

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Ethics clearance reference number: Rec-240816-052

Research permission reference number (if applicable): N/A

March 2025

Title: Intrapersonal processes within South African marriages: The self and its contribution to a healthy and satisfactory marriage relationship

### Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Thato Nchoe-Giliana and I am doing research with Dr. Cily Tabane, a lecturer in the Department of Social Work, towards a Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology degree at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled *Intrapersonal processes within South African marriages: The self and its contribution to a healthy and satisfactory marriage relationship*.

### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

I am conducting this research to explore and identify intrapersonal processes that individuals go through within marriages. This study is expected to collect important information that could develop a healthy marital strategy framework that will simultaneously enhance healthy relationships with self and in marriage.

### WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

To be able to explore the phenomena of interest, there are inclusion and exclusion criteria for the potential participants of the study.

The inclusion criteria includes:

- Five heterosexual married couples,
- who are black South African citizens (born and raised in South Africa),
- from the ages of 18 up to 50 years.



- The black male and female individuals should be from the indigenous South African Nguni, Sotho, Tsonga and Venda ethnic or socio-cultural identity groups.
- Individuals should adhere and/or identify as dualistic worldview (collectivistic and individualistic worldview)
- The couples would have to be married for at least a year,
- either customarily and/or legally married,
- and residing in the Gauteng province,
- with access to the internet.

Individuals with these characteristics would be able to generate relevant and useful information for the study.

As such, individuals with the following characteristics/criteria are to be excluded from the study:

- Non-South African citizens
- Couples of other races besides black
- Couples residing outside of the Gauteng province
- Couples currently cohabitating, not married legally or customarily.
- Couples with no access to the internet
- Couples unable to meet researcher physically for the data collection process (i.e. couple interview)
- Homosexual couples

### **WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?**

To collect data, the participants will engage in 3 types of methods, namely a couples interview, an individual interview, and a homogenous gender-specific focus group discussion. The questions and discussions are to be centered around the participants' intrapersonal processes that individuals experienced within their marriages. There would be a 60-minutes couples' semi-structured interview at a convenient location for the participants; and 60-minute virtual individuals' semi-structured interviews on a different day. Lastly, 90-minutes virtual focus group discussions with individuals (other participants of the study) of the same gender.

The study involves audio-recording for the couples' interview, and audio-visual recording for the virtual interviews (i.e. individual sessions and focus group discussions).



## **CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?**

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. However, should you wish to withdraw from the study, it is preferential that it be before the researcher has begun to analyse the data collected, as it is a time-consuming process.

## **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

There are no specific and clearly set out benefits of participating in such a study. However, the study is conducted in the hopes of possibly informing the development of a healthy marital strategy framework that will simultaneously enhance healthy relationships with self and in marriage in the South African context.

The different stakeholders that could benefit from this research study include South African individuals/couples considering marriage, African married individuals/couples, South African families/communities at large, as well as professionals who typically intervene in marital relationships.

The individuals/couples considering marriage, adhering to the dual-cultural worldviews, will learn about elements that are important for the development of a healthy, satisfactory marriage before commitment, and thus combat divorce. Similarly, couples adhering to the dual-cultural worldviews will have an understanding of the intrapersonal-and-interpersonal processes that contribute to a healthy, satisfactory marriage that can last.

Families and communities, as well as the professionals, could gain insight of the challenges and intrapersonal-and-interpersonal processes the individual, and the couple, face in such a dual-cultural society, and adjust their interventions accordingly so as to contribute to healthy, satisfactory marriages meaningfully.

From this study, culturally-appropriate interventions could be generated as the developmental stages of South African marriages, as well as the intrapersonal and interpersonal processes in South African marriages could be identified. Furthermore, future researchers may be able to then



focus on the different stakeholders' experiences and processes more in-depth to add more knowledge on what contributes to healthy, satisfactory long-term relationships in a dual-cultural context, and test the developed frameworks or interventions accordingly. This could help develop a model or framework that includes progressive stages in the relationship and clear intrapersonal processes the individual goes through from the conception of the marriage.

Thus, as a participant, you would be contributing to this process.

### **ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?**

The study is of low risk in providing negative consequences as it explores individuals' lived experiences, which could be uncomfortable or unpleasant for some participants. Realistically, the study might evoke some discomfort or negative memories of the participants. Should this happen, an arrangement has been made with a registered and experienced clinical psychologist to debrief the participants.

### **WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?**

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one, apart from the researcher and identified members of the research team, will know about your involvement in this research. Accordingly, your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give, as a pseudonym will be given to you to protect your identity. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research reporting methods such as conference proceedings.

During the data transcription process, a professional transcriber might be hired to transcribe the information obtained through audio-recording. Should this be the case, the individual ought to sign a confidentiality, or non-disclosure, agreement in protecting your identity by preventing him. Therefore, your answers may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including the transcriber, external coder, and members of the Research Ethics Review Committee. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.



The anonymous data obtained from the study may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles, and/or conference proceedings. However, all participants will not be identifiable in such reports or presentations. Please keep in mind that it is sometimes impossible to make an absolute guarantee of confidentiality or anonymity, e.g. when focus groups are used as a data collection method. A focus group involves a number of individuals, typically between six to twelve, being interviewed simultaneously, in a controlled environment. In this study, it will be mainly to explore how participants' backgrounds and cultures might have contributed to their experiences in their marriages.

While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in the focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in the focus group.

#### **HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?**

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet in a safe, private study room for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password-protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. If and when necessary to destroy the information obtained from the study, the hard copies will be shredded, while the electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme.

#### **WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

There are no monetary incentives to be received by the participants, except for a copy of the completed thesis in showing appreciation for the participation.

#### **HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL**

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Psychology, UNISA. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.



## **HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?**

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Thato Nchoe-Giliana at [thatolng@revelationsquestpsychology.com](mailto:thatolng@revelationsquestpsychology.com). The findings are accessible for 5 years.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact [thatolng@revelationsquestpsychology.com](mailto:thatolng@revelationsquestpsychology.com).

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Dr. Cily Tabane at [tabane@unisa.ac.za](mailto:tabane@unisa.ac.za).

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



Thato Nchoe-Giliana



## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname..... (please print)

Participant Signature..... Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname..... (please print)

Researcher's signature..... Date.....

