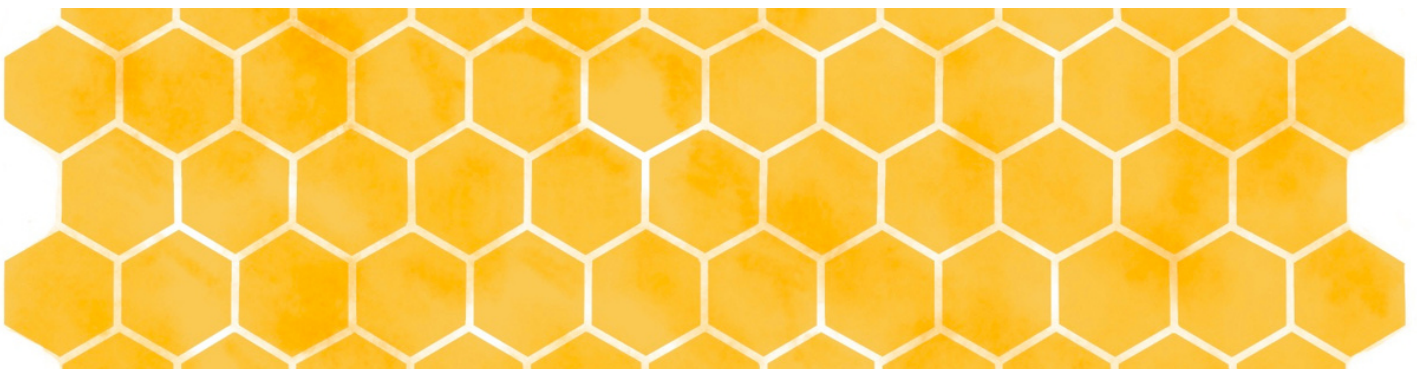
Professor Liesel Ebersöhn and Professor Motlalepule Ruth Mampane are collaborating with Professor Joline Skordis, director of the University College London (UCL) Centre for Global Health Economics, and Professor Frederik Booysen from the University of Witwatersrand (WITS) on a transdisciplinary study.

The initiative established a multi-disciplinary consortium focused on the study of family health in contexts where traditional family structures are being challenged or changed by the forces of urbanisation, globalisation, and social transformation.

Prof. Mampane represented the CSR at a 28 March 2022 inaugural meeting as an expert in the study of family health and development. The meeting aimed at facilitating the negotiation of an agenda of high-level research priorities for fostering new work in the area of family health studies and to outline the mission, model, and action plan for the work of the proposed consortium.



*Lelapa means “home” or
“community” in Setswana*



FOR THE LOVE OF READING

A RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP PICTOGRAPH: SCHOOL-BASED INTERVENTION RESEARCH



NEW CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF RESILIENCE-AFFILIATED PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Cameranesi, M.; Theron, L.; Hölte, J.; Jefferies, P.; Ungar, M. Understanding the Mechanisms through Which Family Risk Affects Adolescent Mental Health: A Model of Multisystemic Resilience in Context. *Children* 2022, 9, 546. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children9040546>

Ebersöhn, L., Omidire, F. & Murphy, P.K. (2022). Academic flocking and global distress: Equitable south-north research partnering to promote quality education in diverse contexts and cultures. *Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11618-022-01084-1>

Hölte, J., Theron, L., & Ungar, M. (2022). A multisystemic perspective on the temporal interplay between adolescent depression and resilience supporting individual and social resources. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 297, 225–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2021.10.030>

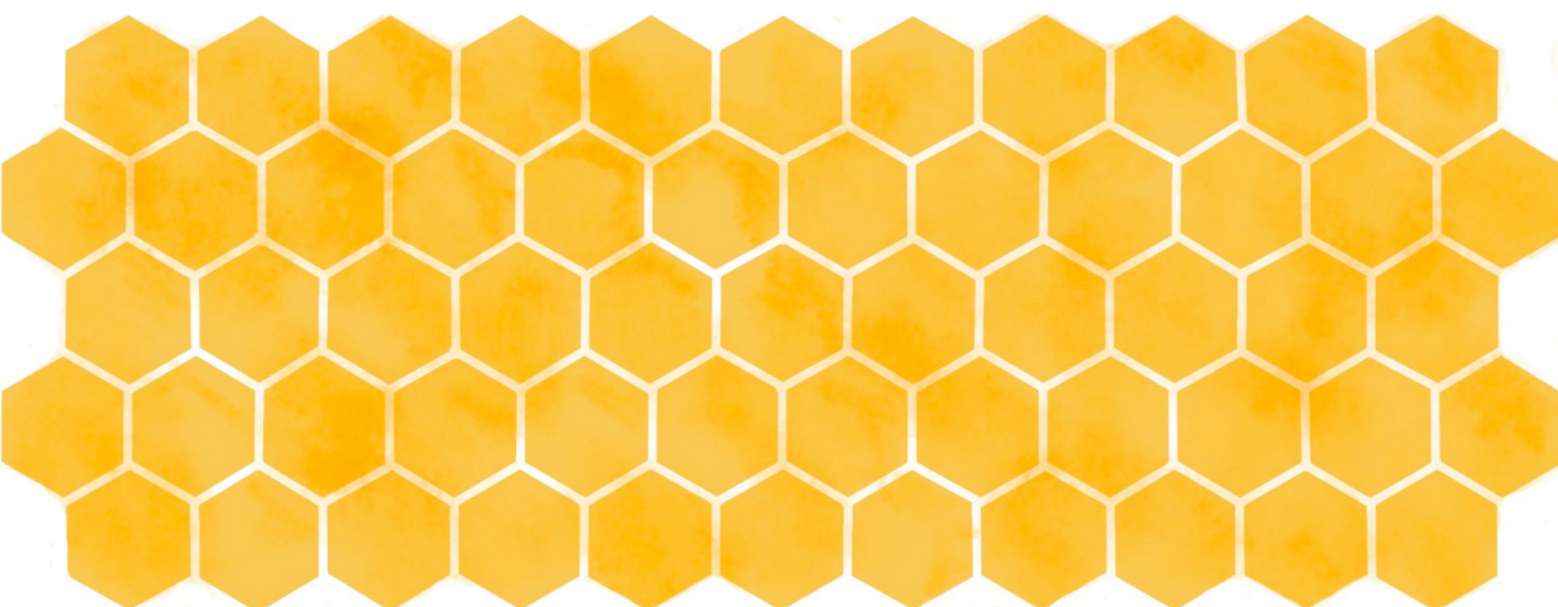
Theron, L. C., Abreu-Villaça, Y., Augusto-Oliveira, M., Brennan, C. H., Crespo-Lopez, M. E., de Paula Arrifano, G., ... & Hadfield, K. (2022). A systematic review of the mental health risks and resilience among pollution exposed adolescents. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 146, 55–66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2021.12.012>

Theron, L., Rothmann, S., Hölte, J. & Ungar, M. (2022). Differential adaptation to adversity: A latent profile analysis of youth engagement with resilience-enabling cultural resources and mental health outcomes in a stressed Canadian and South African community. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/00220221221077353>

Theron, L., Ungar, M. & Hölte, J. (2022). Pathways of resilience: Predicting school engagement trajectories for South African adolescents living in a stressed environment. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 69, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0361476X22000212>

CHAPTERS IN BOOKS

Ebersöhn, L., Omidire, M. F., & Mampame, M. R. (2022). Collective distress calls for collective wellbeing measures. In *The Routledge International Handbook of Indigenous Resilience* (pp. 195–207). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781003048428/routledgeinternational-handbook-indigenous-resilience-hilary-weaver?refId=7f42504ea70d-46c1-8506-a934d2e94cb0&context=ubx>



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