

Curriculum Vitae

Nilanga Abeysinghe

Senior Lecturer
Department of Psychology and Medical Psychology
Faculty of Medicine
South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine
Malabe, Sri Lanka

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EDUCATION

- 2015 – 2018 Faculty of Graduate Studies
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
PhD candidate
Working title: Essential Therapeutic Skills for Mental Health Practitioners:
Adaptation of the ENhancing Assessment of Common Therapeutic (ENACT)
Factors Scale in Sri Lanka.
Supervisor: Brandon Kohrt (MD, PhD)
Co-Supervisor: Ananda Galappatti (MA, MSc)
- 2008 – 2009 University of Worcester, Worcester, UK
**MSc: Issues in Applied Psychology (Clinical and Abnormal Psychology) –
Merit Award**
Thesis: Socio-Cultural Effects on Chronic Shyness: a cross-cultural study
comparing test-scores in Great Britain and Sri Lanka
Supervisor: Jonathan Catling (PhD)
- 2001 – 2005 University of Peradeniya
Faculty of Arts
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
BA: Psychology – First Class (Hons) Pass
Thesis: Effects of Death Related Anxiety on Ethnic Stereotypes – with Special
References to Tsunami Tidal Waves that struck Sri Lanka on 26th December 2004
Supervisor: Desmond Mallikarachchi (PhD)
- 2004 – 2005 University of Peradeniya
Faculty of Medicine
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
One year Diploma in Counselling
- 1985 – 1998 St. Anthony's College, Kandy, Sri Lanka
Primary and secondary education

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **Senior Lecturer in Psychology**

Department of Psychology and Medical Psychology,
Faculty of Medicine,
South Asian Institute of Technology and Management (SAITM),
Malabe, Sri Lanka
[October 21, 2013 – to date]

Conduct lectures in the following programmes: Psychology for medical undergraduates, multidimensional approach to patient care, psychology for nursing students

- **Visiting Lecturer at the University of Colombo**

Faculty of Graduate Studies,
University of Colombo,
94, Cumaratunga Munidasa Mawatha,
Colombo 3, Sri Lanka.
[October 1, 2010 – to date]

Contribute as a lecturer in the Post Graduate Diploma/Master's level programme on 'Counselling and Psychosocial Work'.

Modules: Counselling, Research methods. In addition, I contribute as a dissertation supervisor and a placement supervisor for counselling and psychosocial practice placements.

Department of Sociology
Faculty of Arts,
University of Colombo
[May 1, 2013 – December 2013]

Contributed as a visiting lecturer in the second year Social Psychology module and first year Introduction to Psychology modules

- **Senior Lecturer**

Colombo Institute of Research and Psychology (CIRP),
31, Melbourne Avenue,
Colombo 4, Sri Lanka.
[August 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013]
[Visiting lecturer October 1, 2013 – August 2014]

Contributed as the first coordinator of the Masters in Psychology course offered through the University of Coventry, UK. Contributed as a lecture in psychology at Masters, Bachelors and Diploma level psychology courses and a dissertation supervisor.

- **Visiting Lecturer at Institute of Personal Management (IPM):**

HR House,
No 43, Vijaya Kumaranatunga Mawatha,
Colombo 05, Sri Lanka.
[April 10, 2010 – August 31, 2013]

Contribute as a lecturer in the Professional Qualification in Human Resource Management (PQHRM) programme on the modules 'Industrial Psychology' & 'Research Methods', and I contribute to the course 'Diploma in Psychology' conducted by the HR House. In addition I work as a dissertation supervisor and a second marker of research dissertations of the PQHRM course, which is a first degree in human resource management.

- **Lecturer – Diploma in Counselling,**

Part-time course conducted in affiliation with the Kandy Teaching hospital.
Organised by the 'Nivahana Society of Kandy',
97, Heerassagala Road,
Kandy, Sri Lanka.
[2010 /2011]

- **Lecturer - 'One-Year Counselling Course'**

Department of Psychiatry,
Faculty of Medicine,
University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
[2007 / 2008]

TEACHING INTERESTS

General psychology, Counselling psychology, Social psychology, Research methods, Personality psychology, Psychological First Aid

Memberships of Committees

Nov. 2013 - present	Committee member The Medical Education Unit, Faculty of Medicine, South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine, Malabe, Sri Lanka.
Jan. 2016 - present	Committee member The Ethical Review Committee, Faculty of Medicine, South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine, Malabe, Sri Lanka.
Nov. 2013 - present	Committee member The Curriculum Development and Evaluation Committee, Faculty of Medicine, South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine, Malabe, Sri Lanka.

- Aug. 2012 - Jan. 2013 Committee member
The Technical Advisory Committee of the Higher National Diploma in Counseling at National Institute of Social Development, 488 A, Nawala Road, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka.
- March. 2012 – May 2013 Committee member
The Curriculum Monitoring Committee of the Counseling Diploma Program at National Institute of Social Development, 488 A, Nawala Road, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka.

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

- Galappatti, A., Abeysinghe, N., Ekanayake, E. Francis, F., Peiris, P., Dhanushka, S., Schubert, A., Padmasiri, B., Rahul, M. (2013). *Mapping Study of the Capacity and Work Experiences of the Counselling Assistants Attached to the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs*, Colombo, Good Practice Group.
- Perera M.A.L.R., Galappatti, A., Dalpatadu, S., Abeysinghe, N., Ekanayake, E., Francis, F. Anuranga C., Senarathne B., Adikari D., Kugadas, T. (2013). *Mapping Study on the Capacity and Work Experiences of the Counselling Assistants Attached to the Ministries of Social Development and Child Development and Women's Affairs*, Colombo, Institution for Health Policy.
- Schaller, M., & Abeysinghe, A. M. N. D. (2006). Geographical Frame of Reference and Dangerous Intergroup Attitudes: A Double-Minority Study in Sri Lanka. *Political Psychology*, 27, 615-631.
- Abeysinghe, N., Dressel, D., Jaleel, F., Kulathunga, S., Sarveswaran, K., Thaheer, M. (2006). *Supporting an Enabling Environment for Peace in Sri Lanka (Peace Audit 2006)*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies.

PUBLICATIONS (TRANSLATIONS)

- Abeysinghe, N., Kulathunga, S. (2014). *A Guide to Working with Volunteers: Featuring the experiences of organisations and individuals in Sri Lanka* (Sinhala Translation), Colombo, VSO
- Abeysinghe, N., Kulathunga, S. (2013). *Psychological First Aid: Guide for Field Workers*, by World Health Organisation in 2011(Sinhala Translation), Colombo, Good Practice Group.
- Abeysinghe, A.M. N. D. (Ed), (2007). '*Peace Building Toolkit – A guidebook on Transitional Issues for Reconciliation*' (Sinhala translation), Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Colombo

SELECTED ARTICLES

- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2016). Improving the understanding of safe-sex behaviours with the use of two models in health psychology. *Senior Professor Kulasena Vidanagama Felicitation Volume*, 252-261.
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2007). Mental Well-being of Children is the Foundation of a Healthy Society, *Psychosocial Forum Reflections*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies

Nilanga Abeysinghe, BA(Hons) (PDN), MSc (Worcester, UK), PhD candidate (CBO)

- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2006). Effects of Stress and some Grounding Techniques for Relaxation, *Psychosocial Forum Reflections*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2006). Disappointment and Reactions: 'Halt to Peace Processes in Intergroup Conflicts', *CHA Peace Focus*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies,
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2006). Double Minorities and Intergroup Conflicts, *CHA Peace Focus*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2006). Psychological Determinants of Ethno-political Conflicts, *CHA Peace Focus*, Colombo, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2005). Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, *Mano Vivarana: Psychology Quarterly Magazine*, 10, University of Peradeniya

PRESENTATIONS

- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2016). Essential Therapeutic Skills for Mental Health Practitioners: Adaptation of the Enhancing Assessment of Common Therapeutic (ENACT) Factors Scale in Sri Lanka (Selected to be presented in 2016 July), 31st International Congress of Psychologists (ICP 2016) in Yokohama, Japan
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2011). On culture and shyness: a cross-cultural study comparing shyness in Great Britain and Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Sciences (67th annual session), Colombo
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2008). Loss, Death and Grieving in Sri Lankan Context, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, Kalutara.
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2004). Mental Well-being of Children is the Foundation of a Healthy Society, (2004). Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, Colombo-07, Sri Lanka.
- Abeysinghe, A.M.N.D. (2005). Psychological Determinants of Ethno-Political Conflicts: University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

CURRENT / ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Study on psychosocial, interpersonal, and Management issues in patients who use long-term urinary catheters (South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine, Department of Psychology and Medical Psychology)
- Study on parents' perception of a healthy child – (South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine, Department of Psychology and Medical Psychology)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Counsellor/therapist competence, death and death related anxiety, shyness and social phobia, group dynamics, prejudices, personality

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

Postgraduate level supervision

- **MA in Counselling and Psychosocial Support:** Fazliya, A.H.N. (on-going - 2015 - 2016), Working title: The personality traits of first year and final year medical students. University of Colombo
- **MA in Counselling and Psychosocial Support:** Francis, F (on-going - 2015 - 2016), Working title: Understanding of Counselling and Psychosocial Support *among Service Providing Institutions and its impact on Service Providing Individuals*. University of Colombo
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** Rajasinghe, S.V. (2015) *Useful area of study in the area of sports psychology and in the area of motivation in the Sri Lankan context*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** De Silva, R.S. (2015) *Behavioural Finance Paradigm of Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE): Investor Personality, Psychological & Contextual Factors of Individual Investor Decisions*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** Shabbir, H. (2014) *Impact of Five Minutes of Group Repetition on Academic Performance in Oral Exams*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** Peiris, S. (2014) *Cultural Factors that Impact Motivation in Sri Lanka*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** Vithanage, R.D.H. (2013) *Adult Attachment Styles and Marital Satisfaction among Married Couples in Sri Lanka*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK
- **MSc in Applied Psychology Dissertation:** Weerasinghe, A.A.S.A. (2013) *A Counter-Intuitive Happiness Intervention – Promising Prospects of Death Meditation*, Submitted to Sri Lanka campus of Coventry University, UK

Undergraduate level supervision

- **MBBS - Community Medicine Research Project:** Seventh Batch, (2015) *The Knowledge and Awareness of Harmful Effects to Health due to Substance Abuse (Tobacco Smoking and Alcohol Abuse) among A/L Students*, Submitted to Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, SAITM, Malabe
- **MBBS - Community Medicine Research Project:** Nizahir, T.A., Nandapala, N., Shaznin, F., Rathnayake, I.T., Samaraweera, D.E., Sharmilan, S. (2014) *Awareness and Attitudes of Internet Based Learning Methods in Medical Students at SAITM*, Submitted to Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, SAITM, Malabe

NATIONAL LEVEL CONTRIBUTIONS

- **Consultant trainer in Counselling:** Developing Continued Professional Development (CPD) programme by identifying needs of counsellors and Conducting National level Training for counselling officers and counselling assistants attached to the ministry of Social work, and Ministry of Women's Welfare and Child Development – 2014, 2015, 2016

OTHER PSYCHOSOCIAL INVOLVEMENTS AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- **Trainer – Psychological First Aid**

Contributed to translate the Psychological First Aid (WHO) manual from English to Sinhala and as a trainer of the 'Training of Trainers' (TOT) programme. I continue to promote Psychological First Aid in Sri Lanka as a mechanism of helping individuals to prevent adverse psychological effects following crisis and emergency situations.

[April 2012 – to date]

- **Translator ('Intervention' – International journal)**

War Trauma Foundation, Amstelveen, the Netherlands ©

[February 2010 – to date]

Translation of research summaries (English to Sinhalese) to be published in 'Intervention', an International journal of Mental Health, Psychosocial Work and Counselling in Areas of Armed Conflict is a multi-disciplinary journal. It is published for mental health workers; psychiatrists, psychotherapists, and psychiatric nurses as well as counsellors, psychosocial and community workers, staff members of NGO's developing mental health or psychosocial project, and international experts in the field.

- **Programme Officer (Mental Health)**

Voluntary Service Overseas

102/1, Cotta road,

Colombo 08, Sri Lanka.

[April 5, 2010 – July 31, 2012]

This role included a vast realm of duties. These include the following: leading on VSO mental health project goal to promote mental health advocacy among practitioners and service users; introducing 'Social Inclusion' to the mental health programme and exploring ways of including mental health into mainstream development activities through 'social inclusion. Other duties stretch from administrative work of organising workshops, coordinating and liaising with partner organisations and volunteers, leading in certain aspects of the monitoring and evaluation process of the programme while supporting the programme manager in other aspects including security and safety of VSO volunteers. The second term in this post started with previous two years of experience, knowledge and understanding of the mental health and psychosocial sectors in Sri Lanka with diverse levels of resources and needs across the country increased significantly.

Our programme focus was mainly on promoting a holistic and client centred service in the Mental Health sector that is recovery and prevention oriented.

- **Web editor and editorial coordinator for 'Spectrum' magazine**

Nexus Research Group

No. 251/27, Kirula road,

Narahenpita,

Colombo 05, Sri Lanka.

[September 2009 – January 2010]

I was responsible for the entire publication process of the magazine. This included liaising with the columnists, coordinating with the editor and other technical people including the photographers, layout artists, printers, and marketing & administrative staff. Furthermore, I'm involved in conducting several

interviews on varied topics for each issue apart from coordinating them. I am also responsible for developing and updating the news website liaising with the web designer to make sure that the skills will be transferred to the Nexus Research Group as a means of minimising costs.

- **Volunteer (School and Community Education)**

British Red Cross,
Bradbury Court, Berkeley Business Park
Wainwright Road, Worcester WR4 9GY,
UK
[November 2008 – July 2009]

Along with the programme manager (school and community education), we trained a group of peer educators and capacitated them to deliver programmes to secondary level school children on 'disaster response'. The training to the peer educators ran over a five month period with structured and non-structured sessions to fit into their school lunch hour ones a week, field visits and discussions. This was an experience, which I undertook in the midst of my MSc work broadening my experience in a different area of work. Hence I would consider this to be a different and exiting learning exercise for me too.

- **Programme Development Officer (Mental Health)**

Voluntary Service Overseas
102/1, Cotta road, Colombo 08,
Sri Lanka
[August 07, 2006 – August 31, 2008]

This role included a vast realm of duties from organising workshops, coordinating and liaising with partner organisations and volunteers, leading in certain aspects of the monitoring and evaluation process of the programme while supporting the programme manager in other aspects. During this two years my knowledge and understanding of the mental health and psychosocial sectors in Sri Lanka with diverse levels of resources and needs across the country increased significantly.

Our programme focus was mainly on promoting a holistic and client centred service in the Mental Health sector that is recovery and prevention oriented. I really enjoyed my work and left the organisation for my higher studies.

With reference to my last annual appraisal at VSO, I have achieved over 90% of my job objectives fully and have significantly contributed towards the objectives that could only be partly achieved due to various reasons discussed and agreed with my line manager.

- **Research Officer**

Peace and Research Unit (CHA)
No: 86, Rosmead Place,
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.
[November 07, 2005 – August 04, 2006]

During this period of nine months my main contribution was towards the completion of the Peace Audit 2006 in my role as a Research Officer. The main duties included planning the research, identifying the 12 districts for the research, developing the questionnaires along with the other five team members,

leading the research in three districts while supporting the team members in carrying out the research in other districts, recruiting and training research assistants, monitoring and evaluation, and report writing which included data analysis and interpretation.

In addition, I contributed with an analytical review on two districts (Ampara & Batticaloa) based on the reports provided by the CHA district level staff to a bi-weekly analysis on six districts with possible future scenarios. These reports were circulated among the development agencies working in these conflict-affected areas at that era. The reports were highly commended and appreciated by the recipients.

- **Research Officer (Part-time)**

The Research Team
1/45, Elibank Road,
Colombo 05.
[October 01, 2004 – November 01, 2005]

- **Data Collector & Research Assistant (Part-time)**

The Research Team
1/45, Elibank Road,
Colombo 05.
[March 15, 2000 – September 30, 2004]

I worked as a research assistant and later a part-time research officer while I was still an undergraduate in several projects. These exposed me to the field of research with the opportunity to earn some money.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAININGS

- [2015 – 2016] SAITM Internal Quality Assurance Committee.
Academic Staff Development Programme (127 contact hours + Academic Portfolio)
- [July 19 – 23, 2010] Conducted by BasicNeeds – Sri Lanka with training staff from BasicNeeds Uganda at Kalutara Sri Lanka.
Introductory Training on Advocacy for Mental Health (Training of Trainers)
- [January 24 – 26, 2008] **Conducted** by the McGill University and the Douglas Mental Health University Institute, Montreal, Canada at the Institute of Psychiatry, Teaching Hospital Angoda, Sri Lanka.
Research Methods in Mental Health
- [July 30 – August 4, 2007] Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre's 'Psychosocial Assessment of Development and Humanitarian Interventions' (PADHI) Programme
IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS: Understanding the impact of development interventions on the psychosocial wellbeing of individuals and communities
- [June 25&26, 2007] RedR - IHE in Sri Lanka
Logical Framework Analysis for Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation

Nilanga Abeysinghe, BA(Hons) (PDN), MSc (Worcester, UK), PhD candidate (CBO)

- [August 1 – 26, 2004] Summer Institute by the Solomon Asch Center for study of Ethno-political conflicts, University of Pennsylvania, USA, at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Training on Teaching and Research in Psychology

MEMBERSHIPS OF SOCIETIES / ORGANIZATIONS

- **Commonwealth Scholarship Alumni Association** [September 2009, to date]
- **Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLASS)** [Member since May 2011]
- **American Psychological Association (Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict & Violence - Div. 48)** International Affiliate [July 2006 – January 2010]

ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Commonwealth Shared Scholarship to University of Worcester, UK:** Full Scholarship for Masters level studies in Psychology 2008-2009
- **University Scholarship (University of Peradeniya):** Academic Excellence at the Bachelor of Arts Examination 2004/2005 [Best Results in Psychology with First Class Pass]

REFEREES

Dr. Malathie Dissanayake,
Head of the Department,
Department of Psychology and
Medical Psychology,
Faculty of Medicine,
SAITM
Malabe, Sri Lanka.

Prof. Gameela Samarasinghe,
Associate Professor,
Department of Sociology,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Colombo,
Colombo. Sri Lanka.

Dr. Jonathan Catling,
Senior Lecturer,
School of Psychology,
University of Birmingham,
Edgbaston,
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