



CAREER FOCUS PSYCHOLOGIST

Inside this issue:

- 1-2 BECOMING A PSYCHOLOGIST ;
SPECIALIZED FIELDS IN PSYCHOLOGY
- 3- REQUIREMENTS
- 4- DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGIST
& PSYCHIATRIST



Dear students

Do you find yourself sitting down with friends analyzing their behaviours or helping them sort through their not-so-conscious problems? Ever thought about a career in Psychology? If one looks at what people with training in psychology do, the range or variety is amazing! After all, psychology involves all areas of life, and therefore is one of the most popular areas to study. I thought it might be useful to have an edition on Psychology. To show you what is possible with a degree and further studies in psychology. I hope that the information will alert you to career options and educational pathways that you may not have known about or thought to consider.

- *Martina*

BECOMING A PSYCHOLOGIST

A psychologist does research on studies mental processes and behaviour of human beings as individuals or in groups. He/she also applies his/her knowledge to promote personal, social, educational or occupational adjustment and development

Psychologists may help individuals to deal with the problems of daily living, provide psychotherapy or conduct behaviour modification programmes in mental clinics and hospitals. They study human behaviour in terms of the environment or individual development.

Psychologists may also move out in the community and act as consultants or be involved in preventative work. This entails guiding people in the development of skills for dealing with problems before they even arise. They train various helpers in the community in skills to be applied in serving that community. In the forensic field the psychologist can play an important role in custody disputes and criminal offences.

SPECIALIZED FIELDS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Clinical psychologists: usually work in hospitals or in private practice where a diagnostic and therapeutic service is provided to clients who are experiencing emotional and/or mental distress.

Clinical neuro-psychologists: specialize in the assessment and diagnosis of brain impairment and how this affects thinking skills, emotions, behaviour and personality. They are also involved in the rehabilitation and management of the effects of brain impairment and often work with other health professionals.

Child psychologists: usually work in private practice or child related institutions and diagnostic and therapeutic services to clients under the age of 18, who having emotional problems usually as a result of trauma experienced, such as psychological, physical or sexual abuse.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

SPECIALIZED FIELDS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Educational and developmental psychologists: provide assessment, intervention and counselling services relevant to the management of developmental and educational issues across the life span. Specializations include: *life span transitions, early intervention, disability, problems of learning and adjustment in schools, career and family development and ageing*. They usually work in an educational environment where learners, students, parents and teachers are advised on topics such as school readiness, academic performance and development strategies.

Counselling psychologists: provide assessment, counselling and therapy to individuals, couples, families, groups and organizations. Their clients are, in general, people trying to cope with everyday stresses and the resulting emotional and social problems. These psychologists are responsible for career counselling, marriage counselling and general guidance.

Industrial or organizational psychologists: practise in business or industrial settings with the general aim of directly benefiting the economic well-being of the employing organization. They are concerned with people functioning effectively in relation to their working environments. Their areas of expertise include recruitment and selection, training, appraisal and review, vocational guidance and career development, industrial relations, occupational health and safety, planning technological and organizational change, organizational behaviour, ergonomics, consumer behaviour, job redesign and marketing.

Sports psychologists: provide psychological assistance to people involved in sport and exercise at all levels seeking to enhance their achievement, enjoyment and social interaction. Sports psychology services focus on performance enhancement, personal development, well-being and adjustment skills.

Forensic psychologists: apply psychological knowledge to assessment, intervention and research in the context of the legal and criminal justice system. They provide expert opinion to the courts in such matters as criminal behaviour, child abuse and custody disputes.

Research psychologists: apply skills in statistics, research design, computing and data analysis in an attempt to answer a variety of questions. They may work in government departments, management institutes, market research, media or public opinion research.

Academic psychologists: work in tertiary institutions, and conduct research and provide academic training for psychologists. A PhD qualification and a good record in research are almost always necessary to gain employment in this area.

Community psychologists: are mainly concerned with community issues and with creating social change to prevent or ease human problems. Some work in areas of social need such as with the homeless, and the socially, intellectually or physically disadvantaged.

REQUIREMENTS

Secondary Education

Possession of at least a **HIGCSE** Grade 12 or equivalent qualification, with matriculation exemption is required for studies in South Africa. A valid **HIGCSE/IGCSE** Grade 12 or equivalent qualification with passes in five subjects and a minimum of 25 points on the UNAM evaluation scale is needed to enrol at **UNAM**

Recommended subject

Depends on specific universities

Tertiary Education & Training

Most South African universities offer a **B. A.** Degree in Psychology as well as Honours, Masters and Doctoral training in this field. UNAM offers a **B. Psych** and Masters Degree in Psychology. The basic minimum qualification for registration is a Master's degree and appropriate internship (12 months) at an accredited institution.

Candidates have to undergo selection to be admitted to the Honours and Masters Degree courses. Psychologists can only practice after registration with the Social Work and Psychology Council of Namibia

Personality

A prospective psychologist must have an above-average intelligence. He/she should be patient, sensitive, reliable and mature and should be a creative thinker.

Work Opportunities

- universities and colleges— education departments as educational psychologists
- government departments a
- business and industries, as industrial psychologists , consulting agencies
- private, public and psychiatric hospitals
- community and rehabilitation clinics and other health care facilities
- churches, correctional institutions
- self-employment, in private practice

Satisfying Aspects

- working with people and helping others solve problems
- prestige status and good remuneration
- many areas of specialization from which to choose

Demanding aspects

- keen professional competition
- working irregular hours to meet the needs of clients
- many years of study to meet professional requirements
- dealing with clients who show little progress

Requirements

A psychologist should:

- have an interest in people and human behaviour, ability to solve problems and an inquisitive mind
- be patient and perceptive , have good oral and written communication skills
- be mature and emotionally stable
- be able to deal effectively with others , be sensitive, empathetic and compassionate
- be able to work independently or as part of a team
- have above average intelligence
- be able to keep intimate information confidential and to uphold a very strict ethical code.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST AND PSYCHIATRIST

Psychologist vs. Psychiatrist



Psychologists and psychiatrists are doctoral-level clinicians, but psychiatrists are medical doctors and only they can prescribe medications. These medications help their clients deal with depression and PTSD, overcome substance abuse, and more.

Commonly, patients will see psychiatrists to discuss how their medications are affecting them (and adjust dosage or change medications, if needed), while also attending therapy sessions with a counsellor, therapist or psychologist.

Psychiatrists do most of their training in medical school and spend the last three years learning about mental health during a psychiatry residency.

If you choose to become a psychologist, you'll spend your entire graduate education learning about mental health (typically 5-to-7 years), followed by a supervised internship. Psychologists and psychiatrists both help people deal with emotional issues, but licensed clinical and counselling psychologists must have a doctorate in psychology, which requires 5-to-7 years of postgraduate work. By point of comparison, most licensed therapists and counsellors have a master's degree, which requires 2-to-3 years of postgraduate work.

References : Namibia Careers & Pace careers ;

WHAT WE THINK, WE ARE..



You can't live a positive life with negative mind.

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Previous newsletters can be found on the TUCSIN website:

<http://www.tucsin.org/index.php/en/project/documents-for-students/career-prospect>.