

“Discovering Perceptions and Intentions Regarding Mental Health within Mining Communities in Northern South Africa.”

As part of my master's research on mental health in mining communities, I designed a culturally sensitive survey to gather insights. Below are a selection of sample questions that illustrate my approach to blending narrative, cultural nuance, and structured data collection.

Traditional Beliefs

Everyone has **traditional beliefs**. Some people live by them more than other people. This study will use the term “traditional beliefs” to describe the cultural, religious, or spiritual practices and understandings that have been passed down through generations within a community or society. These beliefs often play a significant role in shaping people's worldview, values, and ways of understanding the world around them.

1. How much do your traditional beliefs influence you when you make decisions about your life?
 - A Lot
 - A Little
 - Not at All
 - I Don't Know

2. What about your parents? When they make important decisions, how much do their traditional beliefs influence them?
 - A Lot
 - A Little
 - Not at All
 - I Don't Know

3. And what about your children? When they make important decisions, how much do their traditional beliefs influence them?
 - A Lot
 - A Little
 - Not at All
 - I Don't Know include I don't know and I don't have children

Regina V Roundtree

Thank you for your answers. In a few minutes we will get to mental health questions. Just a few more culture questions to help me understand why you are answering the way you are answering.

There are many different cultures and tribes around the world. All are unique. There is no wrong or right answer – only what you prefer.

1. This is optional – Would you like to name your tribe? _____
2. When you are sick physically, who do you go to first for advice?
 - traditional healer
 - spiritual guide
 - religious leader
 - modern doctor
 - other
3. When you are sick emotionally, who do you go to **first** for advice?
 - traditional healer
 - spiritual guide
 - religious leader
 - modern doctor /counselor
 - other

Religion/Spirituality

Religion and spirituality can sometimes be interchangeable. For this study they mean the same thing. We will use R/S to represent both words in our study.

1. What is your Religious/Spiritual (R/S) Affiliation:
 - Traditional African Religion
 - Christian- Protestant
 - Islam
 - Christian- Catholic
 - Hindu
 - Buddhism
 - Judaism
 - Atheism
 - none of the above

2. My spiritual beliefs give me comfort and support when dealing with challenges in my life.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

3. My R/S faith is extremely important in helping me maintain a sense of purpose and meaning in my life.

- Not at all Important
- A Little Bit Important
- Somewhat Important
- Very Important
- Extremely Important

4. I feel a strong sense of connection and belonging in my R/S community.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

5. How often do you take part in R/S activities (e.g., prayer, meditation, attending religious services)?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

6. My R/S beliefs strongly contribute to finding meaning and purpose in my work within the mining community.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

Regina V Roundtree

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

7. My R/S beliefs provide a strong sense of hope and optimism for the future.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Modern Vs Tradition

In this section, the study adds the word “modern” to describe practices that include prescription medicine, professionals who have gone to university and get a license that is certified by your government example: medical doctor, psychologist or psychiatrist. We are not including religious persons in this group; they will remain in the R/S category.

1. Do you think the Modern ways people talk about mental health match the Traditional ways your community thinks about it?

- Not at All the Same
- a Little Bit the Same
- Kind of the Same
- Very Much the Same
- Exactly the Same

2. How much influence do you think Modern ideas and concepts have on the understanding of mental health in your community?

- No Influence
- Little Influence
- Some Influence
- Significant Influence
- Strong Influence

3. Do you think Modern approaches to mental health align with the cultural beliefs and practices in your community?

- Not at All Aligned
- A Little Bit Aligned
- Somewhat Aligned
- Very Aligned
- Completely Aligned

4. In your opinion, how easy is it to find help for mental health in your community?

- Not Easy at All
- a Little Bit Easy
- Somewhat Easy
- Very Easy
- Extremely Easy

5. How much does your community accept Modern ways of treating mental health?

- Not Accepting at All
- A Little Bit Accepting
- Somewhat Accepting
- Very Accepting
- Extremely Accepting

6. Do you think Traditional ways of taking care of mental well-being blend with Modern ways in your community?

- Not Blended at All
- A Little Bit Blended
- Somewhat Blended
- Very Blended
- Completely Blended

7. In your opinion, how well do Modern mental health professionals understand the hard things people in mining communities in Africa go through?

- Not Well at All
- Not Very Well
- Somewhat Well
- Very Well
- Extremely Well

8. How sure are you that Modern ways of treating mental health can really help the mental health worries of people in mining communities?
- Not Sure at All
 - A Little Bit Sure
 - Somewhat Sure
 - Very Sure
 - Extremely Sure
9. In your opinion, how well do Modern ways of helping with mental health deal with the money and jobs problems people in mining communities in Africa have?
- Not Well at All
 - Not Very Well
 - Somewhat Well
 - Very Well
 - Extremely Well
10. How willing are you to blend Modern ways of treating mental health with Traditional ways Africans take care of their minds and hearts in your own life or community?
- Not Willing at All
 - A Little Bit Willing
 - Somewhat Willing
 - Very Willing
 - Extremely Willing

Mental Health

For this study, we'll talk about mental health, which means how we feel inside our minds and hearts. The United Nations World Council describes mental health **as feeling good about ourselves, being able to handle life's challenges, doing our work well, and helping our community.**

It doesn't matter what job someone has. When mental health is not balanced, people might experience certain feelings or do certain things, like:

- ◆ Using too much alcohol or drugs, gambling a lot, or doing risky things.
- ◆ Feeling lonely, like no one understands them, having trouble sleeping, and worrying all the time.
- ◆ Getting very angry and being violent.

These behaviors happen a lot and can make it hard for a person to manage money, do well at work, and take care of themselves and their family.

1. Do you feel familiar with the term "mental health" as described by the UN?
 - Not Familiar at All
 - A Little Bit Familiar
 - Somewhat Familiar
 - Very Familiar
 - Extremely Familiar

2. How comfortable are you discussing mental health openly in your community (non-workplace)?
 - Very Uncomfortable
 - Uncomfortable
 - Neutral
 - Comfortable
 - Very Comfortable

3. How comfortable are you discussing mental health openly in your workplace?
 - Very Uncomfortable
 - Uncomfortable
 - Neutral
 - Comfortable
 - Very Comfortable

4. Do you believe that mental health is an important issue that needs to be addressed in your mining community?
 - Not Important at All
 - A Little Bit Important
 - Somewhat Important
 - Very Important
 - Extremely Important

5. How satisfied are you with the level of support and understanding you receive from your religious or spiritual community regarding mental health concerns?
 - Very Dissatisfied

Regina V Roundtree

- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

6. How comfortable are you discussing mental health concerns with members of your R/S community?

- Very Uncomfortable
- Uncomfortable
- Neutral
- Comfortable
- Very Comfortable

7. How much shame do people feel about getting help for their mental health in your community?

- No Shame at All
- A Little Bit of Shame
- Some Shame
- A Lot of Shame
- A Great Deal of Shame

8. Do you think the programs that teach about mental health in your community really help the people who work in the mines?

- Not Helpful at All
- A Little Bit Helpful
- Somewhat Helpful
- Very Helpful
- Extremely Helpful

9. Do you think cultural factors affect how people see and deal with mental health in your community?

- Not at All
- A Little
- Some
- A Lot
- A Whole Lot

Coping mechanisms

In this section we introduce two words – mindfulness and meditation. Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment without judgment. It involves being aware of your thoughts and feelings without getting overwhelmed by them.

Meditation is a technique where an individual uses a specific focus, such as the breath or a mantra, to train attention and awareness. It often involves sitting quietly and allowing the mind to become still and focused.

1. How often do you engage in physical exercise or activities to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

2. Do you engage in mindfulness or meditation practices to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

3. How frequently do you spend time in nature (e.g., parks, forests, open spaces) as a way to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often

Regina V Roundtree

- Very Often

4. Do you engage in creative or artistic activities (e.g., painting, writing, crafting) to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never

- Rarely

- Occasionally

- Often

- Very Often

5. How often do you engage in social activities or spend time with loved ones to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never

- Rarely

- Occasionally

- Often

- Very Often

6. Do you practice deep breathing exercises or other relaxation techniques to promote relaxation and happiness?

- Never

- Rarely

- Occasionally

- Often

- Very Often

7. How frequently do you engage in hobbies or activities that bring you a sense of joy and fulfillment?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

8. Do you engage in R/S activities that promote spiritual well-being (e.g., prayer, going to church, reading R/S books) as a way to feel happy and relaxed?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

9. How often do you do things that help you take care of yourself and be kind to yourself for your mental well-being?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

10. Do you participate in community or social events to promote a sense of belonging and happiness (local sports game, community braai, community clean-up)?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

- Nothing is available / I do not have access

11. How frequently do you engage in activities that challenge and stimulate your mind (e.g., puzzles, reading, learning something new) to promote a sense of well-being and relaxation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

12. Do you seek out opportunities for learning and personal growth to promote happiness and relaxation (attending an online class, learning a new skill)?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

13. Do you engage in activities that involve helping others or contributing to your community to promote happiness and relaxation?

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often
- Nothing is available / I do not have access

14. How frequently do you engage in activities that allow you to disconnect from technology and screen time to promote relaxation and happiness?

Regina V Roundtree

- Never
- Rarely
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often