

ABSTRACT

Using two samples, one comprising 864 SIOPSA abstracts of research and another comprising industrial psychology practitioners who participated in an online electronic survey (N=14) and in telephonic interviews (N=23), the study explored three main issues. First, the trends regarding industrial psychology research themes in research presented at SIOPSA conferences from 2000 to 2011. Second, the extent to which these themes matched research needs as perceived by industrial psychology practitioners in South African organisations was examined to determine their degree of congruence with practical business challenges. Third, the study explored the future research themes in industrial psychology as perceived by industrial psychologists in organisations.

Results indicated that there was a general proportional increase in the amount of research presented at SIOPSA conferences in various global categories of industrial psychology across the 12-year period. Personnel psychology, organisational psychology and psychological assessment were the most commonly covered global areas in the research presented at SIOPSA conferences. Results revealed that there was congruence between research presented at SIOPSA conferences and the prevailing needs among practitioners in South African organisations. Despite this congruence, it was shown that the areas being researched on are not effectively addressing practical organisational issues or assisting in theory development for use in organisations. Additionally, the findings showed that the future research areas proposed by industrial psychology practitioners span all global themes in industrial psychology except for consumer psychology.