

EXPLORING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS WHO WERE RAISED AS ONLY CHILDREN IN CAPE TOWN

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ABSTRACT

It is thought that individuals raised as only children (i.e., children with no siblings) have difficulty forming interpersonal relationships. This study explored how young adults who were raised as only children experienced interpersonal relationships, specifically their relationships with peers, parents and romantic partners. Qualitative interviews were conducted with seven young adults who are only children. Participants were recruited using snowball sampling. Interviews were analysed using thematic content analysis. Participants described their relationships with their parents as good, often referring to them as friends or older siblings. All participants shared that they had limited experience with romantic relationships. Since many of the participants' parents were divorced, parental divorce may have influenced the parent-child dynamic and deterred participants from entering into romantic relationships. However, even participants whose parents were married reported few romantic relationships and some believed that this may have been due to not having siblings who could have acted as role models in romantic relationships. The young adults also reported that being an only child did not affect their ability to make friends and viewed personality as more influential in forming friendships than being an only child. Whilst participants reported growing up as only children to be a largely positive experience, all expressed a desire to share a sibling bond.

Keywords: dating; interpersonal relationships; only born; only child; siblings; subjective experiences; thematic content analysis

BACKGROUND

It is often assumed that siblings are required in order for children to develop normally (Mancillas, 2006) and children raised without siblings (known as only children or onlies) are often stereotyped as being maladjusted, self-centred, lonely and spoiled (Blake, 1981). These stereotypes have been demonstrated to be prevalent even among mental health professionals, as one study found that counsellors viewed hypothetical clients without siblings as being more prone to experiencing problems than those with siblings (Stewart, 2004). However, scholarly research has indicated that these stereotypes are largely unfounded, with only children even demonstrating positive attributes (Falbo, 2012; Falbo & Polit, 1986; Falbo & Poston, 1993; Herrera, Zajonc, Wieszorkowski, & Cichomski, 2003; Mellor, 1990; Polit, Nuttall, & Nuttall, 1980; Poston & Falbo, 1990). In fact, a meta-analysis of research regarding only children concluded that findings comparing only children to those with siblings were inconsistent and that factors other than only child status contribute to differences between only children and those with siblings (Falbo, 2012).

Research relating to the only child was prominent in the 1980s when psychologists were interested in birth order studies. These studies placed significance on an individual's ordinal place within a family and viewed this place as a contributing factor to individuals' psychological well-being and central to personality development (Mancillas, 2006). Since then, research in this area has diminished, mostly due to a consensus that factors other than birth order are more significant determinants of personality and well-being.

However, research on the only child is still of interest in China due to the country's one-child policy. The one-child policy was an attempt by the Chinese government to restrict the Chinese population by offering incentives to families with only one child and penalties to those with more than one child (Pascu, 2011). The implementation of this policy has resulted in economic benefits for China but has also resulted in the country facing a new demographic crisis which sees a rapidly ageing population and disparities in the ratio of girls and boys (Pascu, 2011). Research on only children in China has focused on areas such as the mental health of only children (Liu, Munakata, & Onuoha, 2005), parental gender-specific expectations of their only children (Liu, 2006), gender atypical behaviour of only children (Yu & Winter, 2011) and self-concept (Meredith, Abbott, & Ming, 1993), among other research.

In Western cultures, only child studies usually compare children or adults raised as only children with children or adults raised with siblings in the areas of psychological well-being, academic achievement and social interaction. In terms of psychological well-being, no significant differences were found between only

children and those with siblings in terms of life satisfaction, mood and self-esteem (Veenhoven & Verkuyten, 1989). Surveys on adults who were raised as only children produced similar results. No differences in terms of happiness, life satisfaction and social participation were found between adults who grew up as only children and those with siblings (Polit *et al.*, 1980).

Academically, adults raised as only children achieved higher educational and occupational statuses than those with siblings (Polit *et al.*, 1980). Herrera *et al.* (2003) found that whilst only children were academically successful and diligent they were least liked by their peers. Other theorists contend that the advantage of being an only child in terms of academic ability and achievement is rather small (Falbo, 2012).

Only children are often thought to struggle socially due to their limited interaction with peers. Trent and Spitze (2011) analysed data from a national survey in order to compare adult sociability behaviours between adults who were raised as only children and adults raised with siblings. These researchers did not find any significant differences between the two groups in terms of sociability behaviours, meaning that only children were not more or less sociable than their peers who were raised with siblings. The study did however find that those without siblings had less frequent social interaction with relatives (Trent & Spitze, 2011). Other research has found that only children have a similar number of close friendships and similar quality of friendships as their counterparts with siblings (Kitzmann, Cohen, & Lockwood, 2002). However, only children are less liked by their peers and more likely to be victimised and to exhibit aggression. Kitzmann *et al.* (2002) postulate that this difficulty encountered by only children in their study may be due to the role that siblings play in teaching each other to manage conflict. Birth order studies have also looked at the relationship between an individual's birth order and how individuals think in relationships. Whilst possible trends have emerged from this research, no concrete pattern or trend was found with regard to the way adults raised as only children think and behave in a relationship (McGuirk & Pettijohn II, 2008).

The notion that only children are homogenous was challenged by Rosenberg and Hyde (1993) whose research demonstrated three types of only children in a sample. The authors found that only children were either characterised as "cheerful and well-adjusted", "impulsive and acting out" or "first-bornish". This indicates that research relating to only children should be interpreted with caution as only children should not be grouped as similar primarily due to their only child status.

Whilst most research conducted in the field has assessed perceptions regarding only children and characteristics of only children, there is a gap in terms of understanding subjective experiences of only children. Roberts and Blanton (2001) interviewed young adults who were only children in order to explore their subjective experience of being an only child. Their findings provide some insight into the experience of growing up without siblings. According to Roberts and

Blanton (2001) the only child's perceived advantages included being thankful for not having to share, fight or compete with siblings for their parents' attention or financial resources. The only children in the study valued their time alone and felt that having to play alone added to their creativity and imaginative play. Their only child status allowed for close relationships with their parents and they considered themselves more matured than their peers (Roberts & Blanton, 2001). Many of the participants expressed gratitude for the fact that they did not have to share their parents' attention and regarded their relationship with their parents more as one of friendship than an authoritarian one. The challenges facing the only children in the study related to not having a sibling who could have acted as a confidante, feeling pressure to succeed, difficulty connecting and negotiating with peers and concern regarding caring for their parents as their parents aged. This research indicates that despite the negative perceptions and stereotypes regarding only children, their subjective experience of being an only child is largely positive (Roberts & Blanton, 2001).

The current study aimed to explore the subjective experiences of interpersonal relationships of young adults raised as only children. Subjective experience can be defined as what the individual think, feels and reports. It is the individual's internal interpretation of events, as opposed to observable features (Morrison & Bennett, 2009).

This study was located within Erikson's Psychosocial Stages. According to this theory the participants in this study were in the young adulthood stage of their development. The main developmental task at this point is to form intimacy (romantic relationships) and failure to do so may lead to alienation and isolation. In the phase prior to this identities are formed resulting in a better understanding of personal experiences (Corey, 2013). Rose (2006) stated that in order for psychological intimacy with other people to be possible, a reasonably well-integrated identity would have to emerge from the previous stage.

Despite an extensive literature review, the researchers failed to locate research relating to the only child in South Africa. With this gap in mind, the researchers set out to explore how young adults who were raised as only children experienced relationships. This research focused on the formation of personal relationships and attempted to understand whether young adults who grew up as only children felt that this contributed either positively or negatively to their ability to form relationships.

METHOD

Research Design

The researchers conducted a qualitative study in order to understand how young adults raised as only children experience interpersonal relationships. The researchers

aimed to understand the lived experiences of young adults who were reared as only children and qualitative methods were appropriate as they enhance the understanding of any phenomenon about which little is known (Glesne, 2006). This study was exploratory in nature, as no research has been published in the area of only children in South Africa.

Sampling procedure and sample characteristics

Non-probability, purposive sampling was used to recruit participants. More specifically, snowball sampling was used (Struwig & Stead, 2007). The researchers contacted individuals known to them as only children and asked them to identify other young adults who grew up as only children. The potential participants were told that the researchers were conducting a study and asked if their details could be shared with the researchers. When potential participants consented, their contact details were forwarded to the first author who contacted them and explained the study to them. Those who agreed to participate were interviewed at a time and location that was convenient to them. In order to participate in the study, participants had to have grown up as only children, live in the greater Cape Town region and be between the ages of 18 and 27 years.

The sample consisted of seven participants, with ages ranging between 20 to 27 years. Five participants were females and two were males. Of the group, two were students, four were employed and one was unemployed at the time. All participants came from middle class backgrounds and resided in Cape Town. The participants were asked about their interpersonal relationships, particularly with regard to their parents, their romantic relationships and friendships. The participants in the study are all in the intimacy versus isolation stage of development. The development of intimate relations in this stage is essential for personality development (Corey, 2005).

DATA COLLECTION

Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted with participants. Semi-structured interviews comprise of a list of topics or questions that are compiled in advance and then discussed. This type of interview allowed the participants to talk in depth about their feelings and experiences (Struwig & Stead, 2007). All the participants were asked the same open-ended questions and were allowed to answer it in any way they chose. The questions explored their general experiences of growing up as only children and then focused more specifically on their interpersonal relationships. Three relationships were explored – their relationships with peers, their relationships with their parents and most importantly, their romantic relationships.

An interview schedule guided the interviews and consisted of five main questions exploring the different relationships, with each question containing two or three

probing questions. For example, the area of relationships with peers was explored using the main question “Tell me about your relationships with your peers” and was supported with probing questions related to their interactions with peers, whether they found it easy or difficult to make friends and how they felt their only child status affected their ability to make friends.

The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour and were conducted by the first author in the participants preferred language (English and Afrikaans). Six interviews were conducted in English and one was conducted in Afrikaans. The first author received training on conducting interviews from the second author who acted as her supervisor.

DATA ANALYSIS

All interviews were transcribed and both researchers analysed the transcriptions independently. The Afrikaans interview was not translated as the researchers were proficient in both languages and wanted to work with the participants’ original voice so as not to lose any meaning. Thematic content analysis was conducted using the six phases as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). During the first phase, the researchers read the interview transcriptions and listened to the recordings independently, in order to familiarise themselves with the content. Once familiarity was achieved, the researchers identified an initial selection of codes as part of the second analysis phase. Codes were identified based on their semantic content and extracts of data were highlighted that best described each code. During the third phase, the researchers analysed the codes and grouped similar codes together to form overarching themes. During the first three phases the researchers worked independently in order to enhance the credibility of the analysis. Only after this did the researchers work together in order to gain consensus regarding the themes. The fourth phase entailed reviewing each theme and its corresponding codes and data extracts carefully. In so doing, the researchers ensured that the codes and data extracts of each theme forms a coherent pattern and fit meaningfully to the theme and that each theme reflects the entire data set accurately. During the fifth phase the researchers refined each theme further by defining and naming it as well as writing a detailed description of its scope and content. The sixth, and final, phase of the analysis procedure entailed relating the themes back to the study’s initial aims and relevant existing academic literature and theories.

REFLEXIVITY

As qualitative researchers, the researchers acknowledge that their own experiences and personal viewpoints contribute to their understanding and interpretation of the phenomenon under study. The researchers were cognisant throughout the process of

these views. The first author kept a journal to record the research process and assist her in reflecting on the interviews that she conducted. The researchers conducted debriefing sessions after conducting the interviews where they discussed their views relating to only children as well as shifts in these viewpoints. Both researchers were from large families and had no personal experience of being an only child. Initially, the researchers may have shared some of the popular misconceptions regarding only children, but these viewpoints changed during the process of the research.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness was built into the study using a number of strategies during the data collection and analysis processes. First, the first author received training on conducting interviews from the second author who acted as her supervisor and who is experienced in qualitative training. The interviews were conducted by the first author and monitored by the second author who listened to the recorded interviews and then provided the first author with feedback on how to improve subsequent interviews. In terms of analysis, the researchers coded the interviews independently and only after initial coding did they discuss and debate their analysis in order to gain consensus regarding the themes. This rigour in analysis provided some level of independence in the analysis process.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study was granted ethical clearance by the Ethics Review Board of Midrand Graduate Institute. Participants were informed that the study was voluntary and that there were no direct benefits to participants. They were also informed that they may withdraw from the study without any negative consequences. Participants were informed beforehand that the interviews would be audio taped and transcribed and consented to this. They were also informed that they may refuse to answer a question should it make them feel uncomfortable or end the interview at any time. The authors made counselling available to participants following the interview. None of the participants took up the offer. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of participants and anyone who handled the data signed confidentiality agreements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to explore how young adults who were raised as only children experienced relationships. Four main themes were extracted during the analysis. These themes were named positive relationships with parents, limited experiences with romantic relationships, being an only child does not make it harder to make friends and a romanticised notion of having a sibling. Whilst the

first three themes were actively sought as they deal specifically with different types of relationships, the fourth theme emerged as an unexpected yet overwhelming response from participants.

Positive relationships with parents

When discussing their parental relationships, most of the participants described their individual experiences in detail. It emerged that all participants had good relationships with their parents. In some instances, the participants stated that they had a stronger bond with one parent over the other. These bonds also appeared to be transitional, depending on their ages and developmental stage. For instance, a female participant indicated that as a child she had a very strong bond with her father, but as she grew older she gravitated more towards her mother.

Valerie, 24: I think when I was at crèche level and primary school, my father and I were very close. I was, okay I can't say the favourite child because I was the only child. So it was like my father was the favourite parent . . . From crèche to like say primary school because that was where a lot of like the interesting sport and that and because I'm a girl my father, ja, I don't know, I could be the boy and the girl. So but ja he was always on the sports fields with me and stuff like that. Then obviously high school you start growing into the woman. And then it's like mommy, ja so then my mother and I started building a stronger relationship and my dad was still there with sport and stuff like that.

Participants reported feeling as though the close relationships with parents were beneficial to their parents, as they provided emotional support for their parents during challenging times and even took on the role of caretakers. Therefore in some instances parenting roles switched between parents and children. In others participants regarded their parents as older siblings or friends and in some cases best friends.

The relationship between parent and child is evident from the statements below:

Denise, 24: I had to be the one she could depend on and not only because she was sick.

Clarice, 20: Mom's become like my older sibling, like a very wise older sibling.

Clarice, 20: I think very different I don't think it would've been this close (referring to relationship with parents). So that's why I actually like, I like being the only child because of that. I think ja (yes) I think it would've been very different. I would've been like the kids against the parents. That's how I always think it works.

These close parental relationships echoes the findings of Roberts and Blanton (2001) that being the only child allowed for close relationships with parents. Participants in the Robert and Blanton (2001) study also regarded their relationship with their parents more as one of friendship than an authoritarian one.

Limited experiences with romantic relationships

When discussing the participants' romantic relationships most of the participants admitted to having had limited experience in romantic relationships. The vast majority of participants only had one serious relationship. The participants initially had various reasons for these limited experiences, ranging from religious beliefs to not having found the 'right' partner yet. The limited number of romantic relationships was demonstrated by the following quotes:

Clarice, 20: I've only had one boyfriend and we dated for about a year otherwise I've never had a serious relationship before and I think our relationship was good.

Denise, 24: When I was younger like in grade seven, and I had my first boyfriend but it wasn't serious but at the moment like I'm looking for, like I never had a serious relationship ok I know that's strange for someone my age.

Kris, 20: I've never ever had girlfriends, strangely, because I know teenagers boys go through heavy everybody is their girlfriend but I never went through that and I don't think it was, it was - I was a very shy child.

Catelyn, 20: I never had a serious relationship.

Most of the participants in the study revealed that their parents were divorced. It was evident from some of the responses that their parents' relationships influenced their own romantic relationships. The impact of divorce on romantic relationships is visible in the following quotation by Denise.

Denise, 24: Dad used to make a promise and he didn't keep it, so those things played in our relationship (with boyfriend).

Personality may also have played a role in limiting romantic relationships within the sample. For example, one of the participants attributed being shy as a reason for not having a girlfriend earlier.

Kris, 20: I was a very shy child and that would always reflect in my relationships 'cause even if I did like a girl I wouldn't tell her or I wouldn't act on it.

All participants were in Erikson's psychosocial stage of intimacy versus isolation and therefore the formation of intimate relationships was crucial. Considering that the participants' ages ranged between 20 and 27 years they ideally should have more experience in forming romantic relationships. Whilst a limited number of interpersonal relationships were prevalent among the group the participants did not see their only child status as a contributing factor to their limited relationship experiences.

Being an only child does not make it harder to make friends

The participants all stated that being an only child did not affect their ability to make friends. The following are excerpts from two of the participants' interviews.

Mary, 27: My personality is more, it leans more towards an introverted style, like I'm not comfortable with a lot of people around me.

Valerie, 24: So I'm an extrovert and love being around people and that's why my friends have become my family. I'm always with people, love meeting new people.

Liam, 20: I think it (being an only child) helped me or was maybe a little bit more difficult for me to make friends but I never really had a problem making friends so . . . But I'm sure that if you have a solid relationship, but a brother or sister from a small childhood it would maybe be easier with you for you to go to school and to start making friends and to you know do the whole thing. But there was not really a problem for me to make friends or to try and connect with people on any level or anything like that so.

It was evident from the participants' responses that personality had a bigger role to play in their ability to make friends, than being an only child did. All the participants mentioned in their interviews that they did not have difficulty making friends. What was however different or difficult was the way in which it was done. Some participants had many friends, while one or two focused more on the quality of the friendships than on the number of friends that they had.

Romanticised Notion of Siblings

Although the romanticised idea of having a sibling was not part of the aim of the study, it was a very strong theme that emerged in the course of the study and will therefore be presented. There was an overwhelming contribution from all of the participants that they would have preferred to have a sibling, especially an older one to learn from or to comfort and support them during stressful times.

All of the participants stated that they missed having a role model to learn from. Some of the participants stated that they could have learnt by seeing a sibling go through similar experiences before them, or to just support them through difficult times.

Denise, 24: I've always wanted an older brother or sister. I think it would have been nice to see them go through the experience and learn from it, because everything I had to deal with by myself.

Another participant believed that a sibling would have given invaluable advice in choosing a romantic partner. The possible hypothesis being that the older sibling would have experienced similar difficulties before and is now in a position to give sound advice.

Liam, 20: I probably would've done a lot better if I had a sister from an earlier age because I've had a bad experience with girlfriends now. I can say that having a sister it would've or brother even would've really help me maybe pick better or really picked a girl that would more have suited me better.

Some of the participants stated that they were lonely after their friends left, which highlighted the absence of a sibling bond for them. Although they were aware of the fact that siblings do fight, they all assumed that they would have a great bond.

This theme was not part of the original aims of the study; however, literature does state that first born siblings tend to occupy more leading and teaching roles, while second-born siblings are more likely to emulate behaviour, follow and be a learner (Stewart & Marvin, 1984). Siblings, during early childhood can be a source of support in assisting with taking care of a younger sibling, and may provide support during stressful family experiences in middle childhood or adolescence (Stewart & Marvin, 1984). In a review by Brody (1998) on sibling relationships he states that large individual differences have been documented in the quality of sibling relationships and that this is largely influenced by factors such as temperament.

Some of the participants stated that they wished they had an older sibling to help them with their romantic relationships. One participant in particular believed that had he not grown up as an only child and had an older sibling, this sibling might have been able to assist him in his choice of girlfriends and possibly help avoid the bad experiences he had. Some also stated that they would have liked to have an older sibling to learn from their experiences.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current study sought to explore interpersonal relationships among young adults who were raised as only children. Individuals raised as only children are often stereotyped as being maladjusted, self-centred, lonely and spoiled (Blake, 1981) even though these stereotypes are not supported by research (Herrera *et al.*, 2003; Falbo & Polit, 1986; Falbo & Poston, 1993; Mellor, 1990; Polit, Nuttall, & Nuttall, 1980; Poston & Falbo, 1990; Falbo, 2012). With these stereotypes in mind, the researchers sought to explore how young adults who were raised as only children experience interpersonal relationships. Three relationships were explored – relationships with parents, romantic relationships and friends. A fourth theme, labelled romanticised notion of having a sibling, emerged from the data and was also presented in this article. The research was framed using Erikson's psychosocial stage of intimacy versus isolation, which places an emphasis on the formation of relationships during young adulthood as essential for personality development.

All of the participants in the study reported a good relationship with their parents, with one parent sometimes being favoured over the other. Many participants described their relationships with parents as 'friends' or 'older siblings' as opposed to authoritarian. Whilst older children have been reported to be similar to 'little adults' due to their interactions being primarily with adults as opposed to other children (Roberts & Blanton, 2001), it is worth noting that most of the participants' parents were divorced. Literature pertaining to divorce has highlighted that a role reversal may occur between parents and children following divorce (Johnston, 1990; Mayseless, Bartholomew, Henderson, & Trinke, 2004) and this role reversal was prevalent in our sample of only child young adults whose parents were divorced.

In terms of romantic relationships, the participants indicated that they had limited experiences. Once again, parental divorce may have been a contributor to these limited relationships and perhaps more influential than only child status. These findings can be substantiated by research presented by South (2013), which found that individuals whose parents were divorced reported that their perceptions regarding romantic relationships changed as a result of parental divorce. Participants cited learning from parents' mistakes and uncertainty in relationship as key factors to these changes in perceptions (South, 2013).

However, not all parents were divorced and these participants also reported a limited number of romantic relationships. Some of the participants indicated that they wished for an older sibling to learn from or to provide guidance to them in terms of dating. One even indicated that if he had a sibling the sibling could have helped him to make better choices regarding girlfriends. In this sense, the only child adults in the sample contributed their lack of romantic relationships to being an only child.

According to Erikson's psychosocial theory of development, the ability to form romantic relationships is an important developmental task that needs to be accomplished during young adulthood. Since the young adults in this study did not view their only child status as negatively impacting their ability to form romantic relationships, the current study does not indicate that being an only child provides a developmental disadvantage in the current sample.

Participants also shared that they had no difficulty making friends. Their friendships ranged from having many friends to a few quality friends. This was in line with the findings of Kitzmann *et al.* (2002) who found that only children had similar numbers of close friendships and quality of friendships as their counterparts with siblings. What emerged from the interviews was that their personality (introverted or extroverted) had a greater contribution to their ability to make and sustain friendships than being an only child did. Only child status was therefore not seen as a hindrance to the ability to make friends for only children. These findings may also support the research conducted by Trent and Spitze (2011) that did not find differences in sociability between adults raised as only children and those raised with siblings.

All participants shared a romanticised notion of siblings and indicated that having a sibling would have been a positive experience for them and expressed a desire to have siblings. Their beliefs were that siblings could have provided comfort, guidance and companionship for them. Whilst many acknowledged that siblings may experience conflict they often viewed this conflict as fleeting and superficial. However a sibling was regarded as a best friend or confidant with an unbreakable bond in a rather romanticised way.

In conclusion, parental divorce may have had a greater impact on the parent-child relationship and the ability of these young adults to enter into romantic relationships than their only child status. However, not all parents were divorced and these

participants still reported close relationships with their parents and limited romantic relationships. Participants deemed their personality more influential on their ability to make friends than their only child status and were not hindered by being an only child. Whilst all participants reported positive experiences whilst being raised as only children they all expressed a longing for a sibling. The young adults interviewed did not view their only child status as a hindrance to forming relationships. The ability to form intimate relationships is essential during young adulthood and the participants in this study were satisfied with their ability to form interpersonal relationships and were able to form intimate relationships, albeit a limited number of relationships.

LIMITATIONS

The results of this study cannot be generalised, due to it being a small scale study limited to Cape Town (Western Cape). The participants were all from middle class backgrounds. The sample consisted of four white and three coloured participants only and was not culturally diverse. The participants also had various factors that contributed to their subjective experiences, such as family compositions that cannot be applied to everyone. However, since the study is qualitative in nature it does not aim to generalise findings to the general population but provide insight into what it was like for these participants as growing up as only children.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Further studies could include participants from different cultural groups as well as different socio economic statuses. Comparative studies exploring the experiences between the different genders of the only child can be conducted. Future studies could explore the different attachment styles of the only child, as well as the romanticised notion of having siblings.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES



Jennifer Twigg obtained her Bachelor in Psychology Honours Degree from Midrand Graduate Institute in 2013. The current study formed part of her dissertation and reflects her interest in child and family psychology. She has a passion for child and family counselling and hopes to make a valuable contribution to this field in future.



Rizwana Roomaney is a Research Psychologist and PhD student at Stellenbosch University. Her thesis aims to develop a contextual health-related quality of life measure for patients with endometriosis. She is a thesis supervisor at Midrand Graduate Institute and part time lecturer in Psychology at the University of the Western Cape. Her interests include health psychology, psychometry and research methodology.

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