



**Determining the exposure to and skills needed by  
Industrial – Organisational Psychologists in the Western  
Cape Province to counsel employees towards flourishing  
in the workplace.**

By

**Shuné Brown**

**3131636**

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## **KEYWORDS**

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Industrial-Organisational Psychologist

Optimism

Positive Psychology

Skills

Wellbeing

Workplace Counselling



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NOTE:

- This mini dissertation was prepared utilising APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition referencing guidelines.
- The Department of Industrial Psychology does not require APA style formatting of the headings, paragraphs or tables. Students are encouraged to choose a style of their choice and to use that consistently.
- This thesis constitutes 50% of the structured Master's degree in Industrial Psychology. Therefore, the mini dissertation is only one requirement of the coursework Master's degree.
- According to the University of the Western Cape thesis guide, a mini dissertation is normally between 7 000 – 20 000 words in length and is limited in scope.



## **ABSTRACT**

According to literature, Industrial-Organisational psychology is mainly concerned with investigating the behaviour of humans within the work environment. It is stated that Industrial-Organisational psychology deals with well-adjusted working adults to improve well-being and efficiency by applying psychology principles (Health Professions Act, 2011). One of the roles of the Industrial-Organisational psychologist is to provide counselling in the workplace.

Counselling in the workplace is typically done in a traditional way. This process is mostly seen as reactive and is aimed at helping individuals cope with problems and addictions with the goal of reinstating performance. This research will in part aim to suggest positive psychology as an alternative method. It is suggested that changing counselling to a positive psychology perspective could lead to greater outcomes than just assisting employees through personal and emotional difficulties. The aim of positive psychology counselling should be to enhance employees' sense of coherence, resilience, optimism, work engagement and self-efficacy, amongst others. Thus, Industrial-Organisational psychologists need to be effectively prepared in order to counsel people towards flourishing in the workplace. This implies that they need the necessary exposure to and training in certain skills. With literature increasingly focusing on positively oriented interventions towards improving wellbeing and flourishing of employees, the study investigates whether Industrial-Organisational psychologists are adequately equipped to counsel employees towards a state of flourishing. Similarly, the study aims to assess the exposure to the skills needed for Industrial-Organisational psychologists to counsel employees towards a state of flourishing, or whether they might prefer to use other techniques to achieve this goal.

A qualitative research design, with a combination of convenience and snowball sampling of 12 participants, was utilised. The participants selected for inclusion were Industrial-Organisational psychologists across the Western Cape Province. Semi-structured interviews took place to gather the data, which were transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis.

From the results, it seemed that participants were familiar with the meaning of counselling and that they were faced with a diverse range of counselling situations that require a unique set of skills and competencies. Participants had divergent experience and opinions with regard to the

training they had received in preparation of their role as a counsellor. Most participants were not trained to counsel towards flourishing, and it seems that they preferred coaching as a means to help employees flourish. However, most participants indicated that coaching skills was not included in their postgraduate studies. The majority of the participants did indicate that their skills and exposure was sufficient for workplace counselling, but with room for improvement. Recommendations for future research and the training of Industrial-Organisational psychologists were made.



## DECLARATION

I, Shuné Brown, hereby declare that *Determining the exposure to and skills needed by Industrial - Organisational Psychologists in the Western Cape Province to counsel employees towards flourishing in the workplace* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: Shune Brown

Date: 15 November 2019

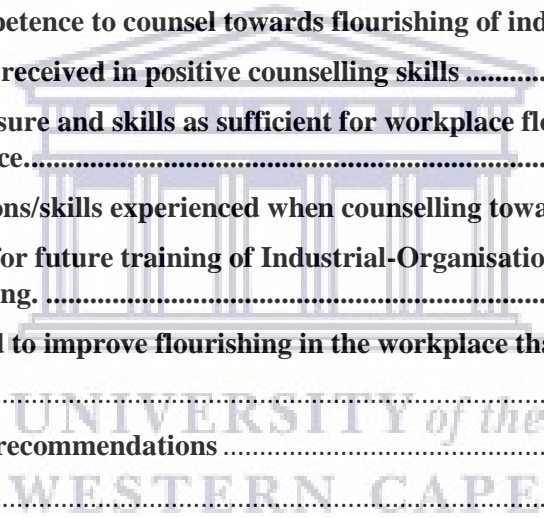
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## Contents

<b>KEYWORDS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>LIST OF GRAPHS</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction to the study</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>1.1 Background and Rationale</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>1.2 Problem Statement</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>1.3 Objectives of research</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>1.4 Significance of the research</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>1.5 Scope of research</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>1.6 Brief overview of methodology</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>1.7 Definitions/terms</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>1.8 Overview of the study</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Literature review</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>2.2 Theoretical background</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>2.2.1 Positive psychology</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>2.2.2 Positive psychology moved into positive organisational psychology</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>2.2.3 Positive psychological counselling models and modes</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>2.2.3.1 Strengths-Based Counselling</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>2.2.3.2 Strengths-Centered Therapy</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>2.2.3.3 Quality of Life Therapy</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>2.2.3.4 Well-being Therapy</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>2.2.3.5 Hope Therapy</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>2.2.3.6 Positive Psychotherapy</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>2.2.4 Flourishing as positive psychological construct</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>2.2.4.1 Meaning of flourishing in the workplace</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>2.2.4.2 Flourishing in the workplace measures</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>2.3 Industrial-Organisational counselling skills and exposure</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>2.3.1 Skills and competencies needed by Industrial-Organisational psychologists to counsel in the workplace</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>3.2.1 Research population</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>3.2.2 Sample selection and size</b> .....	<b>32</b>

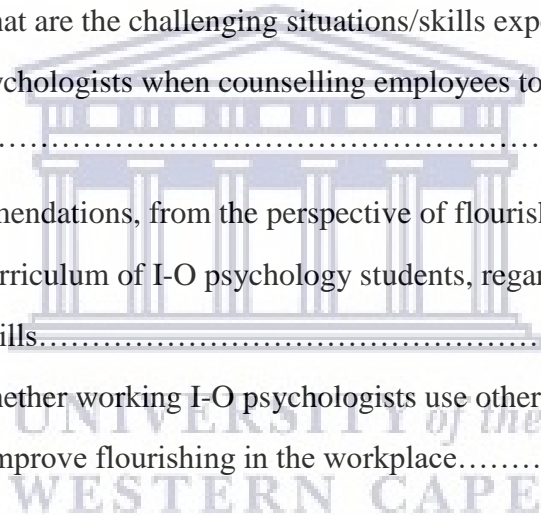
<b>3.3 Data collection procedure</b> .....	32
<b>3.3.1 Data collection instrument</b> .....	33
<b>3.3.2 Trustworthiness in qualitative research</b> .....	34
<b>3.3.3 Data gathering procedure</b> .....	34
<b>3.4 Ethical considerations</b> .....	34
<b>3.5 Data analysis</b> .....	35
<b>3.6 Conclusion</b> .....	36
<b>Chapter 4: Data analysis/findings and results</b> .....	37
<b>4.1 Introduction</b> .....	37
<b>4.2 Data presentation</b> .....	37
<b>4.3 Interview data discussion</b> .....	39
<b>4.3.1 Understanding of counselling and flourishing</b> .....	39
<b>4.3.2 Exposure to counselling towards flourishing of individuals</b> .....	39
<b>4.3.3 Perceptions of competence to counsel towards flourishing of individuals</b> .....	41
<b>4.3.4 Additional training received in positive counselling skills</b> .....	44
<b>4.3.5 Perceiving the exposure and skills as sufficient for workplace flourishing counselling situations respondents face</b> .....	45
<b>4.3.6 Challenging situations/skills experienced when counselling towards flourishing</b> .....	46
<b>4.3.7 Recommendations for future training of Industrial-Organisational Psychologists to counsel towards flourishing</b> .....	48
<b>4.3.8 Other methods used to improve flourishing in the workplace than counselling</b> .....	50
<b>4.4 Conclusion</b> .....	52
<b>Chapter 5: Discussion and recommendations</b> .....	53
<b>5.1 Introduction</b> .....	53
<b>5.2 Summary of results</b> .....	53
<b>5.3 Discussion</b> .....	54
<b>5.4 Limitations</b> .....	56
<b>5.5 Implications for practice</b> .....	56
<b>5.6 Recommendations</b> .....	57
<b>5.7 Conclusion</b> .....	58
<b>Reference List</b> .....	59
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	70
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	71
<b>Appendix C</b> .....	73
<b>Appendix D</b> .....	74





## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 – To explore what exposure working I-O psychologists have had to counselling towards flourishing of individuals.....	39
Table 2 – To determine what counselling towards flourishing skills were included in I-O psychologists training received through their postgraduate studies.....	42
Table 3 – To determine whether working I-O psychologists received extra training in positive counselling skills.....	44
Table 4 – To determine whether working I-O psychologists perceive their exposure to and skills as adequate for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face.....	45
Table 5 – To determine what are the challenging situations/skills experienced by working I-O psychologists when counselling employees towards flourishing.....	46
Table 6 – To make recommendations, from the perspective of flourishing interventions for the future curriculum of I-O psychology students, regarding counselling exposure and skills.....	48
Table 7 – To determine whether working I-O psychologists use other methods than counselling to improve flourishing in the workplace.....	50



## LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1 – Gender of the participants.....	37
Graph 2 – Age of the participants.....	38
Graph 3 – Number of years’ experience as an industrial psychologist.....	38



# Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

## 1.1 Background and Rationale

Industrial-Organisational psychologists are referred to as psychologists who specialises in the psychology of work and human behaviour in organisations (Nelson, 2012; Van Vuuren, 2010). The Health Professions Act (2011) postulates that Industrial-Organisational psychology is concerned with work-related problems of well-balanced adults for enhancing well-being and efficiency by applying psychology principles. Thus, Industrial-Organisational psychologists should support well-balanced employees towards a process of development and optimisation. The main tasks of Industrial-Organisational psychologists are, therefore, to “plan, develop and apply paradigms, theories, models, constructs and principles of psychology to issues related to the world of work in order to understand, modify and enhance individual, group and organisational behaviour, well-being and effectiveness” (HPCSA, 2011, p. 9).

Counselling forms part of the scope of practice for Industrial-Organisational psychology. Therefore, counselling in the workplace addresses the efficiency of the organisation as well as the individuals (Rothmann & Cilliers, 2007). Workplace counselling refers to a discussion with an employee about a specific problem, that usually has an emotional content to it, with the aim to help the employee cope better with the situation. Literature also indicates that workplace counselling can be viewed as an application of methods of brief, relationship-focused psychological intervention that have been shown to be effective (Mcleod, 2001), and that is a systemic as well as an individual intervention.

It can be derived that the scope of practice of Industrial-Organisational Psychology implies optimisation of human behaviour. Counselling usually involves a prevention-based employee therapy, which should pro-actively assist employees in their pursuit of healthier and more meaningful lives. However, Wright (2003) argues that the mission of Industrial-Organisational Psychology also includes the pursuit of employee happiness and wellness.

The field of positive psychology is rapidly gaining momentum in Industrial-Organisational psychology (Snyder & Lopez, 2002; Wright, 2003). Erez and Isen (2002) have shown that inducing positive emotional states in employees facilitates flexible and effective problem

solving, decision-making and evaluation of events. Fredrickson's (1998) 'broaden-and-build' theory of positive emotions states that positive emotions, including joy, interest, contentment and happiness all share the ability to 'broaden' an individual's momentary thought-action repertoires. In addition, these positive emotions assist in building the individual's enduring personal resources. The tendency to experience the positive it is argued, is central to one's ability to flourish, mentally prosper and grow psychologically. Literature indicates that Positive psychology interventions suggest that counselling can help improve flourishing (Wright, 2003). It is possible that workplace counselling can do the same based on the broaden and build theory.

With the increased focus on employee wellbeing in organisations, Industrial-Organisational psychologists should use counselling to enhance employees' positive capabilities, such as sense of coherence, resilience, optimism, work engagement, and self-efficacy (Rothmann, 2007). To do this, Industrial-Organisational psychologists need to be effectively prepared with the necessary exposure to skills needed to counsel towards flourishing in the workplace. It is currently not clear whether practising Industrial-Organisational psychologists have these skills, or whether such skills are included in the postgraduate training curriculum. According to Barkhuizen, Jorgensen and Brink (2015), Industrial-Organisational psychologists in general feel they lack skills in counselling. Thus, it becomes even more important to ask whether they have the skills to counsel towards flourishing. The purpose of this study is to determine the exposure to, and skills needed by Industrial-Organisational psychologists to counsel employees towards flourishing in the workplace and to determine if Industrial-Organisational psychologists consider their skills and exposure to be adequate.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

According to Rothmann and Cilliers (2007), Industrial-Organisational psychologists address the efficiency of the organisation as well as the employees' wellbeing. Traditional views of counselling are helping people overcome problems they are facing. When translated into the workplace sphere, such counselling would be aimed towards helping employees remain productive whilst coping with their problems. Counselling could help an individual increase their level of job resources, work engagement and psychological strengths (McLeod & Henderson, 2003). Thus, when workplace counselling is done from a positive psychology point of view, it assists employees not only with coping, but also with flourishing in their work and

personal lives. The aim of positive psychology counselling should be to enhance employees' sense of coherence, resilience, optimism, work engagement and self-efficacy, amongst others (Magyar-Moe, Owens & Conoley, 2015).

To enhance positive states through counselling, Industrial-Organisational psychologists requires particular exposure to, and skills needed to counsel in such a unique way. It is not clear to what extent such counselling is currently practiced in the workplace. Furthermore, more information is needed on the skills required to perform such counselling. According to Barkhuizen et al. (2015), Industrial-Organisational Psychologists are ill prepared to counsel in the workplace. Therefore, it is not clear whether Industrial-Organisational Psychologists would have the knowledge and skills to counsel towards employee flourishing.

Based on the problem statement the following research questions arise:

- Does Industrial-Organisational Psychologists perceive their exposure to and skills as adequate for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face?
- What recommendations can be made from the perspective of counselling towards flourishing for the future curriculum of Industrial-Organisational Psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills?

### **1.3 Objectives of research**

In order to address the research questions, the following objectives were set for the study:

- To explore what exposure practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists have had to counselling towards flourishing of individuals.
- To determine what counselling towards flourishing skills were included in Industrial-Organisational Psychologists training received through their postgraduate studies.
- To determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists received extra training in positive counselling skills.
- To determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists perceive their exposure to and skills as adequate for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face.
- To determine what are the challenges experienced by practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists when counselling employees towards flourishing.

- To make recommendations, from the perspective of flourishing interventions, for the future curriculum of Industrial-Organisational Psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills.
- To determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists use other methods than counselling to improve flourishing in the workplace.

#### **1.4 Significance of the research**

Workplace counselling addresses the efficiency of employees. Therefore, Industrial-Organisational psychologists should be adequately prepared for this task. According to recent literature, psychologists do not feel adequately equipped for their role as counsellor in the workplace. A study that was conducted among Industrial-Organisational psychologists displayed that Industrial-Organisational psychology students could benefit more from detailed counselling training and more psychology-focussed training, particularly when it comes to counselling models and theories (Barkhuizen et al., 2014).

Thus, the study contributes to clarifying if Industrial-Organisational Psychologists feel equipped to counsel towards flourishing in the workplace as well as if their exposure to and skills are sufficient to counsel employees towards flourishing. This analysis will, therefore, provide an attempt to inform training to ensure that the Industrial-Organisational psychologist can be better prepared to address the needs of South African employees in the workplace.

However, this study also contributes towards guaranteeing that the Industrial-Organisational psychologist is adequately equipped to counsel towards flourishing in a workplace by making knowledge concerning the skills and exposure needed by Industrial-Organisational psychologists accessible so as to be applied in their work. This will also contribute to the future curriculum of Industrial-Organisational psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills when it comes to flourishing interventions.

It is envisaged that the study may influence Industrial-Organisational psychologists counselling practices to be orientated towards solution, future and positive intervention, instead of practices that view counselling as just helping individuals overcome problems they are facing.

#### **1.5 Scope of research**

This study focusses on counselling from an Industrial-Organisational Psychology point of view. No other form of psychology, apart from Industrial-Organisational Psychology, is

included in the study. Therefore, clinical, counselling or educational forms of psychology were not included. Furthermore, the study is limited to the opinions and self-reported counselling skills of the Industrial-Organisational Psychologists and will not include observation thereof. The present study does not include a review of the curriculum for postgraduate counselling training and references to such training is made from the perceptions of the study participants. The delineation of the study is the province in which the Industrial-Organisational Psychologists is selected; the Industrial-Organisational Psychologists was selected from the Western Cape Province. A criterion for inclusion was that the Industrial-Organisational Psychologist must be registered with the HPCSA as Psychologist: Industrial.

## **1.6 Brief overview of methodology**

A qualitative research design, with a combination of convenience and snowball sampling of 12 participants, was utilised. Participants consisted of practicing Industrial-Organisational psychologists from different business sectors across the Western Cape Province. Data gathering took place in the form of semi-structured interviews, which were later transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis.

## **1.7 Definitions/terms**

Industrial-Organisational Psychologist: Observing, analysing and understanding behaviour of humans in a specialised setting is the field of Industrial-Organisational Psychologists, usually referred to as Industrial-Organisational psychology. It is noted that the HPCSA guidelines refer to the field as Industrial psychology, but for the purpose of inclusiveness, the term Industrial-Organisational psychologists is utilised.

Workplace counselling: Providing employees in an organisation with a brief psychological therapy, which the employer pays for (McLeod, 2001).

Counsellor: A person trained to give guidance on personal or psychological problems (Brown, 2010).

Training: An intentional course to adapt attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through a learning experience to accomplish actual performance in any activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work environment, is to improve the skills of the individual and to fulfil the current and future manpower requirements of the organisation (Masadeh, 2012).

Skills: The ability to do something well (Seligman, 2011).

Flourishing: The formation of the search and engagement of a true life that brings internal enjoyment and happiness through meeting objectives, being attached with life desires, and relishing in accomplishments through life (Seligman, 2011).

### **1.8 Overview of the study**

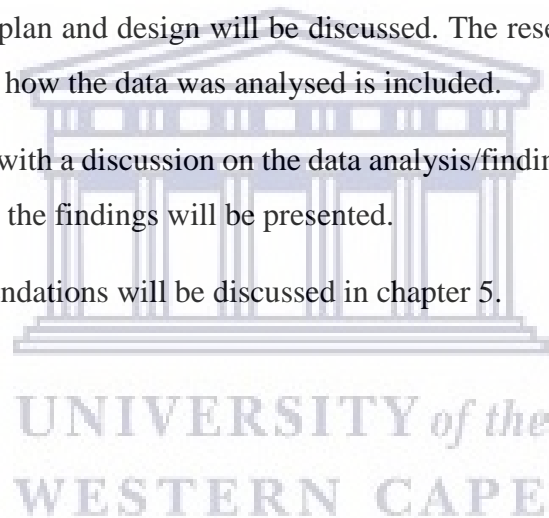
Chapter 1 provided a discussion of the problem statement and research objectives. The significance and contribution of the study was explained. The sample area was defined, including the research methodology that was used. A framework of the study was presented.

Chapter 2 will focus on positive psychology as theoretical framework and will explain the theories that inform positive psychology and flourishing as a positive psychological focus. It will further explain counselling from a positive psychology perspective, which includes the methods, models and skills.

In chapter 3, the research plan and design will be discussed. The research methodology, how the data was collected and how the data was analysed is included.

Chapter 4 will commence with a discussion on the data analysis/findings and results. A critical analysis and discussion on the findings will be presented.

Conclusions and recommendations will be discussed in chapter 5.





## **Chapter 2: Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

A literature review identifies and compares earlier studies and helps to avoid duplication and unnecessary repetition (Mouton, 2001). It introduces the framework for the research that comprises the focus of the research described. The purpose of the literature review presented in this chapter is to define positive psychology, present the main theories that inform positive psychology, and to describe how flourishing can be used as a positive psychological focus. The review will also discuss counselling and how counselling can be viewed from a positive psychology perspective. It will further present viewpoints of counselling towards wellbeing including methods, models and skills needed by an Industrial-Organisational psychologist.

### **2.2 Theoretical background**

#### **2.2.1 Positive psychology**

Positive psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning, the goals of which are to better understand and apply those factors that help individuals and communities thrive and flourish (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Below is definitions of core Positive psychology theories, constructs, and processes.

#### Well-Being

Well-being has been researched by a variety of social scientists since the mid1900s. This research, aimed at understanding how individuals perceive their existence, has resulted in a multitude of ways to define and measure wellbeing. During the earlier years of this analysis, health and well-being was equated to the absence of diseases, disorders, or problems. Contemporary positive psychology research suggests that well-being is not simply the absence of malfunction. Rather, well-being consists of the presence of assets, strengths, and other positive attributes (Frisch, 2000). The two most common approaches to well-being research have focused on well-being as the presence of something positive or in terms of positive feelings or positive functioning (versus the absence of something negative). The first approach defines wellbeing in terms of positive feelings (e.g., happiness) experienced by an individual and includes his or her perceptions of his or her life overall (e.g., satisfaction). This is referred

to as emotional well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). The second approach or line of thinking of well-being research specifies dimensions of positive functioning, which is experienced when one realises his or her human potential in terms of psychological well-being and social well-being. Those who are high in terms of emotional well-being feel good about life, whereas those high in psychological and social well-being function well in life. Subjective well-being (SWB) consists of a combination of these two broad lines of research on positive emotions and positive functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Hence, those who are high in SWB report both feeling good and functioning well.

#### Emotional well-being (positive emotions)

Emotional well-being consists of one's perceptions of declared happiness and satisfaction with life, and the ratio of positive to negative affect experienced (Shmotkin, 1998). Emotional well-being differs from happiness in that happiness is based on spontaneous reflections of pleasant and unpleasant feelings in one's immediate experience, whereas emotional well-being adds the life satisfaction component, which represents a long-term assessment of one's life (Keyes & Magyar-Moe, 2003).

#### Psychological and social well-being (positive functioning)

Positive functioning consists of the multidimensional constructs of psychological well-being and social well-being (Keyes, 1998). Like emotional well-being, the focus of psychological well-being remains at the individual level, whereas relations with others and the environment are the primary focus of social well-being. Elements of psychological well-being are informed by the Aristotelian theme of eudemonia, which suggests that the highest of all good achievable by human action is happiness derived from lifelong conduct aimed at self-development (Waterman, 1993). Thus, many aspects of psychological well-being are subsumed under concepts such as self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968), full functioning (Rogers, 1961), individuation (Von Franz, 1964), maturity (Allport, 1961), and successful resolution of adult developmental stages and tasks (Neugarten, 1973). A variety of concepts defined in terms of personality, developmental, and clinical psychology have been synthesised as criteria for psychological well-being and these concepts are also regarded as criteria for mental health.

More specifically, Ryff's (1989) six dimensional model of psychological well-being encompasses a breadth of wellness areas including, positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life, a sense of continued growth and development as a person, the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful, the experience of quality relations with others, the capacity to

manage one's life and surrounding world effectively, and a sense of self determination (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Each of the six dimensions of psychological well-being includes challenges that individuals encounter as they strive to function fully and realise their unique talents.

Well-being Therapy (Ruini & Fava, 2004) was developed based on Ryff's (1989a, 1989b) model of psychological well-being. Keyes (1998) developed a multidimensional model of social well-being that includes social integration, social contributions, social coherence, social actualisation, and social acceptance. Each of these five dimensions of social well-being includes challenges that people face as social beings.

These dimensions provide information about whether and to what degree individuals are functioning well in their social world, whereas psychological well-being is conceptualised as a primarily private phenomenon, which is focused on the challenges encountered by individuals in their private lives. Social well-being, therefore, represents a primarily public phenomenon focused on the social tasks encountered by individuals in their social structures and communities (Keyes & Magyar-Moe, 2003).

### Social well being

Understood together, emotional well-being and positive functioning converge to create a comprehensive model of SWB that takes into consideration multiple aspects of both the individual and his or her functioning in society. When viewed collectively, SWB includes elements of perceived happiness and life satisfaction, the ratio of positive to negative effects, psychological well-being, and social well-being.

#### 2.2.2 Positive psychology moved into positive organisational psychology

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000, p.8) define positive psychology as “the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels”. Positive psychology focuses on individual positive traits and personal experiences. The purpose is to redirect the focus to positive factors such as strengths, resilience, and wellness rather than negative factors such as weaknesses, vulnerability, and pathology. Over the last decade, the topic of positive psychology has generated substantial research interest in the areas of clinical, counselling, community, educational, social, health, and industrial-organisational psychology (Cameron, Dutton & Quinn, 2003).

The literature concluded that in Industrial-Organisational Psychology there was an interest in well-being and its influence on satisfaction and performance in the workplace. Two variables

are used to measure subjective well-being, namely happiness and satisfaction. According to Cameron et al. (2003), happiness refers to how individuals feel about their work, which is an emotional state, whereas satisfaction is a cognitive process. Industrial-Organisational Psychology, according to literature, has tended to focus on satisfaction in determining well-being and does not put much emphasis on happiness (Grant & Palmer, 2015).

Positive Psychology seems to have become an umbrella term used to stimulate and organise research, application, and scholarship on strengths, virtues, excellence, thriving, flourishing, resilience, flow, and optimal functioning in general. The incorporation of positive psychology principles into the workplace resulted in the development of positive organisational behaviour (Luthans, 2002), positive organisational scholarship (Cameron et al., 2003) and more broadly, positive organisational psychology (Donaldson & Ko, 2010). Positive organisational psychology is focused on work and organisational issues. Positive psychology is “the science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5). As implied in this definition and further explained by Peterson (2006), positive psychology has three pillars: The first pillar, positive subjective experience, includes happiness, well-being, flow, pleasure, hope, optimism, and positive emotions. The second pillar refers to positive traits, encompasses talents, interests, creativity, wisdom, values, character strengths, meaning, purpose, growth, and courage. The third pillar includes positive families, schools, businesses, communities, and societies. Peterson (2006) maintains that the last pillar facilitates the first two pillars to promote human flourishing. In this sense, positive organisational psychology can be viewed as scientific studies on positive subjective experience and traits in the workplace and positive institutions, and, further, its application is to improve the effectiveness and quality of life in organisations.

Positive psychology influenced positive organisational psychology with the emphasis on strengths and advantages. The aim is to identify the quantifiable characteristics of individuals, organisations, and work environments that can be developed and promote active engagement, enhance individual well-being, facilitate excellent performance, and lead to positive organisational outcomes (Turner, Barling & Zacharatos, 2002).

### 2.2.3 Positive psychological counselling models and modes

Counsellors working with individual counselling clients can utilise one or more forms of counselling informed by positive psychology as the primary form of treatment, or they can expand treatment-as-usual depending on the presenting issues. Formal positive psychological counselling models include Strengths Based Counselling (Smith, 2006), Strengths-Centered Therapy (Wong, 2006), Quality of Life Therapy (Frisch, 2006), Well-being Therapy (Ruini & Fava, 2004), Hope Therapy (Lopez, Floyd, Ulven, & Snyder, 2000), and Positive Psychotherapy (Rashid, 2008).

#### 2.2.3.1 Strengths-Based Counselling

Strengths-Based Counselling combines positive psychology, counselling psychology, prevention, positive youth development, social work, solution focused therapy, and narrative therapy (Smith, 2006). It has 12 propositions carried out over 10 stages. The first 3 stages (i.e. building a therapeutic alliance, identifying strengths, and assessing presenting problems) focus on creating a strong therapeutic alliance through helping clients identify and use their strengths. Clients are taught to narrate or reframe their life stories from a strengths perspective (i.e. helping a client to view oneself as a survivor rather than a victim of child abuse). A thorough assessment of the clients' perceptions of their problems also occurs (Smith, 2006). Clients are facilitated in uncovering strengths at the biological (i.e. rest, nutrition, exercise), psychological (i.e. both cognitive strengths, such as problem-solving abilities, and emotional strengths, such as self-esteem), social (i.e. connections with friends and family), cultural (i.e. beliefs, values, positive ethnic identity), economic (i.e. being employed, sufficient money for covering basic needs), and political (i.e. equal opportunity) levels. Solution building conversations, often using principles of solution-focused interviewing (De Jong & Berg, 2002), are utilised in the process of identifying clients' most valuable strengths and reviewing therapy progress (Smith, 2006).

#### 2.2.3.2 Strengths-Centered Therapy

Strengths-Centered Therapy (Wong, 2006) incorporates character strengths and virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) as central to the counselling process. Over the course of a few weeks or months, clients cycle through four phases (explicitising, envisioning, empowering, and evolving). The explicitising phase includes validating clients' concerns in a way that also highlights strengths through helping clients name their existing character strengths. While

validating the sadness, the therapist subsequently points out the strength of hope revealed by seeking therapy (Magyar-Moe, 2009). The envisioning phase includes identifying strengths and the utility of the strengths in accomplishing goals. The empowering phase boosts motivation and empowerment as clients use their strengths to positively affect their lives. Finally, the evolving phase terminates psychotherapy and involves the process of making strengths-development a never-ending process that transcends the formal psychotherapeutic process (Wong, 2006).

#### 2.2.3.3 Quality of Life Therapy

Quality of Life Therapy blends the tenets of positive psychology with cognitive therapy to help clients discover and proceed toward their needs, goals, and wishes to live a life of quality and satisfaction (Frisch, 2006). Quality of Life Therapy emphasises a Whole Life or Life Goal perspective with specific interventions for each through the treatment stages (Frisch, 2006). Clients goals are treated by looking at strengths and weaknesses in 16 areas of functioning, which is the major focus of this treatment approach and which can be measured using the Quality of Life Inventory (Frisch, 1994). Quality of Life Therapy uses cognitive interventions to address issues revealed in a fivefold model of life satisfaction, known as the CASIO model (Frisch, 2006). Satisfaction in any area of life consists of four issues: (a) the objective Circumstances, (b) the subjective Attitudes, (c) the fulfilment Standards, (d) the Importance of the life area for well-being, and (e) the Overall life satisfaction. The CASIO model guides clients through the important life domains to gain more overall satisfaction and well-being.

#### 2.2.3.4 Well-being Therapy

Well-being Therapy (Ruini & Fava, 2004) is a brief, structured, directive, and problem-oriented treatment program based on Ryff's (1989b) model of psychological well-being. Ryff's model contains six dimensions of which clients are informed: environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, autonomy, self-acceptance, and positive relations with others. Clients are assisted in moving from low to high levels of functioning in each domain via identification of current and previous well-being experiences in their lives, no matter how brief those well-being experiences may have been. Structured writing about well-being experiences and the circumstances of such experiences is utilised for enhancing awareness of the instances of well-being in clients' lives. Clients identify unhelpful thoughts and beliefs, which are challenged by



the therapist using cognitive approaches while encouraging behaviours and actions likely to elicit feelings of well-being.

#### 2.2.3.5 Hope Therapy

Several therapy approaches are based on hope theory's assertion that emotions can be changed by addressing the evaluations of effectiveness in goal pursuits (Snyder, 2002). Hope Therapy (Lopez et al., 2000) aims to assist clients in creating goals, producing multiple pathways to reach goals, and generating motivation to pursue goals to enhance clients' self-perceptions. Using a brief, semi-structured format, hope therapy focuses on current goals by examining past successes. Four major processes are addressed: Hope Finding, Hope Bonding, Hope Enhancing, and Hope Reminding.

Hope Finding uses narrative and educational strategies for discovering extant client hope. Hope Bonding consists of fostering a strong, hopeful working alliance via engaging clients in their own treatment planning and outcome goal setting while also striving to understand clients in their totality. Several Hope Therapy techniques can be utilised for helping clients who struggle with the process of goal development. Indeed, for some, developing goals is not easy because they are uncertain about where to begin. Hence, therapists can help provide structure for goal development by asking clients to create lists of their various life domains, prioritising those that are most important, and rating current client levels of satisfaction within each domain. Next, positive, specific, and workable goals are developed for each life domain. This is done collaboratively between clients and therapists (Lopez et al., 2004).

Hope Enhancing is designed to increase hopeful thinking in clients who may be lacking hope in general or in a specific life domain. This is done by providing structure for goal development and pathways planning aimed at helping clients to shift their focus from reducing negative to increasing positive behaviours (Lopez et al., 2000). Clients who struggle with the agency component of hope are assisted to increase their motivation to work toward goals by coming to understand what, in general, serves to motivate them (Lopez et al., 2000). Asking questions about what has motivated clients in the past and how they have previously overcome barriers can prove useful. In addition, teaching clients to engage in positive rather than negative self-talk about their abilities to successfully pursue goals while also learning to enjoy the process of working toward a goal rather than focusing only on the outcome is advised (Snyder, 1994).

Hope Reminding consists of teaching clients how to self-monitor their own hopeful thinking and use of Hope Enhancing techniques, so that they can sustain high hope levels independent of their therapists (Lopez et al., 2004). Hope Reminding can be carried out by providing clients with mini-assignments or interventions such as (a) having them review their personal hope stories as generated during the Hope Finding phase of therapy, (b) finding a “hope buddy” in their personal life that they can turn to for assistance in goal planning or for reinforcement when goal pursuits become difficult, (c) reflecting upon successful goal pursuits and what they did that led to the success, or (d) completing automatic thought records to understand and confront barrier thoughts (Lopez et al., 2004). Although there is evidence that hope is prevalent across cultures and ethnic groups (Chang & Banks, 2007), it has also been reported that barriers arise more often in the goal pursuits for some members of minority groups due to such factors as prejudice, racism, sexism, stereotyping, poverty, acculturation stress, language barriers, lack of privilege, and more. These obstacles exist on various levels, including the interpersonal, societal, and institutional (Gariglietti et al., 2000).

#### 2.2.3.6 Positive Psychotherapy

Positive Psychotherapy is an empirically supported approach to psychotherapy that attends specifically to building client strengths and positive emotions, and increasing meaning in the lives of clients to alleviate psychopathology and foster happiness (Rashid, 2008). Seligman’s (2002) concept of happiness (the pleasant life, the engaged life, and the meaningful life) provides the theoretical basis. Positive psychotherapists elicit and attend to positive emotions and memories in their discussions with clients while also engaging in discourse related to client problems, with the goal of integrating the positive and negative together (Rashid, 2008). Positive psychotherapy consists of 14 sessions with homework assignments. Sessions 1 and 2 focus on client identification of character strengths. Other sessions address the concepts of gratitude, forgiveness, optimism, love and attachment, savouring, and meaning (Rashid, 2008).

#### 2.2.4 Flourishing as positive psychological construct

Keyes (2013) identified two streams of research regarding subjective well-being. One stream of research equates well-being with feeling good (e.g. being happy) and the other stream equates well-being with pursuing and developing human potential (i.e. positive functioning). These approaches grew from two philosophical traditions on happiness, namely hedonia and eudaimonia. Hedonia embodies human concerns with maximising the amount and duration of



positive and pleasant feelings. Eudaimonia concerns purpose, contribution, integration, acceptance, mastery, and intimacy. A multidimensional perspective of the flourishing of people should include the dimensions of feeling good (emotional well-being) and functioning well (psychological and social well-being) (Keyes & Annas, 2009). Flourishing, as a model of positive mental health, was derived from theory, factor analysis and rational criteria (Rothmann, 2014).

#### 2.2.4.1 Meaning of flourishing in the workplace

In a work and organisational context, flourishing refers to the experience that one's life at work is going well and that one is functioning well. Flourishing encompasses individuals who thrive at work, as well as those who are happy, engaged, intrinsically motivated, successful and enjoy learning (Bono et al., 2012), and are functioning well in life in general (Keyes, 2005). According to Keyes (2005), the presence of feeling well and functioning well results in the flourishing of individuals, meaning that positive mental health is present. Flourishing in work and organisational contexts consists of three broad dimensions, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being (Rothmann, 2013). Concerning emotional well-being, individuals who flourish at work are satisfied with their jobs and experience a positive affect balance. Regarding the psychological dimension, individuals who flourish at work experience autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction, have a purpose and meaning at work, are engaged, and learn. With regards to social well-being, individuals who flourish at work include elements of perceived happiness and life satisfaction.

#### 2.2.4.2 Flourishing in the workplace measures

Rautenbach and Rothmann (2003) conducted confirmatory factor analyses on subjective well-being items to test the latent structure of a well-being measure. The well-being model that fitted the data best, consisted of three factors, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Their findings are in line with findings reported by Keyes (2013) on flourishing. Thus, the model and measurement is known as the *Flourishing at Work scale* (FAWS). Emotional well-being refers to how people feel. It consists of satisfaction with one's job and positive-negative affect balance. Job satisfaction entails a more enduring assessment of one's job. Rojas and Veenhoven (2013) pointed out that the concept of satisfaction is based on cognitive theories, which hold that happiness is a product of human thinking. Satisfaction is influenced by people's appraisals of how well work life meets up with standards. Job satisfaction relates

to employees' perceptions of all aspects of their current jobs in terms of the realisation of their wants. Affect theory (Schwarz & Strack, 1991) claims that feeling well is a reflection of how people feel generally. In this regard, the evaluation of work life is regulated by the most salient affective experiences. Positive-negative affect balance reflects pleasant and unpleasant affects in one's immediate experiences at work.

Positive affect refers to pleasant responses to work events, such as joy, gratitude, pride, and amusement. Negative affect refers to unpleasant emotions, such as anger, sadness, anxiety, boredom, frustration, and guilt. Positive and negative affect are linked to need gratification (Rautenbach & Rothmann, 2003; Rojas & Veenhoven, 2013). Psychological well-being in work and organisational contexts comprises autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaningful work, work engagement (consisting of absorption, vitality, and dedication), and learning (Rothmann, 2013). The psychological need for autonomy, competence and relatedness relates to the subjective experience of flourishing. Deci and Ryan (2011) define the need for autonomy as the personal experience of having choices and freedom when activities are carried out. The need for competence raises awareness around the individual's inherent desire to feel effective in interacting with the environment. An individual's need to experience a sense of belonging, connectedness, caring and love as well as being loved refers to the need for relatedness and is satisfied when a sense of closeness and intimate relationships with others exist.

Meaningful work refers to the significance of work where people experience their job as valuable and worthwhile (Dik & Duffy, 2012). Meaningful work is conceptualised in terms of three dimensions: psychological meaningfulness in work (i.e. the subjective experience of the value of one's work judged in relation to one's own standards); meaning-making through work (i.e. the idea that work is a critical basis of meaning in one's life), and greater good motivations (i.e. the desire to make a difference and to have a broader impact on others). Engagement is rooted in the concept of authenticity and is defined as "[...] an employee's psychological presence in a role" (Rothbard & Patil, 2012, p. 59). Engaged individuals invest their energies into role behaviours and express themselves in their roles. Employee engagement comprises physical, cognitive and emotional components. The physical component relates to vigour (being physically involved in a task and investing energy); whereas the cognitive component refers to being alert at work and experiencing involvement and a sense of significance. Dedication constitutes the emotional component of work engagement, and is often characterised by being connected and committed to the job and others, and putting one's heart into the job.

Learning refers to “the sense that one is acquiring and can apply knowledge and skills to one’s work” (Spreitzer, Lam, & Fritz, 2010, p. 139). Learning is an integral part of the search for meaning (Carneiro, 2013). Spreitzer et al. (2010) combines learning with vitality (a sub dimension of work engagement) to explain the thriving of people.

Social well-being in organisations is defined as the evaluation of one’s circumstance and functioning in an organisation (Keyes, 1998). It involves five features entailing the following: (1) Social acceptance refers to a positive attitude towards and acceptance of diversity in the organisation, (2) Social growth indicates whether individuals believe in the potential of development of fellow employees, groups and organisations, (3) Social contribution refers to whether individuals believe that their daily actions add value to the organisation and others, (4) Social coherence indicates whether employees find their organisations and social lives meaningful and understandable, and (5) Social integration indicates whether employees experience a sense of relatedness, comfort and support from the organisation. These facets are based on Keyes’s (2005) conceptualisation of social well-being in civilisations (i.e. social acceptance, social growth, social contribution, social coherence, and social integration).

Rautenbach (2015) reports on the psychometric properties of an extended version of the FAWS. Nonetheless, a need exists for a short measure, which can be used to assess the dimension of flourishing. The findings of this study support the construct validity and internal consistency of the FAWS-SF in a fast-moving consumer goods company in South Africa. While almost 36% of the participants in the sample were flourishing, the other 64% were not flourishing, and even languishing. Job satisfaction (an indicator of emotional well-being), purpose (an indicator of psychological well-being), and social growth (an indicator of social well-being) showed the lowest mean frequencies in the sample. It can be concluded that the FAWS-SF is a valuable research tool, but more validity and reliability information about the measure is needed.

Other measures of flourishing include the one by Huppert and So’s (2013) framework to assess flourishing. The framework addresses positive mental health on three dimensions; namely positive characteristics (emotional stability, vitality, optimism, resilience, and self-esteem), positive functioning (engagement, competence, meaning, and positive relationships), and positive appraisal (life satisfaction and positive emotion). Individuals flourish when they strongly confirm positive emotion, at least four positive characteristics, and three features of positive functioning (Huppert & So, 2013).

Diener et al. (2010) developed a measure of psychosocial flourishing (*The Flourishing Scale*) that complements other dimensions of well-being. In a study conducted by taking a single well-being score into account, the Flourishing Scale consisted of eight items that measured respondents' self-perceived success in areas such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism in life (Diener et al., 2010). The authors provided evidence for the reliability and convergent validity of this one-dimensional scale.

*The Mental Health Continuum – Short Form* (Keyes, 2007) uses 14 items to measure three dimensions of flourishing, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Research confirms the three-factor structure and internal consistency of the MHC-SF in the different countries (Keyes, 2013). However, the MHC-SF does not measure flourishing specifically in work contexts.

## **2.3 Industrial-Organisational counselling skills and exposure**

### **2.3.1 Skills and competencies needed by Industrial-Organisational psychologists to counsel in the workplace**

In South Africa, it is important to consider what skills and competencies is essential to include in a training programme, as that is the basis of gaining the skills and competencies to apply in the workplace. Egan (2009) argues that the training programmes should also include knowledge and not just skills and competencies. Byrne et al. (2014) suggest that Industrial-Organisational psychology students' training should be viewed in a broader spectrum including cognitive-affective and emotional bases of behaviour, as well as personality theory, human development, and abnormal psychology.

Johnson and Kaslow (2014) postulates that nurturing the development of theoretical knowledge is regularly considered a key priority for training in professional psychology. Young (2009) suggests that relationship building, human development knowledge, psychological theories and assessments application should be included in the curriculum for skills in counselling.

Literature on the training intended at developing intrapersonal and interpersonal consciousness and skills for helpers shows that knowledge about a helping model (Carkhuff, 2008) and micro-skills should be combined (Ivey, 2013) and information concerning individuals and groups should be included (Du Preez & Jorgensen, 2012). In 2001, Pienaar and Roodt predicted that

the Industrial-Organisational psychologist's role would continue to develop into that of a counsellor. To this degree, authors argued that Industrial-Organisational psychologists should be equipped with skills. Table 2.1 presents the views of different authors and the skills they highlight.

Table 2.1 Summary table of counselling skills

Sources	Skills
Pienaar & Roodt, 2001	Empathy, communication, and listening skills.
Johnson & Kaslow, 2014	Facilitative interpersonal skills (Individuals' ability to effectively and accurately communicate and interpret messages as well as the ability to persuade others in helpful ways).
Carducci et al., 1987	Effective listening and interviewing skills.
Ivey, 2013	Reflecting, paraphrasing, probing and referral skills.

The above table demonstrates how different authors over the years described the critical skills for counselling in the workplace. Research, early on, focused mostly on communication and listening, and as the profession evolved skills like probing and persuading became important. Carducci et al. (1987) indicated that most graduate programmes in Industrial Psychology do not include basic counselling courses in their curriculum and the question arises whether this has changed since that observation. Industrial-Organisational psychology should include broad coverage of the scope of psychology (Byrne et al., 2014). Carkhuff (2008) developed the helping model which can be used in the workplace as well as in developing undergraduates who wants to join the helping profession. Even though the existence of Industrial-Organisational psychology is due to work related problems (Van Vuuren, 2010), the question remains: Do Industrial-Organisational psychologists currently feel adequately prepared to counsel in the workplace?

Positive psychology focuses on the conditions and processes that contribute to the flourishing or optimal functioning of people, groups and institutions (Gable & Haidt, 2005), and similarly,

coaching psychology primarily aims to enhance goal attainment, wellbeing and performance in clients' personal lives and work domains (Grant & Palmer, 2002). Both of these approaches have now been shown to be effective means of helping individuals improve their wellbeing, resolve mental health programmes, and attain their goals (Grant et al., 2010).

## **Conclusion**

In the above discussion, Positive psychology was discussed and how positive psychology moved into positive organisational psychology. The main principles and theories that inform positive psychology was outlined. Flourishing as positive psychological construct was discussed and how it can be used in the workplace setting. Counselling skills and exposure was discussed. The above is important for the research question as it indicates what skills and exposure will be needed and how positive psychology can be used to counsel in the workplace towards flourishing.

If Industrial-Organisational psychologists have the adequate skills and exposure to counsel in the workplace, they need to counsel in a positive way and leave the traditional way of counselling. If counselling can be combined with positive psychology, the aim will be to enhance the sense of coherence, resilience, optimism, work engagement and self-efficacy, as it will address the effectiveness of the organisation as well as employees' wellbeing. If this is done, organisations can find flourishing interventions for employees in the workplace and this will in turn benefit both the employee and organisation. However, the question that remains is whether the I-O psychologist currently has the necessary skills, competencies and training to fulfil this act.

The next chapter will indicate how the research was done. Indicating the approach that was taken, the population that was used in the study, the data gathering procedure that was used and how the data will be analysed.



## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This chapter consists of the methodology that is utilised in the study. It includes the design, population and sample. It explains the geographical area where the study is conducted and the data collection procedure.

### **3.1 Research Design**

In this study, an interpretivist paradigm, which concerns meaning and seeks to determine definitions and understandings of situations, was followed. Interpretivist approach is based on naturalistic approach of data collection such as interviews and observations. Reeves and Hedberg (2003, p. 32) note that the “interpretivist” paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals. They use meaning oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects

As the nature of the research is qualitative, a phenomenological approach was used in order to provide the researcher the opportunity to collect information concerning a particular phenomenon (Niewenhuis, 2010).

The reason for utilising a phenomenological approach is that the approach aims to understand and interpret the meanings that participants attach to everyday life as they experience it (De Vos et al., 2005). According to Gray (2004), phenomenological research allows the researcher to comprehend and give dense explanations of a phenomenon that individuals experience in their natural setting. When making use of this approach, the researcher experiences life by setting aside their own predetermined thoughts and philosophies (Frost, 2011).

This approach fits with the aim of the study, which was to gather data from practising Industrial-Organisational Psychologists in their natural setting and to gain a deep understanding of their experience of counselling, specifically counselling towards flourishing.

#### **3.2.1 Research population**

Sekaran (2001) states that the concept ‘population’ refers to people in the whole group, and events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to study. For the present study, Industrial-Organisational psychologists in the Western Cape Province was identified as the population.

The Western Cape Province was used purely out of proximity. A list enclosing the names of all registered Industrial-Organisational psychologists from the practitioner list on the HPCSA website was obtained and all the 12 participants came from the Western Cape Province. If participants showed an interest in partaking in the study, information about the study, and an informed consent form declaring that the study is voluntary, was provided.

### **3.2.2 Sample selection and size**

This includes the method in which participants are chosen from the population to provide real data. The process of selecting the participants is important because in most cases it is not possible to gather data from the whole research population, since the population may be too big and as such data gathering might be too expensive, time consuming and it might not be practical to contact all potential participants. As a result, the researcher collected data from a limited number of people, who make up the research sample. According to Dattalo (2010), a sample is a particularly selected subgroup of a population, which is studied in order to make understandings about the population from which the sample is drawn from.

A mixture of convenience and snowball sampling was utilised for a sample to be achieved. Convenience sampling is utilised in exploratory research and refers to when the researcher is interested in getting an inexpensive approximation of the truth. Snowball sampling took place as the study progressed, with the researcher being referred to other Industrial-Organisational psychologists willing to participate. This allowed the researcher to obtain access to a larger sample. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2005) postulates that making use of snowball sampling is an effective method for identifying more related individuals to participate in the study. The sample size of the research consisted of twelve participants that was interviewed.

### **3.3 Data collection procedure**

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data of the study. The information was provided in an interview guide, which referred to the interview estimated duration, confidentiality assurance, voluntary nature of the study, and the utilisation of a voice recorder. The second section of the interview guide requested participants to complete a biographical questionnaire, which included gender, age and number of years' work experience.



### 3.3.1 Data collection instrument

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. According to Struwig and Stead (2001), semi-structured interviews allows the conversation to go further than the limitations of the interview questions. Thus, the researcher can possibly gather more in-depth answers from the interviews concerning counselling. The purpose of the interviews was to give the researcher thorough information relating to the experience and perception of participants regarding a particular topic (Turner, 2010).

The researcher made use of open-ended questions during the interviews, which allowed the participants to elaborate on their responses to the questions that were asked by the researcher during the interview (Salkind, 2009). The interview guide consisted of a biographical questionnaire, which the participants was required to complete prior to the interview. The interview questions was as follows:

1. In your own words what do you regard as workplace counselling towards flourishing?
2. How would you describe an individual who is flourishing in the workplace?
3. With specific reference to workplace wellbeing or flourishing, what type of workplace counselling situations are you faced with?
4. What kind of counselling skills are you required to possess to counsel individuals towards improved flourishing?
5. Do you perceive your skills and exposure to counselling conversations related to flourishing to be efficient?
6. What type of counselling training did you receive during your postgraduate training? Was counselling towards wellbeing/flourishing included in it?
7. Did you receive any additional training?
8. Can you make any recommendations relating to the development of the skills required by the I-O Psychologist as counsellor, specifically relating to counselling people towards greater levels of flourishing?
9. Would you rather use coaching than counselling to help an individual improve their level of flourishing? If so, how would you say the coaching differs from counselling?
10. What counselling model do you make use of? Do you find it effective?
11. What situations do you struggle with?

### **3.3.2 Trustworthiness in qualitative research**

To make sure that trustworthiness was followed and to ensure validity and reliability, four criteria will be explained, namely confirmability, credibility, dependability and transferability.

The researcher remained free from bias by not letting perspectives and intentions influence the data during the research process (Anney, 2014). During the process, the researcher ensured to remain objective by fairly capturing the experiences of the participants. The research findings were reported fairly in the study as the researcher reported the different situations and ways the participants answered the questions.

Dependability of the results was ensured by the researcher as the research methodology was clearly and densely described. To ensure the dependability of the results, the researcher documented all stages of the research process, particularly the write up of the methodology section of the research.

The findings of the research ensure that the transferability can be applied to other contexts. Thus, the researcher provided a clear and dense description of the context and setting of the data (Botma et al., 2010).

### **3.3.3 Data gathering procedure**

One-on-one semi-structured interviews was used to collect data. The interviews were conducted at each potential participant's place of choice at a pre-determined and confirmed time and date that was convenient for each potential participant. Data was gathered from July 2017 to August 2017 and 12 interviews were conducted during this period. Interviews lasted on average 45 minutes.

The information that was referred to in the interview guide included thanking the participant for his/her willingness to participate, the interview duration, confidentiality assurance, the voluntary nature of the study, and the use of the voice recorder.

### **3.4 Ethical considerations**

Brink (2006) stipulates the guidelines of ethical aspects to be taken into account during data collection as observed by the researcher. The purpose of the research was explained by giving each participant a consent form with having the research questions explained in detail to the

participant. The potential participants were aware of the study procedure as information was given so that they could make informed decisions regarding their participation in the study.

When setting up the interviews, the potential participants was informed about the amount of time and level of participation required, the nature of the information, the intended use of the information, and who would have access to it. The consent letter was sent prior to the interview where the potential participants were required to sign, and the letter also explained that a voice recorder would be utilised. All potential participants were aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time. No form of dishonesty was used to ensure the participation of the potential participants.

The identity of the potential participants was not included at any time, as their names was not used in the data collection procedure. No private information was revealed and the right to confidentiality to all the potential participants was respected. The data was kept safely and was not easily accessible to anyone. There was no language barrier between the researcher and potential participants because all the participants understood English. An ethics approval letter was given to the potential participants with reference number HS17/4/30 as issued by the University of the Western Cape, Human and Social Sciences Ethics Committee. Thus, the principle of trust was not violated.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

In this study, the theoretical focus is on thematic analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis can be defined when the experiences are categorised into themes. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By using the phenomenology approach, the researcher could understand and interpret the meanings that participants attach to everyday life as they experience it (De Vos et al., 2005). The researcher identified themes from the various completed interview schedules and grouped the answers of the Industrial-Organisational Psychologists to the themes that were identified for each research objective.

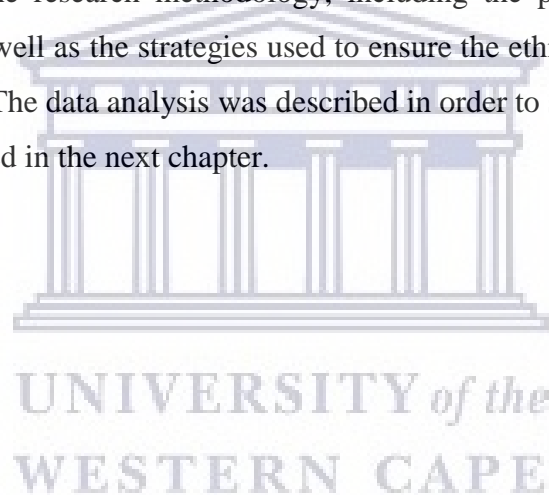
In this study, the interviews were conducted with registered Industrial-Organisational psychologists. In this process, useful information emerged regarding counselling in the workplace. The individual responses were analysed, compared and interpreted to draw conclusions. The procedure that was followed for identifying the themes was the transcribing

of the interview into text, reading the text and making notes, rereading the text, sorting items of interest by organising items relating to similar topics into categories, and then reporting on each theme.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The researcher used a qualitative, phenomenological approach. The researcher utilised an interview guide with research questions that was used to collect data from 12 participants. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions with a biographical section that the participants were required to complete. Before the interview took place, consent was obtained from the participants themselves. Efforts were also made by the researcher to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

This chapter described the research methodology, including the population, sample, data collection instruments as well as the strategies used to ensure the ethical standards, reliability and validity of the study. The data analysis was described in order to show how the researcher go to the findings discussed in the next chapter.



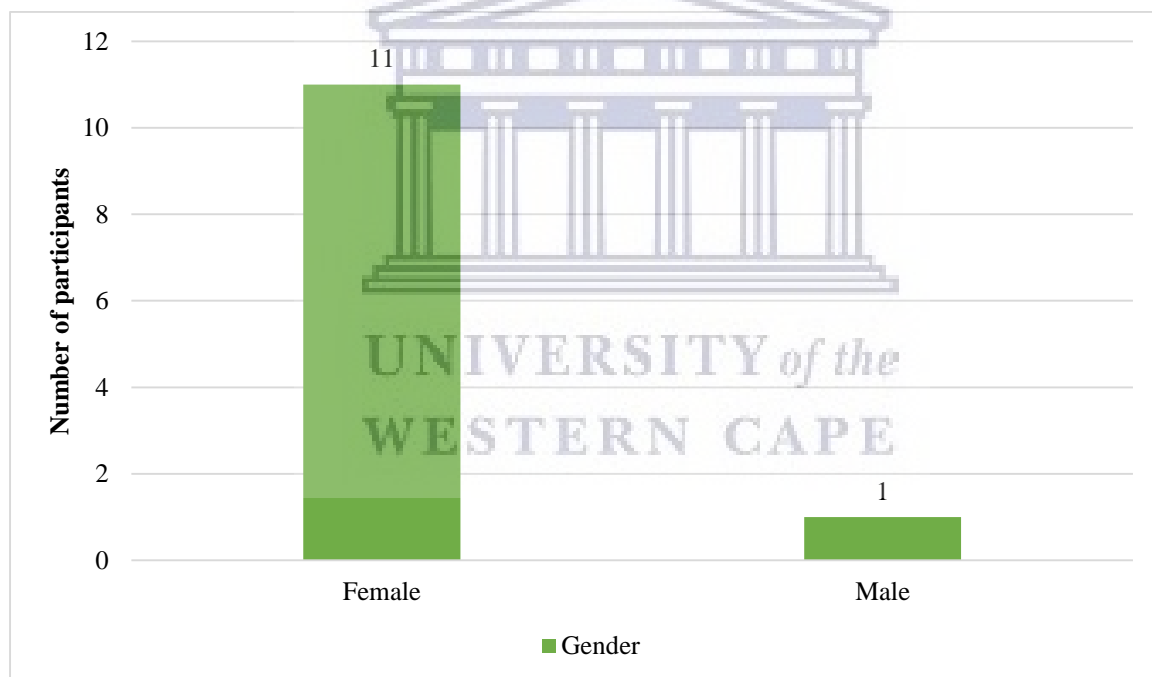
## Chapter 4: Data analysis/findings and results

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the observed results of the study. The type of analysis that was utilised was thematic analysis. The chapter outlines the data presentation, which includes the gender and age of the participants and the number of years' experience. The interview data discussion results are elaborated in this chapter.

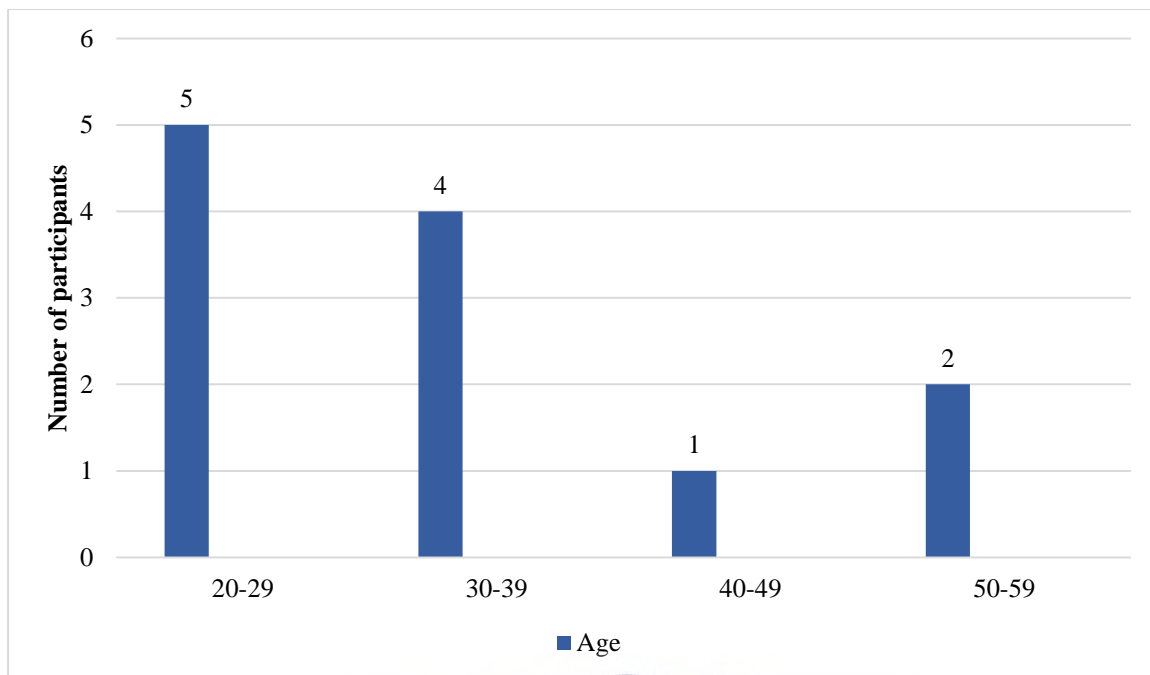
### 4.2 Data presentation

The biographical information of the participants is presented below. Biographical questions that were asked by the researcher included the gender and race of the participants, and the number years of experience as an Industrial psychologist.



**Figure 1: Gender of the participants**

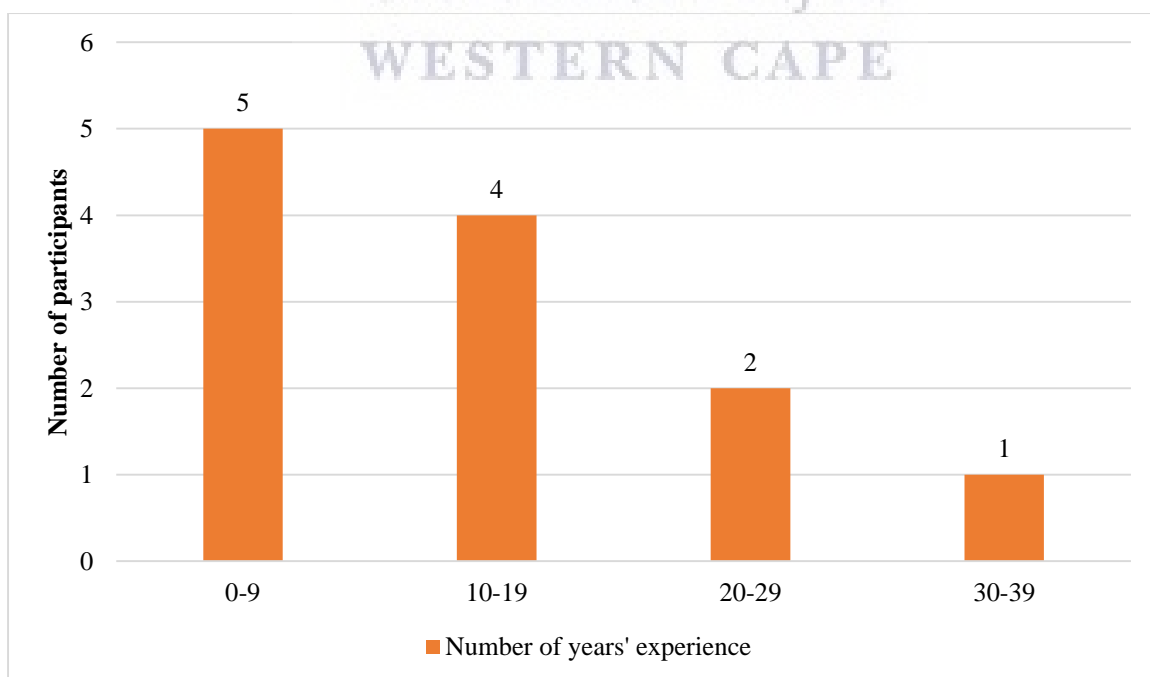
Twelve participants formed part of the research study. Three different biographical questions were presented to the participants. Eleven respondents self-reported that they are females and one self-reported that he is a male. This is consistent with the high number of females in the Industrial Psychology profession.



**Figure 2: Age of the participants**

There are four categories of age groups that the participants are categorised in. Five participants self-reported their age within the 20-29 years category, four participants self-reported their age in the 30-39 years category, one participant self-reported their age within the 40-49 years category, and two participants self-reported their age within the 50-59 years category.

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**Figure 3: Number of years' experience as an Industrial Psychologist**

When analysing the numbers of years' experience as an Industrial Psychologists, it becomes evident that most of the participants fall under the category of 0-9 years of experience. This is consistent with the age group of the respondents. Four participants self-reported 10-19 years of experience, two participants self-reported 20-29 years of experience, and one participant self-reported 30-39 years of experience.

### **4.3 Interview data discussion**

The results of the study are arranged into the various research objectives. The results reflect an overview of how the participants answered the interview questions, as well as the resulting themes that were identified. Each table contains verbatim comments from the participants and is followed by a narrative discussion of the finding.

#### **4.3.1 Understanding of counselling and flourishing**

When conducting the interview, each participant was asked how they regard counselling towards flourishing and how they would describe an individual who is flourishing in the workplace. It was clear from those two questions how they viewed counselling and flourishing, and those insights would determine how they would answer the rest of the interview questions. Participants 1 and 6 saw counselling as a discussion between two individuals where one managed the discussion; Participants 3 and 5 saw it as motivating and supporting employees, even to extent where the employer helps the employee with personal issues; Participant 9 viewed it as a support intervention that is usually short term in nature and that provides the employee with a sounding board and that helps the employee find solutions; Participants 2, 3,4,7,8 and 10, saw flourishing as being engaged at work, being happy, having healthy relationships and excelling at work.

#### **4.3.2 Exposure to counselling towards flourishing of individuals**

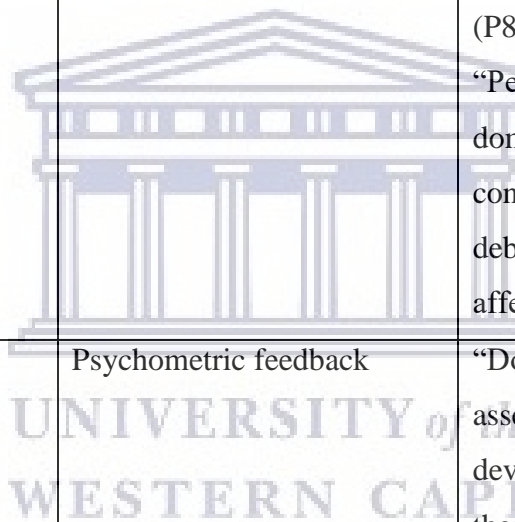
The following section highlights the participants' exposure to counselling towards flourishing in various types of situations. Situations include counselling to improve performance, to guide and give advice, for psychometric feedback purposes as well as for circumstances where the individuals can grow in their role.

**Table 1: Exposure to counselling towards flourishing of individuals.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
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<p>Exposure to counselling towards flourishing</p>	<p>Improving performance</p>	<p>“To help the individual to flourish I would speak about elements they like about their job and where they want to grow as an individual” (P1).  “Career counselling and in-house development is situations faced with” (P3).  “Performance issues, so there are counselling besides performance counselling there is a lot of counselling” (P8).  “Personal problems such as domestic abuse, alcohol consumption or generally debt related concerns that affect job performance” (P9).</p>
	<p>Psychometric feedback</p>	<p>“Do a psychometric assessment and then have a development discussion with them (P5).  “We will give individual feedback to them and feedback takes a form of a very direct conversational facilitating format” (P12).</p>
	<p>Guide and advice</p>	<p>“Guidance and advice to leaders in order to roll out initiatives” (P2)  “I also counsel, guide and advice the heads of HR of</p>



		nine different businesses” (P2). “I’ll have the discussion with the person and just guide them” (P5).
	Growth	“Employees wanting to grow but they don’t know how and then we help” (P6). “The candidate coming to their own conclusions with us as a sound board and us facilitating the counselling session” (P12).

Most participants indicated that they counsel towards the flourishing of individuals in the workplace. Some participants concluded that situations where clients want to improve their performance are opportunities where they counsel towards flourishing (P1, P3, and P8). Using and presenting psychometric feedback were indicated as further opportunities where Industrial – Organisational psychologists counsel towards flourishing (P5, P12). Guiding and advising were indicated as important when counselling employees towards flourishing as it helps the employee reach an end goal, and by doing that the employee can work through issues themselves (P2, P5).

A theme that also emerged was growth within employees, whereby the respondents would then help the employee grow in the workplace to flourish. Participants pointed out that personal problems that affect the employee’s work performance presented an opportunity to help the employee to flourish through counselling (P9). From the results, it is established that various situations provide opportunities where the participants counsel towards flourishing.

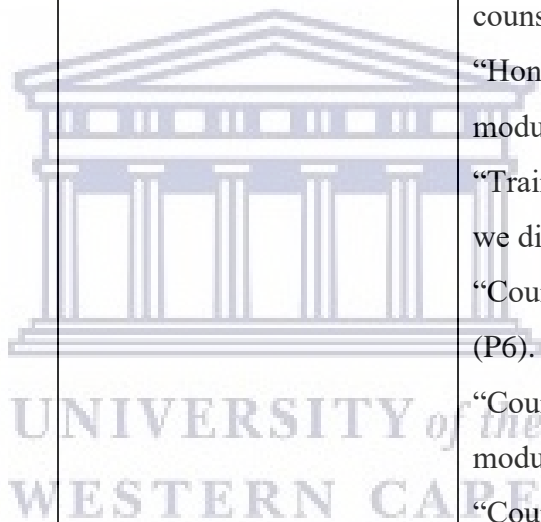
#### **4.3.3 Perceptions of competence to counsel towards flourishing of individuals**

With regard to generic counselling skills, a number of the respondents indicated that counselling was included in their postgraduate studies, whether it was at Honours or Master’s level (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, and P12). Two participants also mentioned that their training was not only theoretical in nature, but included practical experience in counselling (P2, P5). Table

2 further indicates the specific counselling skills that the respondents highlighted in the interviews. One participant mentioned skills required to be an efficient counsellor in general, which includes empathy, excellent communication skills, effective listening, interviewing skills, probing, paraphrasing skills, and relationship building (P9).

**Table 2: To determine what counselling towards flourishing skills were included in I-O psychologist training received during their postgraduate studies.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Counselling towards flourishing skills included during post graduate studies	Postgraduate counselling module	<p>“I did a subject on counselling and coaching and training” (P1).</p> <p>“I definitely did a module, a counselling module” (P2).</p> <p>“Honours year we did a module on counselling” (P3).</p> <p>“Training in honours year, we did counselling” (P5).</p> <p>“Counselling in Masters” (P6).</p> <p>“Counselling skills as a module” (P7).</p> <p>“Counselling session during Masters” (P12).</p>
	Listening skills	<p>“Listener, big filter between brain and mouth” (P1).</p> <p>“Counselling skills so in terms of listening which is a big part of counselling” (P2).</p> <p>“Active listening skills create the thinking environment for that person: (P3).</p> <p>“Active listening skills is very crucial” (P5).</p>



		<p>“Able to listen to what the person is actually saying” (P6).</p> <p>“Listen, being empathetic and meet them where they at” (P7).</p> <p>“Listen to understand” (P11).</p>
	Guiding skills	<p>“Much more focused on guiding the individual towards what do you have that you are exceptional in” (P4).</p> <p>“They come up with their own solution so it’s basically guiding them through the process” (P5).</p>
	Self-awareness	<p>“Be very objective and treating it case by case, always remain calm” (P5).</p> <p>“Be very open minded” (P8).</p>
	Confidentiality	<p>“The ethics around confidentiality is very important” (P10).</p>

The majority of the participants completed a subject in counselling during their postgraduate studies. One participant indicated that the training was specifically focused on the Rogerian counselling approach (P5). Participant 7 went further and gave an example of the exercise of what they were exposed to during their postgraduate studies, “we did the telephone exercise to demonstrate the art and value of listening” (P7). The participants that had longer years of experience stated that counselling was never part of the curriculum and, therefore, they had to learn as they gained experience in the workplace. The most important skill that the participants felt they were taught during their post graduate studies was active listening skills (P1, P2, P3,

P5, P6, P7, P11) and many agreed that more skills should be focused on in postgraduate programmes.

Although most participants received postgraduate training in counselling, their answers did not indicate any specific positive psychological counselling skills. Thus, the question remained whether the aspects of flourishing and positive psychology was incorporated into such training. To this extent, respondents were also questioned about any additional training they may have received in counselling towards flourishing.

#### 4.3.4 Additional training received in positive counselling skills

The following section highlights the additional training that the participants received in positive counselling skills. The highlights that came from this section was on the job training and participation in courses and workshops. It is evident that for the majority of the participants, additional training in positive counselling skills was not received

**Table 3: To determine whether practising I-O psychologists received additional training in positive counselling skills.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Additional training in positive counselling skills	On the job	“No just on the job training like counselling” (P12).
	Courses and workshops	“Not formal but I attended courses, career guidance workshop” (P3). “Short courses in coaching” (P6).

The majority of the participants did not engage in or receive additional training in positive counselling skills. One participant mentioned that the only training related to counselling was on the job training (P12). Other participants mentioned that they received additional training through courses and workshops (P3, P6). Interestingly, participant 6 mentioned courses in coaching as additional training in positive counselling skills.

**4.3.5 Perceiving the exposure and skills as sufficient for workplace flourishing counselling situations respondents face.**

The following section focuses on whether the participants perceived the exposure and skills as sufficient for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face. Confidentiality, trust, and relationships were highlighted in this section.

**Table 4: To determine whether practising I-O psychologists perceive their exposure to and skills as sufficient for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Perceive their exposure to and skills as sufficient to the workplace flourishing counselling situations faced	Relationship	<p>“I would like to see in an individual in order for me to see if it’s successful is firstly I need to see the relationship between me and the individual” (P1).</p> <p>“Every relationship that I build since I started, I’m still in contact with every single person” (P2).</p>
	Trust and confidentiality	<p>“That they trust that they understand that there is confidentiality that is the first sign” (P1).</p>

Most of the participants indicated that they perceive their exposure to and skills as sufficient for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face. Some of the participants indicated that they perceive their exposure to and skills as sufficient but also believe that there is always room for improvement, growth, and learning opportunities (P3, P6, P7, P9, P10). Trust and confidentiality had to be the first sign for participant 1. Two participants answered in the negative as their jobs do not disclose any opportunities for flourishing counselling situations, but they indicated that they understand the concept (P4, P8).

#### 4.3.6 Challenging situations/skills experienced when counselling towards flourishing

The table below highlights that credibility, dual responsibility, unmotivated clients, language, scope of practice, and emotions are all challenges experienced by the participants when counselling towards flourishing.

**Table 5: To determine what are the challenging situations/skills experienced by practising I-O psychologists when counselling employees towards flourishing.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Challenging situations/skills experienced when counselling employees towards flourishing.	Credibility	“Counselling individuals that are much older, the credibility is a challenge, persons by in and people not sharing” (P1).
	Dual responsibility	<p>“We lose quite a bit of good talent because I can’t let anybody know and it’s kind of have a responsibility to business but also a responsibility to the person” (P2).</p> <p>“Finding a balance of when it is just a counselling session or where it is taking the action and being the HR person” (P3).</p> <p>“Being internal I cannot out the needs of the person in front of everything I have to think about the business and about different people in the</p>



		company, so the balance is also a challenge” (P5).
	Unmotivated clients	“When a person is not motivated to change themselves, when a person is hiding something” (P5). “Individual is referred to you and they don’t really want to be there” (P7).
	Language	“Language barrier because I deal mostly with Africans” (P6).
	Scope of practice	“I wouldn’t be able to give trauma counselling because it’s beyond my scope” (P8).
	Emotions	“Battle with an emotional employee in my office I can’t handle a crying person” (P10).

All the participants had various skills/situations that they experience as challenging when counselling employees towards flourishing. Participant 1 mentioned that counselling individuals that are much older is a challenge, as they do not want to share and open up. Responsibility was one challenge that came out frequently, as most participants fulfil a position in HR and, therefore, have difficulty finding a balance between the individual as client and serving the organisations’ needs.

Participants 5 and 7 stated that unmotivated individuals are a challenge when counselling towards flourishing. Situations where, for example, an individual is referred, and do not want to be in the counselling session. Thus, a person that is not motivated in changing themselves. Participant 8 spoke about the scope of practise as challenging as trauma counselling is beyond the scope. However, the challenges presented by the participants could also be true for counselling in general. As no specific reference was made to the flourishing of individuals, the

question of whether respondents fully understand the scope of counselling towards flourishing could be raised.

#### **4.3.7 Recommendations for future training of Industrial-Organisational Psychologists to counsel towards flourishing.**

This section focuses on the recommendations that were made by the participants for future training to counsel towards flourishing. Recommendations that were highlighted included body language, more experts in the field, more practical/practise of skills, and the suggestion that coaching should be included.

**Table 6: To make recommendations, from the perspective of flourishing interventions, for the future curriculum of I-O psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Recommendations from flourishing interventions, for future curriculum of I-O psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills.	Body language	<p>“There is a big element on talking to people body language that can be incorporated” (P1).</p> <p>“A more focused skill that can be further developed is ways of listening and the body language of the counsellor” (P9).</p>
	Experts	“Bringing in more subject knowledge experts maybe industry leaders” (P1).
	Practice/practical of skills	<p>“More practical in university, so that individuals can practise their skills with different situations” (P3).</p> <p>“Have more practise time” (P5).</p>

		<p>“More practice of the skill that we need to incorporate in the universities a little more” (P7).</p> <p>“More practical skills and experience” (P10).</p> <p>“More practical components and also find a good way of assessing the practical, more practical will enhance the skill” (P12).</p>
	Coaching	<p>“Upskill students in coaching more, add the coaching element” (P5).</p>

Recommendations were made from the respondents on how to better prepare future students regarding counselling. The recommendations could help the curriculum better prepare students. Participants mentioned recommendations such as body language, experts, practice/practical of skills, and coaching, which are all general aspects of counselling without taking flourishing into consideration.

Participants felt that body language is an important part when counselling and that it should be incorporated in the curriculum. Participant 1 emphasised that universities should include more subject knowledge experts.

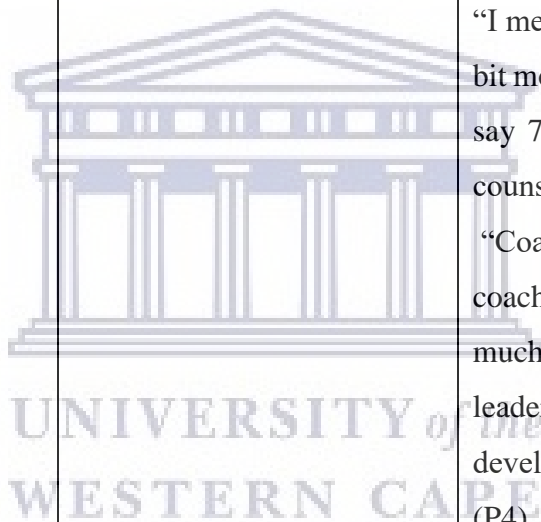
The majority of the participants agreed that more practical assignments/practises should be included in the curriculum. The more practise/practical assignments students receive in their curriculum, the more prepared they will be in the workplace. Participant 12 stated that assessing the practical would enhance the skill. Coaching was also a recommendation from the participants as most stated that the curriculum should upskill the students in the coaching element and should include coaching in the curriculum.

#### 4.3.8 Other methods used to improve flourishing in the workplace than counselling

This section indicates other methods used by the participants other than counselling to improve flourishing in the workplace.

**Table 7: To determine whether practising I-O psychologists use other methods than counselling to improve flourishing in the workplace.**

Objective of the research	Themes	Participant comments
Do I-O psychologists coach more than counsel as a method to improve flourishing in the workplace	Coaching	<p>“Coaching I would use more if the person needs to flourish in being better at something specific in the job” (P1).</p> <p>“I mean to motivate people a bit more of coaching, I would say 70% coaching and 30% counselling” (P2).</p> <p>“Coaching approach, coaching framework is very much aligned with our leadership framework from a development perspective” (P4).</p> <p>“Coaching leads more towards flourishing” (P5).</p> <p>“I would prefer coaching” (P8).</p> <p>“My preference is coaching because I’m trained as a coach” (P11).</p>
	Situation-dependent	“Counselling is problem related and coaching there is a goal in mind, you can’t always separate the two, so it



		depends on the situation and one needs to identify which one it is coaching or counselling” (P3). “Use both depending on the situation” (P6). “It depends on the situation if I would choose counselling or coaching” (P10).
	Combination	“Will do a combination with first doing counselling and then move into coaching” (P7).
	Counselling	“I would prefer counselling as it is more engaging, and one gets to be more creative in helping the other party reach solutions and set goals” (P9).

According to the participants, coaching is a method to improve flourishing in the workplace. Participant 4 noted that counselling has a negative connotation, and therefore, coaching would be a better method. Participant 7 stated that flourishing has a deeper meaning attached to it and thus a combination of counselling (first) and then moving into coaching will be the best method, as the two really has a fine line in meaning. Participant 9 and 12 disagreed with the rest of the participants as they believe that coaching is short term based and that counselling would be the preferred method as it is more engaging, and the employees get to the answer or conclusion by themselves. From the results above, it is evident that there is no consensus of the participant views.

Many respondents answered the questions in a way that can be generic to counselling. It seems that the aspects of flourishing seemed to come up more when discussing coaching. However, most participants indicated that coaching training was not part of their postgraduate studies.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

When carefully considering the results, it was found that the participants either counsel, coach or use a combination of both when flourishing of individuals is the goal. The majority of the participants perceive their skills to and skills efficient for workplace flourishing. However, they all agreed that there is always room for improvement, growth, and learning opportunities. The results showed a number of different themes in the discussion of skills that the respondents experience as challenging when counselling employees towards flourishing. The participants put more emphasis on coaching. It is evident that coaching is the respondents 'favoured method' to improve flourishing in the workplace.



## **Chapter 5: Discussion and recommendations**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the conclusions of the study are put forth in accordance with the objectives. The summary of results will be discussed together with the limitations of the research, followed by recommendations.

### **5.2 Summary of results**

In order to align the results with the initial seven objectives of this study, eleven interview questions were posed to the participants and are presented in the summary below:

The first objective of the study was to explore what exposure practising Industrial-Organisational psychologists have had to counselling towards flourishing of individuals. Themes that emerged from the results was improving performance, psychometric feedback, guide and advice, growth, personal problems, and facilitation. It is, therefore, evident that various situations provide opportunities for the participants to counsel towards flourishing.

The second objective of the study was to determine what counselling towards flourishing skills were included in Industrial-Organisational psychologists' training during their postgraduate studies. Themes like practical experience, listening skills, and formal counselling modules, guiding skills, self-awareness skills, and confidentiality emerged from the results. It is evident that a wide range of skills was included in the participants' postgraduate studies but more in depth skills could be included.

The third objective of the study was to determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational psychologists received additional training in positive counselling skills. It is evident from the results that most participants never received any additional training and training was mostly done on the job or at workshops.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational psychologists perceive their exposure to and skills as sufficient for the workplace flourishing counselling situations they face. The majority of the participants indicated that they perceive their exposure to and skills sufficient for the situations they face in the workplace but feel that there is always room for improvement and growth. The situations they face and that indicated flourishing themes was trust, confidentiality, and relationships. The participants felt that their

skills and exposure was sufficient because they had good relationships and clients could trust them.

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the challenging skills experienced by practising Industrial-Organisation psychologists when counselling employees towards flourishing. It is evident that every participant experienced different challenging skills when counselling in the workplace as themes like credibility, responsibility, unmotivated clients, language, scope of practice, and emotions emerged.

The sixth objective of the study was to make recommendations, from the perspective of flourishing interventions, for the future curriculum of Industrial-Organisational psychology students regarding counselling exposure and skills. One main theme that was extracted from the results, was the need for coaching skills as many participants felt that the curriculum should include coaching.

The seventh objective of the study was to determine whether practising Industrial-Organisational psychologists use other methods than counselling to improve flourishing in the workplace. The majority of the participants uses coaching as another method to improve flourishing in the workplace.

It is expected that the results of this study inform the current state of counselling from a positive perspective done by I-O psychologists. The overall objective of this study was to see what type of positive counselling situations are faced by Industrial-Organisational psychologists and what skills are required for such counselling. From the results, it was clear that Industrial-Organisational psychologists are familiar with the process of counselling and are faced with various counselling situations that require a unique set of skills and exposure. The participants had different experiences and opinions about the training they received during their postgraduate studies. While reflecting upon their training, they made recommendations for the future training of Industrial-Organisational psychologists.

### **5.3 Discussion**

It is evident from the literature that counselling needs to be included in the scope of practice of Industrial-Organisational Psychology. According to the Health Professions Act (2011), the main goal of Industrial-Organisational psychologists is to plan, develop and apply paradigms, theories, models, constructs and principles of psychology to issues related to the world of work in order to understand, modify and enhance individual, group and organisational behaviour



well-being and effectiveness. Literature indicates that Industrial-Organisational psychologists do not feel adequately prepared for the role of workplace counsellor. Therefore, students can benefit from in-depth counselling training and more psychology focused training, especially various counselling models and theories (Smith, 2006). The results of the present study confirm this finding as most Industrial-Organisational psychologists felt they would benefit from more in-depth counselling skills.

It is deduced from the literature that counselling in the workplace towards flourishing should incorporate positive psychology. Positive psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning, the goals of which are to better understand and apply those factors that help individuals and communities thrive and flourish (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Counselling can be used with different positive psychology theories, constructs, or processes.

From the results gathered in the present study, Industrial-Organisational psychologists seem to be unaware of these positive psychological approaches to counselling and prefer to coach rather than counsel when it concerns employees reaching a level of flourishing. According to Silsbee (2010, p. 4), coaching is defined as “a relationship in which one person is primarily dedicated to serving the long-term development of effectiveness and self-generation in the other”.

It is suggested from the results of the present study that positive organisational psychology needs to be incorporated in the curriculum of the training of Industrial-Organisational psychologists in order for the students to have a better idea of how it can be worked together with counselling. Positive psychology according to Keyes and Haidt (2003) aims to discover the factors that allow employees to flourish in the workplace. Research argues that coaching provides a unique platform for including user-friendly applications of positive psychological knowledge across multiple domains, several authors has seen the potential. According to some, coaching has significant potential in this regard because it is fundamentally concerned with enhancing self-regulation by facilitating the establishment and pursuit of self-concordant goals (Linley & Joseph, 2002). Therefore, research indicates that workplace coaching has the potential to enhance both workplace performance and well-being.

In 1997, research by Taylor suggested that solution-focused coaching has been shown to foster resilience in medical students. Research dating back to 2007 by Green, Grant and Rynsaardt focuses on cognitive hardiness in high school. Grant (2003) conducted research on the quality of life and personal insight in postgraduate students.

In 2006, research was conducted on psychological well-being and hope in an adult community sample (Green, Oades & Grant, 2006). In addition, Spence and Grant (2007) found that professional coaching was more effective than peer coaching in enhancing goal attainment and psychological well-being, while Libri and Kemp (2006) have reported that a cognitive-behavioural executive coaching program enhanced the core self-evaluations of coachees. Finally, the results from a workplace-coaching program for high school teachers, using 360-degree feedback, showed improvements in goal attainment, psychological well-being, hope, and workplace well-being (Grant, Green, & Rynsaardt, 2007). In short, there is emerging evidence that coaching interventions can enhance positive psychological constructs, but clearly much further research is needed

The research thus far has suggested that workplace coaching has the potential to enhance both workplace performance and well-being. The question remains how we can draw on positive psychology literature to use coaching as a platform for an applied positive psychology intervention in the workplace.

Thus, from the results it is evident that coaching is a more preferred method than counselling to assist employees to flourish in the workplace. However, the question still remains whether Industrial-Organisational psychologists have adequate skills and exposure in the workplace to assist employees to reach greater levels of flourishing.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

The following limitations were noted during the study: The first limitation of the study relates to the fact that the sample size was small. Despite the fact that permission was obtained for the use of a tape recorder, it could be possible that the anxiety of being recorded influenced the way the participants answered the questions. With regard to the sampling frame, it could be that the level of experience in counselling influenced the answering of the questions. For example, some participants might have had trouble in answering the questions relating to counselling if very little or no counselling experience was present.

#### **5.5 Implications for practice**

The study aimed to contribute in making Industrial-Organisational psychologists better equipped to attend to the flourishing of employees in the workplace in South Africa. According to Keyes (2005), the presence of feeling well and functioning well results in flourishing of

individuals, meaning that positive mental health is present. Flourishing in work and organisational contexts consists of three broad dimensions, namely emotional, psychological, and social well-being (Rothmann, 2013). Concerning emotional well-being, individuals who flourish at work are satisfied with their jobs and experience a positive affect balance. Regarding the psychological dimension, individuals who flourish at work experience autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction, have a purpose and meaning at work, are engaged, and learn. Concerning social well-being, individuals who flourish at work include elements of perceived happiness and life satisfaction.

From the results, it can be seen that care should be taken to equip the Industrial-Organisational psychologist with effective skills for their role as counsellor. The participants of this study dealt with a range of counselling situations. Consequently, it is recommended that future research should focus on the development of a training module that could be included in the curriculum of Industrial-Organisational psychology students in South Africa. Ultimately, training Industrial-Organisational psychologists in effective counselling competencies and skills would contribute to employees' well-being in the workplace, which is at the core of the Industrial-Organisational psychology profession.

## 5.6 Recommendations

- Exposure to positive psychology should be included in undergraduate education. This could facilitate a more balanced view of psychotherapeutic interventions and professional psychology in postgraduate training (Guse, 2010).
- Implementing a positive psychology stance in the basic training of psychologists should be considered (Rothmann, 2013).
- Train students in positive psychology interventions, as this could enhance the experience of self-efficacy in students (Rothmann, 2013).
- Including a positive psychology approach could potentially prevent burnout and stress by making students more aware of the importance of psychological well-being in their own lives.
- Integrating positive psychology in professional training could contribute to widening the scope of practice of psychologists to include capacity building and prevention. Knowledge of and training in positive psychology could thus generate psychologists with a broader skills set, one that grants them greater professional flexibility.

- More skills and exposure in the module of counselling during the curriculum like bringing in experts , focusing on listening skills, looking at how important body language is as it will help and prepare the students
- Professional training of Industrial-Organisational psychologists should include coaching as a module as it will help with workplace situations and gives the students more insight of what is required
- The Industrial-Organisational psychology curriculum should include wellbeing/flourishing.

## 5.7 Conclusion

It is evident that flourishing leads to other desirable outcomes. The need to have more employees who are flourishing is, therefore, of the utmost importance. From the responses, it seems that Industrial-Organisational psychologists are more likely to use coaching than counselling as a means to improve flourishing. Thus, the major recommendation of the present study is to include coaching skills as well as more knowledge about flourishing in the Industrial-Organisational psychology curriculum.



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**Title:** *Determining the exposure to and skills needed by IOP'S in the Western Cape Province to counsel employees towards flourishing in the workplace.*

**Researcher:** Shuné Brown (3131636)

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. (If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead researcher at any time)
3. I understand my responses and personal data will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.
4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.
5. I agree that a voice recording of the interview for this study may be done.
6. I agree to take part in the above research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Participant (or legal representative)      Date      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of person taking consent (If different from lead researcher)      Date      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Lead Researcher (To be signed and dated in presence of the participant)      Date      Signature

*Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.*

**Researcher:**  
 Miss Shune Brown  
 Principal researcher  
 UWC  
 Department of Industrial Psychology  
[shuneb@gmail.com](mailto:shuneb@gmail.com)  
 0733086643

**Supervisor:**  
 Dr. Marieta du Plessis  
 Industrial Psychology  
 EMS Faculty, UWC  
 Bellville  
[mduplessis@uwc.ac.za](mailto:mduplessis@uwc.ac.za)  
 021 959 3175

**Head of Department:**  
 Dr. Bright Mahembe  
 Head of Department  
 Industrial Psychology  
 EMS Faculty, UWC  
 Bellville  
[bmahembe@uwc.ac.za](mailto:bmahembe@uwc.ac.za)  
 021 959 2212



**INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

Dear participant

My name is Shuné Brown and my student number at the University of the Western Cape is 3131636. I am currently studying towards my MCOM in Industrial Psychology. I am currently busy with my mini-thesis and would like to invite you to take part in the research.

The title of my thesis is:

*Determining the exposure to and skills needed by IOP's in the Western Cape Province to counsel employees towards flourishing in the workplace.*

Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear of if you need more information.

**Study procedure**

You will be invited to participate in a semi structured interview (45-60 minutes) in which you will be asked different questions with the aim of reflecting on your own experiences and views. A copy of the questions that will be asked will be available to you before the interview. The interview will be voice recorded.

**Risks**

The risks of this study are minimal. These risks are similar to those you experience when disclosing work-related information to others. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

**Benefits & Compensation:**

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. There will also be no compensation for completing the questionnaire. Your contribution will help the Industrial/Organisational Psychology profession to better understand what skills need to be included in their Counselling postgraduate curriculums. Furthermore, your answers will help to create insight into the exposure to counselling for flourishing that IOPs have.

**Confidentiality:**

Your responses will be kept anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- The analysis of the data will be done entirely by the researcher. Information from this research will be used solely for the purpose of this study and any publications that may result from this study. All other participants involved in this study will not be identified and their anonymity will be maintained.
- A summary report of the findings will be made available to you. However, no identifiable data w.r.t. biographical variables (i.e. age, gender, department, etc.) will be reported.
- Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you do decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. You will also be given a copy of the information letter. If you decide to take part in this study, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. You are free to not answer any question or questions if you choose. This will not affect the relationship you have with the researcher.

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact me at the details listed below:

**Researcher:**

Miss Shune Brown  
Principal researcher  
UWC  
Department of Industrial Psychology

**Supervisor:**

Dr. Marieta du Plessis  
Industrial Psychology  
EMS Faculty, UWC  
Bellville

**Head of Department:**

Dr. Bright Mahembe  
Head of Department  
Industrial Psychology  
EMS Faculty, UWC

**Biographical Information: Personal information of the participant**

---

<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Age:</b>	
<b>Number of years experience:</b>	



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## Interview Guide:

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I would like to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My Name is Shune Brown and I would like to have a discussion with you about IOP's as a workplace counsellor, specifically your perception of the exposure to and skills needed for an IOP to counsel in the workplace towards flourishing.

I have sent you the information letter, but just want to reiterate a few matters. This interview will be done in duration of 1 hour. I will be making use of a voice recording device because I would not want to miss out on any valuable information. There for please be sure to speak loud and clear so that I don't miss your response to the questions that I will ask.

All the responses given will be kept confidential and your anonymity is ensured. I want to remind you that the study is voluntary and that you can end the interview anytime you wish.

Please take note that you may also withdraw after the interview have taken place my contact details are on the Informed Consent form.

I hope I made everything as clear as possible, should there be any questions you are free to ask me and I will clarify.

Do you have any questions at this point?

If you are willing to participate in the interview, please sign at the bottom of the consent page.

### **During the interview the following questions will be asked to each participant**

1. In your own words what do you regard as workplace counselling towards flourishing?
2. How would you describe an individual who is flourishing in the workplace?
3. With specific reference to workplace wellbeing or flourishing, what type of workplace counselling situations are you faced with?
4. What kind of counselling skills are you required to possess to counsel individuals towards improved flourishing?
5. Do you perceive your skills and exposure to counselling conversations related to flourishing to be efficient?
6. What type of counselling training did you receive during your postgraduate training? Was counselling towards wellbeing/flourishing included in it?
7. Did you receive any additional training?

8. Can you make any recommendations relating to the development of the skills required by the I-O Psychologist as counsellor, specifically relating to counselling people towards greater levels of flourishing?
9. Would you rather use coaching than counselling to help an individual improve their level of flourishing? If so, how would you say the coaching differs from counselling?
10. What counselling model do you make use of? Do you find it effective?
11. What situations do you struggle with?





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Determining the exposure to and skills needed by Industrial - Organisational Psychologists in the Western Cape Province to counsel employees towards flourishing in the workplace.

**Author:**

Shuné Brown

Student number: 3131636

Email: 3131636@myuwc.ac.za

**Date Issued:**

12/11/2019

**Certificate Number:**

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