

# COUNSELLING SUPERVISION

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**LECTURE II**

**DR. JANE NGURE**

**AFRICA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY**

# LECTURE 11: RESEARCH ISSUES IN COUNSELLING SUPERVISION

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## **Topic contents:**

- What is research?
- Steps in research process.
- Introduction.
- Literature review.
- Research methodology.

# INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

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By the end of the lecture you will be able to;

- Define the term research?
- Discuss the steps in research process.
- Apply research methodology to counselling supervision.

# WHAT IS RESEARCH?

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- Cooper and Schindler (2006) research is a systematic inquiring that provides information to guide managerial decisions.
- “**Research**” means a systematic investigation, experimentation, testing, exploration, analysis, fact-finding, examination, scrutiny, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge, for decision making, policy-development and practice.

# RESEARCH

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- Research methods comprise a systematic process of inquiry applied in such a manner as to learn something about our social world (Saylor Academy, 2012).
- It is important to understand that research itself is a process that is defined by the approach taken to it in the first place.
- It research uncovers aspect of how the world is, reflecting on how, where, and when we have asked the questions.

# AIMS OF RESEARCH

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- To gain familiarity with a phenomenon (exploratory research studies).
- To portray the characteristics of a particular individual, descriptive research studies).
- To determine the frequency with which something occurs (diagnostic research studies).
- To test a hypothesis of a casual relationship between variables (hypothesis-testing research studies).

# GOALS OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHODS

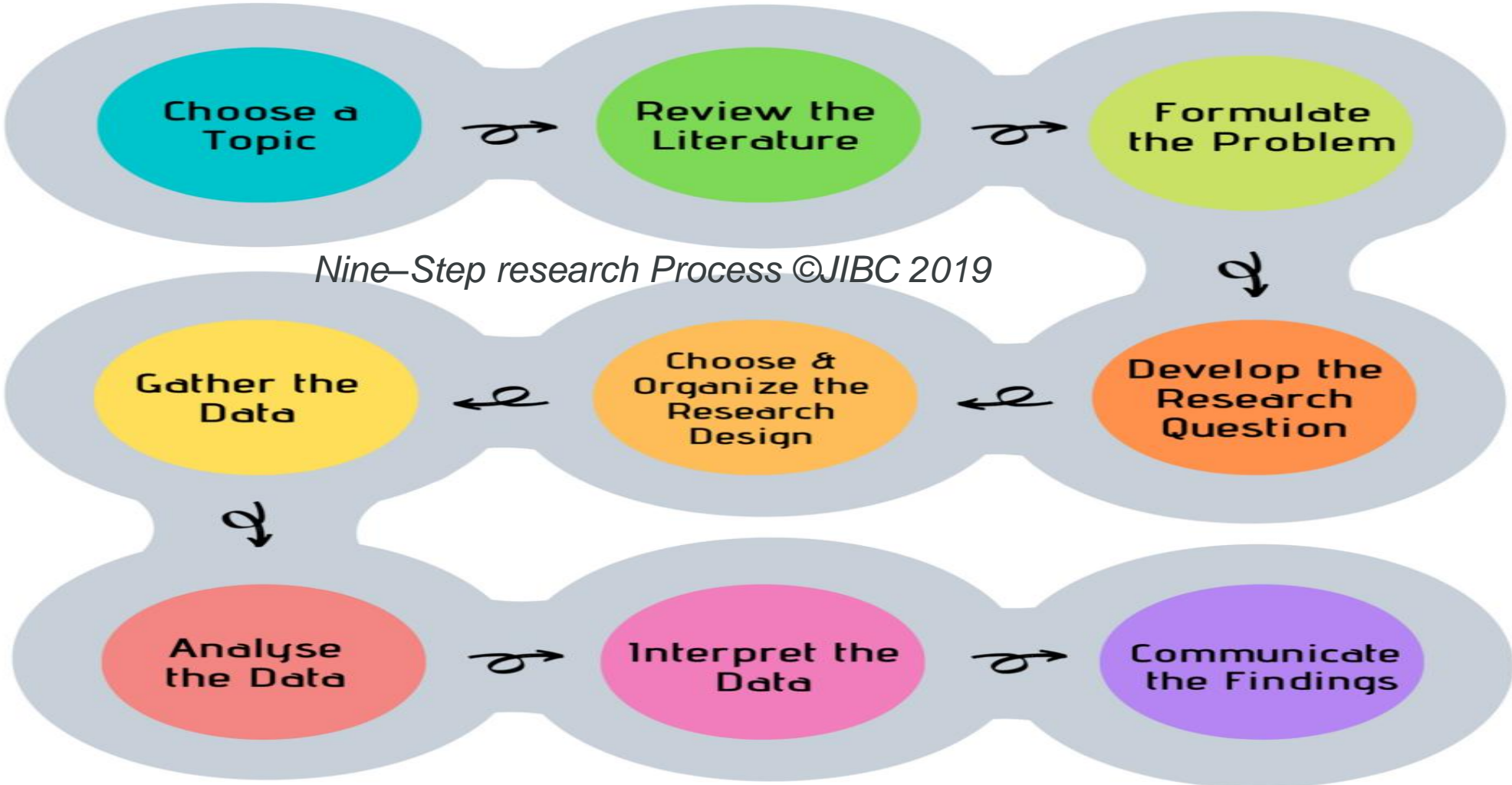
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- To discover new knowledge.
- To describe the phenomenon being investigated, give a detailed account.
- Explain; show causes and effects.
- To enable prediction.
- Improve or develop intervention as necessary.
- Research is the basis for decision making.

# STEPS IN RESEARCH PROCESS

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- Identify research topic.
- Develop a research question.
- State the research problem.
- Collecting data.
- Examining the results and drawing conclusions.
- Reporting the results.



*Nine-Step research Process ©JIBC 2019*

# IDENTIFY RESEARCH TOPIC

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- Is there personal interest in the topic in order to sustain attention?
- Is the topic researchable, given time, resources, and availability of data?
- Will the results of the study be of interest to others?
- Is the topic likely to be publishable in a scholarly journal?
- Does the study fill a void, replicate, extend or develop new ideas in the scholarly literature?
- Will the topic contribute to your career goals?

# RESEARCH TOPIC

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- Be concise and stimulate readers' interest.
- Should define the what, who, where
- 12-20 words but not more than 30 words
- Break with : if too long
- If a quantitative study, include the independent and dependent variables.
- Ensure that the title blends well with the research design.

# INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

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- A concise, engaging, and well-written introduction will start your readers off thinking highly of your analytical skills, your writing style, and your research approach.
- Background information identifies and describes the history and nature of a well-defined research problem with reference to the existing literature.

# INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

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- Background information in your introduction should indicate:
  - The root of the problem being studied.
  - Its scope.
  - The extent to which previous studies have successfully investigated the problem.
  - Noting where gaps exist that your study attempts to address.

# INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

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- Provides readers with the background information for the research.
- Meant to establish a framework for the research.
- Should create reader interest in the topic.
- Lays a broad foundation for the problem.
- Provide global, regional and local statistics of the issue at hand.

# RESEARCH GAP

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- A research gap is defined as a topic or area for which missing or insufficient information limits the ability to reach a conclusion for a question.
- A research need is defined as a gap that limits the ability of decision-makers from making decisions.

# RESEARCH GAP

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- Literature review is the standard for evaluating the current state of scientific knowledge regarding a specific issue or research question.
- Identification of research gap enables the researcher to ascertain the research problem and scope of the study which in turn is the key to success in a research project.

# HOW TO IDENTIFY A RESEARCH GAP

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- Is there a different perspective that I can consider?
- What other factors could have influenced the results?
- Are the methods or procedures used outdated or no longer considered valid in your field? Is there scope for you to test the findings using more a current approach?

# HOW TO IDENTIFY A RESEARCH GAP

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- Focus on the introduction section where the authors explain the importance of their research topic and the gaps they have identified.
- Look at the directions or suggestions for further research that the authors have given.

# RESEARCH QUESTION

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- A research question is a clear, focused, concise, complex and arguable question around which you center your research
- **Research question** is a question that can be answered directly through the analysis of data.
- It should be measurable (quantifiable/testable), well-defined (no ambiguous language), useful in decision-making and encompass the full scope of the problem.

# RESEARCH QUESTION

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The investigator must make sure that:

- The question is clear and specific.
- It reflects the objectives of the study.
- It has no answer by common sense.
- Finding an answer to the question will solve problem.

# RESEARCH PROBLEM

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- A **research problem** is a statement about an area of concern, a condition to be improved, a difficulty to be eliminated, or a troubling **question** that exists in scholarly literature, in theory, or in practice that points to the need for meaningful understanding and deliberate investigation.

# STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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- What is the issue or the problem?
- What is the magnitude of the problem or the issue?
- What will go wrong if it is not resolved?
- Where is the evidence that the problem exists? – journal articles, reports.
- what is the research gap/knowledge gap? How will your research help to fill this gap?

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

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- The research objectives should be:
  - Closely related to the research question.
  - Covering all aspects of the problem.
  - Very specific.
  - Ordered in a logical sequence.

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

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- Stated in action verbs that could be evaluated e.g. to describe, to identify, to measure, to compare, etc.
- Achievable, taking into consideration the available resources and time.
- Mutually exclusive, with no repetitions or overlaps.

# SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

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- What is the importance of the study?
- Identify key stakeholders such as government, practitioners, policy makers, community and scholars and say how the study will benefit each of them?
- What will be improved or changed as a result of the study?
- What are the ways that the study will add to the scholarly literature in the field?
- How does the study improve practice?
- How might the study improve policy?

# SCOPE OF THE STUDY

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- Delimits the study.
- Exclusion and inclusion criteria captured with reasons.
- Length of study, geographical boundaries defined.
- Focus is clarified.

# LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

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- The limitations of the study are those characteristics of design or methodology that impacted or influenced the application or interpretation of the results of your study.
- They are the constraints on generalizability and utility of findings that are the result of the ways in which you chose to design the study or the method used to establish internal and external validity.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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- A literature review is a survey of everything that has been written about a particular topic, theory, or research question.
- The word “literature” means “sources of information”.
- The literature will inform you about the research that has already been conducted on your chosen subject.

# LITERATURE REVIEW 5CS

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- **Cite:** keep the primary focus on the literature pertinent to your research problem.
- **Compare** the various arguments, theories, methodologies, and findings expressed in the literature.
- **Contrast** the various arguments, themes, methodologies and controversies expressed in the literature: what are the major areas of controversy, or debate?

# LITERATURE REVIEW

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- **Critique** the literature: Which arguments are more persuasive, and why? Which approaches, findings, methodologies seem most reliable, valid, or appropriate, and why?
- **Connect** the literature to your own area of research and investigation; how does your own work draw upon, depart from, or synthesize what has been said in the literature? (Callahan, 2014).

# COMMON MISTAKES

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- Failure to be concise; being "all over the map" without a clear sense of purpose.
- Failure to cite landmark works in your literature review.
- Failure to develop a coherent and persuasive argument for the proposed research.
- Failure to stay focused on the research question; going off on unrelated tangents.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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- A research method “refers to the strategy, plan and activities undertaken to accomplish the research”
- **Introduce the overall methodological approach for investigating your research problem.** Is your study qualitative or quantitative or a combination of both (mixed method)? Are you going to take a special approach, such as action research, or a more neutral stance?

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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- **Indicate how the approach fits the overall research design.** Your methods should have a clear connection with your research problem. In other words, make sure that your methods will actually address the problem.
- **Describe the population, sample size, sampling techniques justifying the selection and appropriateness.**

# RESEARCH METHODS

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- **Describe the specific methods of data collection you are going to use**, such as, surveys, interviews, questionnaires, observation.
- **Explain how you intend to analyze your results.** Will you use statistical analysis? Will you use specific theoretical perspectives to help you analyze a text? Which statistics will you use and for what?

# RESEARCH METHOD

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- E.g. Student t test for comparing means, correlation for testing associations, multiple regression for making predictions etc. For qualitative data, themes and key words and phrases.
- **Provide background and rationale for methodologies that are unfamiliar for your readers.** Very often in the social sciences, research problems and the methods for investigating them require more explanation/rationale.

# RESEARCH METHODS

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- **Provide a rationale for subject selection.** For instance, if you propose to conduct interviews, how do you intend to select the sample population?
- **Address potential limitations.** Are there any practical limitations that could affect your data collection? How will you attempt to control for potential confounding variables and errors?

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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- The research design refers to the overall strategy that you choose to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data.
- Your research problem determines the type of design you can use.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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- The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables you to effectively address the research problem as unambiguously as possible.

# RESEARCH DESIGN: GOOD ONE SHOULD HELP:

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- Identify the research problem clearly and justify its selection.
- Review previously published literature associated with the problem area,
- Clearly and explicitly specify hypotheses [i.e., research questions] central to the problem selected

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- Effectively describe the data which will be necessary for an adequate test of the hypotheses and explain how such data will be obtained.
  - Describe the methods of analysis which will be applied to the data in determining whether or not the hypotheses will be accepted or rejected.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS HIGHLIGHTS

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Exploratory Design: An exploratory design is conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to.

- Usually flexible on sample size, geographical coverage etc.
  - Useful in determining feasibility of a study.
  - For formulation of new research questions.
  - Limited value in decision making.
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# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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## Descriptive Design:

- Help provide answers to the questions of who, what, when, where, and how associated with a particular research problem.
- Used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena.
- Sample size must be appropriate.
- Useful for decision making.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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## Causal Design:

- This type of research is used to measure what impact a specific change will have on existing norms and assumptions.
- Variation in one phenomenon, an independent variable, leads to or results, in variation in another phenomenon, the dependent variable.
- A valid conclusion is based on finding an association between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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## Experimental Design:

- The classic experimental design specifies an experimental group and a control group.
- The independent variable is administered to the experimental group and not to the control group, and both groups are measured on the same dependent variable.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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## Case Study:

- In-depth study of a particular research problem rather than a sweeping statistical survey.
- The case can be an individual, company, NGO etc.
- Useful design when not much is known about a phenomenon.
- Design can provide detailed descriptions of specific and rare cases.

# RESEARCH DESIGNS

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## Action Research:

- Design focuses on pragmatic and solution-driven research rather than testing theories.
- Intervention is carried out (the action) during which time, pertinent observations are collected in various forms.
- The new interventional strategies are carried out and the cyclic process is repeated till a solution is achieved.

# COUNSELLING SUPERVISION RESEARCH

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- Falender CA, Shafranske EP. Supervision essentials for the practice of competency-based supervision. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; 2017.
- Goodyear RK, Lichtenberg J, Hutman H, Overland E, Bedi R, Christiani K, et al. A global portrait of counselling psychologists' characteristics, perspectives, and professional behaviors. *Couns Psychol Q*. 2016;29(2):115–38.

# COUNSELLING SUPERVISION

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- Kühne, F., Maas, J., Wiesenthal, S. *et al.* Empirical research in clinical supervision: a systematic review and suggestions for future studies. *BMC Psychol* **7**, 54 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-019-0327-7>.
- Reviewed the current status of supervision interventions (e.g., setting, session frequency, therapeutic background). Second to provide suggestions for future supervision research.

# SUMMARY

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- In this lecture we have defined the term research, explored the aims and purpose of research.
- We have discussed the steps in research process.
- We have identified the various research methods.

# REFERENCE

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- Babbie, E. (2010). The practice of social research (12th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Choo, Garro, Ranney, Meisel, and Guthrie (2015): Qualitative Research in Emergency Care Part I: Research Principles and Common Applications by <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4545270/>

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- Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions (2018), published by the British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP), UK
- Hawkins, P., & Shoet, R. (2000). Supervision in the Helping Professions. (2nd Ed). Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Kothari, C. (2019). Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. 4th Edition, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.

# NEXT LECTURE

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Counselling supervision and technology.