AFRICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, THE FIVE FACTOR MODEL, AND PARENTAL BONDING: PREDICTION OF ALCOHOL USE

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

MPUMELELO MARCEL MHLONGO

SUPERVISOR
S. MASHEGOANE

CO-SUPERVISOR
DR. S. MORIPE

DISCIPLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO (TURFLOOP CAMPUS)
DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree of Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology, has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signed at the ______________________ On the ______________________

________________________________________
M.M Mhlongo
This project is dedicated to my late father, Joseph Mhlongo. I wish you were here to witness how your son is prospering. Rest in peace Njomane!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following people who made this study possible:

- Firstly I would like to thank God for making everything possible for me. For giving me strength and wisdom to finish this project. Without Him I wouldn’t have reached to this professional level.

- Mr. S Mashegoane, my supervisor for the continued support, guidance and positive attitude. Through him I gained professional sense of independence, growth and patience. God bless him!

- Dr. S Moripe, my co-supervisor for support and encouragement. Thank you so much!

- National Research Fund (NRF) for financial assistance in times of need and desperation. Thanks a million!

- Ms. Thema Lucia Sambo, my aunt for being there for me since day one. It is her inner strength, love, support, guidance, morality and wisdom that made everything possible for me. She is the best thing that ever happened to me and an angel in disguise. May God bless her with more days and make everything her heart desires possible. She is the greatest!

- Ms Grace Nkosi (my mother) and Grace Sambo (my late grandmother) for installing happy memories of my childhood. You both mother me.

- Mandulo Abel Mhlongo (my late father) through his achievements he gave me sense that success is possible hence; he gave me that name (Mpumelelo). May his soul rest in peace.
• My friend Mothasi Sithole. *Rest in peace and I miss you.*

• Lwazi Wisdom Bhiya my best friend for his motivation, support and helping me with my data. We have been through a lot together and his contribution to this project is appreciated. *He was destined to be my friend.*

• Sindiswa Jilaji my dear friend, her presence in my life makes a difference. She contributed in my personal growth in many ways. I wish her, more success in all possible ways!

• Julia Matlala, my twin soul, for her unconditional love and support that kept me going when I was losing hope. Her presence always recharged me both emotionally and physically. She is heaven sent and may her life be filled with more success, peace, joy, love, health, and wisdom.

• This short list of acknowledgements cannot be ended without mentioning the people who kept me going in every possible way, like Wonder Nkosi (my friend), Bongani Malandule [who helped me find a way to this profession], Themba [for support and helping with my data]. To my family: Rejoice, Dorcus, Sonto, Thembi, Lindiwe, Nhlanhla, Delisiwe (my sisters), Sydwell [for encouragement], Disco, Yingisa [for giving me strength], Bheki, Sipho, (my brothers), N.I, Leah, Thoko, Sphiwe, and Isabel (my aunts). Evans Mhlanga for being a role model to me in this profession and being there for me in times of desperation. To all mentioned above your presents means a lot to me. *Thank you very much!*

• Last, but not least, to all the individuals who contributed to make this project possible and whose identity might have not been included. *Thank you!*
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title page</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction                        | 1    |
1.2 Statement of the problem            | 3    |
1.3 Background of the study             | 3    |
1.4 Aim of the study                    | 4    |
1.5 Motivation of the study             | 5    |
1.6 Need for the study                  | 5    |
1.7 Area of the study                   | 5    |
1.8 Objectives of the study             | 6    |
1.9 Definition of concepts              | 6    |
1.10 Chapter outlay                     | 7    |

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Five Factor Model (FFM)         | 8    |
2.1.1 Historical background of the FFM | 8    |
2.2 Students and alcohol use            | 12   |
2.3 Personality and alcohol use         | 19   |
2.4 Global personality traits and alcohol use | 20 |
2.4.1 Neuroticism                       | 21   |
2.4.2 Extraversion                      | 23   |
2.4.3 Openness to Experience            | 24   |
2.4.4 Agreeableness                     | 25   |
2.4.5 Conscientiousness                 | 25   |
2.4.6 Summary                           | 27   |
2.5 Parenting and other risk behaviours in relation to alcohol use | 27 |
2.6 Hypotheses                          | 34   |

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design                     | 35   |
3.2 Description of the population       | 35   |
3.3 Sampling method                     | 36   |
3.4 Instruments                         | 36   |
3.4.1 NEO PI-R                           | 36   |
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Plan for analyzing the data 43
4.2 Classification of the participants according to their rates of alcohol use 43
4.3 The FFM aspects of personality in relation to alcohol use 44
4.4 Prevalence of risky drinking by parental attachment 47
4.5 Prevalence of risky drinking by risk behaviour 48

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction 50
5.2 Description of the sample 50
5.3 Risky drinking by personality domains and facets 51
5.4 Prevalence of risky drinking by parental attachment 56

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Conclusion 58
6.2 Limitations of the study 58
6.3 Implications of the results 59
6.4 Recommendations 60

REFERENCES 61

APPENDICES

Appendix 1-6: Questionnaire 85
Appendix 7: Prevalence of drinking by risky behaviour 88
Appendix 8: Drinking group type by personality 89
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Demographic information of the participants</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Classification of the participants according to their rates of alcohol use</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Drinking group type by personality domains and facets</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Drinking group type by parental attachment</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Drinking group type by risky behaviour</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Prevalence of drinking with risky behaviour</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Drinking group type by personality domains and facets (full table)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

There is a considerable literature linking aspects of personality, parenting, and risk behaviors such as alcohol abuse. Three hundred African university students participated in a study of the relationship between personality, assessed with the NEO PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992), and alcohol use. Personality traits did not predict alcohol use among the students. It was also predicted that the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI; Parker, Tupling, & Brown, 1979) would mediate the relationship between personality and alcohol use. Results of the current study revealed no significant relationship between parenting and alcohol use. The results are discussed with regards the use of the NEO PI-R’s validity in the population used.

*Keyword:* Five Factor Model; Parental bonding; Abstainers; Moderate drinkers; Heavy drinkers.