Interview 3: 60 minutes

Rapport building discussion held at the start of the interview. Consent obtained to start the audio recording.

Interviewer: I  
Participant: P

**I**: There we go. If you do at some point, sound like the computer's about to take off my computer is very breathy sometimes, it does make noises. Okay, so then there's just some basic demographic information that I need to get first because I do, I did try and get a demographically diverse sample with a limited scope. Because I'm only doing a mini dissertation. It's not a full dissertation. So I tried to get a demographically diverse sample but I never assume anyone's gender anymore or anyone's race or anything like that. What gender do you identify as?

**P**: Female

**I**: okay and your race?

**P**: Um, tricky one, but let's just go with Indian

**I**: And your language group

**P**: English

**I**: And if you don't mind sharing your age

**P**: I'm 31

**I**: How many years have you been registered now?

**P**: well as a registered counsellor, seven as an educational psychologists just over a year.

**I**: Okay, and then just your current setting of employment.

**P**: Okay, so at the moment, I am the selection manager at (foundation name) involved in the (name of fellowship) and basically, I oversee the psychometrics and the selection design for our selection process.

**I**: Okay.

**P**: And then I am in private practice, so I practice in Randburg.

**I**: Perfect. Um, okay, those are just the demographic information. So, the interview was originally structured to be a focus group. But I mean, I had a hard time finding three participants, never mind, eight. So, and just the scope of the mini dissertation, my supervisor and I, later decided that eight, eight is too many. Also, it's extensive. So, a lot of people don't have it, or don't really use it. So, there's only eight questions. I don't think it will take… didn't… sometimes it take a full hour, sometimes not. And a lot of the questions are very similar, but they're just open-ended questions that allow for, you know, discussion about the WISC. So the first question is, how frequently do you utilise the WISC in your practice?

**P**: I've used the WISC quite frequently if we if we considering my internship here as well. Because my supervisor had the WISC, and she gave me access to it. So, I needed to do any assessments or accommodations or whatever, the WISC was the first tool I used because it fitted the demographic as well, because in private school

CO3 demographics

**I**: Okay and you said the demographic was a private school. In which area if you don't mind? Also Ranburg?

**P**: No, it was in Sandton at (schools name) in Sandton.

**I**: Okay, um, you are the internships have become quite a hassle. At this point, they… places aren’t hiring post COVID. They don't want to hire us and if they do it for free, we need to work for free.

**P**: Yeah, just keep in touch with me and if I can help you at some point, just, just send me a message if I can, I will.

**I**: Okay, thank you! Um, and now currently in private practice, do you use the WISC a lot.

**P**: So, my private practice is quite slow, because my days are limited as to how much I can use it in private practice. I have used it in private practice. Not a lot, but I am okay.

**I:** And in in your, you know, as your role as manager in the selection process. Do you administer any of the psychometric media or do you just oversee the process?

**P**: No. So, I don't administer any psychometric media we have a psychometrist that we consult to externally who does the psychometrics but I obviously am getting trained in all of them so that I can oversee all of them.

**I**: Okay. So we… also you will find a lot of the questions flow into one another. So often we've answered one as we go along. It just says here, so is there a specific reason… Have you used the SSAIS and the JSAIS as well?

**P**: Yes.

**I**: Do you have a specific preference for one of them?

**P**: I don't, I think it depends on the child I'm assessing, and where they from and factors around that.

CO 4 clinical judgement on use based on CO3

**I**: Okay. Yeah, because one of my participants prefers the SSAIS, because he works with a lot of children from the townships, whereas my other participants, also in private practice in the northern suburbs of Joburg, so there, the WISC is far more relevant.

**P**: So do you want me to expand on that? Do you want to go to the next question?

**I**: No, you can expand on that, please.

**P**: So with regards to that, in terms of affordability, I find that…the WISC is expensive. So even with you are in private practice, you have to rent it right. And then if you're doing a pro bono case, or something like that, for a student in the township, you're going to do the SSAIS because of affordability. But if the parent can afford it from the township or from a public school, that's not too great, you find that you don't want to give the child a test, who's normed so high, and you always want to give the it's always in the best interest of the child. Okay? Right, that's what we do? So, I obviously first look at the results and compare that to where their class is doing or how the school is doing, and then decide from the whether or not the SSAIS will be administered,or should be administered. So the SSAIS of course, shouldn't be administered.

CO1.2 cost of test

CO1.2 renting

CO1.1 cost of services

CO 4 clinical judgement

**I**: Okay. Yeah, my research partner is doing SSAIS and I'm doing WISC. And it's quite interesting how they, they play off each other, you know, the SSAIS has its disadvantages in terms of it being very outdated. In terms of the I mean, a lot of the things when you were practicing, I was like, I don't even know this, it's not something within my frame of reference at all anymore. And, you know, I've been very exposed, whereas learners who haven't been exposed at all, to some of the things in the SSAIS, it would be really very difficult for them to complete.

**P**: Yeah.

**I**: Yeah. So then, the next question is, What are the demographics in terms of race and language that you typically see with children, either in your practice or previously in your internship? The demographics.

**P**: Very mixed, I would say really mixed, but at the top would be white. I have to go quite informally, but according to how my memory serves me, it was definitely more white, Indian, black and coloured would be the least.

**I**: Okay. And it would be…would most of them come from the more affluent schools was all within that school? Correct?

**P**: Yes. It was the more affluent, and obviously, that demographic suits the demographic of the school because that was the demographic of the school it was more why…Yeah, what I explained.

CO3 demographics

**I**: All right, and then obviously, that plays well into the choice of using the WISC versus the SSAIS

**P**: Yes.

**I**: Okay. Um, so then it says, what are some of the experiences you have had administering the WISC, you know, positive or negative experiences you have had with it?

**P**: Sure. So, I think, because I've done the WISC-IV and the WISC-V and I think that in one of the questions, it says, pennies and pence, and obviously, if you are not from England, and these are kids, that kids that have administered it to our children who are exposed to travel, and not all of them would know what a penny is so contextually, I don't think it's relevant in the questioning, or you know, the items that are specifically used. That's the first one of my first experiences. The second experience, I think, is that if I had administered the test to it, sorry, if I administered the SSAIS to the student, a lot of the kids would have come out as gifted, you know, you know, in terms of comparison of the SSAIS and the WISC. So it's definitely that norm that, you know, is questionable as to whether or not it makes sense.

CO10 reliability

CO3.2 language

CO3.4 exposure

**I**: Yes.

**P**: Yeah. So I think those are the two big issues for me.

**I**: Okay. With some of the things that, so then the next two questions kind of follow on that. It's the advantages and the disadvantages of the WISC and some of the things that have come up. And I don't know if you experienced it like this, is one of my participants said that… So obviously, the WISC, it's quite a few things that you need to have in rotation the whole time is the stimulus book and the blocks, two stimulus books and a response booklet. He's also quite new in educational psychology, and he says that very often, if a child is already experiencing anxiety related to assessments and schoolwork, that that amount of stuff often disorientates the child, and they also get anxious. And he says, he often also gets quite, you know, fumbly when the kids get anxious, and he needs to start moving things around. So I don't know if that's maybe been an experience for you.

**P**: Um, I don't want to reflect that because that wasn't my experience, in a sense that personally, if you are well trained by the WISC, or or you have good enough training, then you know how to administer the WISC. But I can understand that because there was an instance where after a while, I administered it, and you kind of like, you glitchy you know, you like what, what, what was what were you what? You know? But I do think I found my rhythm quickly. So the anxiety could have been his anxiety making the child anxious. But for me, I haven't felt that way. I feel like the WISC, if it is used correctly, is actually quite comforting because it provides the client with an object or picture or you know, something to bring the focus point to the here and now. But I have been, I'll be lying to you, I have been very conscious of the students seeing so many things laid out. Because I, I have thought about the fact that that could make a student anxious, seeing such thick books and those things. The blocks for me, actually, the kids, most kids enjoy the blocks. You know, they look forward to those blocks. I think it's a break from counting in the you know, those traditional kinds of school things you do for learning.

CO7.2 engaging

CO7.1&2 Pictures, engaging

CO6 Anxiety

CO4 clinical judgement

**I**: Yes. Something else that also just came up was children with ADHD, or not necessarily even diagnosed ADHD but just very fidgety, quite busy. How do you find administration with children like that?

**P**: Yeah, sure. So that's a good question. With children like that, you do find that you know, they get quite… they get quite unsettled and so what I would do is be very, very clear on breaks like small breaks between every subtest, you know, checking in with a child, are you okay? Do you need water? Do you want to go pick that up? Let's do 10 jumps, you know, something between them to make sure that the child is feeling a little bit settled. I think the issue with me for the WISC is the affordability that I need to bring that in again, it is so expensive. And so obviously I do not have the WISC bought for myself. So in my practice I still rent it and if I need to use the five then I pay for it but if I need to use a four there is a psychologist who has been kind enough to be like, you can just use it, you know? And so it's crazy, because you need to, you know, nobody wants to go into debt.

CO1.2 cost of test

CO4 clinical judgment

**I**: Take out a second mortgage for your assessments (laughs)

**P**: Exactly! But yeah, I think it's just bleh..

**I**: Yes, it is very expensive because for my research, I emailed Pearson directly, and I was like, you know, I just want pricing. At that stage, I hadn't actually started administering it. So, I didn't really know what all it entailed and what I'd need and whatever. And the full package was R56,000. And I was like, how do people how do we pay for this? Like, we're walking straight into an internship and then straight into wherever and then we don't, we don't have that type of money.

**P**: Just a bit of context (school name) being such an affluent school, our particular one and hopefully don't use the name in research that they, they didn't buy it, they were like, no ways, we are not going to buy that assessment. It's too expensive. So if it is a tool that is necessity for a school like a public school. How must that be done? There is already lack of funding, lack of resources, because with such an expensive assessment, you'll also find that there isn't a lock up cupboard or a room that you know, a psychologist doesn't have to share with somebody else?

CO1.2 cost of test

**I**: Yes, yeah. And we so we obviously are looking for internship sites now and we've come into contact with (institution name) and they currently also they only bought two tests, I'm assuming it would probably be WISC and WIAT because it's IEB so it would make sense to have WISC that all the Western Cape and Gauteng schools have to share. There's only one and they need to share. so, it's quite hectic and previously indeed a previously they had to rent it and I'm not sure if it was out of the psychology you know, the interns pocket or if it was out of you know, for school paid for it, but it's still I mean, I don't know if Who do you rent from?

**P**: I currently rent from another psychologist

**I**: Okay. Because I think other ones called Mind music. I think that's one of them. And I normally charge 590 Rand.

**P**: Yeah, yeah. It's and whenever you call mind music, it's never available. Just so you know. It's always rented out. So yeah,

CO2 availability

**I**: yeah, he said he's been on a four week waiting list before…I think we froze I think it's my internet connection. I've been having some hassles. Can you still hear me?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_disconnected\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Participant reminded to start recording

**I**: Thank you for reminding me! Yeah, so we were just talking about, you know, mind music never having the test available and renting it from others. So is that something that happens quite often within our field is that we rent from other psychologists.

**P**: Um, I don't know, I just come from class, a Master's class, that was quite supportive and network-y. And, you know, I don't know if it operates, I'd be lying to you if it works like that in the broader society of psychologists. But what I can tell you is that we, whoever we know, like, oh, has it you like this person has it? Maybe you can rent it from them and tell them I, I recommended you. So that's kind of how it's done. I think it's also a nice way for psychologists to cover costs for the purchase of it. Yeah. Oh, while I remember the other issue with WISC is that IEB clearly stipulates that it wants the WISC. And I'm sure you heard that from everyone. This will strengthen your data is that the IEB specifically says it wants the WISC and it wants the WISC-V! Not the WIS-IV.

CO5.1 IEB wants WISC v

**I**: Oh, really?

**P**: Yes, if I maybe I'm mistaken, but I'm almost sure that it needs to WISC-V. I remember a student, his name was CJ (pseudonym) and he needed it to go into remedial school, I needed to find the WISC for him to go into the remedial school. And I remember thinking but what because he wasn't part of (schools name). So because of COVID. I was allowed to get it. Remember, I did my internship during COVID. So we didn't have access to people. Right. And so getting assessment done was very difficult process. So I was allowed to then contract through my supervisor who could give us some, some people to assess. Anyway, CJ needed to go to remedial school. And he was just from a regular sorry, let me just catch my thought, public school. And so he needed the WISC and his parents couldn't afford it. So obviously, as a student, I definitely couldn't afford it. So, my supervisor there was like, no, you know, what you administer and provide the assessments, pro bono. So now imagine the desperation of a parent whose child desperately needs to go into a remedial school and they were currently just in a placement school. You know, and they were considering to be keeping his normal school because now, you know, he was getting bullied now, because people started noticing that he wasn't coping and stuff. So the emotional distress or that for the parents just because of an expensive test. It's unfair.

CO9 COVID

CO1.1&2 cost of service and cost of test

**I**: It is unfair. So my research focuses quite a bit on how, unfortunately, a lot of the time race is synonymous with a certain socio-economic status, and how that socioeconomic status plays into interpretations of intelligence, availability of resources, educational levels, and it is the greater demographic of our country needs these assessments, but they can't afford to have them done. And it's quite sad that that's the case.

**P**: Yeah, so this little boy was white, and he was Afrikaans. So …but I completely hear what you're saying and how. Yeah. I wonder if you've spoken to anyone who speaks African languages about the interpretation of the words

**I**: My first participant was an African man. And I chatted to him about it and you just he spoke about you know, he does so… He doesn't often get IEB schools anyway. So he does more commonly administer the SSAIS. And he uses the WAIS-III with his university students. Because it's standardized to our sample, he said, but he has to, like take a lot of time considering language, when he chooses the assessments he needs to do just because he's even, he's had clients where he has done the research their home language, English, you know, they come from a fairly, you know, previously Model C school, etc. And he says, and they still sometimes struggle with the WISC, that ethically he just felt it wasn't fair to administer it any further, he discontinued and switched over to the SSAIS, because it was disadvantaging the child. So, and all of my participants now up till now have said that language is a very big issue with the WISC as well. Not necessarily even just, you know, specific terms, but the way things are said the way they are phrased, is sometimes quite difficult for the South African demographic to understand. It's, it's quite interesting, because when I started this research, I hadn't had experience with the WISC. And obviously, all the research on the WISC-V, you need to pay for still because it's still new, it's not old news. So, you know, didn't have much, I didn't know much. And I was like, oh, yeah, I won't be relevant, because it's normed elsewhere. But when you start working with it, you're like, Okay, I can see the value in this. But also, I've never worked with a real child. So, I can't see how it how it interprets or how it plays out in the actual clinical environment.

**P**: Yeah, so the WISC is an absolutely amazing tool let’s not take away from that, you know, it is a brilliant tool, and most psychologists who have access to it, I know in the North use it. And so it is being used for a very clear reason not only because it is stipulated by the IEB, that you need to use it, but people trust it, more than they trust the SSAIS, because the SSAIS is sorely outdated. Yes. And, yeah, we speak about relevance, as much as I think the WISC is probably more relevant, and contextually than the SSAIS. So as much as the a few gaps for South Africa, with using the WISC, there's a lot of benefit to it, because it works very well with the WIAT. Those two tests basically give you a full scholastic view, you know, apart from emotional and you know, others a few things that you need to be assessed for. So, you know, it is it is worth it. And if we think about, you know, the costing of by the psychologist charges for an assessment, like we cant sit here complaining,

CO7 positive

**I**: Yes, for sure. And just on that, because we were talking about it in one of my other interviews, and we also are like, how do we charge our clients? Like, how do we know what we charge them? And again, I think it's dependent on the tests you use, how, you know, if you've bought in, you need to pay back the mortgage on your house, because you had to, you know, it all depends on that and whether you're sharing the cost of someone and so it's, it's a lot to consider, you know, and we didn't really know that we were walking into, you know, potentially having to buy a lot of assessments.

**P**: So, what that's to the costing we use, we have guidelines from the different medical aids, psychologists use that to charge

CO1 cost of services

**I**: Okay, um, you say that you sometimes use the WISC-IV and sometimes the WISC-V between those two is there a preference for either one?

**P**: Um, I think the five obviously, just because it is newer and I am trained in that quite recently, so I'm better versed with that one. The WISC-IV I got training informally from an ed psych, not by someone who is I don't even know if you get certified people but you know, when we when we were in Varsity, we got to train properly for the WISC five. Yeah, so I think that's the only Yeah.

CO7 updated

**I**: Okay. All right. And norms wise you feel it's very similar.

**P**: I'd be lying to you. I haven't like in terms of the questions they've asked, yes. But in terms of looking at the bell curve and the norms and the numbers, I haven't actually looked at that. So I don't want to comment on that.

**I**: Okay. Let me just write that, because then I can do some research on that. Yeah, so that I think that speaks to the advantages and the disadvantages that, you know, we've now highlighted. So, it just says here, bearing these advantages and disadvantages in mind, to what extent do you feel that it's appropriate for the South African context?

**P**: I think it is appropriate. For the context that I've been exposed to it is. I've been able to complete the assessment on all the people that I've administered it on. So I'll be lying, if I saying you can't use it, you can definitely use. And it's given me very clear results in terms of… I've had once, I've had a student to show showed ADHD have had a student with intellectual disability, and the WISC has been able to contribute towards that… Those diagnosis. So is it doing what it's meant to be doing? Absolutely. And so I do think that it is relevant. But just keep in mind that I have been in exposed to a private sector and not only private, but in terms of using the WISC it was private.

CO10 reliability

CO3 demographics

**I**: So, the final question is just how do you feel? Or, do you feel a could be better adapted for the South African context? And if so, how?

**P**: Absolutely. So I do think it could be adapted for South African context. Firstly, I think that the way they ask questions could be adapted in terms of just ease of understanding for people, especially because we have so many different languages. I think that in terms of affordability, it could be adapted so that it could access more students and be used by the GDE, by psychologists there. I'm trying to think what else could be adapted. I think, like using terms like pennies and pence, and you know, those kinds of things that are more UK normed in those things need to be adapted. So yeah, I know that you need to go…

Improvements based on CO3.2

CO1 cost

**I**: No! I live on a main road. So there's always something happening in the road. Someone shouting or clinging on the gate, or there's always something so I was looking what's happening this time. No, okay. But yeah, I think that covers a lot of… so my previous participants. You know, one was very new and one had been, she's been in practice for 12 years. And it's just so interesting to hear how the experiences differ in terms of sort of, like, clients that they see and how that affects how you administer the test and the things you need to consider. You know, if you're working in a setting like (school name), I don't know, I could be speaking under correction, but like, thinking about the child's language and the isn't as important as it would be, you know, in Pretoria North if you are getting all the, the, you know, the township children even I didn't know this, but there are private schools and townships now, apparently, which I didn't know. And even there he still needed to consider the language, the home language, whether they be able to understand the WISC, but also obviously, a lot of those schools aren't IEB and wouldn't require the WISC. So that allows freedom.

**P**: So for me, language is not as big of a barrier because most children, most children can speak English more than they can speak their home language. Yes. In in, in private schools, but the difficulty is like if you get a student from China, we have lots of students from China and from India. And so the language barrier is not so much South African context. Its being done in South Africa, but more a thing of accent. How a thing is said.

CO3.2 language

**I**: okay. All right. Yeah, I hadn't even considered international students. Which we do have I mean, (schools name) especially, um, I know in Pretoria near my campus we have a (schools name) and we have a (Schools name) and they also like all the embassies are they in Pretoria so they have all the foreign children in (Schools name).

Recording was stopped as conversation about schools and teachers continued, participant was thanked and interview ended.