

**THE EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISEES IN
RELATION TO SUPERVISION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE JOHANNESBURG REGION**

by

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DECLARATION

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I hereby declare that the research report titled: “The experiences of Social Work Supervisees in relation to Supervision within the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg Region”, is my own work and all the resources used or referred to by me in this research project are indicated by means of a complete reference and acknowledgement.

MS L. MOKOKA

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"I have come to believe that each of us has a personal calling that's as unique as a fingerprint- and that the best way to succeed is to discover what you love, and then find a way to offer it to others in the form of service, working hard, and also allowing the energy of the universe to lead you" Oprah Winfrey.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others" Mahatma Gandhi.

"Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or another. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger, and it will make not only for our own happiness, but that of the world at large" Mahatma Gandhi.

ABSTRACT

Social work was declared a “scarce skill” in 2003 by the Minister for Social Development, Dr. Zola Skweyiya. In response to this, the National Department of Social Development developed the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers. This strategy identifies supervision as a critical area requiring definite attention, if the retention of social workers is to be realised. Social work supervisees’ voices need to be heard on this issue and hence this study was undertaken.

The main purpose of this study was to explore, describe and gain insight into the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

A qualitative research approach was used, and qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using Tesch’s model in Creswell (2009:186). The researcher followed a systematic process of data analysis.

The findings of this study reveal amongst others, a lack of supervision for social work supervisees, and raises questions about the quality and effectiveness of the service rendered by the social work supervisees.

KEY CONCEPTS

Experience, social work, social work supervisee, supervision

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AASW- Australian Association of Social Work

ANZASW- Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Work

ASWB- Association of Social Work Board

BASW- British Association for Social Workers

CPO- Child Protection Organization

CSWE- Council on Social Work Education

CYCC- Child and Youth Care Centre

DSD- Department of Social Development

IFSW- International Federation of Social Workers

NASW- National Association for Social Workers

P-I-E- Person in Environment

SACSSP- South African Council for Social Service Profession

SAQA- South African Qualifications Authority

	LIST OF FIGURES	Page
	Figure 2. 1: Supervision: Supervision encompasses several interrelated functions and responsibilities	55
	Figure 2.2: Outcomes for supervision: supervision-outcome chain	61
	Figure 2.3: Three methods of social work: Case work=micro; Group work=mezzo and Community work= macro	80
	LIST OF TABLES	
	Table 2.1: Probability and non-probability sampling	30
	Table 2.2. Seven functions of supervision	62
	Table 2.3: Three primary functions of supervision	66
	Table 3.1: Biographical profile of participants	71
	Table 3.2: Racial profile of social workers within the Johannesburg region	72
	Table 3.3: Overview of themes, sub-themes and categories	74

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	CONTENT	Page
	CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW	
	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	11
1.1	MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	14
1.2	PROBLEM FORMULATION	14
1.3	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	16
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES	22
1.4.1	Research question	22

1.4.2	Research goal	22
1.4.3	Research objectives	23
1.5	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	24
1.5.1	Research Approach	24
1.5.2	Research Design	27
1.5.3	Research Population	30
1.5.4	Sampling and sampling techniques	30
1.6	DATA COLLECTION	32
1.6.1	Method of Data Collection	32
1.6.2	Method of Data Collection	32
1.6.3	Pilot testing of the data collection tool	36
1.7	DATA ANALYSIS	36
1.8	DATA VERIFICATION	38
1.9	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	41
1.10	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	45
1.11	CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS	46
1.12	STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT	49
2.	CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1	INTRODUCTION	50
2.2	DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL WORK	51
2.3	DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	52
2.4	THE HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	54
2.5	LEGAL FRAMEWORK PERTAINING TO SUPERVISION IN SOUTH AFRICA	63
2.6	THE FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION	65
2.7	CONCLUSION	69

	CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL	
3.1	INTRODUCTION	70
3.2	PROFILE SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPANTS	71
3.3	OVERVIEW OF THE THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES	73
3.4	PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL	78
3.4.1	THEME 1: The participants job requirements	78
3.4.1.1	Sub-theme 1.1: Completed degree or diploma in social work	78
3.4.1.2	Sub-theme 1.2: Registration with the professional council as social worker	79
3.4.1.3	Sub-theme 1.3: Practicing the three primary methods of social work	79
3.4.1.3.1	Category 1.3.1: Casework	80
3.4.1.3.2	Category 1.3.2: Group work and community work	84
3.4.2	THEME 2: The participants understanding of supervision.	85
3.4.2.1	Sub-theme 2.1: A contract	86
3.4.2.2	Sub-theme 2.2: A structure	88
3.4.2.3	Sub-theme 2.3: A process	89
3.4.2.4	Sub-theme 2.4: Supervisory sessions	89
3.4.2.5	Sub-theme 2.5: Methods of supervision	90
3.4.2.6	Sub-theme 2.6: The functions of supervision	91
3.4.3.	THEME 3: The participants views on structure of supervision with the DSD.	95
3.4.3.1	Sub-theme 3.1: Lack of a formal structure	95
3.4.3.2	Sub-theme 3.2: No platform where the challenges of critical self-reflection and professional growth can be raised and managed	96
3.4.3.3	Sub-theme 3.3: No signed contact providing for structured	97

	supervision	
3.4.3.4	Sub-theme 3.4: No guidelines or policy related to supervision	98
3.4.3.5	Sub-theme 3.5: No planning to address the learning needs of supervisees	99
3.4.4	THEME 4: The challenges experienced by participants in performing their daily duties.	100
3.4.4.1	Sub-theme 4.1: Lack of support	100
3.4.4.2	Sub-theme 4.2: High number of supervisees under a supervisor and high case loads	102
3.4.4.3	Sub-theme 4.3: Burnout	103
3.4.4.4	Sub-theme 4.4: Political interference	104
3.4.4.5	Sub-theme 4.5: Supervisors do not have time to supervise	106
3.4.4.6	Sub-theme 4.6: Supervisors are not empowered to fulfill their roles and responsibilities	107
3.4.4.7	Sub-theme 4.7: Quality versus quality	108
3.4.5	THEME 5: Suggestions to improve supervision within, DSD Johannesburg	109
3.4.5.1	Sub-theme 5.1: Training to be provided for social workers in relation to supervision	110
3.4.5.2	Sub-theme 5.2: Selection criteria for supervisors should be revisited	112
3.4.5.3	Sub-theme 5.3: Number of supervisees per supervisor should be reduced	112
3.4.5.4	Sub-theme 5.4: Rotation policy should be developed and implemented to avoid burnout	113
3.4.5.5	Sub-theme 5.5: Supervisors should assume multiple roles to ensure the adjustment of supervisees	114
3.4.5.6	Sub-theme 5.6: Structured supervision is needed	114
3.4.5.7	Sub-theme 5.7: Educate political leaders on the role of supervision in the social work context	115
3.4.5.8	Sub-theme 5.8: All social workers should keep abreast of the developments in the field of social work	116
3.4.5.9	Sub-theme 5.9: Supervision should be a two-way process	116

3.4.5.10	Sub-theme 5.10: Performance evaluation should be on a regular basis	117
3.5	CONCLUSION	118
	CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
4.1	INTRODUCTION	119
4.2	SUMMARY OF THE STUDY	119
4.3	CONCLUSIONS	120
4.4	RECOMMENDATIONS	121
4.4.1	Recommendations for practice	121
4.4.2	Recommendations for policy	121
4.4.3	Recommendations for further research	122
4.5	CONCLUSION	122
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	123
	ADDENDUM A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH	141
	ADDENDUM B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM	142
	ADDENDUM C: INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT	146
	ADDENDUM D: CONSENT FORM REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PUBLISH AUDIOTAPES AND VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OF AUDIOTAPED RECORDINGS	150
	ADDENDUM E: RAW DATA	151

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The social work profession has existed for over a century and has enriched many lives. It requires skills that are broad and applicable in a variety of settings and which make the profession unique and vitally important. Globally social workers' training, experience and professional ethics prepare them to provide a diverse range of services within communities and across the life span (Earl, 2008:14).

The Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region has a number of decentralised offices and different sections. The researcher is in the Canalisation section as a Canalisation Officer. The researcher works directly and on a daily basis with social workers and supervisors, from Child and Youth Care Centres, Child Protection Organisations and the Department of Social Development.

The researcher observed that reports written by social workers in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region were not of a good professional standard and quality despite social workers being expected to be supervised in the process of preparing these reports. The files were not chronologically arranged; in some files although there were sub-files for process notes, court documents and comprehensive reports, the filing was not organised. Even the Presiding Officers from the Johannesburg Children's Court returned the finalisation of children's court enquiry reports on a monthly basis to the Region due to insufficient information provided by social workers. The researcher became concerned about what she observed, and decided to explore the issues of social work supervisees and supervision.

It is indicated in the manual on the Retention and Recruitment of Social Workers in South Africa (n.d.) that some officials who are responsible for supervision do not have the capacity to effectively guide and support social workers. The manual also states that the impact of no or poor supervision on professional service delivery and the

development of social workers can be seen in a number of cases where social workers are accused of misconduct and unprofessional practice.

The researcher came to the conclusion that social work supervision within the Department of Social Development is not effective, based on these observations. The problem does not lie with supervision practice but with the fact that the supervision that is actually applied is either faulty or weak (Botha, 2002:1). An organisation rendering service without supervision may be putting itself at risk of being sued for poor work performance (Botha, 2002:1).

The decline in effective social work service delivery, which necessitates the use of supervision, is attributed to high case-loads, emotional and other trauma experienced by social workers in the process of service delivery, high stress levels due to personal, professional and social demands, a lack of resources to deliver on their mandate as well as the supervision of social workers by non-social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006). The shortage of social workers has been aggravated by the outflow of South African social workers to countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, by social workers leaving the profession due to poor working conditions and the increased demands for social work services by the South African population (Department of Social Development, 2006). This calls for serious consideration on how supervision is implemented to ensure the provision of efficient and effective services. The researcher observed that supervisors are often appointed to supervisory posts based on outstanding interview results or work experience. However they sometimes lack the necessary leadership qualities and are not given a proper induction to fulfill their roles of supervising and managing social workers.

In view of the researcher being concerned about supervision and the involvement of social work supervisees in the supervisory process, attempts were made to obtain the Department of Social Development's policies on supervision from its Human Resource division. However, no policy or guidelines were available and the researcher was

referred to the job description of supervisors as the guideline document to be used for reference purposes.

According to the Department of Social Development, the job description of supervisors is to:

- Manage and supervise social workers, social auxiliary workers and administrative staff to deliver social welfare in accordance with the strategic mandate of the Department, MEC, Premier and social welfare sector delivery priorities.
- To ensure that welfare services are in line with regulatory and legislative compliance.
- To monitor and model ethical social work practices.
- To manage social work interventions.
- To develop and manage training programmes for social workers.
- To evaluate social workers' reports.
- To develop sectional operation plans, job description and to monitor work plans of staff.
- To plan and co-ordinate the rendering of developmental social work services through case work, group work with emphasis on prevention, early intervention and statutory delivery programmes.

As indicated in the job description above, the focus is solely on the role of the supervisor and nothing is said about the supervisee.

Much of the research within the field of supervision is written from supervisors' point of view using their experiences as the basis to discuss supervisees' experiences. This study offers an understanding of social work supervisees' experiences in relation to supervision from the social work supervisees themselves, with the hope of contributing towards improved service delivery. The researcher deems it necessary to give the supervisees a voice in the supervision process.

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The rationale for this study was derived from the perceived need within the social work profession to improve the quality of social work services offered to service users. Singh (2007:64) emphasizes that there is a need for “social research to be in place to design, plan, implement, and improve any development change process”. Bergman (2008:5) and Creswell (2007:5) assert that a researcher must have reason and interest to conduct an inquiry. Fouché and Delport (2011:101)) specify that this interest should come from day-to-day activities and interactions in the work situation, thus leading to the basic knowledge and experience of the phenomenon under study. Hence this study was conducted.

The researcher’s aim was, to explore and describe the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision, with co-operation of social workers from the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region and to use the findings to formulate recommendations regarding supervision to improve service delivery. By conducting this study, the researcher intended to expand knowledge and find answers to the concerns around the issue under investigation as stated by Ivankova, Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:254) and Neuman (2006:12). The researcher wanted to understand what social workers’ experiences are regarding the supervision processes to which they are exposed. The knowledge generated through this research could contribute to the growth and development of supervision by assisting policy makers to determine the future direction of supervision, enabling social service professionals and the general public to understand supervision and hopefully to improve service delivery.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

According to Monette, Sullivan and De Jong (2008:77), the research problem is the initial step in the research process and provides the basis for a study. The concept problem formulation is defined, according to Sekaran (2003:69), as “any situation where a gap exists between the actual and the desired ideal states”. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:17) define it as:- “some difficulty, which the researcher experiences

in the context of either a theoretical or a practical situation and to which she wants to obtain a solution”.

On the other hand, Yegidis and Weinbach (2002:47) see a research problem as “an intellectual stimulus calling for an answer in the form of a scientific inquiry”. Strydom and Delpont (2005:290) maintain that the problem formulation is thus the researcher’s broad conceptualisation of the problem that should be refined in due course. The research problem becomes the foundation for the research.

The research problem arose from the provision of supervision in the Department of Social Development, where the researcher observed in reality how supervision was being implemented.

The researcher observed that, in order for supervisees to render effective and efficient services, professional supervision is essential. Effective supervision assists supervisees to grow professionally, and to utilise their skills and knowledge in the process of service delivery. According to the researcher, the challenge in most social work workplaces is the lack of trained supervisors to offer guidance and support to social work supervisees. Mathebula (2003:11); Ngweniso (1998:1); Mudau (1996:56) and Legodi (1993:2) agree that supervisors are assigned to their supervisory posts without proper orientation, and yet at the same time they are expected to provide efficient services and effective supervision. Supervisors are not appointed in accordance with their skills, and their roles are not clearly defined. As a result, supervision holds challenges for social workers as supervisees. Mboniswa (2007:4) in her study on supervision in Gauteng Department of Social Development; showed that most social workers who received supervision expressed their dissatisfaction with the supervision they received. The researcher concurs with these researchers that supervision is still a challenge in the field of social work in South Africa, and argues that today’s supervisory settings are mostly characterised by a supervision process which is one-sided, where the supervisor decides on the content of the supervision process, which is not how it is meant to be. The supervision process should benefit both parties involved. The researcher is of the opinion that, to be able to satisfy the

purpose of supervision, the experiences of social work supervisees need to be considered.

Munson (2002:19) states that new graduates require assistance to integrate the many practice demands that are marginally covered in their academic programmes. They must translate theory into practice. They should be supervised to deal with the real social issues affecting people in their environments. Every educator, supervisor and social worker should personally accept, seek out and develop ways to put supervision in its correct perspective.

The problem formulated for this study was: There is a lack of knowledge regarding the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the person-in-environment (P-I-E). The P-I-E perspective in social work is a practice-guiding principle that highlights the importance of understanding an individual's behaviour in light of the environmental context in which that person lives and acts (Kondrat, 2008:14). From the inception of social work as a unique profession, practitioners noted the connection between individuals and their environment. The experience of social work supervisees needs to be seen in light of their environment within the DSD. Sheafor and Horejsi (2006:9) define the environment broadly as "one's surroundings - that multitudes of physical and social structure, forces and processes that affect humans and all other life forms", but the authors then make a distinction between the "immediate environment", defined in terms of social systems, and "distant environment" which includes features of water, air, shelter and good soil to produce food.

It has been shown that the environment has a dramatic impact on the development of the self (Schachter, 2005:378). Bronfenbrenner (2003:10) supports the view that human beings should be understood as a result of the interaction between the

individual and environment. It is the P-I-E perspective that acknowledges that development is a changing process that takes place over time (Harkonen, 2007:6).

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the person-in-environment (P-I-E) perspective which has historically been the central focus of the social work profession. This perspective underscores “the interdependence of individuals within their families, other social networks, community and the larger environment” (Northern & Kurland, 2001:49). In the researcher’s own understanding, the person-in-environment views the person as the focus for change and sees the environment as a problem contributing to human distress.

In the P-I-E system manual, first published in 1994, Karls and O’Keefe (2008:11) create an assessment tool specifically for identifying problems in individual functioning as related to the environment. The manual guides social work practitioners through four areas of assessment: social role and relationship functioning; environmental conditions affecting clients functioning; mental health functioning; and physical health functioning. Assessment includes issues such as discrimination, lack of social support and availability of community resources.

The researcher has chosen this perspective as it deals with the person within the environment. The focus is on the social work supervisees and their experiences of supervision within DSD. The focus is on the reciprocal relationship between the individual and the environment and the continuous adaptation of both person and environment to each other. Miley, O’Melia and DuBois (2004:34) support the view that “people affect their environment, and likewise, the social and physical environment affects the people”. Heinonen and Spearman (2006:182) explained that the “primary focus of social work should not be on psychological forces, the environment, or the social structure, but on the interface or relationship between the person and the social environment”.

Kondrat (2008:1) notes that, the concept “Person in Environment” is paramount in defining social work practice as “a practice-guiding principle that highlights: - individual behavior in light of the environment contexts in which that person lives and acts”.

Person-in-environment is used in social work education and clinical practices. The idea that individuals are connected to their environment contributes to the rationale for the extensive social policy and advocacy aspects of the social work profession (NASW, 2008:48). Individuals affect and are also affected by their environments. This provides the impetus to practice with the awareness of the role supervisor's play in the social workers' lives in DSD. Hare (2004:413) comments that "social work provides to human beings services as they interact with their human, societal and physical environment, whether on an interpersonal level or in a broader social context, constantly reflecting the person-in-environment construct".

P-I-E is currently used and widely embraced for the following reasons:

- It provides a format for systemic understanding of human functioning, crucial to the biopsychosocial perspective that is also fundamental to social work practice (Council on Social Work Education, 2004:14).
- It provides a basis for arguing on behalf of the social justice issues that social workers see as an ethical mandate for their work (CSWE, 2004:7; NASW, 2008:3).
- P-I-E allows social workers to assess the existence of relationships between individuals and their environment in trying to understand their social functioning.

By utilizing P-I-E, social workers intervene at the point where people interact with their environments. The principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work (Hare, 2004:409). NASW (2008) also supports the idea that individuals are connected to their environment which contributes to the rationale for the extensive social policy and advocacy aspects of the social work profession. P-I-E highlights the relationship between institutions and individual functioning.

The organisational context clearly has a very significant impact on social work supervisees and is seen as the most powerful element in determining job satisfaction and how people cope with stress and individual differences also play a part in coping behaviors (Storey & Billingham, 2001:12). Supervisors are gatekeepers in frontline

service settings; they ensure that supervisees abide by agency policies and follow the regulations.

P-I-E can best be understood as looking at: people (the service users, the supervisors system and the supervisee system) and environment (the organisational system) and a brief discussion on these aspects is provided below:-

- *The service users*

The service users are those people who were or still are receiving social work services (National Task Team, Management and Supervision, 2011:6). They are also called clients. The objective of social work supervision is to ensure that quality services are rendered to clients by the social workers who are working directly with the clients. Lack of supervision to newly qualified and inexperienced social work supervisee can harm clients, and can lead to poor service delivery and dissatisfaction in the community as a whole. Supervision enables social work supervisees to provide proper services to clients. A section without supervision has no direction. Tsui (2005:43) reflects that the professional relationship is when the social work supervisee uses the knowledge acquired through training, and also the education received from the supervisor to ensure that the needs of clients are met.

- *The organizational system*

Social work supervision is used to deliver cost-effective services by the organization. Kadushin and Harkness (2002:28) state that the organization determines the structure of social work supervision. O'Donoghue (2003:14) refers to social work supervision as a tool for risk management to protect the organisation from professional and unethical practices by social work supervisees and their supervisors. Supervision is influenced by the goals, structure, policies and procedures of the organisation. The researcher observed that the nature of social work supervision in the Department of Social Development differs from that implemented by other government departments and non-profit organisations. Tsui (2005:41) is of the opinion that social work supervision is determined by the role of supervision in the organisation, the organisational climate

and the vision and mission of the organisation. All of these are related to the culture of the organisation. Social work supervision is used by social work supervisees and supervisors to achieve the organisational goal.

- *The supervisor system*

The supervisor is responsible for the execution of supervision. The aim of supervision is to ensure that quality services are provided to social work supervisees through the provision of advice and guidance. Bogo and McNight (2005:59) define supervisors as people who are prized, and who:-

- Are available
- Are knowledgeable about tasks and skills and can relate techniques and theory
- hold practice perspectives and expectations about service delivery similar to the supervisees
- provide support and encourage professional growth
- delegate responsibilities to supervisees who can do the task
- serve as a professional role model and communicate in a mutual and interactive supervisory style.

The role and responsibilities of supervisors are guided by the Code of Ethics of the SACSSP (2007:4). Some of those roles are:

- To plan and prepare for supervision sessions and keep records.
- To ensure that intervention techniques and approaches used by the supervisee are appropriately applied, and to evaluate supervisee's performance in a manner that is fair and respectful.
- To ensure competence in the supervisee's work and to protect beneficiaries from harm.

- To conduct quality assurance of the work delivered by supervisees, and to take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and support.
 - To assist supervisees to perform functions that are challenging.
 - To ensure that adequate organisational resources are available to conduct effective supervision.
 - To seek feedback and evaluation from their supervisee for the enhancement of supervision.
- *The supervisee system*

The role and responsibilities of the social work supervisee according to the SACSSP (2007:12) are listed below:

- To ensure that they attend agreed supervision sessions and keep records of the supervision session.
- To plan and prepare for the supervision session, seek feedback and evaluation from supervisor for the enhancement of supervision.
- To keep abreast with new developments in the professional field, develop an annual work and personal development plan.
- To adhere to the lines of communication and authority, and to review the contract if there are stumbling block in providing effective supervision.

The researcher selected this theoretical framework because it emphasises social work knowledge and skills that improve the contextual fitness between individuals and their environment. The researcher recognises that social work supervisees cannot be understood apart from the environment in which they operate.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

This section gives a discussion on the research question, goal and objectives for this study.

1.4.1 Research question

A research question is seen as a guide for the researcher; it depicts and describes the method to be followed in studying the problem (Bell, 2005:32). A research question also gives the reader some idea of the scope of the project. According to Badenhorst (2007:25), a research question indicates the size of the project and the area it will cover. Johnson (2002:28) asserts that the first step in the research planning process is figuring out what the researcher wants to know, that is developing a research question. The question should be clear, focused and relevant.

The researcher wanted to answer the following research question: What are the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region?

After having decided on the research question the next step was to formulate the goal of the research.

1.4.2 Research goal

The goal is a dream the researcher wants to achieve in the research project (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95). While Weinbach (2007:128) regards goals as the outcome towards which the activities of persons are aimed.

From the aforementioned, the goal of this study was formulated as follows: To develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences of social work supervisees regarding supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

The goal is broad and in order to achieve it the researcher developed objectives to guide the research process:

1.4.3 Research objectives

The objectives of a study can be seen as the steps taken to operationalise the aim or goal of the research. Objectives are measurable, attainable steps that will be taken to achieve the goal and are linked to a time frame (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95).

According to Weinbach (2007:31) objectives are defined as “measures possible to determine to what degree a goal has been accomplished and often includes, time and deadlines for accomplishment”. Fouché and De Vos (2011:94) confirm this by stating that objectives refer to practical steps taken to achieve the aim of the research. This can be linked to what is said by Mouton (2003:240), when describing objectives as the route to a destination.

In order to realise the goal of this particular study, the research objectives were formulated as follows:

- To explore and describe the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

In order to realize this main objective, the following task objectives were formulated:

- To obtain a sample of social workers in the employ of the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region, excluding the Canalisation Section where the researcher is operating to ensure objectivity, and to engage them in face to face interviews.
- To conduct semi-structured interviews facilitated by open-ended questions in an interview guide to explore the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision.
- To sift, sort and analyse the data obtained according to the eight steps of qualitative data analysis constructed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186).
- To analyse and interpret the data and conduct a literature study in order to verify the data.

- To draw conclusions and make recommendations regarding supervision for social work supervisees in the Johannesburg Region of the Department of Social Development.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research project. According to Polit and Hungler (2004:233), methodology refers to ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. According to Burns and Grove (2003:488), methodology includes the design, setting, sample, methodological limitations, and the data collection and analysis techniques in a study. While Henning (2004:36), describes methodology as a coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the ability fit to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the researcher's purpose. It is essential that the researcher should give account of the methods, strategies and tactics to be deployed to execute a study (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:34). The qualitative approach has been adopted in the study.

1.5.1 Research approach

Yates (2004:138) states that "qualitative research explores how the individual or group members give meaning to, and express their understanding of themselves, their experiences and /or their world". The qualitative research approach does not usually provide the researcher with fixed recipe to follow step by step. It is a systematic, subjective approach, used to describe life experiences and give them meaning (Burns & Grove, 2003:356). It is important to note that this research approach is linked to exploring the research question, thus in this research the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision were explored. The approach is mostly associated with words, language and experiences rather than measurement, statistics and numerical figures (Burns & Groves, 2003:356). According to Merriam (2009:13), qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world.

On the other hand, Denzin and Lincoln (2003:5) explain qualitative research as involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study people in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Neuman (2006:157) mentions that "qualitative researchers borrow ideas from people they study and place them within the context of a natural setting". Qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. Qualitative research strives to obtain and understand the experiences of the participants on a particular topic. In this research the focus was on the social workers receiving social work supervision.

The researcher's rationale for using a qualitative approach was based on the characteristics of the approach which created the context for a descriptive and explorative study.

According to Creswell (2009: 175) the following are the characteristics of qualitative research:

- *Natural setting*

The qualitative researcher collects data in the field and on the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study. Dale (2006:19) talks about the naturalistic characteristic of qualitative research, where studies are conducted in a real-world situation. The researcher thus goes to the participant's natural setting (Kielborn, 2001:21). The researcher contacted the participants individually and interviewed them face to face in their offices in the, Department of Social Development Johannesburg Region where they operate, talking to them directly and observing their verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

The researcher focused on learning from participants as they described and explained their own meaning of experiences in relation to supervision and those interpreted by the researcher within their natural setting.

- *Researcher as a key instrument*

The researchers in qualitative research strive to understand the subjective world of participants from their frame of reference. The researcher remains the key instrument in the facilitation process. Qualitative researchers collect data themselves by interviewing participants. The researcher collected data from social work supervisees by using a semi-structured interview guide to explore their experiences of supervision. Patton (2002:11) postulates that any understanding of the phenomenon in qualitative research needs to consider the researcher's personal experience and engagement in the process.

- *Data from multiple sources*

Qualitative researchers gather multiple forms of data. The researcher used a semi-structured interview schedule to collecting information. Semi-structured interviews, according to Greeff (2011: 43), allow the researcher to explore the participants' views, opinions, attitudes and belief about certain events and phenomena. In the semi-structured interviews, the researcher used open-ended questions focusing on different aspects of the particular research as stated by Donalek (2005:124). The design for individual interviews included a pre-interview preparation task as well as a semi-structured interview guide. The researcher prepared questions in advance that she explored with social work supervisees before contacting research participants. Interviews offer researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:98). Then the researcher reviewed all the data, made sense of it, and organised it into categories or themes.

- *Inductive data analysis*

Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up, by organising the data into increasingly more abstract unit information. The researcher collaborated with the supervisor from UNISA interactively, to shape the themes that emerged from the mass of information that was collected.

- *Participants' meanings*

According to Creswell (2009:175), “in the entire qualitative research process, the researcher keeps a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researcher brings to the research or writers expressed in the literature”. The researcher learned from the supervisees about their experience of supervision.

The researcher focused on gaining a holistic account from the participants, trying to develop a comprehensive picture of the issue under study.

The researcher's understanding of qualitative research is an inquiry approach that is useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon. To learn about this phenomenon, the researcher asks participants broad, general questions, collects the detailed views of participants in the form of words and analyses the information for description and themes. From this data, the researcher interprets the meaning of the information, drawing on personal reflections and past research. The structure of the final report is flexible, and it displays the researcher's biases and thoughts (Creswell, 2002:58). The method focuses on the exploration of human behaviour and search for understanding through people's actions. Based on the above discussion, the researcher found this approach suitable for this study.

1.5.2 Research design

A research design can be described as a map the researcher used in order to answer the research question. Kerlinger (in Kumar, 2005:84) defines a research design as a plan, structure and the strategy of investigation. According to Fouché and Delport (2011:64) as well as Leedy and Ormrod (2005:94), a research design is a plan to guide the researcher in collecting; analysing and interpreting observed and collected data. In line with these authors, Mouton (2001: 74) specifies that a research design is a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct research.

According to Babbie and Benaquisto (2010:79), the researcher “needs to determine what he is going to observe and analyze, why and how”. Within the qualitative approach, the researcher employed an explorative, descriptive and contextual research design.

Explorative research focuses on the “how” and the “why” questions (Fouché & De Vos, 2005:106). Burns and Grove (2003:313) define exploratory research as research conducted to gain new insights, discover new ideas and/or increase knowledge on a phenomenon. The exploratory research refers to “research in which the primary purpose is to examine a little understood phenomenon to develop preliminary ideas and move towards a refined research question by focusing on the “WHAT” question” (Neuman, 2006:23). According to Neuman (2006:34) explorative researchers must be creative, open minded and flexible, adopt an investigative stance, and explore sources of information, though the research rarely yields definitive answers.

Exploratory studies are typically done for 3 purposes, namely: - to satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding, to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study and, to develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent studies (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2010:80).

The researcher asked creative questions by using semi-structured interviews in an interview guide, to explore the experiences of social work supervisees regarding social work supervision. The researcher will help to determine what further research can be done with social workers regarding their experiences in relation to supervision. The researcher’s aim is to gain new insight, discover new ideas and/or increase knowledge of experiences of being involved in supervision, and from these experiences, the researcher make recommendations pertaining to the improvement of supervision of social work supervisees in the Department of Social Development within the Johannesburg Region.

Descriptive research refers to research studies that have as their main objective the accurate portrayal of the characteristics of persons, situations or group (Polit & Hungler, 2004:716). In descriptive research the researcher tries to determine the “how

or why” of the research, while in the explorative research design the researcher answers the “what” question. The descriptive research is defined by Neuman (2006:35) as a “Research in which the primary purpose is to “paint a picture” using words or numbers and to present a profile, a classification of – types, or an outline of steps to answer questions such as whom, when and how”.

Streubert Speziale and Carpenter (2003:22) state that, a descriptive method in data collection within qualitative research is central to open, unstructured qualitative research interview investigations. The researcher studied the experiences of social workers regarding supervision, within the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg Region.

The contextual research design is concerned with identifying what exists in the social world the way it manifests itself (Ritchie & Lewis, 2005:2007). Qualitative researchers emphasize the social context for understanding the social world, Burns and Grove (2003:32) point out that contextual studies focus on specific events in “naturalistic settings”. Naturalistic settings are uncontrollable real-life situations sometimes referred to as field setting. According to Neuman (2006:158) the meaning of social action depends on the context in which it appears. The researcher noted what surrounds supervision around social workers in the Department of Social Development Johannesburg Region. This means that the study was conducted within Department of Social Development offices. Research was done in a natural setting refers to an enquiry done in a setting free from manipulation (Streubert Speziale & Carpernter 2003:363).

In this study the researcher utilised an explorative research design with the aim of exploring the experiences of social work supervisees’ in relation to supervision. The researcher undertook the exploratory study in order to satisfy her curiosity and the desire for better understanding, as stated by Babbie and Mouton (2001:191).

1.5.3 Research population

According to Rubin and Babbie (2007:153), a population is “that aggregation of the elements from which the sample is actually selected”. In the human sciences the term “population” usually refers to all possible cases one is interested in studying, people with specific characteristics in common that are relevant to the study (Monette et al. 2008:136). A population according to Babbie (2007:111) is a group of people about whom we want to draw conclusions. The population for this study was the social work supervisees’ employed by the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

1.5.4 Sampling and sampling techniques

The term sample is taken to mean the specific set of people interviewed or observed for the purpose of the study. Strydom and Venter (2002:199) define a sample as “the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study”. Due to time and money constrains the researcher was unable to include the whole population in the study and selected a sample. According to Strydom (2005:195), a sample is a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested. Sampling is defined by Strydom and Delpont (2011:390) and Durrheim (2002:44) as the means of taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe.

Sampling can be done by means of two methods: Probability and non-probability sampling.

Table: 2.1: Probability and non-probability sampling (according to Strydom, 2005:198) and Bless et al, (2006:105)

PROBABILITY SAMPLING	NON- PROBABILITY SAMPLING
Each element of the population has a chance to be drawn.	Includes all sampling methods in which the probability of the inclusion of the units is unknown.

It is representative of all.	Representativeness cannot be claimed.
<u>METHODS:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random sampling • Systematic sampling • Stratified sampling • Cluster sampling 	<u>METHODS:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience/casual sampling • Quota sampling • Snowball sampling • Purposive sampling

For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected a sample using purposive sampling from the non-probability sampling methods as stated by Strydom (2005:202). This sampling method was suitable as the researcher was able to use her judgement to select people with the particular characteristics relevant for the study. The researcher selected social workers from decentralised offices in the Johannesburg Region with the exclusion of those in the Canalisation section to ensure that the principle of objectivity was upheld.

The following selection criteria were used to select the sample:

- Participants who were registered with the SACSSP as social workers.
- Participants who were under supervision
- Participants who were employed by the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.
- Participants of any age, race and gender were included.

Due to the fact that the participants were social workers English was the language of choice for the interviews.

The ultimate sample that was selected for the study consisted of social work supervisees from offices of the Department of Social Development within Johannesburg Region and consisted of two males and eight females.

1.6 DATA COLLECTION

Once the research plan is completed and the sample is selected, the researcher's next task is actually to collect data. Data collection begins with the researcher deciding from where and from whom data will be collected. Data gathering is precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to research sub-problems, using methods such as interviews, participation observation, focus group discussion, narratives and case histories (Burns & Grove, 2003:373). Qualitative research makes use of unique methods and procedures to collect data.

1.6.1 Methods of data collection

In this research, data was collected from social workers by means of semi-structured interviews with the aid of an interview guide. Semi-structured interviews rely on certain set of questions and try to get the conversation to remain, more loosely, on those questions; the researcher allows the conversation to flow more naturally, making rules for the conversation to go in unexpected direction (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:102). Interviews offer researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:98). Interviews enabled social work supervisees to explore experiences and ideas about supervision. Semi-structured interviews, according to Greeff (2011: 43), allow the researcher to explore the participants' views, opinions, attitudes and belief about certain events and phenomena. In the semi-structured interview, the researcher used open-ended questions focusing on different aspects of the particular research. The design for individual interviews included the development of an interview guide followed by a pre-interview preparation.

Instead of focusing on the therapeutic outcome, the primary goal of a qualitative research interview is to collect data through various methods in order to answer

specific questions for scientific reasons, namely understanding a particular phenomenon (Maxwell & Satake, 2006:254).

The following section presents the details of data collection.

1.6.2 Preparation for data collection.

The researcher is employed by the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region and she was granted permission by the DSD Provincial Office to conduct the research with participants. (See Addendum C)

In order to create a conducive environment where the researcher could facilitate the process of exploration and description of participants' experiences in relation to supervision, the participants had to be prepared for data collection.

After identifying the participants, they were informed about the study in preparation for their participation and appointments were made with them for the actual interviews. The participants were interviewed in their own offices to avoid travelling time for them. This was also done to ensure that they are in a familiar environment and to allow the researcher to observe their natural environment, which is one of the characteristics of qualitative research. Even if the researcher knew participants by their names she had to clarify her role for the purpose of the study.

The researcher followed the guidelines by Rogers and Bouey (1996: 131) to explain the aim, goal and purpose of research:

- *Explain the purpose of the research*

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the participants as a study which aimed to develop an in-depth understanding of social work supervisees' experiences in relation to supervision in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

- *Explain to them why the researcher wants them in particular to participate in the study*

The researcher further clarified why social work supervisees in particular had been chosen to participate in the study. The primary reason was that as social work supervisees, they had first-hand experience and knowledge about supervision.

- *Explain the value of their participation and contribution to the study*

The value of the study was explained to social work supervisees. The focus was on social work supervisees and their lived experiences of supervision. The value was thus to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences in relation to supervision. The knowledge gained from this study would directly inform the future planning and practices of supervision in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

- *Explain to participants how the data will be collected and what will be asked of them*

The researcher provided participants with questions in advance, to prepare them for the interview. Apart from the interview guide provided by the researcher, the participants also generated their own topics and contributed on issues they wished to be explored.

- *Inform the participants where the interview will take place*

The researcher met with individual participants, negotiated and clarified where the interviews would take place. The most convenient place for the purpose of this study was the social work supervisees' offices; the natural setting where participants did most of their day to day work.

- *Indicate to the participants, the time and the length of the interviews*

The researcher informed the social work supervisees that the estimated time for the face to face semi-structured interview was between 45 minutes and an hour each.

- *Inform participants about record keeping during the process of data collection*

In order for the researcher to focus fully, she requested the permission of the participants to audio record the discussion. The interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants and later transcribed. The audio records were secured in a locked drawer in the office where the researcher is the only one who had access and participants were informed that upon completion of the study the audio records and the transcripts of the interview will be destroyed.

The preparation as discussed above enabled the researcher to collect the data.

The researcher asked the following questions to assist her to compile a biographical profile of the participants:

- How old are you?
- How long have you been practicing as a social worker/ years of experience?
- What is the level of your job position?
- How long have you been subjected to supervision?
- What does your section deal with in the Department?
- In which decentralised offices of the Department are you based?

The following request and questions were asked of social workers (supervisees).

- Describe your current job requirements, with specific references to the tasks that you are expected to perform.
- Tell me more about how supervision is structured within the department.
- Share with me your experiences regarding supervision within the Department of Social Development.
- In your opinion, what do you see as the role of supervision that you are exposed to as a social worker employed by Department of Social Development?
- Tell me more about the manner in which the supervision sessions that you are exposed to are structured.

- Share with me the manner in which the supervision process you are exposed to is structured.
- Considering your experiences of supervision, kindly share with me what you found to be beneficial to you as a social worker, that helps you to render satisfactory services to your clients.
- Describe the support that is offered to you to help you deal with the challenges or problems related to your daily work.
- According to your observation, share with me what you think needs to be done to improve the quality of social work service delivery within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

1.6.3 Pilot testing of the data collection tool

The researcher views pilot testing as a preparatory activity before the actual research can take place to ensure that the data collection will generate relevant information to answer the research question. According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2000:155), a pilot study is “a small study conducted prior to a large piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling instrument and analysis are adequate and appropriate”. Yegidis and Weinbach (2002:206) state that the process of pilot testing a measurement instrument with a few individuals who are similar to the research participants can help to make measurement more reliable.

The researcher identified three social work supervisees according to the selection criteria set out for this study. They were requested to objectively comment on the questions in the interview guide regarding whether they were clear and understandable. The three social work supervisees who participated in the pilot testing were excluded from the actual sample.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative research involves not only collecting data but also transcribing, coding and interpreting the data. After data has been collected, meaning has to be attached to the information. “Qualitative analysis is the non-numerical examination and interpretation

of observations, for the purpose of discovering underlying meaning and patterns of relationships” (Babbie, 2007:378). Creswell (2009:183) refers to data analysis as a process of meaning-making related to the data collected which is an ongoing process of analytical reflection on the assembled data. De Vos (2005:333) states that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. While Walliman (2011:60) regards data analysis as a quality control exercises that assists researchers to choose the best and most relevant pieces of information to be used.

In this study, the researcher followed a systematic process of data analysis. The researcher analysed the information obtained from the interviews into themes and sub-themes, using a coding system according to the following step-wise framework proposed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186).

- The researcher wrote down, word for word all the information obtained from the interviews recorded with participants. The researcher got the sense of the whole then made notes of the ideas that came to mind in connection with the topic.
- The researcher picked one document (interview report), the most interesting and went through it, without thinking of the substance of the information but its underlying meaning (implied meaning). Researcher wrote down her thoughts in the margin.
- The researcher found the most descriptive wording for the different topics and turned them into themes. Efforts were made to reduce the total list of categories by grouping topics related to each other. Lines were drawn between categories to show interrelationships.
- On completion of the above, the researcher made a final decision on the abbreviation for each theme and alphabetised the codes,
- Using a cut-and-paste method, the data material belonging to each theme were grouped together in one place and a preliminary analysis was performed.
- In the last step, the researcher presented the results in a descriptive form in chapter 3 of this report.

1.8 DATA VERIFICATION

According to the researcher, verification is the process of checking, confirming, making sure and being certain. For Krefting (1991:215), the purpose of many qualitative studies will not be to test the hypotheses but rather the final analysis to generate hypotheses for further research. Streubert Speziale and Carpenter (2003:364) describe trustworthiness as “establishing the validity and reliability of qualitative research”. Qualitative researchers prefer to use the term credibility in the place of validity. According to Babbie (2010:417), the concept of reliability is more elusive, because: - what we are observing may be constantly changing and/or, the act of measuring (for example asking a question) may affect the person being studied. Qualitative researcher uses the term dependability when referring to reliability. Qualitative research is trustworthy when it accurately represents the experiences of participants. Guba’s model (in Krefting 1991:214) of ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative data was applied. The four characteristics to ensure trustworthiness are: Truth-value, Applicability, Consistency and Neutrality.

- *Truth-value*

Truth-value is established through the strategy of credibility by which the researcher discovers the lived experiences of the participants. It asks how confident the researcher is with the truth of the findings based on the research design, information and the context in which the study was undertaken (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). The researcher applied truth-value by allowing enough time for interviews, by establishing rapport, building trust, encouraging open conversation without fear and discrimination and conveying to participants how meaningful their contribution to the process would be. This allowed the participants to freely share their true experiences.

Triangulation is described by Krefting (1991: 219) as the comparison of multiple perspectives by using different methods of data collection. “Qualitative researchers are more concerned about the richness, texture, and the feelings of raw data because their inductive approach emphasizes developing insights and generalization out of the data collected” (Neuman, 2006:149). The researcher observed the participants during

the interviews to ensure that what was being said was also confirmed by the non-verbal cues.

In peer examination, the opinion of the colleagues and co-workers is needed (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:38). The researcher sought input from the research unit in the Department of Social Development and Department of Social Work Unisa who are experts in qualitative research. The researcher's study leader is also an expert in qualitative research and mentors various doctoral and masters' studies. The experts clarified the proposed study by asking questions, providing guidance and making suggestions. In an efforts to further enhance the credibility of the study, the researcher conducted all interviews and consultations in English.

Regarding the authority of the researcher the following is pointed out: the researcher attended the workshop on qualitative research in view of orientation towards writing a research proposal. The researcher completed BA (SS) at Unisa in 1997, has worked for 14 years as a social worker at NGOs and the Department of Social Development in Gauteng, and has supervised Unisa social work students for 4 years. The researcher is knowledgeable about the area and the context under study, and was able to determine the credibility of information from the participants.

- *Applicability*

Applicability is the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings (Krefting, 1991:216). In qualitative approach it is not usually intended that the findings of a particular study be generalised, but will apply only to the specific population under study. Therefore the sample size is not determined by the need to ensure generalisation, but by a desire to investigate fully the chosen topic and provide information-rich data (Grbich, 1999: 12). Van der Riet and Durrheim (2006:91) argue that findings should be transferable, and Krefting (1991:215) refers to this as applicability. To ensure transferability, the researcher provided a detailed description of the research methodology employed in case there is someone who would like to duplicate the study to check if the findings are similar. The meeting of dependability

criterion is difficult in qualitative research; the researcher should at least strive to enable a future investigator to repeat the study (Shenton, 2003:1).

To test applicability the researcher conducted a peer review session to debate various issues of the research project. The researcher did member checking by taking the final results back to some participants to determine the accuracy of the findings. The social workers, who were part of the study, after reading the findings, were able to identify that the researcher had met the criteria of trustworthiness.

- *Consistency*

Consistency of data refers to “whether the findings would be consistent if the enquiry were replicated with the same subject or in a similar context” (Guba in Krefting 1991:216). Consistency is established through the strategy of dependability. Dependability is met through securing credibility of the findings (Lincoln & Guba 1985:16; Streubert Speziale & Carpenter, 2003:38). This means that if the study is repeated in a similar context with the same participants, the findings will be consistent. In qualitative research the instrument to be assessed for consistency is the researcher and the participants. The participants reported from their own frame of reference. For the findings of the research project to be dependable, data were coded by the researcher with the assistance of the supervisor in order to establish themes, subthemes and categories that are presented in the research.

- *Neutrality*

Neutrality is defined as the freedom from bias in the research procedures and results (Krefting, 1991:216). Guba (in Krefting, 1991: 216) proposes that neutrality in qualitative research, should consider the neutrality of the data rather than that of the researcher, which suggests conformability as the strategy to achieve neutrality. According to Polit and Hungler (2004:435) conformability evaluates data quality and refers to the neutrality or objectivity of the data by an agreement between two or more independent persons that the data is similar.

To ensure neutrality the researcher employed the procedures of Gibbs (2007:69) as follows:

- Checked transcripts to make sure that they did not contain obvious mistakes during transcribing.
- Made certain that there was no drift in the definition of the codes during the process of coding. This was achieved by constantly comparing data with the codes and writing memos about the codes and definitions.
- Coded the data.
- Cross-checked codes developed by different researchers, through literature control.

All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed immediately after the interview, and the field notes taken during interviews were incorporated in the transcription process. This helped to ensure the neutrality of the research findings. The researcher adopted the position of a learner who wants to learn more from the participants who are the experts in their experiences.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to adhere to the ethics of social research (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:528). The research was conducted in a structured and professional manner and the rights and dignity of the participants were protected. The researcher considered it very important to establish trust between her and the participants, and to respect them as autonomous beings, thus enabling them to make sound decisions.

Research interviews in the qualitative approach often involve exploration of personal experiences; the researcher is obligated to be particularly aware of ethical issues (Strydom, 2005:17). According to Strydom (2005: 57), ethics is “a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other

researchers, assistants and students”. De Vos (2011:114) cited that ethics can be defined as code of conduct or rules or laws that regulate behaviour.

Ethical considerations as set out by Whittaker (2009:110) and Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:11) are the core features from the onset of the research in terms of the research process, selection of participants, interviewing and data analysis.

The researcher found the following ethical issues relevant and to be considered and applied in this study:-

- *Informed Consent*

Informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which the participants may be exposed, be discussed with participants (Strydom, 2005:59). Thomas (2003:21) refer to informed consent as “voluntary participation”. The consent of the participants must be obtained before the commencement of the research. Such consent includes the participant’s right to refuse to answer a question, to stop the interview at any time and to reschedule or withdraw from the study without consequences (Donalek, 2005:125). The social workers had the cognitive capacity to understand and evaluate the information about the intended research in order to make an informed decision. The participants were informed that there will be no remuneration involved and were also told how the data would be collected with the use of a recording device, stored and the processes for release. After all the information pertaining to the study was clarified and a decision had been made to participate, written informed consent letters were signed by participants who indicated their willingness to take part in the study.

- *Privacy*

Privacy refers to the participants’ ability “to control when and under what conditions others will have access to [their] belief, values or behaviour” (Monette et al. 2008:57). Sieber (in Strydom 2005:61) defines privacy as “that which normally is not intended for others to observe or analyze”. Sieber links confidentiality to privacy by defining

confidentiality as: “agreements between persons that limit others’ access to private information”. It is the duty of the researcher to ensure that the rights of the participants are protected and that their privacy and anonymity are paramount. As a fellow employee with the participants, the researcher had an even greater responsibility to respect the privacy of the participants. The participants were assured of confidentiality with regard to the information they were going to share with the researcher and the protection of their privacy in the signed covering letter to them.

- *Confidentiality*

According to Bless et al (2000:103), it is imperative that participants are assured of confidentiality despite anonymity and that data will only be used for the purpose of the research. Babbie (2001:472) states that confidentiality implies that “only the researcher and possibly a few members of his staff should be aware of the identity of participants, and that the latter should have made a commitment with regard to confidentiality”.

The researcher prepared a signed form in which she committed to confidentiality. The confidentiality forms were signed by participants as it is the researcher’s responsibility to protect the participants and to ensure that the information gathered or the findings reached, are not used at the cost of the participants. The transcripts and notes from the research were stored in a locked file to which only the researcher had access.

- *Anonymity*

Anonymity means that no one should be able to identify any research participant. The participants’ identity is protected in that no one is able to identify any participants afterwards, by removing any identifiable information of the participants from interview transcripts or quotations used (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011:71).

The researcher ensured the anonymity of social workers by using pseudonyms instead of their real names. Alphabets letters were used for coding and no identifying

information of the participants is revealed in the research report. This was done to protect the participants from any form of discrimination that might come from identification with any data collected. However, it has to be noted that the participants are known to the researcher and the pseudonyms are used to ensure that the responses are not linked to the participants in the research report, for their protection.

- *Debriefing of participants*

Debriefing sessions give participants opportunity after the study to work through the experience and aftermath of the research process (Strydom, 2005:73). Debriefing, according to Babbie (2001:475), entails interviews to discover any problems generated by the research experience so that those problems can be corrected. If the interview has touched sensitive issues it should be determined whether the participants are able to deal with the situation. The researcher provided debriefing to participants to ensure that they were emotionally restored to their state prior to their participation in the study and there were no participants who were referred to the Employment Assistance Programme for counselling.

- *Management of information*

The interviews were recorded, and data management and storage becomes a very important ethical consideration in research. The researcher put measures in place to secure the information collected. The audio recordings, notes and transcripts were locked in the cabinet. The data were accessible only to the researcher and the researchers' supervisor.

The audio recordings were coded to disguise any identifying information, were stored in a locked office at the researcher's workplace: - the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region, and only the researcher had access to them. The tapes and transcripts of the recordings will be destroyed after the completion of the research. The above formed part of an undertaking given to the participants and was honoured by the researcher.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this research was carefully prepared, and has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. Limitations are matters and occurrences that arise in a study which are out of the researchers' control. Every study, no matter how well it is conducted and constructed, has limitations. A limitation associated with qualitative study is related to validity and reliability: - "because qualitative research occurs in the specific settings, it is extremely difficult to replicate the studies" (Wiersma, 2000:211).

The following were observed as limitations by the researcher during the course of the research process:

- This research was conducted with only a small sample of the population. The initial intention was to interview as many participants as possible in order to gain rich data on supervision: - but this research study was limited in scope. It was found after the seventh interview that there was data saturation and the researcher decided to interview three more participants to confirm this observation so, as a result ten participants were interviewed for the entire study. The results are also limited to the social work supervisees in DSD Johannesburg Region who were receiving supervision at the time of data collection.
- Some participants might have withheld important information because they were not free to reveal the challenges they experience regarding supervision during interviews, fearing that their name could be traced even though the ethical considerations were clarified to them. The researcher continued to address these feelings by providing assurance that their names will be kept confidential. This was also discussed before they signed the consent forms.
- Data collection was time-consuming. Only a few of the selected social workers who met the selection criteria were willing to participate in the research. The newly appointed social workers reported that they could not participate because

they were afraid they would be targeted by supervisors, and others had overwhelming problems that they were dealing with at that time of data collection and could not spare the time.

1.11 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In this subsection the key concepts central to this study are clarified. According to Singh (2007:70), “when the word is not popular used, it must be preceded by a brief explanation”. The key concepts are defined to clarify the meaning and to provide common understanding on how they are used in the context of the research study. The following concepts are clarified: experiences, social worker, social work supervisee, and supervision.

- *Experience*

Experience is an accumulation of knowledge or skills that result from direct participation in events or activities, the content of direct observation or participation in an event (Collins, 2009, sv “experience”). According to Soanes, Spooner and Hawkers (2001:311), experience can be defined as an event which leaves an impression on a person. Experience arises in joining information from the external world with information from the internal world, and is personal and unique.

In the context of this study, the concept experience refers to what social work supervisees went through in their direct participation in the process of supervision.

- *Social worker*

Social worker applies to a graduate at bachelor’s or master’s level, who is registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) in terms of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 as amended (South Africa 1978: section 17). According to Barsky (2006:14), social workers are registered to promote social change, problem solving, empowerment and the liberation of people to enhance well-being. Social workers act as advocates for their clients, educate clients and teach them new skills, link clients with essential resources within the community, protects

vulnerable clients and ensure that their best interests are observed, counsel clients who need support and assistance, and research social problems to look for remedies. Social workers deal with people from a broad range of socio-economic and ethno-cultural background.

In the context of this study, social worker is an employee in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region and a graduate of a school of social work, registered with the SACSSP, who has the responsibility to render social work services to clients by applying social work knowledge and skills.

- *Social work supervisee*

Social work supervisee is the social worker who is supervised, who works under a supervisor and is dependent on the skills and expertise of supervisor to guide him/her (NASW: 2013:12). Bernard and Goodyear (2002:34) do not use the word supervisee, when they explain the person who receives supervision. Instead, they use the word “more junior member” referring to a social worker in a junior position, who does not have enough experience to practice independently. While Kadushin and Harkness (2002:57) refer to social work supervisee as a registered social worker who is supervised by an experienced and competent supervisor to ensure that quality services are offered to clients. The work of the social work supervisee is related to the organisation’s objectives through supervision.

The supervisee in this study refers to a social worker who receives supervision from a senior social worker who has experience in social work and is employed by the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region.

- *Supervision*

Social work supervision is the process which takes place within a professional relationship between a social work supervisor and a supervisee, with the ultimate goal of facilitating critical reflections upon action, processes, person and the context of

social work practice (O'Donoghue, 2000:5). Bernard and Goodyear (in Cooper & Lesser, 2002:24) defines supervision as the intervention provided by a more senior member, and can also be seen as a contractual learning process that begins with an agreement between the supervisor and the social work supervisee on what is to be learned, and how the learning will take place.

For the purpose of this study, supervision refers to an interactional process, during which a supervisor demonstrates his/her professional ability to guide, through a learning experience, by creating a warm, comfortable, conducive and non-threatening environment to enhance the supervisee's professional functioning, with the aim of providing effective and efficient social work services to service users.

1.12 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report is divided into four chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: General overview and Introduction

This chapter consists of a general introduction to the study. It outlines the study; describes the background of the study; rationale for the study; and the problem formulation. It also includes the research question; goal and objectives of the study; the research methodology and how it was applied in the study; the theoretical framework; ethical considerations; limitations of the study; clarification of the key concepts; and the structure of research report.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter focuses on a literature review on social work supervision, what is social work, what is supervision, the history of supervision, structure of supervision, legal framework pertaining to social work supervision in South Africa and a summary

Chapter 3: Research findings and literature control

The chapter focuses on the empirical findings of the study; where findings are presented in a narrative form, and compared and contrasted with related existing literature.

Chapter 4: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The chapter provides a summary of the study and followed by the overall conclusions and recommendations derived from the findings.

The next chapter will provide a literature review on the topic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the experiences of social work supervisees, various literature sources were consulted to compare with the findings of this empirical research. According to Neuman (1998:89), the goals of literature study are: to demonstrate a familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility; to show the path of prior research and how the current project is linked to it; to learn from others; and to stimulate new ideas. The literature review broadens the researcher's horizon and ensures that the researcher does not duplicate research that has already been done (Van Schalkwyk, 2001:196). O'Leavy (2005:40) highlights the following benefits of conducting a literature review as enabling the researcher to:

- Focus on ideas and expand knowledge
- Develop appropriate questions
- Argue the relevance of the study
- Design suitable methods
- Construct a literature review.

The literature review helps the researcher to identify connections, contradictions and other relationships in existing research (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2000:20).

According to the researcher, a literature review provides an overview and a critical evaluation of literature relating to a research topic. The literature study focuses on a discussion of the following:

- Description of social work
- Description of supervision

- The history of supervision
- Legal framework pertaining to supervision
- The functions of supervision
- Summary

The researcher deemed it necessary to first describe what social work is, before exploring the experiences of social work supervisees regarding supervision, because social work supervision can only be contextualised within the social work profession.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL WORK

According to the National Association of Social Workers, the primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being, and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty (NASW, 2013:13).

Social work is a professional service, rendered by a registered social worker, to promote, enhance or restore the capacity and social functioning of individuals, groups and communities (SACSSP, 2013:6). Within the South African context since 1999 the emphasis has been that social work functions should be executed within an empowering and developmental paradigm according to Midgley (2001:245) and the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:15).

Globally, there are different definitions of social work. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) is a global organisation striving for social justice, human rights and social development through the promotion of social work, best practice models and the facilitation of international cooperation (IFSW, 2014). A global definition of the social work profession, according to IFSW is: "Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and

indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing” (IFSW, 2014).

According to NASW as cited by Zastrow (2014:5) the National Association for Social Workers (NASW) in the United States of America (USA) defines social work as “the professional activity of helping individuals, groups or communities to enhance or restore community capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goal. Social work practice consists of professional application of social work values, principles and the techniques to one or more of the following ends: helping people to obtain tangible services, providing counseling and psychotherapy for individuals, families and groups, helping communities or groups improve social and health services; and participating in relevant processes. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior of social, economic and cultural institution; and the interaction of all the factors” (NASW cited by Zastrow, 2014:5).

The Australian Association of Social Workers (2010) in its code of ethics adopted the definition of social work approved by International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) (AASW, 2010:6).

The above description of social work shows that social work is a profession that is guided by ethics in its effort to provide services to humanity at all levels, to ensure social justice, human rights and empowerment. In this process, specific theories, skills and techniques are used to ensure professional practice.

2.3 DESCRIPTION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Within the social work context, supervision can be defined as the intervention provided by a more senior member of the profession and through a contractual learning process that begins with an agreement between the supervisor and the social work supervisee on what is to be learned, and how the learning will take place (Bernard & Goodyear cited by Cooper & Lesser, 2002:24).

Supervision in social work is the product of many processes in which the social worker and supervisor try to find answers, to address problems relating to professional development, standard of training and social service delivery, ethical behaviour and justice (Van Dyk & Harrison, 2008:21). Social workers cannot separate themselves from supervision, and should take responsibility for their own involvement and development in the process. Supervision is a major part of social work administration, teaching and learning, and has processes that are embedded in the beginning, middle, working and termination phases. In these phases, supervisors with specific skills and knowledge are responsible to train social workers to put theory into practice (Schulman, 1993:34 & Tsui, 2005:57).

According to NASW (2013:15), professional supervision is defined as the relationship between supervisor and supervisee in which the responsibility and accountability for the development of competence, demeanour, and ethical practice take place. The supervisor is responsible for providing direction to the supervisee, who applies social work theory, standardised knowledge, skills, competency, and applicable ethical content in the practice setting.

According to NASW (2013:17), supervision is an opportunity for:

- Reflection and self-reflection
- Openness
- Support
- Trying new things
- Feedback
- Modifying old habits
- Developing professional competence, knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Facilitating personal and professional growth
- Assisting social workers to make the connection between practice and theory
- Role modelling

Supervision within a social work organisation can be defined as an interactional process within the context of a positive, anti-discriminatory relationship, based on distinct theories, models and perspectives, whereby a supervisor supervises a social work practitioner by performing educational, supportive and administrative functions in order to promote efficient and professional rendering of social work services (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; O'Donoghue 2000:5). Botha (2002:1) views supervision as an activity which promotes the professional identity as well as the performance of social workers. Supervision is promoted for newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17) and needs empirical support in terms of its execution (Kelly, 2001:18; Strand & Bosco-Ruggiro, 2010:51).

According to the researcher, social work supervision is important for the social worker, supervisor and the organisation. Internationally, supervision is fundamental in providing competent professional social work services, and is central to the development of social work practice. Skill for Care (2007:12) supports that supervision is “an accountable process which supports, assures and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual group or team”.

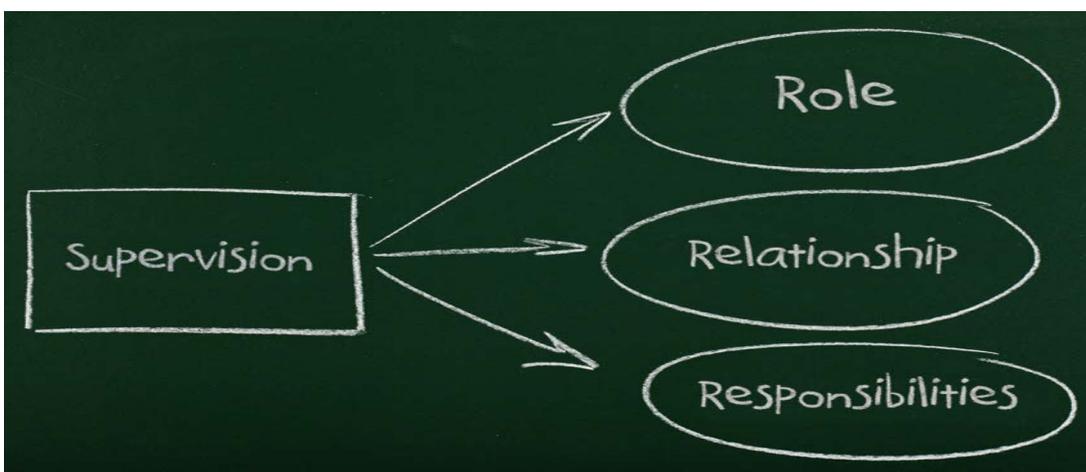
In order to understand social work supervision it becomes very important to consider its development and this is discussed briefly below.

2.4 THE HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

The theory of supervision has developed over many years. Munson (2002:19) gives a very comprehensive history of supervision, going back to the precursors of the models in the 1920s.

The figure below illustrates the interrelation functions of supervision (NASW, 2013:6).

Figure 2.1: Supervision: supervision encompasses several interrelated functions and responsibilities.



Earle (2008:14) states that the social work profession emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, responding to the threat of the social crisis among the working classes brought about by the industrial revolution. The development of social work education was an important part of the social work profession. The first school of social work in South Africa was established at the University of Cape Town in 1924, followed by the University of Witwatersrand in 1931 (McKendrick, 1990:126). It was in the early 1940s and the late 1950s that social work training for other racial groups was introduced in South Africa (Mazibuko & Gray, 2004:130). The Social Work Act was promulgated in 1978, which established the Council of Social Work that required all social workers to register annually by law in order to practice social work (SACSSP, 2012:12).

Before 1920, little was written about social work supervision (Kadushin, 1992:1). During those years supervision did not carry the same connotation it has today. In the beginning, social work supervisors had a great responsibility to advise and tell supervisees what needed to be done and how to do it. It was assumed that a supervisor possesses more knowledge than the supervisee (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:12). Kadushin and Harkness (2002:12) further note that the supervisor, knowing what was best, told the worker what needed to be done.

After 1920, social work supervision started to focus on individual social work (Tsui, 2005:6). The focus originated from the Charity Organizations Society movement in the nineteenth century, started in Buffalo, New York (Kadushin, 1992:2). Supervision was implemented with visitors or volunteers who were rendering a direct service by giving support to families. There was a need for these volunteers to be supervised and those who supervised them were called paid agents. Each agent was responsible for a sizeable number of so called visitors (later referred to as clients) (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:2).

Throughout its history, supervision in social work has remained exclusively concerned with social workers' experiences in the roles of supervisors and supervisees, the activity of supervision itself and the context within which supervision takes place (O'Donoghue, 2003: 10). The development of social work supervision has been shaped by the dual forces of social services organisations and the social work profession with either managerial or organisational interests being accentuated throughout its history (O'Donoghue, 2003: 21). Globally, there are different views regarding social work supervision.

- *International views regarding social work supervision*

The British Association of Social Workers' (BASW) code of ethics includes the statement: "the social work supervision role is educational, supportive, developmental and work-focused". In this code, the prime purpose of supervision is to support social workers to provide quality services. The code indicates that social work practitioners have a right to receive regular and good supervision, one on one supervision from registered and experienced social workers. In BASW research of supervision, members found out that many social workers receive good supervision, however a significant number do not. The BASW also has particular concerns about social workers who work in multi-disciplinary teams. The concern expressed is lack of, or insufficient supervision, poor quality supervision, and in some cases lack of supervision given by qualified social workers (BASW). In addressing these concerns, a Social Work Taskforce was formed and the Taskforce recommended clear, universal

standards for employees including standards for supervision (BASW Code of Ethics, 2012:4).

The American National Association of Social Workers states that social workers should receive supervision from those who are competent in the techniques of social work (Godden, 2012:11). The American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work (2004:9) presented a strong case for supervision as a practice specialty in social work. They stated that “the supervisor takes formal, legal responsibility for the quality and outcome of the supervisee’s work with the client, a function fundamental to the protection of the public”. NASW and the Association of Social Work Board (ASWB) have developed “Best Practice Standards in Social Work Supervision (hereafter “Supervision Standards”) to support and strengthen supervision for professional social workers. The standards provides a general framework that promotes uniformity and serves as a resource for issues related to supervision in the Social Work Supervisory Community (NASW, 2013:2). The NASW and ASWB Task Force on Supervision Standards maintain that supervision is essential and an integral part of the training and continuing education required for the skillful development of professional social workers.

Eruera (2007:143) provides a summary of the development of supervision in Aotearoa by stating that “the development of supervision has been influenced predominately by the international trends in social work theory and practice, and the western models of supervision”. In Aotearoa New Zealand Code of Conduct Guideline, supervision is fundamental in providing competent professional social work services; the code requests that all employers must provide supervision, even if it requires employers to look outside of their own organizations for supervisors. According to the code, supervision is not just about case management. Good supervision:- “provides the opportunity to reflect critically on current practice, support professional staff development and practice competence, ensures adherence to social work ethics, and provides a context for continued values clarification and the exploration of ethical dilemmas and cultural issues” (ANZASW,2008: 6).

The Australian Association of Social Work (2010:2) believes that the quality of social work supervision is central to the development of social work practice. The Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) further states that supervision encompasses administrative, educational and supportive functions, all of which are interrelated. According to the AASW, supervision should meet the needs of the supervisee within the organisation. There should be a written agreement between the supervisor and the supervisee which includes long-term professional development objectives and it should be mutually negotiated and periodically reviewed by both parties.

With reference to the situation in Ireland, supervision is a process and not an event. It entails preparation, open discussion and the implementation of decisions. Both the supervisors and supervisees have a responsibility to contribute positively to this process (Regional Policy for Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts, 2008:6).

Internationally, social work supervision is recommended in providing competent professional services and is central to the development of social work practice as both the social worker and supervisor contribute to the process. The introduction of supervision policies and framework in various countries such as AASW (2010); BASW (2011); ANZASW(2012); and the Supervision framework for the Social Work Profession in South Africa (DSD & SACSSP, 2012:14) promotes supervision.

- *Developments of social work supervision in South Africa*

The South African welfare context, as show-case of the paradigm shift of welfare service delivery from a social treatment model to a developmental service delivery model serves as an example of a best practice vignette of a strength perspective on supervision employed at welfare organisations (Engelbrecht, 2010:6). Engelbrecht (2010:16) further reveals that the way in which these supervision functions are depicted, tends to consider supervisees to be deficient despite organisations' development approach. The main thrust in further developing, improving and refining supervisory practices, is to meet the needs of South African people and service delivery. It does not lie with any major adaptation of theory, but rather with increased incorporation of theoretical tenets into supervisory practices. According to Engelbrecht

(2010:325), the historical development of social work supervision in South Africa can be categorised into three periods as discussed briefly below:-

- *The first period 1960 to 1975: Emerging and predominantly administrative years*

Supervision was known as field guidance and occurred within the group work context. It was used in the form of in-service training within the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions. Supervision developed along hierarchical lines and it emphasised the educational function of supervision (Engelbrecht, 2010:325). The emphasis was placed on the administrative and educational function of supervision. In 1970 supervision was formally defined in a South African Social Work Dictionary in Afrikaans, and did not refer to any functions of supervision. It was defined as a process whereby the social work supervisor assists the social worker to achieve work-related goals (Engelbrecht, 2010:325).

- *The second period 1975 to 1990: Integrated supervision and the expansion of a knowledge base*

International researchers positioned supervision within the context of social and political dimensions, and defined the specific supervision functions as educational, administrative and supportive (Kadushin, 1976; Austin, 1981). The work of Kadushin (1976) and Austin (1981) were acknowledged in South Africa by the researchers who emphasized effective and professional supervision. Botha (1985) developed an educational model for supervision, and provided a solid foundation for the practice and training of supervision (Engelbrecht, 2010:326). In South Africa during the apartheid era, the supervisory functions were assigned to white social workers whilst black social workers were subjected to continuous supervision. This perception and that of non-social work managers supervising social workers led to supervision becoming less popular (Department of Social Development, 2006:19).

- *The third period 1990 to date: Times of change*

There were political changes in South Africa in 1990, where the focus on supervision became less popular. In addition, the high case-loads of social workers, poor working

conditions, poor salaries, migration of social workers to other countries, and lack of quality supervision, led to a critical shortage of social workers in South Africa as well as a decline in the quality of social work services provided to the communities in South Africa (Cloete, 2012:18). Botha (2002:1) found that the working conditions of social workers limited their professional development.

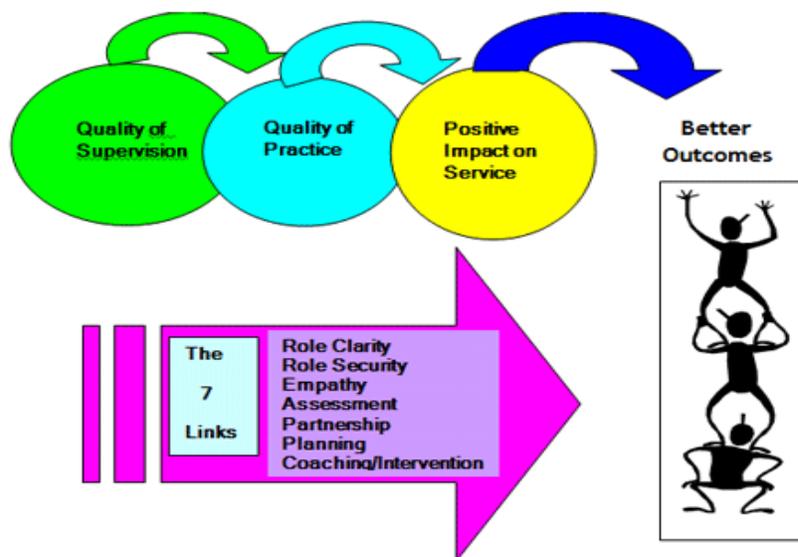
After 1994, social work supervision adopted a participatory approach where social workers started to have a say in the matters concerning themselves and their work. There was an exchange of ideas, knowledge and skills, and the social workers learnt from each other. Supervision moved from telling the supervisee what to do, to a greater encouragement of supervisee participation in the planning of supervision and increased mutuality in the supervisor-supervisee relationship (Glendenning in Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:12).

Bruce and Austin (2001:87) identify the following components which contribute to satisfactory social work supervision experiences:

- “When the agency provides a supportive and clearly understood work environment”
- “When supervisors exercise leadership and authority based on competence and position”
- And “when workers feel supported by their supervisor”.

According to the researcher’s opinion, a long history of ideas, values and events have shaped the present ways in which social work supervision is practiced in South Africa. Experiences from the past and the lessons learned, continuously paved the future of supervision practice. The history of the helping profession is intertwined with South Africa’s political history and the history of social welfare in South Africa which may then also have had an impact on supervision practice in South Africa.

Figure: 2.2 Outcomes for social work supervision: Supervision-outcome chain



Outcome means end product of the learning process. The success of outcome-based supervision depends on the continuous, systematic and creative application of outcomes-based principles (Engelbrecht, 2010:209). Supervision is a critical success factor for social work practice, it provides protection for clients, develops and enhances social work service delivery and contributes to the development of social work. The quality of proper supervision that is structured allows professional socialisation, job satisfaction, job retention, better job performance and increased staff morale (Engelbrecht, 2010:9).

Engelbrecht (2010:9) further shows that social work supervisees do as their supervisors do, implying that supervisees have the tendency to act and perform in the same way as their supervisors, confirming that the supervisor is the role model for the supervisee. This demands that supervisors be aware of their modeling role for them to behave appropriately for the supervisees to copy the correct behaviour that enhances social work service delivery.

On the other hand Botha (2002:1) sees supervision as being used as a means to control and develop the quality of social welfare services to communities. It increases

accountability within the welfare organisation, and also equips new and inexperienced social workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective social welfare services to client systems. The South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP, 2005:38) emphasises the need for supervision as a special field in social work practice as reflected in the Code of Ethics of the South African Council for Social Service Professions. Botha (2002:4) further states that the South African context that is characterised by- the unpredictable, non-routine, non-standardised, highly individual and imperceptible nature of social work practice necessitates supervision. Kadushin and Harkness (2002: 102) as well as Munson (2002: 99) assert that supervision is a major determinant of the quality of service to clients, the level of professional development of social workers and the level of job satisfaction amongst social workers.

Following are the seven principles of supervision as identified by different authors:

Table 2.2 Seven Principles of Supervision

<p>1. Interpersonal interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision is an interpersonal transaction between two or more people. • The role of supervision is that experienced competent supervisors helps the supervisee and ensure the quality of services to clients (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:97; Tsui, 2005:17).
<p>2. Agency objectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of the supervisee is related to the objectives of the agency through the supervisor (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:99; Shulman; 1995:12).
<p>3. Flow of authority, information and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the process of supervision, there is use of authority (the organizational/administrative function) , the exchange of information and ideas

feelings.	(professional/ educational function) and expression of feelings (the emotional/ supportive function) (Munson, 2002:101; Tsui, 2005:19).
4. Professional values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision reflects the professional values of social work (Kadushin & Harkness 2002:111; Munson 2002:101; Tsui, 2005:21).
5. Job performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supervisor monitors job performance, conveys professional values, knowledge and skills, and provides emotional support to the supervisee (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:102; Tsui, 2005:24; Ho 2003:12).
6. Evaluation criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to reflect the short and long-term objectives of supervision, the criteria for evaluating effectiveness of supervision include satisfaction with supervision, job accomplishment and client outcomes (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:98).
7. Involving parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervision, from the holistic point of view, involves four parties: the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee and the client (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:102; Tsui, 2005:25; Ho, 2003:13).

It is evident from the preceding table that social work supervision is a process that unfolds within a particular context and is guided by particular principles.

2.5 LEGAL FRAMEWORK PERTAINING TO SUPERVISION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The environment within which social welfare services are rendered has change over the past years. Changes have been brought about by socio-economic and political situations in South Africa, which necessitated legislation and policy reviews to make social welfare progammes and services responsive to the needs of the poorest of the

poor (Department of Social Development, 2013:8). The legal framework plays an important role in social work practice today. Legislation has been passed in recent years, which has had a profound effect on social work practice. The understanding of legislation underpins and provides duties and powers for social work. Statutory and legal requirements are essential for effective and just social work practice.

In addition the statutory requirements of social work practice in South Africa, such as the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 as amended, the Code of Ethics (SACSSP, 2007), and the Children's Act (38 of 2005) all imply that the supervision of social workers is an important aspect in order to give effective and professional services.

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (Department of Social Development, 2006: 2) identifies supervision as a critical area that needs attention for the retention of social work professionals and to address the deterioration in the quality of service provision. Strategy further confirms that there is a lack of structured supervision in South Africa. The recommendation of the national Department of Social Development is that:- quality supervision should be promoted as a strategy to retain existing social workers and to recruit new social workers in the field of social work in South Africa (Cloete, 2012:13).

The national Department of Social Development, together with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) established a task team in 2012 for the development of a Supervision Framework for Social Workers in South Africa. The framework embraces the Department of Social Development, Non-Governmental Organisations, other state departments, Local Government and Social Workers in Private Practice on how they should conduct effective supervision. However the framework needs to be customised to suit their varied needs (Supervision Framework for Social Work Profession in South Africa, 2012:3). The Framework was introduced as a response to improve the social work profession, social work supervision and to address the shortage of social workers in South Africa. The recommendation in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers was that quality social work

supervision be provided through the transfer of skills, including mentoring newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17).

In the Department of Social Development, with reference to supervision of social workers, the employer operates within different policies and legislative frameworks, including the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996. The constitution Section 195(1) clarifies the basic values and principles governing public administration in. The principles are as follows: (a) a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted; and (b) good human resources management and career development practices in order to maximize human potential that must be cultivated. The Constitution places emphasis on equality in all spheres of life, human dignity, and the right to social security, respect and the security of children's rights. The Constitution provides the guiding principles for all the legislation and policies.

Based on the legal framework discussed above, it becomes clear that social work supervision has an important role to play in ensuring that newly qualified social workers learns about all these requirements so that he/she can implement social work service delivery within the stipulated frameworks.

2.6 THE FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

Social work supervision has developed according to the following themes: individual supervision with a focus on administrative functions, case work, group work and community work (Kadushin, 1992:109; Tsui, 2005:29). Supervision comprises a number of different functions, according to Driscoll (2007:14). Kadushin's model of supervision outlines three functions; educational, supportive and administrative as stated in Kadushin (1976). These functions have been further defined by Proctor (1987) as formative, restorative and normative, describing them in terms of an interactive framework for clinical supervision, suggesting that all three functions should be overlapping and flexible.

The following table outlines the three primary functions of supervision as stated in the guidelines for social workers in Northern Sydney and Central Coast Area Health Service.

Table: 2.3 Three primary functions of supervision

Educational (Formative).	: Educational development of each worker in a manner that enhances their full potential. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing knowledge and skills• Developing self-awareness• Reflecting on practice• Integrating theory into practice• Facilitating professional reasoning.
Supportive (Restorative).	: The maintenance of harmonious working relationships with a focus on morale and job satisfaction. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dealing with job-related stress• Sustaining worker morale• Developing of a sense of professional self-worth.
Administrative (Normative)	: The promotion and maintenance of good standards of work, including ethical practice, accountability measures and adhering to policies of the agency and administration. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarification of roles and responsibilities• Work load management• Review and assessment of work• Addressing organisation and practice issues.

Adapted from Northern Sydney and Central Coast Area Health Service, Social Work Supervision and Consultation Guideline :- (2009:4).

The researcher is of the opinion that a combination of educational, administrative and supportive supervision is necessary for the development of ethically competent and professional social workers.

- *Administrative supervision*

Administrative supervision is oriented towards agency policy or organisational demands and focuses on the supervisee's level of functioning on the job and work assigned. Kadushin (cited in Smith, 2012:4) defines the administrative function of supervision as being primarily concerned with ensuring that the agency's policies and procedures are implemented correctly, efficiently and appropriately. Hilton (2007:1) sees the administration component of supervision as the supervisor's structural frame where the framework allows supervisors to provide supervisees with clear written guidelines about areas of job performance and provides a sense of safety for supervisees. In support Maas and Ney (2005:3) also stress the importance of having clear guidelines for supervisees in terms of job descriptions, expectations, procedures, philosophy and ethics of practice in order to ensure that workers' tasks are measurable.

According to the researcher, administrative supervision promotes and maintains a good standard of work, implementing agency policies, monitoring and improving work performance.

- *Educational supervision*

Educational supervision focuses on professional concerns and relates to special cases. It helps supervisees to better understand social work philosophy, become more self-aware, refine their knowledge on a particular caseload, and it focuses on staff development and training needs (Smith, 2012:5). It also includes activities in which the supervisee is guided to learn about assessment, treatment and intervention, identification and resolution of ethical issues, and evaluation and termination of services. Educational supervision according to the researcher is developing the skills and knowledge of social workers to equip them to, acquire professional competence

and engage in reflective practices. The educative function of supervision is likely to be poor if the supervisor has not received the right level of training.

- *Support components of supervision*

Support components of supervision according to: - Maas and Ney (2005:2) refers to four areas of support needed by social work supervisees that is, emotional, instrumental, conceptual and institutional and they are briefly discussed below.

- **Emotional support:** helps social work supervisees to become aware of and understand their own emotional reaction and themes of their work.
- **Instrumental support:** assists supervisees in managing their task schedule and task within the organisation.
- **Conceptual support:** helps social work supervisees to link their understanding of theoretical knowledge to their personal experiences.
- **Institutional support:** helps social work supervisees in understanding: their job description and expectations, the vision and policies of the organisation, supervision and in-service training of staff.

Hilton (2007:2) refers to the supportive component in supervision as the “Human Resource Frame” with the focus on compassion, support and empowerment of the supervisees, and placing people and their needs first.

Very often social work supervisees may not need help in meeting the challenges of their work; but rather need emotional support and motivation from supervisors because of the demands of the profession. Kadushin (in Smith, 2012:15) supports this by stating that this function should improve the morale and job satisfaction of social work supervisees, because the stress they face may lead to burn-out if they do not receive the necessary help.

The supervision support function focuses on the need of social work supervisees, and helps to identify the stresses accompanying the work and their impact on the worker.

There should be a close relationship between supervisor and supervisee. Supervision must be a safe space, one in which workers can discuss the positive and the negative emotions triggered by team members in supervisory relationships (Maas & Ney, 2005:2). According to Mitchell (2007:1), the support component provides emotional and psychological support that encourages workers to gain knowledge and promote self-development.

From the above, it seems that there is an agreement that supervisors need to give social work supervisees a safe space in supervision. The social work supervisees need to discuss their attitudes, beliefs and feelings openly in supervision and to be allowed to explore them. It is maintaining harmonious working relationships, high morale and job satisfaction.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In the chapter, literature sources were consulted to understand: social work profession, social work supervision and the functions of supervision.

The next chapter presents the findings of the research with regard to social work supervision within the Department of Social Department, Johannesburg Region.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of social work supervisees' experiences in relation to supervision, within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region. The Department of Social Development provides social work services to the entire Johannesburg Region at decentralised offices.

Due to the fact that this study adopted the qualitative research approach, data were collected through the semi-structured interviews and participants were selected by using purposive sampling. The researcher followed a systematic process of data analysis according to the step-wise framework proposed by Tesch (in Creswell, 2009:186) as was indicated in detailed in chapter 2 of this report.

The researcher conducted ten semi-structured interviews with social work supervisees. The participants were eight females and two males. This sample size was not determined at the beginning of the research but was determined by the point of data saturation. Data saturation occurred in the seventh interview but the researcher continued with interviews until the tenth participant as a way of guarding against new information from the participants. Data were collected from participants who are employed as social work supervisees in the Department of Social Development Johannesburg Region. The informed consent forms were signed by all the participants prior to the process of data collection. It is important to mention here that the themes used to analyse the data were mainly derived from the interview guide to ensure that all the aspects were covered.

The research problem on which the research was based was formulated as follows:

What are the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, in the Johannesburg Region?

3.2 PROFILE SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANTS

In order to give clarity to data collected, it is important that the profile of the participants in the study be provided as their background and personal experiences might bring some clarity on how they responded to different questions. To uphold confidentiality and the anonymity of participants, alphabetical codes were used instead of participants' names. The demographic data of ten participants who participated in the study are presented in Table 3.1 below which reflects participants' age, race, work section, work experience and the years under supervision.

Table 3.1 Biographical profile of the participants

PARTICIPANTS: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J.

Participant	Age	Gender	Race	Section	Work experience	Years under supervision
A	33	Female	Black	Alexandra	4	4
B	43	Male	Black	Orlando	8	8
C	34	Female	Black	Naledi	7	7
D	45	Female	Black	Johannesburg	10	10
E	37	Female	Black	Randburg	7	7
F	27	Male	Black	School intervention social work	5	5
G	33	Female	Black	Intake	3	3

H	34	Female	Black	Soweto	5	5
I	49	Female	Black	Johannesburg	4	4
J	38	Female	Black	Alexandra	8	8

- *Gender of participants*

The profile of the participants revealed that the majority were women. The gender distribution of participants' correlates with the statement made by Whalley (2012:92) in a General Social Care Council Report that social work has been seen traditionally as "caring" profession with a majority of women and minority of men. This is also supported by Dewane (2008:10) and McLean (2003:15) that social work is dominated by women due to the fact that its roles are perceived as "caring" and salaries have not been commensurate with other careers. Social work is practiced mainly by women and occupations dominated by females tend to have lower status than those dominated by men (Earle, 2008: 41; Baron & Byrne, 2000:193). This was not unexpected by the researcher as it is a common observation that the social work profession is mostly dominated by females.

- *Racial distribution of participants of social workers within the Johannesburg region*

Table 3.1 reflects that all participants were blacks. This is confirmed by the data base of the Department (Information from HR, 2015) as indicated in the table below:

Table 3.2 Racial profile of social workers within the Johannesburg region

Title	Black	Indian	Coloureds	Whites	Males	Females	Total
Regional Director	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Deputy Directors	3	1	0	0	1	3	4

Title	Black	Indian	Coloureds	Whites	Males	Females	Total
Assistant Directors	5	0	0	3	0	8	8
Supervisors	32	2	0	0	1	33	34
Social workers	273	0	0	0	25	248	273
TOTAL	314	3	0	3	28	292	320

There is a minority of coloureds, Asians and whites and most are not supervised but are part of management.

- *Years of experience*

Table 3.1, show that participants have between three to ten years' experience as social workers and are under supervision. The majority of participants are well experienced in the field of social work. Since participants have been appointed in the region, they have been subjected to supervision irrespective of their years of experience. This is supported by Munson (1993:16) that supervision is provided to all the social workers regardless of supervisees' level of experience or competency.

3.3 OVERVIEW OF THE THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

This section describes gives an overview of the various themes, sub-themes and categories as they emerged from the analysis of the collected data. After this, the themes, sub-themes and categories will be discussed with excerpts from the interviews with participants and a literature control.

Table 3.3 below presents an overview of the themes, sub-themes, categories and sub-categories in order to provide an overview of the findings.

Table 3.3 Themes; sub-themes; categories and sub-categories

THEME 1: The participants job requirements		
Sub-theme	Categories	Sub-categories
1.1. Completed degree or diploma in social work.	University or College	3 to 4 years
1. 2. Registration with the council as social workers.	SACSSP	4 to ten years
1.3. Practising 3 methods of social work.	<p>1.3.1. Casework: Children’s Act 38 (No 38 of 2005) as amended.</p> <p>1.3.2. Group work and Community work</p>	<p>Statutory services: opening and finalisation of children’s court enquiries for children in need of care and protection.</p> <p>Placing children in alternative care.</p> <p>Placing children in Rehabilitation centres or for detoxification in the hospital.</p> <p>Parenting skills; support group for foster children.</p> <p>HIV/AIDS awareness</p>

3.3.2. THEME 2: The participants understanding of supervision		
Sub-theme	Categories	Sub-categories
2.1 A Contract 2.2 A Structure 2.3 A Process 2.4 Sessions 2.5 Methods of supervision 2.6 Functions of supervision	2.6.1 Supervision is provided to empower, support and guide. 2.6.2 Providing supervision means monitoring, reviewing and evaluating supervisees' job.	
THEME 3: The participants' views on the structure of supervision within DSD. Johannesburg Region.		
Sub-theme	Categories	Sub-categories
3.1 Lack of formal structure 3.2 Lack of platform where the challenges of critical self-reflection and professional growth can occur.		

<p>3.3 No contract signed to provide for the structure of supervision</p> <p>3.4 No guidelines or policy in relation to supervision</p> <p>3.5 No planning for the best learning needs of supervisees.</p>		
<p>THEME 4: The challenges experienced by participants in performing their daily duties.</p>		
Sub-theme	Categories	Sub-categories
<p>4.1 Lack of support</p> <p>4.2 High number of supervisees under a supervisor and high caseloads</p> <p>4.3 Burnout</p> <p>4.4 Political interference</p> <p>4.5 Supervisors do not have time to supervise.</p> <p>4.6 Supervisors are not empowered to perform their role and responsibilities.</p> <p>4.7 Quality versus quantity</p>		

THEME 5: Suggestions to improve supervision within the DSD.		
Sub-theme	Categories	Sub-categories
<p>5.1 Training to be provided for social workers in relation to supervision.</p> <p>5.2 Selection criteria for supervisors should be revisited.</p> <p>5.3 Number of social workers under one supervisor should be reduced to.</p> <p>5.4 Rotation policy should be developed and implemented to avoid burnout.</p> <p>5.5 Supervisors to assume multiple roles to ensure adjustment of supervisees.</p> <p>5.6 Structured supervision is needed.</p> <p>5.7 Educate political leaders on the role of supervision in social work context.</p> <p>5.8 Social workers to keep abreast of developments in the field of social work.</p>		

5.9 Supervision should be a two-way process.		
5.10 Performance evaluation should be on a regular basis.		

3.4 PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

Each theme is now presented with its sub-themes and categories supported by relevant quotations from the participants' interviews and literature control, where possible.

3.4.1 THEME 1: THE PARTICIPANTS' JOB REQUIREMENTS

The first requirement for participants to practice as social workers, they are required to complete the degree and register with SACSSP. The participants were requested to describe their current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks they were expected to perform. During the process of data analysis it was discovered that the participants' unique experience with regard to job requirements became a theme. The following were found to be the sub-themes flowing from the main theme:

3.4.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Completed degree or diploma in social work

Social work is a professional service, rendered by a registered social worker, to promote, enhance or restore the capacity and social functioning of individuals, groups and communities (SACSSP,2012:2). Within the South African context since 1999 it was emphasised that social work functions should be executed within an empowering and developmental paradigm as stated by Midgley (2001:245), as well as the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:15).

All the participants were qualified social workers who completed their degree in social work from different universities. The South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) prescribes the exit level outcomes for social workers to complete the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree for four years on NQF level 8 in South Africa (SAQA, 2010). The qualification specifies that learners must demonstrate an understanding of the roles, functions, knowledge and skills for effective social work supervision and consultation (Lombard, Grobbelaar & Pruis, 2003: 12).

3.4.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Registration with the professional council as social workers

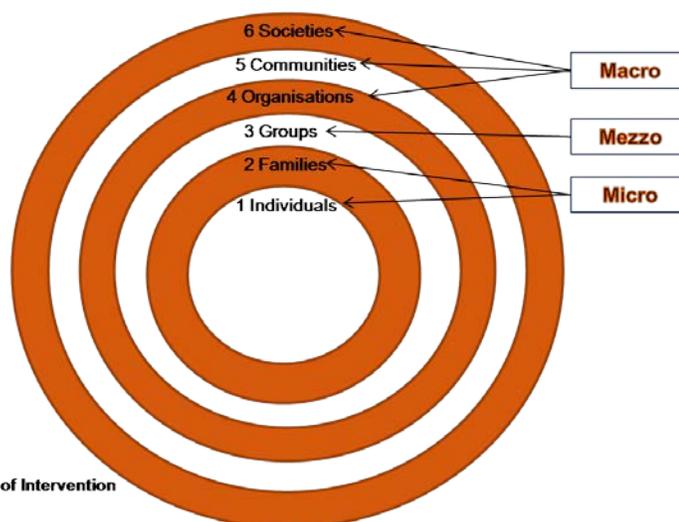
Participants are registered with SACSSP as a professional body as social workers. The term “social worker” in the South African context is a protected title in that no person without the requisite qualification and registration with SACSSP may use the title or practice as a social worker; any person who violates this is liable to prosecution (SACSSP, 2012:3). The regulations governing the registration of social workers with the council are made in terms of the Social Services Professions Act 110 (No. 110 of 1978) as amended; as social work is regulated it is directly accountable to the Ministry and the DSD; as stipulated in the abovementioned Act supervision is the strategy used to ensure accountability (Department of Social Development, 2007:14).

3.4.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: Practicing the three primary methods of social work

Vulnerable children in South Africa receive care and protection, in various forms that includes temporary safe placement, foster care, adoption and placement in child and youth care centres. The social work professional body SACSSP (2007:6); states that the social work profession is mandated by various constituencies and by legislation to act in the best interest of individuals, families, organisations and communities; social work is accountable to various stakeholders: employers; courts and client systems at various levels (SACSSP, 2007:6). Social work is the only professional group with the mandate to undertake statutory functions including adoptions and fostercare. It is further mandated to do casework, group work, community work, social work supervision; social work administration and research (SACSSP, 2007: 6).

Figure 2.3: Three methods of social work: Case work= micro; Group work= mezzo and Community work=macro.

Adapted from Draft Reviewed Policy for Developmental Social Welfare Services (2010:33)



The three primary methods of social work were identified as the themes during data analysis namely: casework; group work and community work. According to Kadushin (1992:10) and Tsui (2005:45) social work supervision has developed according to the following themes: individual supervision with a focus on administrative functions, casework, group work and community work.

3.4.3.1 Category 1.3.1 Case work

The participants were requested to describe their current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks to perform. Some of the participants in the study highlighted the importance of casework (statutory services) and these perceptions were articulated as follows:

“I am dealing with statutory cases; specifically with children and families. The focus is on children who are in need of care and protection; that is, the vulnerable children. I deal with children who are abused, neglected, abandoned or orphaned. Most of the

cases I am dealing with are orphaned children. The cases are reported by maternal or paternal family member, who is prepared to foster the child/ren. The cases will be reported to the intake section and directed to different areas where the family resides. When I receive the file, I start by investigating the circumstances of a child/ren and the family. Compile a report and advise the Children's Court as whether a child is in need of care and protection or not. Then recommend the suitable placement for a child/ren; is either foster care; adoption; place of safety or child and youth care centre. I also prepare the child and prospective foster parent before bringing the case before the Children's Court, on the processes and procedures. As a social worker I should ensure that the child/ren is provided with a suitable place to live and living conditions are conducive to the child/ren's health; well-being and development; and financial support. I also guide, support and assist foster parents to make decisions that serve the best interest of the child/ren. The court will issue an order regarding where the child should be placed in alternative care for the period of two years or more. If the child is above 18 years and attending school, I write the report to the Canalization Section for extension until the child turns 21 years."

"In casework we are dealing with children who are in need of care and protection, either the child has been abandoned or orphaned and is without any visible means of support, displays behaviour which cannot be controlled, begs, lives or work in the streets and abuse substance. As a social worker I make sure that I put children in foster care or children's home."

"I am doing statutory work, focusing on opening and finalisation of Children's Court enquiries and placing children in alternative care. After finalisation of Children's Court enquiry, the child is either placed in foster care, children's home or adoption. Most cases that I am dealing with are orphaned children, where either both parents are deceased; or mother/father deceased and mother/father's whereabouts are unknown. They are related placement, meaning that the child's prospective caregiver/guardian is a member who in most cases has being involved in caring for the child."

“Foster care placement is priority of the minister since the implementation of the new Children’s Act (38 of 2005) as amended in 2010. On a monthly basis we focus on foster care backlog working on the lapsed orders; to ensure that the children are provided with services and their basic needs are met. I am doing statutory work focusing on children who are in need of care and protection after it has been established that either the child is abused, neglected, orphaned or abandoned. After investigations, and placing the matter before court, with the court decision I place the child in suitable alternative care in order to protect the child from physical or psychological harm. I act in the best interest of the child.”

“I deal with children who are in need of care and protection. Those children are either neglected, abandoned, abused or without visible means of support. If the case is reported to DSD I do investigations and check the circumstances of the child. If I found that the child is in need of care and protection, I open a Children’s Court enquiry. After intensive investigations, that confirm that the child needs placement I finalise the case. I may recommend that the child be placed in alternative care that might be; in place of safety pending permanent placement either in foster care, adoption or in child and youth care centre. The Presiding Officer will finalise the placement. If the child is placed in foster care, I assist foster parents to apply for foster care grant and to monitor and supervise the placement of the child. I monitor always to check if the placement is still suitable for the child. The placement should be in the best interest of the child. If the placement is not serving the best interest of the child; I transfer the child to alternative care; which is also monitored.”

“I am a statutory social worker working with children who are in need of care and protection. I am opening and finalizing new fostercare cases; and extending placement with the Children’s Court. Cases where children are in-conflict with the law I refer them to the Probation Unit.”

Other participants highlighted chemical substance abuse; school intervention; and Intake as part of their job requirements. The following views were voiced:

“I also deal with chemical substance abuse by children and adults; where I refer the clients to hospital for detoxification services either as an in-patient or out-patient; or SANCA for counselling or to rehabilitation centres. The client should be willing or can be forced by the law to go to a rehabilitation centre. If the client is forced by the law; I appear before the criminal court for the magistrate to apply for the committal letter for the client to be committed. The program in rehab takes close to six months. In that period I will be preparing and supporting the family to accept the client. If the client is accepted by the family, his/her chances of relapse become minimised. In the foster family if the child is giving them challenges for example displaying uncontrollable behaviour I refer the case for psychological assessment; or relationship problems to FAMSA. I also run parental skills programme to assist foster parents to manage the children under their care.”

“As school intervention social workers, our main focus is on substance abuse within primary and secondary schools in Alexandra. The Department of Education felt that there was a need for public schools to have social workers in orders to deal with increased substance abuse amongst learners as teachers are not trained to address the issue. The DSD National office was approached as this is a national problem. The school intervention project is piloted in Johannesburg Region to check if it could be effective before it could be implemented nationally.”

“Our section is regarded as the face of the DSD as it is the point of entry. The services that I provide include front desk, office interviews, telephone interview, crisis intervention, home visits and administration support. At the front desk I briefly interview all individual members to assess their challenging problems and refer them to the relevant resources. Most cases that I am dealing with -include child abuse and neglect, family problems, substance abuse, elderly abuse, marital problems, custody, foster care placement, uncontrollable children, mental illness, physical disabilities just to name few. As the DSD is funding NGOs specialising in different fields, we have memorandum of understanding that if we assess the cases we should refer them to the appropriate organisations that provide those needed services. For example if a client experience marital problems I refer the client to FAMSA, alcohol problems to

SANCA, mental problems to mental health or hospital for assessment; and the children under the age of twelve to Child Welfare.”

“I do statutory cases for the children in need of care and protection, where I place them in alternative care until they turn 18 years. When they are attending school, I extend the order with Canalization Section until they turn 21 years.”

It is evident from the above responses that most of the participants render statutory services mainly to children in need of care and protection. As they address these problematic situations it becomes very important for them to be under a structured supervision process for them to meet the needs of the clients. Without the fit between what is expected from them and what their environment contains, in the form of structured supervision, it becomes difficult for them to meet the needs of the children and their families.

3.4.1.3.2 Category 1.3.2 Group work and Community work

A few verbatim responses from participants presented below demonstrate the participants' views on how they practice group work and community work:

“In the parenting skills project, I teach and share with foster parents about the challenges they experience with their foster children. We focus on different developmental stages of children and the challenges of the stage. Foster parents encourage, share experiences and support each other on how to handle the children under their care. Some of the children are HIV positive as their parent/s died of the infection. I support both the children and the foster parents: by providing awareness campaigns in partnership with the clinics around the area to educate them. I also educate the public around Johannesburg CBD about the processes and procedures to follow if they want to apply for foster care placement; and for foster care grant.”

“I am also expected to organise community work programmes, and also render group work with foster parents, children and prospective foster parents. I run support groups

where a group of parents and children share experiences and challenges regarding foster placements. Due to a high number of orphans, neglected and abandoned children my focus is on casework. Our National office is concerned with foster care backlog and need us to focus on the issue and report on a monthly basis.”

“I also run groups and community work with foster children and parents.”

Botha (2010:144) also supported the statements of participants that one of the main functions of a social worker working for the government is statutory work. She highlights that at certain welfare agencies, up to 80% of a social workers' caseloads may consist of statutory cases. It is clear that the participants understand their roles as social workers. The researcher noted during the process of data analysis that all participants recognised the tasks expected from them within the Department of Social Development. It becomes then very important for the DSD to work on improving social work service provision by structuring supervision so that supervisees are empowered through effective supervision.

3.4.2 THEME 2: THE PARTICIPANTS' UNDERSTANDING OF SUPERVISION

Understanding supervision was identified to be one of the themes during data analysis. Supervision within a social work organisation can be defined as an interactional process within the context of a positive, anti-discriminatory relationship, based on distinct theories, models and perspectives, whereby a supervisor supervises a social work practitioner by performing educational, supportive and administrative functions in order to promote efficient and professional rendering of social work services (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002, 46; O' Donoghue, 2000:5). Botha (2002:1) views supervision as an activity which promotes the professional identity as well as the performance of social workers.

All the participants in the study understand supervision, as striving to improve the social work profession. The need for supervision as a specialised field in social work practice is also reflected in the Code of Ethics of the South African Council for Social

Service Professions (SACSSP, 2005:38). Effective supervision requires knowledge of the principles of supervision and the ability to demonstrate necessary skills such as addressing both strengths and challenges of the supervisees, modelling and discussing ethical practice, and providing support and encouragement in the learning context (NASW, 2012:10).

The aim of supervision is to ensure that a quality service is provided to social workers through the provision of advice and guidance. Kadushin and Harkness (2002:203-205) mention that the social work supervisor should focus on the development of the professional identity of the worker rather than on his/her personal identity, because supervision has a direct relation to the enhancement of effective and efficient services to the service user, and it should be structured.

The participants are in agreement that supervision is important in order to provide effective supervision. The participants were requested to share their understanding of supervision. The researcher noted during the process of data analysis that all the participants' recognise and understand the importance of supervision. The following sub-themes were formed from these views, namely a contract, a structure, a process and sessions, the methods and functions of supervision and these are discussed below:

3.4.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1. A contract

Contracting is necessary in supervision; the contract can be written or verbal. The written contract is important because it is signed and everyone has a copy to serve as proof that supervision was provided (Munson, 2002:175). Furthermore, Munson (2002:176) mentions that the contents of the contract must include:- the work that is to be undertaken by the worker, special conditions on how supervision will be provided, the model of supervision to be used, time and frequency of supervision and the duration of the supervision process, procedures to be used if either party does not meet the conditions of the contract and must be flexible in the sense that items can be changed or added.

The following are some of the responses from the participants about the contract:

“The supervisor and the supervisee are expected to have a contract. They should contract about the date, time, venue and agenda for the session. Minutes of the session should be taken and thereafter signed by both parties as a sign of agreement on what had transpired. Supervision should be provided on a weekly or monthly basis either individual; group or peer supervision.”

“There is no structured supervision where you contract with the supervisor on the venue, time, date and the purpose or aim of the session. Any time that I experience any challenge I consult. I can say I am not exposed to any supervision and I don’t see its role.”

“In the DSD supervisors don’t render proper supervision that is structured, where we sign contracts and agree on the date, venue and time and method of supervision: individual, group or peer. I only consult with my supervisor when I have a difficult case to discuss.”

“Since I joined the DSD, I have never been exposed to supervision. I did not contract with my supervisor on supervision.”

From the discussions above it is evident that a contract plays a crucial role in supervision since it stipulates the conditions for supervision. Bernard and Goodyear (in Cooper & Lesser, 2002:24) support the above responses by stating that :- supervision is professional and a contractual learning process that begins with an agreement between the supervisor and the social work supervisee on what is to be learned, and how the learning will take place. It is evident that contracting in supervision is not taken seriously within the DSD, because a large number of participants reported that they have never contracted with their supervisors for supervision. If there is no contracting in supervision, both parties will not be committed to the process.

3.4.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2. A structure

According to Munson (2002:12) both the supervisor and supervisee must plan the structure that is best for the learning needs, for example which method of supervision must be used and when. The formal structure for supervision must be clear to the supervisee. The supervisor and the supervisee should plan the structure suitable for learning either as an individual, group or peer supervision.

The participants provided the following statements about the structure of supervision within the DSD. Johannesburg Region:

“Yes, I am not supervised and I have no experience about supervision within DSD. There is no structure. According to my understanding, supervision should have a structure.”

“Currently I can say there is no structured supervision provided in the section.”

“I mean there is no structure where I meet with my supervisor on a weekly or monthly basis for a session for supervision.”

“Supervision is not structured at all within the DSD. I don’t understand why it is not structured. There is no supervision structure or process I am exposed to. I need to sit down with my supervisor and share my frustrations, concerns and experiences.”

“There is no structure that we are following.”

The above statements tell us that the participants are in agreement with regard to the importance of having a structured supervision to provide effective and efficient services to clients. The responses given by the participants reflected that there is lack of formal supervision. It became clear that structured supervision is not provided to participants. Kadushin and Harkness (2002:28) state that the organization determines the structure of social work supervision. The participants indicated that supervision is necessary for support, helps to equip supervisees with new skills and personal development. Kadushin (1992:30) supports the above responses by stating that supervision is significant in social work because the greatest percentage of social workers perform

their professional functions within an agency, which has structure and requires supervision.

3.4.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3. A process

The process of social work supervision is further embedded in an interactional process as proposed by Munson (1983:7). While Tsui (2005:41) is in agreement with Munson, he also discusses the supervision process in terms of: the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee, the supervision contract, the format of supervision and the phases of supervision.

The participants gave responses as follows:-

“I mean I was never exposed to any processes of supervision, for the past eight years. I think that new social workers should be exposed to all the processes of supervision in order to understand what is expected of them.”

“There is no process I am exposed to, since I joined the DSD.”

The above statements show that participants value the processes of supervision. It is clear to the researcher that there are no processes and the participants believe that if processes are implemented, there would be improved quality of service to the clients. The statements are supported by Kadushin and Harkness (2002: 217) that the supervisor should teach the supervisee about what the worker is expected to do professionally and how she/he has to act during the helping process.

3.4.2.4 Sub-theme 2.4. Supervisory sessions

Kadushin and Harkness (2002: 391) believe that supervision should be conducted regularly because it is easy for a busy supervisor to fail to formalise the regularity of supervision and as a result supervision is delayed or avoided completely. The participants expect that they should have supervision sessions on a regular basis as shown below:

“There are no supervision sessions that exposed me to an environment of support and learning.”

“There is no supervision sessions provided to me. In my section the supervisor’s post is vacant, we have an acting supervisor who doesn’t provide any supervision sessions and has no experience in supervision.”

It is evident from the responses above that the supervision contract that is structured, and has process and sessions plays a crucial role in social work. A well formulated contract results in successful supervision and will result in quality service delivery to the client system. The participants responded that in the DSD Johannesburg Region, there is no supervision and participants resort to consultation when necessary.

3.4.2.5 Sub-theme 2.5 Methods of supervision

According to Kadushin and Harkness (2002:391), there are different methods of supervision that can be used in working with supervisees. They can be used interchangeably. They are the individual, group or peer supervision. The individual supervisory conference is the most common kind of meeting between supervisors and workers, but in many agencies individual supervision is supplemented by other forms of supervision, especially group supervision. In the course of providing individual supervision to a worker, a supervisor may (1) review the worker’s entire caseload over the course of multiple conferences, so that all cases receive some attention; (2) review the worker’s cases selectively; (3) review only cases with which the worker is having (or is likely to have) difficulty; or (4) review only cases the worker selects for review.

Group supervision is a meeting between a supervisor and a group of workers who fall under the supervisor’s administrative authority; with a typical group including four or five workers. In some agencies, the group conference is the main form of supervision and in most agencies group supervision is used along with individual supervision. The purpose of group conferences are scheduled ahead of time to take place on a regular basis and their content is planned in advance. Each group conference should have a clearly defined purpose (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:391). The supervisor exercises

the least amount of leadership necessary to ensure that the group achieves its objectives. Over the life of the group, the supervisor should become progressively less active and allow the workers to take over more leadership activities. Botha (2002:124) mentions that irrespective of the employment of individual, group supervision or peer supervision, supervision should address the learning needs of supervisees.

The participants understand the methods of supervision. They furthermore highlight that they are not provided with any method of supervision but consult with their peers if they experience any challenges in the work place and these sentiments are confirmed by the responses below:

“Together the supervisor and supervisees must plan the structure that is best for the learning needs of the supervisees, for example which method of supervision must be used and when. A formal structure should be clear to the supervisees.”

“I thought I was going to be provided with individual supervision to adjust and to develop a mutual relationship with my supervisor. I feel we need to be having a structured supervision either individual or group to share needs and concerns.”

“A supervisor is only having the position; there are no supervision sessions planned for us as individuals, or in groups. We are struggling in the region.”

3.4.2.6 Sub-theme 2.6 The functions of supervision

This sub-theme deals with supervision functions. Kadushin (1992:97); Botha (2002:2); Tsui (2005:111) are of the opinion that the following three functions of supervision are important, namely the administrative, educational and supportive functions. Kadushin and Harkness (2002:23) support supervision being educational, administrative and supportive. Supervision can be used as an educational tool for training, as an administrative function for quality control; and as a means of professional support. Kadushin (1992:96) and NASW (2012:15) support the purpose of supervision as administrative, educational and supportive.

The participants were requested to share their experience of the functions of supervision according to their experience. The following views were voiced:

“The functions of supervision are supposed to be educational, administrative and support. On a quarterly basis we identify our training needs, for the past three years I was not exposed or provided with any training whereas my training needs were identified. Even our supervisors don’t make follow up about the training. Since I am not supervised I don’t see the function of supervision, I do not receive any support from my supervisor.”

“There is no supervision provided. I think the purpose of supervision is to support, and give information with regard to challenges I face as a supervisee. After dealing with challenges the supervisor must evaluate if there is any progress. If there is no progress or development the supervisor should provide training where necessary or link me with the organization that could assist me with the needed training. In my section there is no support provided by the supervisor that is why I resort to peer support.”

“As social workers we need to develop love and passion for our profession. By providing supervision I think we can protect social workers from being charged with professional misconduct. When I do my telephone and office interviews, and home visits, sometimes I fail to record the process and this gives the impression that I did not do the job. Those are some of the things the supervisors should discuss with supervisees and explain to us the importance of record keeping.”

Participants reflected their understanding of the functions of supervision as being the development of social workers into competent, independent and autonomous people. From the above responses, it is obvious that participants understand what the functions of supervision are, but they are challenged by the fact that they are not supervised as an organisational expectation. Most of the participants only consult when they need a second opinion in complicated cases but rely mainly on peer support most of the time. This is not doing any good for the profession as there might be unsatisfactory services provided to the clients, without the knowledge of the supervisors.

The participants understand the methods of supervision but supervision is not provided within the DSD, Johannesburg Region. The participants indicated that they only get support from their peers, if they had to deal with difficult cases. The state of affairs with regard to supervision in the Johannesburg Region indicates that the environment in which the social work supervisees are operating is not facilitating a fit as argued by the person-in-environment perspective. Even if the supervisees have a reasonable understanding of social work supervision, which they might have acquired during their years of training, they need continued guidance from their supervisors for them to render effective services to their clients.

Category 2.6.1 Supervision is provided to empower, support and guide

Tsui (2005:43) reflects that a professional relationship is when the social work supervisee uses the knowledge acquired through training, also education received from supervisor to ensure that the needs of clients are met.

Some of the participants in the study highlighted the importance of supervision as being empowering, supporting and guiding. This view was articulated as follows.

“The role of supervision is to empower, support, guide and educate. When I have difficult or challenging cases, I expect the supervisor to give me direction. There is no guidance since I have been employed and there is no supervision.”

“Supervision is a process of learning and developing new skills. I have been in the DSD for three years. Since I was appointed I was never orientated or supervised. The role of a supervisor in supervision should be of a teacher, guide, gatekeeper and consultant.”

It is clear that participants agree that the role of supervision is to empower, support and guide, but they acknowledge that they receive no such empowerment, support or guidance. With this gap it could be that the supervisees perform their duties without the assurance that what they are doing is correct and this has a negative impact on the quality of social work services they provide.

Category 2.6.2 Providing supervision means monitoring, reviewing and evaluating supervisees' job.

The supervisor monitors job performance, conveys professional values, knowledge and skills, and provides emotional support to the supervisee (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002: 105; Tsui, 2005:47; Ho, 2003:9).

The following responses illustrate participants' views of the role of the supervisor in their environment:

“Supervisors are paid to provide supervision services; therefore the DSD should hold them accountable. They must be monitored and evaluated to ensure that there is structure and process; and they understand their role as supervisors.”

“The role of supervision is supposed to be monitoring, reviewing and evaluating. The supervisor should monitor work performance of supervisees by reading their records, reviewing statistical reports and providing feedback for improvement. Also support supervisees to manage their caseloads. Supervision should be planned and be developmental.”

“Supervision should be provided to every social worker within the DSD, if the social worker functions independently she should consult. There should be continuous evaluation, assessment and support within supervision sessions to ascertain the level of functioning of the supervisee in preparation for moving from supervision to consultation level.”

The supervisor has a role in staff recruitment and selection, inducting and placing the social work supervisees, work planning and delegation. The participants are of the opinion that supervision should be monitored, reviewed and evaluated in DSD, and the supervisors should be held accountable. The supervisor has the responsibility of delegating work to the supervisee, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating work.

3.4.3 THEME 3: PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF SUPERVISION WITHIN THE DSD

Supervision is a critical success factor for social work practice; it provides protection for clients develops and enhances social work services delivery and contributes to the development of social work (DSD, 2006:12). Supervision that is of good quality and structured allows professional socialisation, job satisfaction, job retention, better job performance and increased staff morale (DSD, 2006:12). The researcher noted during the process of data analysis that all the participants recognised that there is no structure of supervision in DSD.

3.4.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1 Lack of a formal structure

Structured supervision is used as a means to control and develop the quality of social welfare services to communities. It increases accountability within the welfare organisation, and also equips new and inexperienced social workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective social welfare services to client systems (Botha 2002:1).

Some of the participants in this study highlighted that the nature of supervision is not structured and this perception was articulated by the following statements:-

“Structure refers to the formats for conducting supervision, such as individual or group supervision. Together the supervisor and supervisees must plan the structure that is best for learning needs for example, which method of supervision must be used and when. A formal structure should be clear to the supervisees.”

“Since I have been employed by the DSD for the past seven years, I have never been exposed to any supervision structure; where the supervisor and supervisee sit together or in a group to discuss difficult issues in order to improve service delivery.”

“Exactly, there are no processes that we are following as I am not supervised. I benefit from peer support. They assist me a lot in dealing with most difficult and challenging cases. We consult on a daily basis if we experience any challenges; that assists me to provide

satisfactory services to my clients. There is no structure.”

“In my experience, I don’t think there is any structured supervision I am exposed to.”

“Yes, I don’t attend any planned session with the supervisor. As I mentioned there is no supervision only consultation. There is no structure and process I am exposed to.”

“If there was proper structure of supervision and assessment of cases by supervisor, we would not be running like head less chicken. Proper supervision is very important to overcome political interference, and also the politicians to understand the role of social workers.”

The above given quotations, reflect that within the DSD Johannesburg Region, there is no formal structure for supervision. What the supervisees are experiencing at the DSD is not in line with what is stated by Munson (2002:12) that effective supervision must be structured. Due to the fact that there is no structured supervision at all, the researcher is of the view that there could not be any claim of providing effective supervision at this stage within the DSD.

3.4.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2 No platform where the challenges of critical self-reflection and professional growth can be raised and managed

The decline in quality social work service delivery, which necessitates the use of supervision, is attributed to high case-loads; emotional and other trauma experienced by social workers in the process of service delivery; high stress level due to personal, professional and social demands; lack of resources to deliver on their mandate as well as the supervision of social workers by non-social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006:14).

The participants responses to the challenge of critical self-reflection and professional growth are as follows:-

“I feel that supervisors should provide a conducive environment that is characterized by trust and respect; where the challenges of critical self-reflection and professional growth

can occur.”

“Supervisors need to update themselves on new developments, social problems globally and encourage supervisees to read and exchange knowledge during the supervision process to facilitate professional growth in supervision. Both should be open to learning and development.”

“Supervisors should be open to learning, establish relationships with other stakeholders to learn how they provide supervision and read more books to update themselves and assist supervisees if they have challenges during supervision. Both the supervisors and supervisees should be trained in report writing to know what is expected by the courts. Supervisors should know what to check in the report when providing supervision. That will improve the standard of reports produced by the supervisees.”

The above mentioned responses from the participants’ reflect that in DSD Johannesburg region there is no platform where challenges, of critical self-reflection and professional growth can be raised and managed.

3.4.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3 No signed contract providing for structured supervision

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy of the Department of Social Development (2006:7) confirms that there is lack of structured supervision in South Africa, and there is an investigation into the current supervisory practices in the country.

In addition to what the participants have shared regarding the structure of supervision within DSD in Johannesburg Region the participants said:-

“Yes, I am not supervised. Since I joined DSD I am supervising myself. If I experience challenges with my case load, I consult with my supervisor. If the supervisor doesn’t provide satisfactory answers I resort to peer support. There is no supervision or the structure that is in place in our section.”

This suggests that the supervisors are not well equipped to guide if they give unsatisfactory answers.

“Ever since I joined the DSD; I don’t remember myself signing any contract with my supervisor, sitting or meeting with her for an hour. I have not done that for the past ten years.”

“There is no contract I have signed with my supervisor.”

It is clear from these statements that the participants value the importance of supervision but there is no contract signed to provide structured supervision. The participants are in agreement that a contract should be signed in order to provide effective supervision.

3.4.3.4 Sub-theme 3.4 No guidelines or policy in relation to supervision

With regard to the guidelines or a policy related to supervision within the DSD, the participants said the following:-

“In the department there is no structure, guidelines or policy in relation to supervision. There should be draft guidelines or policy on how supervision should be rendered within the region.”

“Supervisors are doing injustice to new social workers who are joining the profession by not providing them the necessary supervision. There should be a policy in the DSD guiding the supervisees and supervisors on procedures and processes of supervision. Training should be provided to all the parties.”

“The supervisor should understand and be knowledgeable on the aim, goal, objectives, policies, legislations and acts governing the DSD; know other departments and Non-profit organizations that provide services to the clients in order to assist and guide supervisees to deal with their cases effectively and provide satisfactory services to the clients.”

“Supervision should be given a priority, be structured and have a policy to guide the whole process.”

According to the researcher, supervision is influenced by the goals, structure, policies and procedures in the organization. DSD should develop a policy on supervision. The policy should specify how long supervision should take place and what variables will determine

the supervisee's readiness to be released to the consultation process. The policy has to specify all relevant factors coupled with what is expected from both parties. The policy must be made available to both parties and be monitored.

The participants understand the guidelines and policy related to supervision, but they responded that there is no policy or guidelines that they are exposed to, as they are not being supervised.

3.4.3.5 Sub-theme 3.5 No planning to address the learning needs of supervisees

Social work supervision is a process which takes place within a professional relationship between a social work supervisor and the supervisee, with the ultimate goal to facilitate critical reflections upon action, processes, person and the context of social work practice (O'Donoghue, 2000:5). Some participants in this study highlighted that there is no planning from supervisors for their learning, and this is confirmed by the following statements:-

"There is no supervision in my section or any planning. We don't learn as we are not provided with the opportunity to learn from each other. As social workers we need supervision as an instrument to develop and improve mutual relationships in social work and to improve the profession."

"Supervisors should understand that supervision is not one-sided where they decide about the content of the supervision process, but need to involve supervisees in the process. Supervision process should benefit both the supervisor and supervisee."

"The role of supervision is supposed to be guidance and empowerment of junior social workers. It is a two-way process where the supervisor and social worker share experiences and learning. I get most of my support from my colleagues and I learn from them."

It is clear from the above given statements that participants understand supervision and the structure that should be provided but there is a lack of supervision from DSD, Johannesburg Region. The participants responded that there is no planning for best learning opportunities for supervisees; they need supervision that will encourage learning, empowerment and guidance. According to Farley, Smith and Boyle (2003:125)

supervision in social work is necessary in order to respond to the needs of the clients and the mandate of the community to relieve sufferings and restore people to greater usefulness. Without creating opportunities for supervisees to learn continuously they will end up under-performing their tasks relying on outdated ways of working, leading to them not meeting the needs of the clients they serve. The theoretical framework used in this study assisted the researcher to understand the important role played by the environment on the person. It could be deducted that the social work supervisees in the Johannesburg Region are not enjoying job satisfaction because they are not receiving the support that they need from their supervisors.

Depending on their peers for support could lead to stress and inappropriate services to clients.

3.4.4 THEME 4: THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY PARTICIPANTS IN PERFORMING THEIR DAILY DUTIES

The shortage of social workers has been aggravated by the outflow of South African social workers to countries, such as United Kingdom and Australia, by social workers leaving the profession due to poor working conditions and the increased demands from social work services by the South African population (Department of Social Development, 2006:10). This calls for serious consideration of how supervision is provided to ensure the provision of efficient and effective services. The researcher observed that supervisors are often appointed to supervisory posts because of outstanding interview results or work experience. They sometimes lack leadership skills and are not given a proper induction to fulfill their roles to supervise and manage social workers.

3.4.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1 Lack of support

The supervision support function focuses on the need of social work supervisees and helps to identify the stressors located in their work and the impact on the worker. There should be a close relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee to give support and guidance on personal and professional development. Supervision must be a safe space, in which workers can discuss the positive and the negative emotions triggered by team

members in a supervisory relationship. Some of the participants in this study highlighted that the challenge in DSD about supervision is that there is a lack of support from supervisors as confirmed by the following responses:

“There is no support offered by my supervisor in dealing with challenges on a daily basis. Peers are there to offer support daily to ensure that we provide effective services to our clients. I don’t understand why we have supervisors if they don’t understand their role.”

“I feel that I don’t get enough support from my supervisor, I only consult. I get my support from peers. If I have to do home visits and appear in court, I request my supervisor to assign the task to another social worker she will assist and allocate the task. The peers are there to support. I am happy to have peers that understand and are willing to assist. I feel that supervisors should supervise us and provide support and guidance to improve service delivery.”

“When providing support to my colleagues, the supervisor will accuse me of wanting to take her position. Supervisors are not there for us.”

“I get more of my support from my colleagues than from my supervisor. We discuss cases and get solutions without our supervisor. Supervisors are not there for support, I don’t think they know and understand what we are doing or they are afraid of challenges as they are not knowledgeable.”

It is evident that participants do not get any support from their supervisors in performing their daily duties while some receive minimal support. The supervisees are faced with increasing challenges that contribute to job stress, including the growing complexity of client problems; unfavourable physical environment, heavy workloads and emotional trauma. Supportive supervision is needed where a climate of safety and trust is created, where supervisees can develop their sense of professional identity. NASW (2012:7) is emphases the importance of supportive supervision in social work.

3.4.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2 High numbers of supervisees under a supervisor and high case loads

Contributing to the high staff turnover are high caseloads, inefficiency, work stress and anxiety, emotional burnout, and even incidents of social work being reduced to an activity of crisis management (Lombard, 2008:12; Earl, 2003:18). The Department of Social Development's Intergraded Service Delivery Model (2006:39) indicates that a social work supervisee who works with a variety of welfare cases should not have more than sixty files at a given time.

In responses to supervisors' high numbers of supervisees and high caseload, the participants gave the following responses:-

"In my section we are 12 social workers and 14 social auxiliary workers. It is very difficult for my supervisor to provide individual supervision."

"In my section we are 10 social workers and 11 social auxiliary workers under a supervisor."

"Supervisors are overwhelmed, they are supervising many people. In my section we are twenty, the social workers and social auxiliary workers."

"It is important for the supervisor to understand supervisees individually and their case loads, in order to identify their training needs and provide support emotionally and mentally. This will assist to avoid absenteeism, burnout, and social workers leaving the profession (staff turnover) and attract new social workers."

"I have 120 cases to attend to and it is very difficult for me to attend and be supervised with all the cases. DSD should decrease the case load to 1:60 cases as stipulate by the Council. This will ensure effective and proper service delivery."

"The number of cases per social worker should be reduced to 1:60."

“There is high case load and too many supervisees under one supervisor. The supervisor is unable to provide supervision.”

These statements by the participants show that there are high case-loads in which social workers are unable to cope. These statements are supported by Giese (2010:12) and Lombard (2005:10); The DSD Draft Norms and Standard for Welfare Services that there should be 1:60 ratio of a social worker to service users. The ratio of social work supervisees to supervisor is also too high which may well compromise quality. The participants indicated that the supervisors are not providing them with supervision because they do not understand what supervision is. This leads supervisors allocating high case loads to social workers without supervision and social workers are not coping and it creates a backlog.

3.4.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3 Burnout

According to Kadushin and Harkness (2013:224) burnout can be defined as a syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion resulting from occupational stress “involving the development of negative self-concept, negative job attitude and the loss of concern and feeling for clients”. Munson (1993:24) states that burnout and stress in many instances are associated with a lack of coping mechanisms and that when practitioners cannot cope with practice demands: they need to turn for help to a trustworthy source who should be the supervisor. Without supervision as such a source, supervisees struggle on their own or turn to colleagues which in some instances can make the burnout worse. Burn out affects individuals involved in most professions and work settings all over the world (Valdut & Kallay, 2010: 56).

The following statements were made by the participants as they responded to the aspects of burn out in their work environment:-

“The social workers in my section have over five years of experience in the field. They developed burnout to deal with statutory cases and not exposed to other fields of service delivery.”

“I feel that the DSD should encourage supervisors to provide supervision in order to deal with challenges and problems experienced by the social workers on a daily basis. This will assist in retaining social workers in the profession and avoiding burnouts.”

It is clear that some of the participants are experiencing burn out because they are placed in a section for more than five years, and there is no rotation to learn more skills and be exposed to different supervisors. Morrisette (2004:69) supported the views of participants; that therapists and social workers were found to experience increased amount of stress and burnout due to a combination of organisational and personal factors. The lack of adequate social work supervision could lead to burnout amongst social workers, including newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006:19). Lack of social and organisational supports causes increased burnout.

3.4.4.4 Sub-theme 4.4 Political interference

Politicians are playing a decisive role in the public sectors which leads to the complex relation between elected officials and appointed workers (Joyce, 1998:68). Instead of following professional procedures, the elected officials are concerned with immediate intervention and often blame the appointed official of bureaucracy (Joyce, 1998:68). There is also a lack of awareness about what social workers do and what their capabilities are (Schenck, 2004:195).

The participants said the following with regard to political interference they experience in performing their job:-

“What I am saying is that we experience some level of political interference and we are unable to attend to communities. We are unable to practice social work fully but fulfilling the political needs. It deprives me the opportunity to attend to my clients, and having supervision.”

“Cases that are reported through media, by any political party or structure are given first priority without thinking of the social workers’ plans and priorities. The cases that are reported need immediate attention from the social workers and have deadlines. For

example I dealt with the case where the Minister of Social Development removed the children from unregistered children's home. It was very difficult because I had to report daily on the progress I have made and this disorganised my plans and could not attend to my other clients."

"Our supervisors are not protecting us from political interference that we exposed to. As the DSD we serve the interest of the ruling party."

"The last thing that I can say is that, as long as we have political interference supervision will not improve. We need to educate our leaders about social work and the role of supervision in social work. We need people to push forward the region and implement supervision."

The above statements tell us that participants experience political interference in performing their daily duties which might be generating frustration in them. They reported that they are unable to perform their planned activities because of the immediate demand of fulfilling the political mandate. The statements are supported by Payne (1997:286) who states that when political goals are experienced as oppressive and against the purpose of social work service delivery, it can lead to frustration for social workers. The participants are experiencing a challenge whereby the political mandates tend to focus on immediate results in terms of quantity rather than quality. This might be a difficult situation for the social workers and might also lead to social workers leaving the profession to avoid burnout emanating from aggravated stress levels at work. According to Engelbrecht (2010:325), there were political changes in South Africa in 1990, where the focus on supervision became less popular. In addition the high case-loads of social workers, poor working conditions, poor salaries, migration of social workers to other countries, and lack of quality supervision, led to a critical shortage of social workers in South Africa as well as a decline in the quality of social work services provided to the communities in South Africa (Cloete, 2012:18).

3.4.4.5 Sub-theme 4.5 Supervisors do not have the time to supervise

Hawkins and Shohet (2012:149) states that teachers, probation officers, social workers, and doctors reported that they do not receive support and supervision. They are expected to do their work without supervision as their managers are either too busy or too inadequate to provide them with good supervision. Botha (2002:vi) also mentions that supervision in South Africa is regarded as an opportunity for promotion for social workers with some years of experience, irrespective of whether they are equipped for the position or not. Furthermore social work supervisors receive no formal training and are usually expected to execute their supervisory responsibilities, without any set policies and guidelines.

Some of the participants in the study highlighted that supervisors do not have time for supervision. The perception was articulated as follows:

“I don’t have a specific time allocated to me to discuss about my case load, challenges, growth needs, concerns and expectations.”

“I can say supervisors are not doing their work. They should focus on quality than quantity.”

“My supervisor is always busy, she will not assist you immediately; but still have to check with management or consult with other supervisors. It is time-consuming when you have to deal with a crisis.”

“I feel that supervisors should have time; and provide supervision to individuals and group in order for us to learn from each other and improve our knowledge.”

“The supervisor only allocates cases without understanding what is expected or providing guidance.

“Yes, there is no time allocated for supervision and no sessions.”

“My supervisor is unavailable for sessions and might not understand the purpose of providing supervision.”

The participants' statements are supported by BASW (2008:6) that if professionals are to be effective they must have sufficient time to undertake their work, and be provided with support and advice in what are often challenging and complex situations. If supervisors have insufficient time for supervision this could lead to high stress levels for supervisees and staff turnover. The participants indicated that they are not supervised, as their supervisors do not have time for supervision. Munson (2002:7) supports this when he states that social workers often report that they are not getting supervision, but understand that their supervisors are busy and overworked, and they do not wish to burden them further.

3.4.4.6 Sub-theme 4.6 Supervisors are not empowered to perform their role and responsibilities

It is indicated in the manual of the DSD Retention and Recruitment for Social Workers in South Africa (2006:10) that some officials who currently have the responsibility of supervision do not have the capacity to effectively guide and support social workers. The manual also states that the impact of no or poor supervision on professional service delivery and the development of social workers can be seen in a number of cases in which social workers are being accused of misconduct and unprofessional practice. Botha (2002:vi) also mentions that supervision in South Africa is regarded as an opportunity for promotion for social workers with some years of experience, irrespective of whether they are equipped for the position or not.

The participants were requested to share their experience regarding the role of supervision in performing their daily duties. According to the sub-theme, the focus was on supervisors not being empowered to perform their responsibilities. The following views were voiced by participants:-

“As a social worker I am afraid to challenge the supervisor, I feel that they also need support to perform their role.”

“Even the acting supervisor has to deal with her case load. Most of the time if I consult with

her, she doesn't have answers."

"There is no direction on what is expected from me as a supervisee. I feel that supervisors are not empowered to perform their role and cannot support and provide supervision."

"They need to take their role seriously, read and understand the policies, legislations, acts used within the DSD. Without that understanding they will never understand their responsibilities and cannot support us."

From the above mentioned responses, it is obvious that supervisors are not performing their role and responsibilities to assist supervisees to perform their duties. Social work supervisors receive no formal training and are usually expected to execute their supervisory responsibilities, without any set policies and guidelines. Legodi (1993: 2); Ngweniso (1998:1) and Mudau (1996:56) support the participants that supervisors are assigned to their supervisory posts without proper orientation on the expectation of their roles. Kadushin (in Makondo & Van Biljion, 2002:118) gives a definition of supervision as an educational process in which a person equipped with certain skills takes responsibility for the training a person who is less equipped, but this is not the case according to the participants in this study.

3.4.4.7 Sub-theme 4.7 Quantity versus quality

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy identifies supervision as the critical area that needs attention for the retention of social work professionals, and also to address the deterioration in the quality of service provision. Management in the DSD focuses merely on quantity (how many people are addressed) rather than quality.

Participants stated the following in relation to the above subtheme:-

"They (supervisors) should focus on quality than quantity. Quality services provide intensive intervention to the client and gives satisfactory results."

"I mean that supervisors are mostly focusing on statistics, that is, the number of cases I have than the quality of work I am doing."

“The supervisors are not encouraging, not interested in the development of cases but only on daily, weekly or monthly statistics. They focus on quantity rather quality.”

“Supervisors are only concentrating on one aspect, statistics at the end of the month. During the month I don’t understand what they are doing because you will find them always busy.”

“Supervisors focus on a number of cases I am finalizing than on the quality of services that I am providing to clients.”

The above responses from participants are supported by Erera and Lazar (1994:75) that the more supervision time spent on administration responsibilities, the more social workers experience role ambiguity and role conflict. The participants feel that supervisors focus on quantity rather than quality as they seem to be more interested in the number of cases they finalise rather than focusing on the quality of the service that they provide to their clients.

Poor quality of supervision within the DSD has been linked to supervisors lacking confidence in their knowledge and skills development. They struggle to assist social workers to formulate ideas about client development and the process of change. It is important for the DSD to assess the capacity and potential of supervisor before allocating social workers for extra responsibility. This has an impact on service delivery and the commitment of the supervisor. Based on this state of affairs it becomes clear that the environment in which social work supervisees are operating in the Johannesburg Region is not conducive for their professional growth and development.

3.4.5 THEME 5: SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE SUPERVISION WITHIN DSD

The National Department of Social Development, together with the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) established a task team for the development of Supervision Framework for Social Workers in South Africa in 2012. The framework was introduced in an effort to improve social work profession, social work supervision and to address the shortage of social workers in South Africa. The framework has certainly filled the vacuum of not having any policy or guidelines to structure social work supervision. It

has also created a big debate about supervision in South Africa.

The recommendation in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers was that quality social work supervision be provided through the transfer of skills, including mentoring of newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17).

Seeing that considerable effort is needed to improve social work supervision within the DSD Johannesburg Region, the participants gave the following suggestions:-

3.4.5.1 Sub-theme 5.1 Training to be provided for social workers in relation to supervision

The supervisor and the supervisee both share responsibility for carrying out their role in this collaborative process (NASW, 2012:6). The participants had the following to say about training:-

“There should be training provided for supervisors and supervisees to understand their role and responsibilities. They should update themselves on the current developments in order to improve their knowledge and skills; and use the knowledge during supervision.”

“I think there must be an agency where supervisors are trained thoroughly in terms of supervision, purpose of supervision and how to support staff. Supervision workshops should be provided for supervisors and supervisees in order to clarify their roles and responsibilities. Also be trained on policies, legislation and acts to understand the goal of DSD and improve service delivery.”

“Supervisors need to be trained to understand their role and responsibility. They should provide educational, administrative and supportive supervision to all staff under their span.”

“The DSD needs to provide training for supervisors and supervisees to understand supervision. They should have common understanding and clarity on the role of supervision and the responsibilities of the supervisors. And also need to understand the structure and process to be followed in order to provide supervision.”

“There should be proper training for supervisors and supervisees on supervision issues

focusing on the structure, processes, role and responsibilities.”

“Supervisors should be appointed into permanent positions and be trained on the role and responsibilities of supervision.”

“I think that supervision should be taken seriously, by training both the supervisors and social workers in the supervision process, procedures and structure. They should understand their roles and responsibilities.”

“Supervisors and supervisees should be trained on supervision.”

“There should be draft guidelines or policy on how supervision should be rendered within the Region and training is compulsory to social workers.”

“There should be a policy in the DSD guiding the supervisees and supervisors on procedures and processes of supervision. Training should be provided to all the parties.”

“The social workers are trained to understand and have knowledge on the aim, goal, objectives, policies, legislations and acts governing the DSD; know other departments and Non-profit organizations that provide services to the clients in order to assist and guide supervisees to deal with their cases effectively and provide satisfactory services to the clients.”

“Supervisors should understand the aim, purpose and objectives of the DSD in order to provide supervision to supervisees in line with the vision of the DSD.”

It can be deduced from the above statements that there is a clear need expressed for the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg regional managers to organise workshops and seminars to train social work supervisees and supervisors regarding supervision, in order for the team to have a common understanding on the roles and responsibilities of each member. Supervision provides an ideal forum to promote a culture of life-long learning. It is important to ensure from the beginning that both parties have clear expectations of the process. Continuous in-service trainings opportunities should be provided to ensure professional growth and development of officials, supervisors and

senior managers.

3.4.5.2 Sub-theme 5.2 Selection criteria for supervisors should be revisited

It is the responsibility of the employer of a social worker to appoint a supervisor who takes primary responsibility for the supervision of the social workers and to provide the supervisor with an appropriate job description (DSD, 2012:20).

Participants had the following to say regarding the selection of supervisors:-

“I think that the DSD needs to employ supervisors who are capable, who will make follow ups, who will support supervisees and who will provide supervision. They must not consider years of experience but target people who are knowledgeable and who will work as team leaders.”

3.4.5.3 Sub-theme 5.3 Number of social workers per supervisor should be reduced

The organisation should state the ratio of the supervisor to supervisees in its supervision policy and capture this in the contract with the supervisor (DSD, 2012:20; SACSSP, 2007:4).

With regard to the ratio of the social workers under one supervisor, the participants had the following to say:

“In my section we are 12 social workers and 14 social auxiliary workers. It is very difficult for my supervisor to provide individual supervision. I think the DSD should employ more supervisors and balance the ratio to 1:10.”

“In my section we are 10 social workers and 11 social auxiliary workers under one supervisor. I think the ratio should be 1:6 in order to provide effective supervision to every supervisee on a weekly basis. This will improve service delivery.”

“In my section we are twenty; the social workers and social auxiliary workers. I think the ratio should be 1:5 in order for supervisors to provide effective services.”

“Supervision should be provided at the ratio 1:6 in order for the supervisor to understand

supervisees individually, their case-load, identify the training needs of each supervisee and provide support emotionally and mentally. This will assist to avoid absenteeism, burnout, and social workers leaving the profession (staff turnover) and attract new social workers.”

It is clear from the participants' sentiments that they are aware that their supervisors are over-loaded as they have to supervise many people. This is impacting on the quality of social work supervision they are providing as well as the service provided by the supervisees to their respective clients. There is a strong suggestion from the participants that a manageable ratio should be used to ensure that the services provided to both the supervisors and supervisees are improved.

3.4.5.4 Sub-theme 5.4 Rotation policy should be developed and implemented to avoid burnout

The following responses encapsulate the participants' suggestions regarding a rotation policy to avoid burnout:

“The social workers in my section have over five years' experience in the field. They have developed burnout due to dealing with statutory cases and not exposed to other fields of service delivery. The DSD should revisit the staff rotation policy; where social workers and supervisors should be exposed to other sections to avoid burnout. Supervision should be monitored and evaluated on the monthly basis to ensure that supervisors are doing their job.”

“Social workers and supervisors should be allowed to rotate, to avoid burnout.”

According to the participants in this study, working in position, doing same tasks repeatedly leads to burnout. This could well be their experiences as they are not exposed to any rotation to other sections to perform different duties. Based on this experience they suggested that a rotational policy be introduced, to ensure that social workers keep on changing their positions for them to learn continuously. The impression expressed by the participants is that rotating from one position to the other will keep the supervisors and supervisees on their toes, that is, challenge them to learn new things every-time they

move.

3.4.5.5 Sub-theme 5.5 Supervisors should assume multiple roles to ensure the adjustment of supervisees

Effective supervision requires knowledge of the principles of supervision and the ability to demonstrate necessary skills such as addressing both strengths and challenges of supervisee, modeling and discussing ethical practice, and providing support and encouragement in the learning context (NASW, 2012:12).

The following responses show the participants' suggestions regarding supervisors' multiple roles to ensure adjustment of the supervisees:

"In order for supervisors to provide effective supervision that has structure and process, they should assume multiple roles that of a supervisor; educator; mentor; evaluator and role model for the supervisees."

"There is no social work without supervision. In supervision there is an exchange of knowledge, support and increase of professional conduct. The social workers become confident to deal with case-loads and face personal and professional challenges. Proper supervision can decrease social workers who leave the profession. The supervisor can identify the problem, before the social worker experiences burnout. For example, if I cannot function in the section, during the supervision session the supervisor should be able to identify that and encourage training, rotation, support or challenge me to function effectively and to provide satisfactory services to the client."

3.4.5.6 Sub-theme 5.6 Structured supervision is needed

Formal structure of supervision is important because it is the foundation for effective supervision and prevents problems in the supervisory relationship (Munson, 2002:12).

With regard to the structure of supervision, the participants had the following to say:

"The supervisor has to have a signed contract with the supervisee on how supervision will be conducted. The contract should be discussed with the supervisee to know what is

expected and discuss his/her concerns. It means there should be a structure and processes to be followed in order to provide proper supervision. The supervisor should know what is happening in the section and the case load of each and every social worker, in order to know the intervention strategy to be used to individual challenges and needs.”

“As social workers we need to be supervised to enable us to provide effective and efficient services to our client and organization. Supervision that is structured allows professional socialization and job satisfaction.”

According to the participants in this study, structured supervision is needed, to allow professional growth and job satisfaction. Based on their experiences they suggested a signed contract to ensure effective service delivery.

3.4.5.7 Sub-theme 5.7 Educate political leaders on the role of supervision in the social work context

According to the researcher, the political leaders do not understand the role of social workers and even more so, they do not understanding the role of supervision in social work. This is supported by Schenck (2004:195) that there is a lack of awareness of what the social workers does and what their capabilities are. One participant had this to say on educating political leaders about supervision:

“The last thing that I can say is that; as long as we have political interference supervision will not improve. We need to educate our leaders about social work and the role of supervision in social work. We need people to push forward the region and implement supervision.”

It is clear that from the above statement that there is political interference and politicians need to be educated about the role of social work and supervision. According to DSD (2006:12) if politicians are not educated, this has its own effect on how supervision is provided in the organisation. Priorities change as political leaders change (Dominelli, 2002:43). This, on its own affects how supervision is provided in the organisation namely DSD.

3.4.5.8 Sub-theme 5.8 All social workers should keep abreast of developments in the field of social work

Social workers have been drawn to the field because they are interested in making a difference in vulnerable people's lives- not to manage people, and specifically not to undertake human resource, financial and other administrative tasks (Lambrect, 2013:15). Social workers should take cognizance of the impact of the global political, economic, social and technological environmental changes. Participants had the following to say regarding social workers updating themselves in the field of social work:

“Supervisors need to update themselves on new developments, social problems globally and encourage supervisees to read and exchange knowledge during the supervision process. Both should be open to learning and development.”

“Supervisors should be open to learning, establish relationships with other stakeholders to learn how they provide supervision and read more books to update themselves and assist supervisees if they have challenges during supervision.”

The above statements by the participants show that the social workers are not updating themselves on what is happening in their environment globally as well as locally with regard to supervision. The supervisee and supervisor do not exchange knowledge as supervision is not provided; this may well be a difficult situation for supervisees and could lead to higher stress levels at work. Social workers in the DSD lack the necessary motivation to improve themselves because there are no sanctions taken against them if they do not.

3.4.5.9 Sub-theme 5.9 Supervision should be a two-way process

According to Brittian and Potter (2009:280) “interaction between supervisor and worker is one of the most powerful settings for the developing worker competence”. According to the researcher supervision takes place between the supervisee and the supervisor, and is essential to ensure that the work undertaken in the environment is of a high quality. Supervision should not be one-sided and focus on the supervisor's needs and ignore support to the supervisee. The participants provided the following statements about why

supervision should not be one-sided:

“As social workers we need supervision as an instrument to develop and improve mutual relationships in social work and to improve the profession.”

“Supervisors should understand that supervision is not one-sided where they decide about the content of the supervision process, but need to involve supervisees in the process. Supervision process should benefit both the supervisor and supervisee.”

“The role of social work supervision is supposed to be guidance and empowerment social workers. It is a two way process where the supervisor and social worker share experiences.”

The responses of the participants indicate that the supervision process within the Johannesburg Region of the DSD is authoritarian, in the sense that supervisees are not allowed to give input. They are just dictated to on what to do; as a result they would like to see a supervisory process that is mutual, where both parties are given an opportunity to give own inputs.

3.4.5.10 Sub-theme 5.10 Performance evaluation should be on a regular basis

According to Cleak and Wilson (2007:65) supervision should be planned and purposeful, should be evaluated and should offer the following questions as a guide to assist in setting an agenda for supervision sessions: why is the meeting important? What is its purpose? What would you like to cover? What are your desired outcomes? And what question do you wish to ask? According to the researcher, a Regional Monitoring team should be set up by senior managers (Assistant Directors/Deputy Directors) within the DSD to evaluate supervision on a regular basis within units and steps should be taken against those supervisors who do not conform.

The following responses illustrate participants' views of performance evaluation:

“Supervision provided within the DSD should be monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis.”

“Performance assessment should be done on a monthly basis to monitor, assess and evaluate supervisees and supervisors in order to improve the supervision process.”

“To avoid staff turnover, absenteeism and job dissatisfaction, supervision should be provided on a monthly basis to address concerns and problems and also support supervisees professionally and personally.”

It is evident from the above responses that performance is not evaluated on a regular basis. Without regular evaluation it becomes difficult to assess and provide proper and structural supervision to the supervisees. It becomes very important for the DSD to provide supervision to address problems and concerns of supervisees in order for them to be empowered and provide effective services in their environment.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Chapter three focuses on the research findings derived from semi-structured interviews conducted with the ten participants who are supervised in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region in the Gauteng Province. The data were analysed by using themes that emerged from the collected data. Interpretation of the findings was described on various themes, sub-themes and categories. The main finding of this study is that there is no supervision provided for the social work supervisees within the Johannesburg region of DSD. This finding shows that the environment in which the social work supervisees are functioning needs extensive reconstruction in as far as supervision is concerned, with the aim of improving social work service delivery.

It is imperative for the authority to know what the social workers on the ground are going through if the environment is to be improved. The fit between the environment and social work supervisees within the DSD has a long way to go in order to improve the image of social work amongst other professions and for the services to be effective in meeting the needs of the client system.

The next chapter will provide a summary of the findings, draw conclusions based on the research and make recommendations.

CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND, RECOMMENDATION.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters dealt with the general introduction and orientation to the research, literature review and the research findings. The purpose of this study was to develop an in-depth understanding of the experiences of social work supervisees regarding supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region in the Gauteng Province. The researcher wanted to answer the following research question: What are the experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region? In this chapter the researcher presents a summary on how the goal of the research was achieved, conclusions and recommendations based on the empirical findings and the literature that as used to control and verify the findings.

4.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: This chapter was mainly concerned with providing the reader with an overview of the research and a general introduction to the whole study. The research question and goal were formulated and linked to the research topic, followed by the objectives that guided the investigation; the research methodology that was used to conduct the study, Ethical considerations that guided the researcher were discussed, and the key concepts used in the research were clarified.

Chapter 2: The chapter focused on a literature review on social work supervision and social work. In this chapter, the important role of social work supervision was highlighted after its development was discussed. Attention was also given to person-in-environment theory as the theoretical framework that guided the study to facilitate understanding of social work supervision within the DSD.

Chapter 3: The research findings were presented according to the themes, sub-themes, categories as well as sub-categories. This chapter focused on the detailed application of

qualitative research methods which was introduced in chapter 1.

The researcher now indicates the extent to which the objectives were achieved by presenting the summary, drawing conclusion and making recommendations based on the findings below.

4.3 CONCLUSIONS

- The main conclusion drawn from the data is that all the participants do not receive supervision as prescribed by the SACSSP and NASW. There is no structure or policy developed to guide supervisors and supervisees to provide effective supervision.
- The social work supervisees within the DSD Johannesburg Region have a reasonable understanding of the importance of supervision in their service delivery process.
- Based on the data that was collected from the participants, the researcher concludes that social workers who are not subjected to structured supervision face many challenges in their efforts to render social work services to their clients. This becomes a concern specifically because the participants in this study render statutory services to children in need of care and protection.
- The social work supervisors within the DSD in the Johannesburg Region are not specifically trained to perform this particular task; they were promoted to be supervisors based on their years of experience as social workers. This makes it difficult for them to know what they have to do and how they have to go about performing this role and function, which impacts negatively on social work service delivery to the clients.
- The social work supervisors seem to have high caseloads because they are appointed to supervisory positions whilst they have other duties to perform. They are also responsible for too many supervisees to supervise, resulting in them not

having time to dedicate to the supervisory role.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.4.1 Recommendations for practice

- There is a need to seriously revise the supervision structure within the DSD to ensure that the supervisees are provided with appropriate supervision.
- Due to the fact that most supervisors are not specifically or well trained to perform appropriate social work supervision, the researcher recommends that workshops and seminars on social work supervision be organised on a regular basis for the supervisors and supervisees. This would assist in alleviating the problem of role confusion amongst the supervisors and supervisees.
- The Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Regional should encourage social work supervisees and supervisors to attend courses in supervision offered by different service providers and understand their roles.
- Monitoring mechanisms need to be established to focus on the supervision process within the Department. This would ensure that the supervisors perform their supervision tasks appropriately and the supervisees are actively involved not only as the recipients but as active participants in supervision.
- More social workers and supervisors should be employed to reduce the workload, so as to create a conducive environment for the growth and development of social work supervision and supervisees.

4.3.2 Recommendation on policy

- The Department should develop norms and standards for supervision.
- The Department should develop and implement a strategy to retain social workers within the region as a form of recognition for social workers and supervisors.

- Policy makers and relevant training institutions should address the supervision training gap at the agency and university level.

4.3.3 Recommendation for further research

As it has been established in this study that limited research has been conducted with regard to supervision in social work, specifically focusing on the experiences of supervisees, the researcher recommends that there be a national research study on supervision focusing on social work supervisees in order to improve the social work profession and to attract more people to the field of social work. This study must include all the organisations that employ social workers within the country, both governmental as well as non-governmental.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Supervision is an important aspect in social work, from the study social work supervisees indicated that social workers lack the knowledge or clarity of what to expect in supervision. There is no structure of supervision in DSD. From the researcher's professional experience it seems that there is lack of social work supervision because of the following reasons: supervisors lack enough time for supervision, supervisors are overloaded with administrative work, and supervisors lack the formal training and competency to carry out the task. This is supported by the question posed on experience of supervision, most participants indicated that there is no supervision that they are exposed to and supervisors are not trained on their role as supervisors. It is in the researchers' conviction therefore that the appropriate training of social workers and supervisors be provided to deal with the challenges experienced by supervisees' in the organization. The information revealed in this research report provide an opportunity for DSD, to understand challenges faced by social work supervisees in relation to supervision, and to have a plan to resolve the challenge. The researcher supports the participants and believes that in order to avoid burn out in DSD, there should be improve staff communication, review of supervision framework, DSD policies, provide clear job requirements and provide supportive environment.

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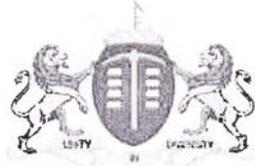
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ADDENDUM A: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



GAUTENG PROVINCE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries : Refilwe Makapela
011 355 7676; Cell No. 082 469 3131
Sub-Directorate Research and Policy Co-Ordination
Dir.: Research and Demography
CD: Development and Research

Dear Ms Lebohang Mokoka

RE: YOUR APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

Thank you for your application to conduct research within the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Your application on the research "*The experiences of social work supervisees in relation to supervision within the Department of Social development in the Johannesburg region*" has been considered and approved for support by the Department as it was found beneficial to the Department's vision and mission.

The approval is subject to the Departmental terms and conditions as endorsed by you on the 8/04/14

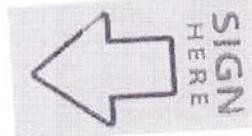
May I take this opportunity to wish you well for the research.

Looking forward to a value adding research and a fruitful co-operation.

With thanks.

MS. W.R. TSHABALALA
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE 5/5/2014



ADDENDUM B: ETHICAL CONSENT FORM



A PREAMBLE TO AN INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Dear Colleagues

I Lebohang Mokoka , the undersigned, am a social worker in service of Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region in the Canalisation Section , and also a part-time Master's student in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa. In fulfilment of the requirements for the master's degree, I have to undertake a research project and have consequently decided to focus on the following research topic:

The experiences of social work supervisees, in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg, Region.

In view of the fact that you are exposed to, and have experience in supervision, within the region. I hereby approach you with the request to participate in the study. For you to decide whether or not to participate in this research project, I am going to give you information that will help you to understand the study (i.e. what the aims of the study are and why there is a need for this particular study). Furthermore, you will be informed about what your involvement in this study will entail (i.e. what you will be asked/or what you will be requested to do during the study, the risks and benefits involved by participating in this research project, and your rights as a participant in this study).

I have decided to conduct a research project on this topic resulting from my observation that the need has arisen to reflect on and assess the experiences of social work supervisees in order to improve service delivery. With this in mind, the following aim is formulated: To develop an in-depth understanding of social work supervisees experience in relation to supervision.

The information gathered from this study will contribute to the improved service delivery and inform the future involvement of social work supervisees in supervision within the region.

Should you agree to participate, you would be requested to participate in two interviews – face-to-face interview that will be conducted at Johannesburg, Regional Offices from 9:00. It is estimated that the interview(s) will last approximately 1 hour.

During the interview(s)¹ the following questions will be directed to you:

- 1) Describe your current job requirements, with specific references to the tasks that you are expected to perform.
- 2) Tell me more about how supervision is structured within the Department.
- 3) In your opinion, what do you see as the role of supervision that you are exposed to as a social worker employed by Department of Social Development?
- 4) Share with me your experiences regarding supervision within the Department of Social Development.
- 5) Tell me more about the manner in which the supervision sessions that you are exposed to are structured.
- 6) Share with me the manner in which the supervision process you are exposed to is structured.
- 7) Considering your experiences of supervision, kindly share with me what you found to be beneficial to you as a social worker, that helps you to render satisfactory services to your clients.
- 8) Describe the support that is offered to you to help you to deal with the challenges or problems related to your daily work.
- 9) According to your observation, share with me what you think needs to be done in order to improve the quality of service delivery within the Department of Social Development Johannesburg Region.

¹ Any other expectations required from participants need to be clearly spelled out, for example: filling in questionnaires, completing schedules focusing on biographical information, reading through the verbatim transcriptions compiled from the interviews conducted with them, follow-up interviews, etc.]

With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped. The recorded interviews will be transcribed word-for-word. Your responses in the interview (both the taped and transcribed versions) will be kept strictly confidential. The audiotape will be coded to disguise any identifying information. The tapes will be stored in a locked office in the safe at the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Region and only I will have access to them. The transcripts (without any identifying information) will be made available to my research supervisor, a translator (if they need to be translated into English), and an independent coder² with the sole purpose of assisting and guiding me with this research undertaking. My research supervisor, the translator and the independent coder will each sign an undertaking to treat the information shared by you in a confidential manner.

The audiotapes and the transcripts of the interviews will be destroyed upon the completion of the study. Identifying information will be deleted or disguised in any subsequent publication and presentation of the research findings.

Please note that participation in the research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in the research. Your decision to participate, or not to participate, will not affect you in any way now or in the future and you will incur no penalty and/or loss to which you may otherwise be entitled. Should you agree to participate and sign the information and informed consent document herewith, as proof of your willingness to participate, please note that you are not signing your rights away.

If you agree to take part, you have the right to change your mind at any time during the study. You are free to withdraw this consent and discontinue participation without any loss of benefits. However, if you do withdraw from the study, you would be requested to grant me an opportunity to engage in informal discussion with you so that the research partnership that was established can be terminated in an orderly manner.

As the researcher, I also have the right to dismiss you from the study without regard to your consent if you fail to follow the instructions or if the information you have to divulge is emotionally sensitive and upsets- you to such an extent that it hinders you from functioning physically and emotionally in a proper manner. Furthermore, if participating in the study at any time jeopardises your safety in any way, you will be dismissed.

² The independent coder is someone who is well versed and experienced in analysing information collected by means of interviews and is appointed to analyse the transcripts of the interviews independently of the researcher to ensure that the researcher will report the participants' accounts of what has been researched.

Should I conclude that the information you have shared left you feeling emotionally upset, or perturbed, I am obliged to refer you to a counsellor for debriefing or counselling (should you agree).

You have the right to ask questions concerning the study at any time. Should you have any questions or concerns about the study, contact these numbers:

Ms Lebohang Mokoka, the researcher at (011) 355-9319 or 082 422 6037

Please note that this study has been approved by the Research and Ethics Committee³ of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. Without the approval of this committee, the study cannot be conducted. Should you have any questions and queries not sufficiently addressed by me as the researcher, you are more than welcome to contact the Chairperson of the Research and Ethics Committee of the Department of Social Work at Unisa. His contact details are as follows: Prof AH (Nicky) Alpaslan, telephone number: 012 429 6739, or email alpasah@unisa.ac.za.

If, after you have consulted the researcher and the Research and Ethics Committee in the Department of Social Work at Unisa, their answers have not satisfied you, you may direct your questions/concerns/queries to the Chairperson, Human Ethics Committee⁴, College of Human Science, PO Box 392, Unisa, 0003.

Based upon all the information provided to you above, and being aware of your rights, you are asked to give your written consent should you want to participate in this research study by signing and dating the information and consent form provided herewith and initialling each section to indicate that you understand and agree to the conditions.

³ This is a group of independent experts whose responsibility it is to help ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and the study is carried out in an ethical manner.

⁴ This is a group of independent experts whose responsibility it is to help ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and the study is carried out in an ethical manner.

Thank you for your participation.

Kind regards

Ms Lebohang Mokoka

Researcher

Contact details: (O) 011 355-9319

(Fax) 011 355-9395

(Email) Lebohangmokoka2@gauteng.gov.za.



ADDENDUM C: INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT⁵

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

The experiences of social work supervisees, in relation to supervision within the Department of Social Development in the Johannesburg Region

REFERENCE NUMBER: 08198012

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/RESEARCHER: Ms Lebohang Mokoka

ADDRESS: 669 Ralefutso Street, Moletsane, PO Kwa-Xuma 1868

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER: 011 355-9200/9319

<p>DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT:</p> <p>I, THE UNDERSIGNED, _____ (name), [ID No: _____] the participant of _____ _____ _____ _____ (address)</p> <p>A. HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:</p> <p>1. I was invited to participate in the above research project which is being undertaken by Ms Lebohang Mokoka of the Department of Social Work in the School of Social Science and Humanities at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.</p>	<p><u>Initial</u></p>
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⁵ A copy of the completed information and informed consent document must be handed to the participant or their representative.

<p>2. The following aspects have been explained to me/the participant:</p> <p>2.1 Aim: The aim of the study: Is to explore and develop an in-depth understanding of Social Work Supervisees experiences relating to Supervision at the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg.</p> <p>The information will be used to:</p> <p>To improve service delivery and service provided for clients.</p>	<p><u>Initial</u></p>
<p>2.2 I understand the following:</p> <p>The goal of the study, need for the study and the benefits it will have for the participants and any other stakeholders (i.e. the researcher, the profession).</p> <p>Why I in particular was chosen, and that my participation is completely voluntary.</p> <p>How the information shared by me will be recorded (i.e. on paper and audiotape).</p> <p>How this information will be made public (i.e. it will be made known in a research paper and might be used in subsequent scholarly presentation, printed publication and or further research, and dissertation in fulfilment of a master's degree).</p> <p>My rights as participant namely:</p> <p>That I may terminate or withdraw from the study at any point.</p> <p>That I may ask for clarification or more information throughout the study.</p> <p>That I may contact the appropriate administrative body if they have</p>	<p><u>Initial</u></p>

any question about the conduct of the researcher or the study's procedures	
<p>2.3 Risks:</p> <p>No foreseeable risks. Since I will be expected to talk about my experiences, it might happen that I experience emotional discomfort, of which the researcher has promised to have attended to by the EAP services within the department.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>Possible benefits: As a result of my participation in this study</p> <p>I, the participant, will have the opportunity to contribute to process of improving social work supervision processes in the Johannesburg Region.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>Confidentiality: My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the researchers.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>Access to findings: Any new information/benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared with me.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>Voluntary participation/refusal/discontinuation: My participation is voluntary. My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect me now or in the future.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>3. The information above was explained to me, the participant by the researcher (<u>Ms Lebohang Mokoka</u>) in English and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>4. No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participate and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage from the study without any penalty.</p>	<u>Initial</u>
<p>5. Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to me.</p>	<u>Initial</u>

B. I HEREBY CONSENT VOLUNTARILY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE PROJECT.

Signed/confirmed at _____ on _____ 20__

Signature or right thumbprint of participant

Signature of witness



ADDENDUM D: CONSENT FORM REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PUBLISH AUDIOTAPES AND VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS OF AUDIOTAPE RECORDINGS⁶

<p>As part of this project, I have made a photographic, audio and/or video recording of you. I would like you to indicate (with ticks in the appropriate blocks next to each statement below) what uses of these records you are willing to consent to. This is completely up to you. I will use the records only in ways that you agree to. In any of these records, names will not be identified.</p>	<p>Place a tick [✓] next to the use of the record you consent to</p>
<p>1. The records can be studied by the research team and quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings can be used in the research report.</p>	
<p>2. The records (i.e. quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings) can be used for scientific publications and/or meetings.</p>	
<p>3. The written transcripts can be used by other researchers.</p>	
<p>4. The records (i.e. quotations from the transcripts made of the recordings) can be used in public presentations to non-scientific groups.</p>	
<p>5. The records can be used on television or radio.</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Signature of participant</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>

⁶ Adopted and adapted from Silverman, D. 2001. *Interpreting qualitative data. Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction*. London: Sage.Publications.

ADDENDUM E: RAW DATA

THE TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Introduction to Transcripts

- Data was collected from ten participants who are employed as social workers and supervised within DSD, Johannesburg Region.
- Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the individual participants.
- Participants names were not used, but labeled as A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I and J.
- All the participants were interviewed in English.
- The participants were between the age of 27 to 49
- Participants were all Blacks, 8 females and 2 males.
- Participants have 3 to 10 years of working experience.
- Below are transcripts of all the participants from A to J.

RESEACHER: R

PARICIPANTS: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, & J

Name of the participant	A
Age	33
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Alexandra
Work experience	4 Years
Years under supervision	4 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Morning madam

A: Good morning madam; and you are welcomed.

R: Thank you; it is my pleasure to meet with you once again.

A: Thank you

R: Before we start; let me remind you that the interview will be tape recorded; and the information you share with me will remain confidential. Our session will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Without any waste of time; can we still continue if you are ready?

A: Yes; I am prepared.

R: Thank you for affording me an opportunity to interview you. Can we go straight to the research question?

A: Pleasure

R: Can you kindly describe your current job requirements, with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

A: I am expected to open and finalize the children's court enquiries.

R: Can you elaborate more

A: I am dealing with statutory cases; in relation to children and families. The focus is the children, who are in need of care and protection; the vulnerable children. Is either the child is abused; neglected; abandoned or orphaned. Most of the cases I am dealing with are orphaned children. The case is reported by maternal or paternal family member; who is prepared to foster the child/ren. The case will be reported to the Intake Section and directed to different areas where the family resides. When I receive the file; I start by investigating the circumstances of a child/ren and the family. Compile a report and advise the children's court as whether a child is in need of care and protection. Then recommend the suitable placement for a child; is either foster-care; adoption; place of safety or child and youth care centre. I also prepare the child and prospective foster parent before bringing the case before the children's court, on the processes and procedures. As a social worker I should ensure that the child is provided with a suitable place to live and living conditions are conducive to the child's health; well-being and development and financial support. I also guide; support and assist foster

parents to take decisions that serve the best interest of the child. The court will issue an order regarding where the child should be placed in alternative care for the period of two years or more. If the child is above 18 years and attending school; then I write the report to the Canalization Section for extension until the child turns 21 years.

R: Are you only dealing with related foster care cases?

A: No; I also deal with substance abuse; were I refer the clients to hospital for detoxification services either as an inpatient or outpatient; or SANCA for counseling or to rehabilitation centre. The client should be willing or can be forced by the law to go to rehabilitation centre. If the client is forced by the law; I appear before the criminal court for the magistrate to commit the client. The program in rehab takes close to six months. In that period I will be preparing and supporting the family to accept the client. If the client is accommodated by the family; his/her chances of relapse are minimized. In the foster family if the child is giving them challenges, for example uncontrollable I refer the case for psychological assessment; or relationship problems to FAMSA. I also run parental skills program to assist foster parents to manage the children under their care.

R: In all the services you are providing; are you receiving any supervision?

A: No; I am not receiving any supervision. In my section; at the beginning of the month we sit down with our supervisor and revise our case load. Due to high case load we are not supervised; the supervisor only reviews the return date of every file. When the date is due; I submit the files to check if I had followed the instructions or recommendations provided by the supervisor. Sometimes I spend most of my time in

court and fail to honor the date allocated to me. Then I have to negotiate and make arrangement for the meeting; in order to get instructions and recommendations on how to deal with the case. I only consult and there is no structure that is provided within the section.

R: Can you elaborate about the structure

A: Structure refers to the formats for conducting supervision, such as individual or group supervision. Together the supervisor and supervisees must plan the structure that is best for the learning needs of the supervisees, for example which method of supervision must be used and when. A formal structure should be clear to the supervisees. There is no supervision and structure that I am exposed to. I only consult with my supervisor to check if I adhere to the return dates or when I experience challenging situations. I don't have a specific time allocated to me to discuss about my case load, challenges, growth needs, concerns and expectations. I feel that supervisors should provide the structure and conducive environment that is characterized by trust and respect; where the challenges of critical self-reflection and professional growth can occur. There should be a contract signed between the supervisor and supervisee that provide the structure. I feel I don't see the role of supervision in my section.

R: You say you don't see the role of supervision; please elaborate.

A: Yes; I am not supervised. I see the role of supervision when I am supposed to act for the supervisor. I learn from other supervisees and develop my knowledge. I think if the supervisors understand the role of supervision quality of time will be provided to

social workers to improve service delivery. They should focus on quality than quantity. Quality services provide intensive intervention to the client and gives satisfactory results. This can improve understanding of social problems experienced by clients if supervision is provided.

R: Are you saying you don't experience supervision in your section?

A: Yes; the aim of supervision is to render effective and efficient social work service to the clients and also to enhance the professional development of social workers. When I arrived in DSD I expected to be provided with supervision for my entire case load. The department is failing me as an individual because I don't get proper supervision; I only consult with my supervisor for the return dates. I am not exposed to any fruitful sessions of supervision.

R: Elaborate more.

A: I mean I am not exposed to any session since I joined the department. I only consult when I feel I have a need. In consultation with my supervisor we only focus on the return date of the file. There is no process of supervision that I am exposed to.

R: When you say; you are not exposed to any supervision process can you elaborate.

A: With my supervisor; I am supposed to have supervision that is structured. The structure supposed to have process and sessions that we contract and follow. My supervisor has not elaborated the process I must follow in order to help clients. I have learnt from my peers. The department has not offered me an opportunity to be

supervised, or exposed to any supervision session. I feel I need to be exposed and provided with supervision.

R: You saying you need to be supervised.

A: Yes; I need to understand why the department is appointing supervisors; who are not performing their job. They don't have time to sit with social workers and understand their individual and professional goals regarding their professional growth. I only consult when there are difficult tasks to perform; for example ministerial cases. The case is reported from National Department if services are not provided to the clients; that is the only time I get full support from my supervisor. I will be guided until the case is reported to Head Office. Other cases you struggle with; and get more support from the peers. I can say in order to provide effective and satisfactory services to the clients I need proper supervision and support in all the methods of social work. This will ensure that there is guidance and improved service delivery.

R: You mentioned that you are not exposed to any supervision; share with me what you think need to be done to improve the quality of service delivery.

A: I think DSD should adopt the multidisciplinary team way of working; where other professionals are employed to assist; for example psychologists to assess children with difficult or psychological problems; and proper supervision should be provided with all the teams.

In my section we are 12 social workers and 14 social auxiliary workers. It is very difficult for my supervisor to provide individual supervision. I think DSD should employ more supervisors and balance the ratio to 1:10.

I have 120 case loads; and it is very difficult for me to attend and be supervised with all the cases. DSD should decrease the case load to 1:60 cases as stipulate by the council. This will ensure effective and proper service delivery.

The social workers in my section have over five years experience in the field. They developed burnout to deal with statutory cases and not exposed to other fields of service delivery. DSD should revisit the staff rotation policy; where social workers and supervisors should be exposed to other sections to avoid burnout. Supervision should be monitored and evaluated on the monthly basis to ensure that supervisors are doing their job.

There should be training provided for supervisors and supervisees to understand their role and responsibilities. They should update themselves on the current developments in order to improve their knowledge and skills; and use the knowledge during supervision.

There should be training provided to supervisors and supervisees to understand the policies; legislation and acts of the DSD in relation to supervision in order to improve service delivery.

R: I can hear you want to see improvement; I am wondering if you still have something you want to share

A: Yes; thank you very much for your time. I think as social workers from DSD we need to go back and revise the aim, goal and purpose of supervision. Then we can be able to implement supervision.

R: You mean supervision is important in social work profession.

A: Yes

R: Thank you very much for making my study possible; have a great day

A: You too, and goodbye.

Name of the participant	B
Age	43
Gender	Male
Race	Black
Section	Orlando
Work experience	8 Years
Years under supervision	8 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Morning B; and how are you

B: Morning R; welcome to my office

R: Thank you very much for affording me this opportunity to share with me your experience regarding supervision within the department”.

B: (with a smile and nodding his head).

You are welcome. We set an appointment to meet on Monday but unfortunately I was busy. I felt bad because we had to change the date. Today I am ready for you.

R: Thank you very much, I feel very much honored. Before we start with our session, we have agreed that the interview will take about 45 minutes to an hour, and whatever information we discuss will be treated as confidential. All the information will be tape recorded. I am wondering if you are still fine with it, can we continue?

B: I am fine with it, we can still continue

R: Thank you very much. Without any waste of time, can you kindly describe your current job requirements, with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform.

B: Pleasure, I am required to do case, group and community work with children.

R: Meaning you are doing three methods of social work with children; please elaborate.

B: In case work we are dealing with children who are in need of care and protection, either the child has been abandoned or orphaned and is without any visible means of support, displays behavior which cannot be controlled, begs, lives or work in the streets, and abuse substance. As a social worker I make sure that I put children in foster care or children's home. I also do group work with foster children and foster

parents. The focus is on life skills and parenting skills. Community work is not given full attention.

R: what do you mean by not given full attention?

B: What I am saying is that we experience some level of political interference and we are unable to attend to communities. We are unable to practice social work fully but fulfilling the political needs. It deprives me the opportunity to attend to my clients, and having supervision.

R: It sounds to me that besides the fact that you find that there is political interference, you also find that there is no supervision

B: You are absolutely right, in the department there is no structure, guidelines or policy in relation to supervision.

R: Would you like to elaborate further on that?

B: What I am saying is that, there is no supervision or policy that is guiding supervisors within the department. It becomes a big challenge to me because some supervisors are not performing their role; they are not knowledgeable and not aware of the importance of supervision. They want to please the Deputy or Assistant Directors.

R: Pleasing Deputy or Assistant Directors can you elaborate.

B: What I am saying is that since there is no supervision structure or policy supervisors are running their sections differently; in which supervision I am exposed to does not encourage learning or me receiving any constructive feedback.

R: In other words, you find that you are not exposed to supervision in your section.

B: You see there are no guidelines regarding supervision.

R: Could you elaborate more.

B: I am developing my own perception about supervision. Since there is no supervision I am resorting to peer support. Even if you are bringing the challenging case to the supervisor, if she doesn't have answers she will refer you back to social workers who have dealt with similar cases before.

R: You also find it difficult not to be exposed to supervision?

B: Exactly; I feel that supervisors are focusing on quantity than quality.

R: What do you mean by saying supervisors focus on quantity than quality?

B: I mean that supervisors are mostly focusing on statistics; that is the number of cases I have than the quality of work I am doing. The supervisors are not there for us, and there is no mutual relationship between the supervisor and the supervisees. I found that my supervisor is arrogant and not effective or efficient in dealing with issues or challenges faced by supervisees within the section.

R: Maybe you would like to share more of your experiences with me

B: Like I told you, there is no supervision in the Region. I was placed in different sections for the past eight years, and exposed to different supervisors. I didn't benefit from any supervision I was exposed to in the Region.

R: What do you mean by not benefiting in the Region?

B: What I am saying is that we need people who are passionate in providing supervision in order to develop and move the Region forward. Even the managers don't know what they are doing; they are pushing the political mandate.

R: You mean that political interference affects supervision?

B: Exactly, supervision is not provided, I am running with ministerial queries that are difficult without any support. I resort to peer support. There is no supervision sessions where I am exposed for support and learning.

R: Would you like to elaborate further on that

B: What I am saying is that there is no structure that I am exposed to. Each and every supervisor is trying to do PMDS (Performance Management) for the sake of performance evaluation. When submitting files to the supervisor, the supervisor will ask you the following questions: How old is the child? In which grade is the child? How is the relationship between foster parent and the child? There are no specifics in terms of what kind of challenges are the social workers facing to deal with their case loads. As a social worker I am afraid to challenge the supervisor; I feel that they also need support to perform their role.

R: You mean that there is no support with supervision you are exposed to?

B: Yes; the supervision which I undergo is not effective. I think the purpose of supervision is to support, and give information with regard to challenges I face as a

supervisee. After dealing with challenges the supervisor must evaluate if there is any progress. If there is no progress or development the supervisor should provide training where necessary. In my section there is no support provided by the supervisor that is why I resort to peer support.

R: Please elaborate more

B: I mean I was never exposed to any processes of supervision, for the past eight years. Peer support has been working for me. Even the new social workers joining the Region are not exposed to any supervision. I find it very much unfair for employing someone and only providing in-service training after six months and also providing them with job description after a year. I think that new social workers should be exposed to all the processes of supervision in order to understand what is expected of them.

R: You mean that there is no supportive supervision

B: I can say supervisors are not doing their work. They should mentor new social workers and acquaint themselves with SASSCP and NASW guidelines for supervision in order understand their role and to meet the needs of their supervisees. They should focus on quality than quantity.

R: Are you saying in order for supervisors to provide support, they need to understand the processes themselves for them to be able to share with their supervisees.

B: Exactly they should have the processes they follow and all the processes should be structured.

R: Can you elaborate more.

B: Since I am not supervised, and there is no structure, I don't have any experience of supervision. I resort to peer support.

R: Are you saying you are not offered any support?

B: Yes, I am not given any support but just given pressure when the supervisor needs daily, weekly or monthly statistics.

R: Can you elaborate more?

B: When I have ministerial enquiries, I am given pressure to complete the cases without the support of the supervisor. I will run all over to consult in order to complete the case on time. The peers provide me with the support I need.

R: What are ministerial enquiries?

B: Cases that are reported through media; any political party or structure. The cases need immediate attention from the social workers and have deadlines. For example I dealt with the case where the Minister of Social Development removed the children from unregistered children's home. I did not know what to do as the children's homes were full. I had to consult with my peers for support in order to place the children. It was very difficult because I had to report daily for the progress.

R: Are you saying you don't get support from your supervisor; what do you think needs to be done to improve the quality of service delivery within the Department of Social Development; Johannesburg Region?

B: I think there must be an agency where supervisors are trained thoroughly in terms of supervision, purpose of supervision and how to support staff.

There should be draft guidelines or policy on how supervision should be rendered within the Region. After recruitment; social workers should be inducted for a month by a supervisor who is capable and knowledgeable about services provided by DSD and be exposed to different methods of supervision.

Supervision provided within DSD should be monitored and evaluated on a continuous basis.

Supervision workshops should be provided for supervisors and supervisees in order to clarify their role and responsibilities. Also be trained on policies, legislation and acts to understand the goal of DSD; and improve service delivery. Supervisors should re-visit their role in supervision. They must not relax but update themselves on the new developments- improving their knowledge and skills. As social workers we need supervision as an instrument to develop and improve mutual relationships in social work and to improve the profession.

R: I can hear you want to see improvement within the Region. We are running out of time; do you still have something you want to share with regard to your experience of supervision?

B: The last thing that I can say is that; as long as we have political interference supervision will not improve. We need to educate our leaders about social work and the role of supervision in social work. We need people to push forward the region and implement supervision.

R: Thank you very much for sharing with me your experiences; I have learnt a lot from our engagement.

B: It's my pleasure

R: Goodbye

Name of the participant	C
Age	34
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Naledi
Work experience	7 Years
Years under supervision	7 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Good morning; and thank you for inviting me in your office

C: You are welcomed

R: Again thank you very much for affording me an opportunity to learn from you about your experiences in relation to supervision.

C: (smiling) pleasure.

R: Before we start with our session; I want to remind you that the interview will take 45 minutes to an hour. Whatever information you share with me will be tape recorded and be kept confidential. Are you fine, can we still continue?

C: I am fine; I also understand what is expected of me.

R: Thank you; as you understand what is expected from you. Can we go straight to the research questions?

C: No problem; I am ready

R: Can you kindly describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform.

C: I am doing statutory work; focusing on opening and finalization of children's court enquiries and placing children in alternative care.

R: What do you mean by placing the children in alternate care?

C: After finalization of children's court enquiry, the child is either placed in foster care, children's home or adoption. Most cases that I am dealing with are orphaned children, where either both parents are deceased; or mother/father deceased and mother/father's whereabouts are unknown. They are related cases.

R: When you say related cases; what do you mean?

C: I mean that in cases of foster care placement; children are placed with either the paternal or maternal families. I also do programs.

R: When you say programs, what types of programs?

C: I am doing substance abuse, parenting skills and awareness campaigns.

R: Would you like to elaborate further on the programs

C: In substance abuse; I refer clients to hospitals and rehabilitation centres; and educate and support the families with the client who is addicted.

Parenting skills; I educate foster parents on how to care for the children who are in need of care and protection. In awareness campaigns; I do HIV and AIDS and foster care placements. I educate the community in partnership with Department of Health, Department of Education and other stakeholders. In dealing with statutory work and programs; I am struggling because there is no supervision and support from the supervisor.

R: Are you saying you are not supervised? Please elaborate.

C: Yes, I am not supervised. Since I join DSD I am supervising myself. If I experience challenges with my case load, I consult with my supervisor. If the supervisor doesn't provide correct answers I resort to peer support. There is no supervision or the structure that is in place in our section.

R: When you say, there is no supervision or structure what do you mean?

C: According to my understanding; supervision should have the structure. Meaning that the supervisor and the supervisee should know what is expected of them and have a contract. They should contract about the date, time, venue and agenda for the session. In the session minutes should be taken and after those minutes should be signed by both parties as an agreement. Supervision should be provided on a weekly or monthly basis either individual; group or peer supervision. According to my knowledge I am not exposed to any supervision.

R: Are you saying you are not exposed to any supervision; do you understand the role of supervision within DSD.

C: Yes I am not. The role of supervision is recognized as one of the major determinants of the quality of services to clients; the level of professional development and the level of job satisfaction of social workers. Is the interaction process and related to on-going learning and performance. I don't understand the role of supervision within DSD as I am not supervised. Supervision is not provided.

R: If I hear you correctly; you are saying that there is no supervision provided in your section?

C: Yes; I am not supervised and I have no experience about supervision within DSD. There is no structure.

R: Do you like to elaborate more when you say there is no structure

C: Since I have been employed by DSD for the past seven years, I have never been exposed to any supervision; where the supervisor and supervisee sit together or in a group to discuss difficult issues in order to improve service delivery. If I experience any challenge within the section I consult with my peers. I get most of my support and encouragement from my peers.

R: You mean that there is no supervision and you are resorting to peer support?

C: Yes, it is true; there is no support; processes and structure of supervision I am exposed to.

R: You have mentioned earlier that since you were employed by DSD you are not exposed to supervision. I am wondering if you are saying that there is no process or structure you are exposed to; could you elaborate more.

C: When I experience challenges; I consult with junior and senior colleagues or consult with Canalization Section. The challenge would be the format of the report or dealing with difficult cases like ministerial enquiries or families in crisis situation. I don't get an assistance to sit down with my supervisors and discuss cases.

R: If I hear correctly you are saying supervisors are not providing supervision sessions?

C: Exactly; there are no supervision sessions provided to me. In my section the supervisor's post is vacant; we have an acting supervisor who doesn't provide any supervision and has no experience in supervision. The post has been vacant for four years. I don't benefit from supervision.

R: Ok (nodding my head and encouraging the participant to talk more)

C: Even the acting supervisor has to deal with her case load. Most of the time if I consult with her; she doesn't have answers. It is very difficult for me to do my cases without proper supervision. I feel I need proper supervision in dealing with all my difficult cases in order to provide satisfactory services to my clients.

R: If I am not mistaken; you have mentioned the importance of supervision. Share with me what you think need to be done to improve service delivery within the DSD.

C: I think supervisors are not doing their job; but talks about service delivery. They must have the structure and should provide individual supervision on a weekly basis.

R: Mm (minimal encouragement)

C: The supervisor has to have a signed contract with the supervisee on how supervision will be conducted. The contract should be discussed with the supervisee to know what is expected and discuss his/her concerns. It means there should be a structure and processes to be followed in order to provide proper supervision. The supervisor should know what is happening in the section and the case load of each and every social worker, in order to know the intervention strategy to be used to individual challenges and needs.

In my section we are 10 social workers and 11 social auxiliary workers under a supervisor. I think the ratio should be 1:6 in order to provide effective supervision to every supervisee on a weekly basis. This will improve service delivery.

Supervisors need to be trained to understand their role and responsibility. They should provide educational; administrative and supportive supervision to all staff under their span.

R: You sound passionate about improvement of services in the Region

C: Yes, as social workers we need to develop love and passion about our profession. By providing supervision I think we can protect social workers for being charged with professional misconduct. When I do my telephone and office interviews; and home visits; sometimes I fail to record the process. If process notes are not in the file; it

means I did not do the job. Those are some of the things the supervisors should discuss with supervisees and explain to us the importance of record keeping.

R: I can hear you want to see improvement; I am wondering if you still have something you want to share

C: No; thank you very much for your time; you remind me when I was still a student; we were provided with individual and group supervision where we learnt from each other. It was effective as we shared our skills, knowledge and theory. I think as social workers from the DSD we need to go back and revise the aim, goal and purpose of supervision. Then we can be able to implement supervision.

R: You mean supervision is important in social work profession.

C: Yes

R: Thank you very much for making my study possible; have a great day

C: You too, and goodbye.

Name of the participant	D
Age	45
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Johannesburg CBD
Work experience	10 Years
Years under supervision	10 Years

Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview
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R: Morning madam

D: Good morning madam; and you are welcomed. Please take a seat.

R: Thank you; it is my pleasure to meet with you once again.

D: I had to make time because I wanted to share my experiences about supervision in my section.

R: Before we start; let me remind you that the interview will be tape recorded; and the information you share with me will remain confidential. Our session will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Without any waste of time; can we still continue if you are ready?

D: It is ok; no problem.

R: Kindly describe your current job requirement with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform.

D: As a social worker, I am expected to have a degree; drivers license and be registered with the professional council every year. I am also expected to conduct home visits; write reports; interview clients and go to court.

R: Could you kindly elaborate more and be specific on the tasks that you are expected to perform.

D: I am doing statutory work focusing on children who are in need of care and protection. Is either the child is abused, neglected, orphaned or abandoned. After investigations, and placing the matter before the children's court; with the court decision I place the child in suitable alternative care in order to protect the child from physical or psychological harm. I act in the best interest of the child. I also do projects; parenting skills; awareness campaigns and HIV and AIDS.

R: Please give more clarity on the projects you are involved with.

D: Parenting skills project; I teach and share with foster parents about the challenges they experience with their foster children. We focus on different developmental stages of children and the challenges of the stage. Foster parents encourage; share experiences and support each other on how to handle the children under their care. Some of the children are HIV positive as their parent/s died of the disease. I support both the children and the foster parents; by providing awareness campaigns in partnership with the clinics around the area to educate them.

I also educate the public around Johannesburg CBD about the processes and procedures to follow if they want to apply for foster care placement; and for foster care grant.

R: Are you saying you are doing case; group and community work.

D: Yes; but our main focus is statutory work.

R: Can you elaborate more?

D: Foster care placement is priority of the minister since the implementation of the new Children's Act (38 of 2005) as amended in 2010. On a monthly basis we focus on

foster care backlog working on the lapsed orders; to ensure that the children are provided with services and their basic needs are met.

R: Your focus is on statutory work; are you provided with any structured supervision to perform your job?

D: No; to my understanding; supervision within the DSD is not structured at all

R: When you say; not structured at all what do you really mean?

D: Ever since I joined the DSD; I don't remember myself signing any contract with my supervisor; sitting or meeting with her for an hour. I have not done that for the past ten years.

R: Are you saying you are not exposed to any structured supervision in your section?

D: Exactly; there is no supervision that I am exposed to.

R: What do you think is supposed to be the role of supervision within the DSD?

D: The role of supervision is to empower; support; guide and educate.

R: Can you elaborate more

D: When I have difficult or challenging cases; I expect the supervisor to give me direction. For example we are unable to finalize the court cases as the Presiding Officers are questioning our reports. When you go to court; the supervisor sign the report without canalizing it; and doesn't identify the gaps in the report. The Presiding Officer returns the reports. That is the challenge I am facing. The supervisor will

instruct you to check what is outstanding without sitting down and supporting you on the process. I expect my supervisor to guide me in order to avoid delays in finalizing children's court enquiries. There is no guidance since I have been employed and there is no supervision.

R: Are you saying you are not supervised?

D: Yes; my experience is that I have never had any structured supervision.

R: Elaborate more.

D: I have never been exposed to a structured supervision; where I contract with my supervisor. Even when I consult we don't take minutes of consultation. I feel we need structured supervision where I plan with my supervisor and prepare for the session.

R: Do you mean that there are no processes you are exposed to?

D: Exactly; there are no processes that we are following as I am not supervised. I benefit from peer support. They assist me a lot in dealing with most difficult and challenging cases. We consult on a daily basis if we experience any challenges; that assists me to provide satisfactory services to my clients.

R: Can you elaborate more?

D: I don't benefit anything from supervision as I am not supervised. I consult when there is a need; and only if my peers cannot assist. My supervisor is always busy, she will not assist you immediately; but still have to check with management or consult with other supervisors. It is time consuming when you have to deal with a crisis. That is why

I resort to peer support; they assist me to render satisfactory services and to deal with challenging problems relating to my daily work.

R: Dealing with challenging problems how?

D: There is no support offered by my supervisor in dealing with challenges on a daily basis. Peers are there to offer support daily to ensure that we provide effective services to our clients. I don't understand why we have supervisors if they don't understand their role. Supervisors are paid to provide supervision services; the DSD should hold them accountable. They must be monitored and evaluated to ensure that there is structure and process; and they understand the role of supervision.

R: You are saying; there is no supervision. Share with me what you think needs to be done to improve the quality of service delivery within the DSD.

D: I think that the DSD needs to employ supervisors who are capable; who will make follow ups, who will support supervisees and who will provide supervision. They must not consider years of experience but target people who are knowledgeable and who will work as team leaders.

Supervisors are overwhelmed; they are supervising many people. In my section we are twenty; the social workers and social auxiliary workers. I think the ratio should be 1:5 in order for supervisors to provide effective services.

Supervisors are doing injustice to new social workers who are joining the profession by not providing supervision. There should be a policy in the DSD guiding the supervisees and supervisors on procedures and processes of supervision. Training should be provided to all the parties.

R: I hear you saying that suitable people should be appointed to supervise and to improve services within the DSD.

D: Yes, from our interview I have learnt that there is a gap. Really and honestly we need to be supervised; if we are not supervised there is no growth. Supervisors should know if they are not providing supervision to new social workers joining the profession they are doing injustice.

R: I hear you saying that supervision is important within the DSD.

D: Very important, it needs team work and commitment.

R: I am wondering if there is anything you still want to share about supervision?

D: No

R: Thank you very much for affording me your time; to share your experience regarding supervision within the DSD.

D: I thank you.

R: Have a wonderful day, bye.

D: Goodbye.

Name of the participant	E
Age	37
Gender	Female
Race	Black

Section	Randburg
Work experience	7 Years
Years under supervision	7 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Good afternoon madam and how are you?

E: Afternoon; you are welcome in my office and you can have a seat.

R: Smiling; thank you very much.

E: I was waiting for this day to share my experiences.

R: Thank you. Before we start; let me remind you that the interview will be tape recorded; and the information you share with me will remain confidential. Our session will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Without any waste of time; can we still continue if you are ready?

E: Yes, I am willing to continue.

R: Could you describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

E: I am supposed to mentor and supervise the social auxiliary workers and the interns in relation to social work profession within the DSD. After they met with clients; groups and community members; I provide individual and group supervision where they put theory into practice. They learn from each other and share their experience. The

process enables them to improve their knowledge and skills; and to provide effective services to the clients.

R: Can you elaborate more?

E: I orientate and induct social auxiliary and interns on policies; legislation and acts used in the DSD in order to understand the mission; aim; goal and objectives of the department. I also provide supervision on weekly basis to ensure that clients are assisted. Our supervision is structured where we have contracts and have them signed. The contracts stipulate the purpose of supervision; clarify expectations; clarify the roles and the duration of supervision. During supervision we have planned agenda drafted by both parties; we take minutes and sign. I put minutes as evidence in individual portfolio to ensure that supervision has been provided.

R: Were you provided with any policy or guidelines to provide supervision?

E: No; I was approached by the supervisor to check if I can supervise social auxiliary workers and interns that I placed within the DSD. I took an opportunity. Before I started supervising I read more about supervision from NASW; in order to know what was expected from me. Currently I don't have individuals that I am supervising; the DSD has not recruited. I am expected to provide statutory services.

R: Statutory services; elaborate.

E: I deal with children who are in need of care and protection. Those children are either neglected, abandoned, abused or without visible means of support. If the case is reported to the DSD I do investigations and check the circumstances of the child. If I

found that the child is in need of care and protection; I open the case with the children's court. After intensive investigations; and I am convinced that the child needs placement I finalize the case. I may order that the child be placed in alternative care; in place of safety pending permanent placement either in foster care; adoption or in child and youth care centre. The Presiding Officer will finalize the placement. If the child is placed in foster care, I assist foster parents to apply for foster care grant and to monitor and supervise the placement of the child. I monitor always to check if placement is still suitable for the child. The placement should be in the best interest of the child. If the placement is not serving the best interest of the child; I transfer the child to alternative care; and it is also monitored. Most placements break because foster parents; adoptive parents and the child and youth care centers cannot handle children with conduct behavior; psychological problems and uncontrollable behavior. The challenge is that the DSD and organizations do not have facilities to cater for those children. Some of those children end up using drugs; and not attending schools. I refer them for detoxification in hospitals or to SANCA for services. If they are addicted I refer them to rehab centre for the period of six months.

R: You are doing a lot with children; I am wondering if you are provided with structured supervision?

E: No; I am not provided with any structured supervision

R: Tell me more.

E: Currently I can say there is no structured supervision provided in the section. What I do if I experience a challenging or difficult case I consult with the supervisor to provide

clarity or direction. There is no structured supervision where you contract with the supervisor on the venue; time; date and the purpose or aim of the session. Anytime that I experience any challenge I consult. I can say I am not exposed to any supervision and I don't see its role.

R: When you say you don't see its role; could you clarify

E: The role of supervision is supposed to be developmental. Currently I don't have supervision and there is no growth and developmental within the DSD.

R: Elaborate more.

E: The role of supervision is supposed to be monitoring; reviewing and evaluating. The supervisor should monitor work performance from supervisees by reading records; reviewing statistical reports and sharing feedback. Also support supervisees to manage their case loads. Supervision should be planned and be developmental. But we are not exposed to that. I don't remember having supervision and I don't have experience regarding supervision within the DSD.

R: Can you elaborate more when you say you don't have experience regarding supervision?

E: Since I was employed for the past seven years; I have never had formal supervision. I only consult with my peers and the supervisor when there is a need. I have gained experience of supervision when I am providing it to social auxiliary workers and interns. It is very structured and I have learnt from it. I feel that supervisors should have time; and provide supervision to individuals and group in

order for us to learn from each other and improve our knowledge. It will also improve service delivery; if we have structured supervision.

R: Are you saying you need supervision sessions that are structured

E: Exactly, if there is a structure there will be commitment. As there is no supervision there are no sessions or processes I am exposed to.

R: Please elaborate more.

E: I don't have any process that I follow with my supervisor. We meet when there is a need; when I consult not supervised. I feel that the DSD should encourage supervisors to provide supervision in order to deal with challenges and problems experienced by the social workers on daily basis. This will assist in retaining social workers in the profession and avoiding burnouts.

R: Elaborate more on the support that is offered to you to deal with your problems or challenges on daily basis.

E: I feel that I don't get enough support from my supervisor; I only consult. I get my support from peers. If I have to do home visits and appear in court; I request my supervisor to assign the task to another social worker she will assist and allocate the task. The peers are there to support. I am happy to have peers that understand and are willing to assist. I feel that supervisors should supervise us and provide support and guidance to improve service delivery.

R: What do you think needs to be done in order to improve service delivery within the DSD?

E: I think that supervisors and managers should be dedicated to do their work; and supervisors should be motivated to provide supervision.

The DSD needs to provide training to supervisors and supervisees to understand supervision. They should have common understanding and clarity on the role of supervision and the responsibilities of the supervisors. And also need to understand structure and process to be followed in order to provide supervision.

R: I can hear you are passionate about supervision, and you need to see improvement. I am wondering if you still have something to share.

E: Supervisors should understand that supervision is not one-sided where they decide about the content of supervision process, but need to involve supervisees in the process. Supervision process should benefit both the supervisor and supervisee.

R: You are saying that it takes two to tango. There is no supervision without both parties.

E: Yes; I think I enjoy sharing with you my experiences about supervision. I wish that every social worker should see the importance of supervision. Thank you very much, I wish we can meet again.

R: Thank you very much for your time, and have a wonderful day.

E: Same to you, and goodbye.

Name of the participant	F
Age	27
Gender	Male
Race	Black
Section	School intervention
Work experience	5 Years
Years under supervision	5 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Morning Sir, and how are you?

F: Morning and you are welcomed. Sorry for not honoring our appointment. I was busy; I am working at Alexandra and most of the time I am out of the office.

R: Thank you very much for providing me with an opportunity to learn more about your experiences.

F: Pleasure.

R: I feel very much honored. Before we start with our session, we have agreed that the interview will take about 45 minutes to an hour, and whatever information we discuss will be treated as confidential. All the information will be tape recorded. I am wondering if you are still fine with it, can we continue?

F: Yes; let's continue.

R: Could you kindly describe your current job requirements; with specific references to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

F: I am an Intake social worker based at school intervention section. I do family work; substance abuse and assessments.

R: Elaborate more on services that you are providing

F: As school intervention social worker, our main focus is on substance abuse within Primary and Secondary schools in Alexandra. The Department of Education felt that there was a need for public schools to have social workers in orders to deal with increased substance abuse. They felt that teachers are not trained to address the issue. The DSD National Office was approached as this is a national problem. The school intervention project is piloted in Johannesburg Region to check if there is a need; then it will be implemented nationally.

R: Mmm (minimal encouragement)

F: Our focus is substance abuse in schools. I assess what is the cause of substance abuse amongst school children. In ten schools we have targeted; I have identify amongst others child neglect; child abuse; family problems; peer pressure; developmental stage; poor performance at school and bullying. I am overloaded as many children are exploring and abusing substance.

R: It sounds interesting; I just want to know how many children you are targeting on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

F: It is supposed to be ten daily. We are requested to go to schools on a daily basis. With my experience since I have started with the project; sometimes I go to a school for the whole day I don't get referrals because they are busy. I felt this was a waste of

time. I have contracted with the principals and life orientation teachers in different schools to contact me if there is a child who needs our services. I have formulated good relationship with the team. When I am called at school I start by assessing the case. For example if I assess the case and find that the child is abusing substance because of family problems, the child will be referred to SANCA and the family to FAMSA. I do all the follow ups to ensure that the child is assisted and back to school. Other cases I refer them internally to different sections; Child Protection Unit when there is neglect or abuse; and statutory services where the child needs to be placed in alternative care. I have consulted with my supervisor and she understands my intervention.

R: As this is a new section in DSD; can you tell me about how supervision is structured?

F: In my experience; I don't think there is any structured supervision I am exposed to. Firstly our supervisors are not trained and don't understand what is supervision. Then how can they provide structure? The only thing that I do I consult with my supervisor and peers when I experience challenging cases.

R: You mean supervision is not structured

F: Exactly, it is not structured. When I was appointed five years ago I was placed at Intake section. I was doing crisis intervention; where I reunite lost children with their families; placing abused, neglected and vulnerable children in foster care or children's home. I placed individuals and children abusing substances in rehabilitation centre. On a weekly basis I was provided with supervision for my entire case load. Supervision

was structured and I signed a contract. My supervisor provided all three methods of supervision. That is education; administration and support. I improved with my administration work; I was provided with training on the new Children's Act (38 of 2005) as amended, substance abuse, child abuse, report writing and adoption. I felt supported on personal and work related issues. In my new section supervision is not structured and I don't see the role of it.

R: What you see as the role of supervision you are exposed to?

F: I feel that I am not exposed to any supervision. In my section I am the only senior person; placed with new social workers. It is very difficult for me as I have to guide new workers because; there is no supervision provided to them. When providing support to my colleagues; the supervisor will accuse me of wanting to take her position. There is no supervision in my section. I feel new social worker should be supervised in order to understand what is expected of them, role and purpose of supervision. Because they are not being supervised, they don't know how to write process; court and comprehensive reports. They consult with colleagues who are also not supervised. Supervisors are not there for us. When I write a report; I give it to my supervisor to canalize it. I should remind her about my report; it takes close to three to four weeks. She is only doing administration. I don't think that they understand the role of supervision. I am not supervised

R: Mm

F: The supervisor only allocates cases without understanding what is expected or providing guidance. I feel it is a new section and we need to be supervised. I don't

have any experience regarding supervision in my new section but I was exposed in my previous section.

R: Can you elaborate more about your experience?

F: My experience when I was employed, I felt supported. The supervisor guided me through all the processes of supervision and I knew what was expected of me. I was given tasks to complete and report back when we have supervision. The supervisor also provided me with books and materials to read; to improve my knowledge. When we have training and meetings she will choose a member to attend. Then the members do presentation to the whole group members. I have good experience and have learnt a lot from supervision. In my new section there is no supervision, no clear expectations and no clear structure, I only deal with deadlines. As a supervisee I am not sure what is expected of me, as the supervisor also doesn't understand the section. I am not exposed to any process or session.

R: When you say you are not exposed to any supervision what do you mean?

F: I mean there is no structure where I meet with my supervisor on a weekly or monthly basis for a session for supervision. I consult with supervisor when there is a need and mostly with my peers. There is no supervision process that I am exposed to.

R: Elaborate more when you say that there is no supervision process you are exposed to.

F: Right now I am not exposed to any supervision process. There is no direction on what is expected from me as a supervisee. I feel that supervisors are not empowered

to perform their role and cannot support and provide supervision. They are threatened by supervisees who is knowledgeable and who understand their role and responsibility. In order for supervisors to provide effective supervision that has structure and process, they should assume multiple roles that of a supervisor; educator; mentor; evaluator and role model for the supervisees. The DSD should appoint supervisors who could lead and provide them with supervision training.

R: Are you saying supervisors are not trained to provide supervision?

F: Yes, for example when you write a report, the supervisor is not interested in the content but correct the spelling. When I quote and integrate different theories that are not acknowledged. It is very frustrating that is why my colleagues cut and paste reports. They are aware that the supervisor signs if there is no spelling error but doesn't understand the content. I feel there is no motivation and support from supervisors. My initiatives and efforts are not supported. The supervisors are not encouraging, not interested in the development of cases but only to daily, weekly or monthly statistics. They focus on quantity than quality. It is de-motivating to work without supervision.

R: Are you saying you don't benefit from supervision?

F: Yes, I don't benefit as supervision is not provided. I consult with either the supervisor if available or peers if I experience problems or challenges with cases in order to render satisfactory services to clients.

R: Elaborate

F: I get most of support, encouragement and direction from my peers in order to deal with my daily work. I feel I need more support and guidance as we are piloting the new service in the DSD. This will assist us to give positive results about the project, and also to expand it to other Regions and Nationally. If proper supervision is provided, we can develop the profession and attract more social workers in the section. School intervention social work is a very interesting field.

R: According to your observation and experience, what do you think needs to be done to improve quality of service within the DSD?

F: There should be proper training for supervisors and supervisees on supervision issues focusing on the structure, processes, role and responsibilities.

The supervisor should understand and be knowledgeable on the aim, goal, objectives, policies, legislations and acts governing the DSD; know other departments and Non-profit organizations that provide services to the clients in order to assist and guide supervisees to deal with their cases effectively and provide satisfactory services to the clients.

Supervision should be provided at the ratio 1:6 in order for the supervisor to understand supervisees individually, their case load, identify the training needs and provide support emotionally and mentally. This will assist to avoid absenteeism, burnout, social workers leaving the profession (staff turnover) and attract new social workers.

Supervisors need to update themselves on new developments, social problems globally and encourage supervisees to read and exchange knowledge during the supervision process. Both should be open to learning and development.

Performance assessment should be done on monthly basis to monitor, assess and evaluate supervisees and supervisors in order to improve supervision.

R: I can hear you are passionate and want to see improvement in supervision. I am wondering if you still have something to share regarding your experience.

F: I think I enjoy sharing with you my experience. As social workers we need to be supervised to enable us to provide effective and efficient services to our client and organization. Supervision that is structured allows professional socialization and job satisfaction.

R: You need supervision to improve service delivery. Thank you for sharing your experience with me, and making my study possible.

F: I enjoyed it too, bye.

R: Have a great day.

Name of the participant	G
Age	33
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Intake

Work experience	3 Years
Years under supervision	3 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Good morning; and thank you for inviting me.

G: You are welcomed.

R: Thank you for affording me an opportunity to learn from you about your experience.

G: Pleasure

R: Before we start with our session, I want to remind you that the interview will take 45 minutes to an hour. Whatever information you share with me will be tape recorded and be kept confidential. Are you fine, can we still continue?

G: I am fine; we can continue.

R: Thank you, could you kindly describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

G: I am an Intake social worker based in the Region. I am dealing directly with the clients who approach the office experiencing different challenges and of all ages, race and gender.

R: Can you elaborate more?

G: Our section is regarded as the face of the DSD as is the point of entry. The services that I provide include front desk, office interviews, telephone interviews, crisis intervention, home visits and administration support. At the front desk I briefly interview

all individual members to assess their challenging problems and refer to the relevant resources. Most cases that I am dealing with includes child abuse and neglect, family problems, substance abuse, elderly abuse, marital problems, custody, foster care placement, uncontrollable children, mental illness, physical disabilities just to name a few. As the DSD is funding NGO's specializing in different fields, we have memorandum of understanding that if we assess the cases we should refer them to the organization that provide services. For example if a client experience marital problems I refer the client to FAMSA, alcohol problems to SANCA, mental problems to mental health or hospital for assessment and the children under the age of twelve to Child Welfare.

F: You can continue

G: If the social worker at front desk feels that the client needs office interview, she will send her for further intervention. I will interview the client and if there is a need for follow up, I make an appointment. As I am dealing with short term cases, if the client needs further intervention I refer the case to field social workers. I also deal with crises, where I assist lost and street children to be reunified with their families. Where the child needs care and protection, the case will be referred to field social workers for opening and finalization of the children' court enquiry. The child will either be placed in temporarily place of care, foster care, children's home or adoption. My work is challenging and I am not provided with any training.

R: Are you saying with all the tasks you are performing there is no supervision?

G: Yes, there is no structured supervision

R: Can you elaborate more

G: Supervision is a process of learning and developing new skills. I have been in the DSD for three years. Since I was appointed I was never orientated or supervised. I thought I was going to be provided with individual supervision to adjust and to develop a mutual relationship with my supervisor. To my surprise I was never provided with supervision. For the first time it was very difficult as I expected to have weekly supervision, in order to adjust. I had to think, learn fast and adapt to the section with the assistance of the peers. The supervisor was not there for me. I was expecting to sign a contract were I clarify my fears, concerns, expectation, share challenges, identify training gaps and learning needs. I interacted with my peers and they created a supportive environment where I share my challenges. The peers developed my skills, theory and knowledge through sharing difficulties and challenging cases. I am not supervised; I consult with the supervisor when there is a need. The supervisor makes contact with us at the end of the month when she needs statistic.

R: Do you mean that you only consult with supervisor, you are not supervised?

G: Yes, I consult not provided with any supervision. I feel that we need to be supervised since our section deals with new social problems and challenges. For example the parent or teacher will report children who are possessed by Satanism. Since this a new challenge; we must have group supervision to plan on how to deal with it and involve other stakeholders. Since we are not supervised; we have different approaches to deal with the challenge. I don't know why do they appoint supervisors if

they cannot fulfill their role. If you are exposed to supervision you feel confident and learn new developments in the field of social work. Supervision is vital in our field.

R: Do you see any role of supervision?

G: No; there is no role.

R: Elaborate more

G: I am not supervised, but consult with my peers. The roles of supervision are supposed to be educational, administrative and support, we only focus on administration. On a quarterly basis we identify our training needs, for the past three years I was not exposed or provided with training. Even our supervisors don't make follow up about the training. I feel we need to be having a structured supervision either individual or group to share our concerns. The role of a supervisor in supervision should be of a teacher, guide, gatekeeper and consultant. Since I am not supervised I don't see the role of supervision.

R: Are you saying you don't have any experience regarding supervision?

G: Yes, there is no time allocated for supervision and no sessions. I remember when I was still at the university, I was provided with supervision where we discussed about cases, got support, guidance, education and learning. I miss those years and sessions to learn and develop.

R: Are you saying that there are no sessions; elaborate

G: Yes, I don't attend any planned session with the supervisor. As I mentioned there is no supervision only consultation. There is no structure and process I am exposed to.

R: Please elaborate

G: Supervision is not provided. It seems that the supervisors do not understand the purpose of supervision. In some sections there are no supervisors only acting supervisors, who are still dealing with their case load and unable to provide supervision. There is no proper time allocated for supervision, I only consult with my supervisor and get support from my colleagues when I experience difficult cases.

R: What do you find to be beneficial to you that help you to render satisfactory services to your clients?

G: I find peer support to be beneficial as I am not supervised. Consulting with peers, assist me to improve my knowledge, skills and attitudes in dealing with clients and rendering effective services.

R: What do you think needs to be done to improve the quality of service delivery within the DSD?

G: Supervisors should be appointed into permanent positions and be trained on the role and responsibilities of supervision.

Supervisors should understand the aim, purpose and objectives of the DSD in order to provide supervision to supervisees in line with the vision of the DSD.

To avoid staff turnover, absenteeism and job dissatisfaction, supervision should be provided on a monthly basis to address concerns and problems and also support supervisees professionally and personally.

Supervision should be provided to every social worker within the DSD, if the social worker functions independently she should consult. There should be continuous evaluation, assessment and support within supervision sessions.

R: You are saying providing effective and efficient supervision will improve service delivery?

G: Yes

R: I can hear you need to see improvement in the Region. I am wondering if you still have something to share.

G: I have enjoyed sharing my experience with you and I am still emphasizing the importance of supervision in social work. Thank you very much for offering me the opportunity.

R: Ok, thank you very much for your time and have a wonderful day.

G: Goodbye.

Name of the participant	H
Age	34
Gender	Female
Race	Black

Section	Soweto
Work experience	5 Years
Years under supervision	5 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Good morning madam and how are you?

H: Morning, you are welcomed

R: Thank you for affording me an opportunity to interview you.

H: (smiling) pleasure

R: Before we start with our session, I want to remind you that the interview will be audio-taped and the tapes stored in a locked office and I will only have access. The interview will take 45 minutes to an hour and participation is completely voluntary. Whatever information you share with me will be kept confidential. Do you have any questions or can we continue with our research questions?

H: No questions I have read more about and I understand what is expected from me, let's continue.

R: Thank you; please describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

H: I am a statutory social worker, working with children who are in need of care and protection. I am opening and finalizing new foster-care cases and extending placement

with the children's court. Cases where children are in-conflict with the law I refer cases to the Probation unit.

I am also expected to organize community work programs and also render group work with foster parents, children and prospective foster parents. I run support groups where group of parents and children share experiences and challenges regarding foster placements. Due to high number of orphans, neglected and abandoned children my focus is on case work. Our National office is concerned with Foster care backlog and need us to focus on the issue and report on a monthly basis.

R: Foster care placement is the priority within the DSD, are you supervised? Tell me more about how supervision is structured within the DSD.

H: Supervision is not structured at all within the DSD. I don't understand why it is not structured. From the university we were encouraged to attend supervision in order to improve our knowledge, skills and integration of theory. In supervision we learnt from each other as we exchanged our experiences, perceptions and challenges. In the DSD supervisors don't render proper supervision where there is the structure. Where we sign contract and agree on the date, venue and time and method of supervision: individual, group or peer. I only consult with my supervisor when I have difficult case to discuss. This is more stressful especially for the newly appointed social workers because they need support and guidance as they are fresh from university. They must learn from supervision what is expected from them to improve service delivery. I don't see any role of supervision.

R: When you say, you don't see the role of supervision can you elaborate?

H: The role of supervision is supposed to be guidance and empowerment of junior social workers. It is a two way process where the supervisor and social worker share experiences. The supervisor performs the educational, administrative and supportive role to the supervisee. Since there is no proper supervision, it is better to network with other social workers from different fields or other organizations and share new information. The supervisor focuses only on the administration part, there is no education and support. I get most of my support from my colleagues and I learn from them.

R: You mean you are not provided with supervision?

H: Yes, I only consult with my supervisor. There is no supervision structure or process I am exposed to. Most of the supervisors appointed, do not have passion and knowledge about supervision. They are failing us as social workers, that is why the DSD is experiencing a high case load of lapsed foster care orders as there is no supervision. Supervisors don't know each social workers case load and the lapsing dates. We only deal with return dates not supervision. I think I need supervision for my entire case load. I need to sit down with my supervisor and share my frustrations, concerns and experiences. There should be a structure and process we are following in order to provide satisfactory services to my client.

R: Please elaborate.

H: There is no structure, most supervisors focus only on lapsing dates of the orders, ministerial enquiries and difficult cases. I consult with supervisor and colleagues when

I am experiencing difficult cases. Then I am able to provide satisfactory services to the clients. There is support when I need it, but no effective supervision.

R: You are saying there is no supervision, what you think needs to be done in order to improve the quality of service delivery within the DSD, Johannesburg Regional.

H: I think that supervision should be taken serious, by training both the supervisors and social workers in supervision process, procedures and structure. They should understand their roles and responsibilities. The DSD should employ knowledgeable supervisors to provide satisfactory services to the clients and the organization.

R: You mean supervision should be provided in order to improve services for clients and the department.

H: Yes, there is no social work without supervision. In supervision there is an exchange of knowledge, support and increase of professional conduct. The social workers become confident to deal with case load and face personal and professional challenges. Proper supervision can decrease social workers who leave the profession. The supervisor can identify the problem, before the social worker experiences burnout. For example if I cannot function in the section, during the supervision session the supervisor should be able to identify that and encourage training, rotation, support or challenge me to function effectively and to provide satisfactory services to the client.

R: You are saying supervision is important and you mentioned a number of challenges that you encounter in relation to supervision namely that there is no structure, no

process and sessions provided to you and you consult with your peers. I am wondering if you still have something to say.

H: No

R: Once again thank you very much for your time.

H: Pleasure

R: Have a wonderful day

H: Same to you and bye

R: Goodbye.

Name of the participant	I
Age	49
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Johannesburg
Work experience	4 Years
Years under supervision	4 Years
Data collection tool	Semi-structured interview

R: Good morning madam

I: Morning, you are welcome in my office.

R: Smiling, thank you very much.

I: I was waiting for this day to share my experiences.

R: Thank you very much for affording me an opportunity to share your experience regarding supervision. Before we start, let me remind you that the interview will be tape recorded, and the information you share with me will remain confidential. Our session will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. I am wondering if you still prepared to continue.

I: Yes, I am willing to continue.

R: Without any waste of time, I will start with my first question. Could you describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

I: I am a statutory social worker dealing with children cases. The cases are either referred by school, community, day care centre or families. I assess the cases to check if the child is in need of care and protection.

R: What do you mean by saying child in need of care and protection?

I: Is either the child is abandoned or orphaned and without visible means of support, uncontrollable and cannot be controlled by care-giver, lives in the streets, abuses substance and physically, emotionally and mentally abused. After assessment, I do opening and finalization to children's court to place the child in foster care or children's home. But if the child is young and abandoned I refer the case to Adoption agencies, Johannesburg Child Welfare or private social workers specializing with adoption to

place the child for adoption. The DSD is not delegated to do adoption according to the new Children's Act (38 of 2005) as amended.

Where the children are abusing substance I refer them to rehabilitation centre. Then I work with the family and prepare after care sessions after their release. If after care is not provided the children's order might relapse. It is important to support the family to be able to support the child. I also do group work sessions with foster parents and foster children.

The cases that I have finalized at court, are only extended for two years, then I have to write a report three months prior the date on which the court order lapses either to court or Canalization Section for further extension. The reports that I am writing are canalized by my supervisor then I send them to court or for canalization. My problem is that sometimes they are returned because of insufficient information. I am asking myself why the supervisor didn't identify the gap, did she sign the report without reading it or she does not understand what is required at court.

R: In your tasks, do you have any structured supervision?

I: No, since I was employed in the DSD I have never been provided with structured supervision. The supervisors do not understand their role and responsibilities. That is why our reports are returning from court. I do not have an opportunity were I have contracted with my supervisor to attend any supervision. Most of the time I consult with my colleagues and we share our experiences without any guidance from the supervisor. Even the new social workers do not get one-on-one supervision, we are

supporting them. Supervisors are not organized. I don't see the role of supervision as I am not exposed to any supervision.

R: Elaborate more

I: The DSD supervisors are not doing their job; and they do not understand the role of supervision. They only concentrate on one aspect, statistics at the end of the month. During the month I don't understand what they are doing because you will find them always busy. I don't have supervision and I do not attend any sessions. I only consult with my supervisor when I am experiencing difficult challenges. They do not have information that is why I resort to my colleagues. If we had sessions I think we could develop as a section, share knowledge and experience because some of us started working with NGO's before being employed by the DSD. We were exposed to supervision sessions and we gained from the sessions which encouraged me to continue assisting my colleagues.

R: You mean you are not exposed to any supervision sessions?

I: Yes, there are no sessions, we only consult and adhere to return dates. My supervisor is unavailable for sessions and might not understand the purpose of providing the supervision sessions. I am struggling but at least I have my colleagues who support me. There is no process.

R: When you say there is no process please elaborate on that statement.

I: There is no supervision provided. If there is no structured supervision there cannot be processes. The process should be in line with the structure.

R: You are saying that there is no supervision, what helps you to render satisfactory services to your clients?

I: I get more of my support from my colleagues than from my supervisor. We discuss cases and get solutions without our supervisor. Supervisors are not there for support, I don't think they know and understand what we are doing or they are afraid of challenges as they are not knowledgeable.

R: How, please elaborate?

I: Supervisors are not studying further or just reading? reading and not updating themselves regarding the new knowledge. I think they don't even understand on what is expected from them. They need to take their role seriously, read and understand the policies, legislations, acts used within the DSD. Without that understanding they will never understand their responsibilities and cannot support us.

R: What support is offered to you to deal with challenges or problems you encounter in your daily work?

I: I benefit from consulting with my colleagues, that is where I get my support to deal with challenging cases. Sometimes with my supervisor when she is available.

R: You are saying that there is no supervision, what do you think needs to be done in order to improve the quality of service delivery within DSD, Johannesburg Region?

I: Supervisors and supervisees should be trained on supervision, and Assistant Directors should ensure that supervisors are evaluated and monitored to ensure that

supervision is provided on a monthly basis. Also identify the gaps of supervisors and provide training were necessary, to enable them to provide effective supervision.

Supervisors should be open to learning, establish relationships with other stakeholders to learn how they provide supervision and read more books to update themselves and assist supervisees if they have challenges during supervision. Both the supervisors and supervisees should be trained in report writing to know what is expected by the courts. Supervisors should know what to check in the report when providing supervision. That will improve the standard of reports produced by the supervisees.

All the three tasks of supervision should be provided; administration; education and support to ensure proper service delivery. Supervision should be given a priority, be structured and have a policy to guide the whole process.

R: You mean that supervision should be provided and both social workers and supervisors should understand supervision as an important concept in social work.

I: Yes, even if someone is acting on behalf of the supervisor, she/he must have a clear understanding what is required on him/her.

R: Do you mean that the supervisees and supervisors should understand supervision?

I: Yes

R: To you supervision is important to improve service delivery

I: Yes

R: I am wondering if there is something you want to add before we close our session.

I: I wish that the DSD could see the gap, the fact that supervision is not provided to us. The management should provide training to supervisors to ensure that supervision is provided. Supervisors should be held accountable of the professional growth of their supervisees.

R: I can hear you would like to see improvement, once again thank you very much for your time.

I: You are more than welcome.

R: Enjoy you day.

I: Same to you.

R: Goodbye.

I: Bye.

Name of the participant	J
Age	38
Gender	Female
Race	Black
Section	Alexandra
Work experience	8
Years under supervision	8
Data collection tool	Semi- structured interview

R: Good morning madam

J: Morning, you are welcome in my office.

R: Smiling, thank you very much. When we shared information about the research topic you sound interested and you were willing to be interviewed. I am wondering if you are still interested.

J: I know I was very busy, as my working is very hectic. I am prepared to share my experiences with you.

R: Thank you very much. Before we start, let me remind you that the interview will be tape recorded, and the information you share with me will remain confidential. Our session will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Is anything that you want to have clarity on before we start our session?

J: No, the questions that you provided to me are clear, we can continue.

R: Without any waste of time, I will start with my first question. Could you describe your current job requirements with specific reference to the tasks that are expected of you to perform?

J: I am a statutory social worker dealing with children who are in need of care and protection. My duty is to place those vulnerable children in alternative care either foster care, place of safety, children's home or in adoption.

R: What do you mean by saying child in need of care and protection?

J: When the case is been referred to the office , the social worker must do an assessment to check if the child is in need of care an protection. The assessment should be based on: if the child has no parents, the child has been abandoned, the child is uncontrollable, abuses substance or the child is emotionally or physically abused. As a case manager I, do home visit to investigate the child circumstances.

Then write a report to the children's court to recommend that the child be placed in alternative care. The court will issue an order that commit the child into alternative care. As a case manager, I do visits to check if the placement is still suitable for the child. Then I extend the orders three months before they lapse.

R: In all the services you are providing your tasks, are you receiving any supervision?

J: No, I am not receiving any supervision since I joined DSD. I only consult where there is a need.

R: When you say, where there is a need, can you elaborate

J: When I experience a challenge, for example a ministerial case. In order to compile a report you need an input from a supervisor. There is where I consult with her. There is no structured supervision that I am receiving. I also consult with my peers on a daily basis if I experience any challenge. There is high case load and too many supervisees under that is why there is no structure provided for supervision.

R: You are saying, you are not supervised and there is no structure?

J: Exactly, a supervisor is only having the position; there are no supervision sessions that are planned for us as individuals. We are struggling in the Region. Our supervisors are not protecting us from management. And also there is a lot of political interference; where you end up not understanding the role of a supervisor. As a government organization we are serving the interest of the Ruling party. People in the community are referred randomly to DSD without be linked to the relevant resources. As a social worker you are requested to leave you planned activities for the day and focus on the referral. We are now working as a crisis centre, and ignore other cases which result in the orders lapsing. The supervisor at the end of the month she is not interested on what you do, but need the monthly stats.

R: Are you saying there is no structured supervision; and proper planning?

I: If there was proper structure of supervision and assessment. We would not be running around like headless chickens. Proper supervision is very important to

overcome political interference. The DSD should educate the politicians about the role of social workers, and also the importance of supervision. We are also not exposed to the process and session of supervision in order to develop professionally. I wish in the DSD we should encourage the culture of learning by promoting supervision. The supervisors should be held accountable on the role they suppose play in the DSD. I love my profession and I will like to see an improvements and learning taking place.

R: You saying proper supervision can improve social work profession.

J: Yes, if supervision is structured. There will be improved service delivery.

R: You mentioned that you are not exposed to any supervision. Share with me what you think need to be done in order to improve supervision in the region.

J: We need supervisors who are properly trained

The ratio of social worker to supervisor should be 1:6.

Supervisors in DSD should focus on quality than quantity.

There should be continuous training to supervisors, managers and social workers on the role of supervision.

Case load should be decrease to 1:60 cases.

Rotation policy should be revisited where social workers and supervisors are given an opportunity to rotate to other sections in order to avoid burn out.

There should be promotion of supervision in DSD where supervisors are evaluated on the monthly basis to ensure that they provide services to the supervisees.

Politicians should be orientated on the role of DSD, and how different sections function and on the role of supervision.

R: I can hear you would like to see improvement, once again thank you very much for your time. I am wondering if you still have something you want to share.

J: If supervision is provided in DSD, and the supervisors understands their roles. We can be able to improve service delivery.

R: You want to see improvement in the Region.

J: Yes.

R: Thank you very much for your time; and making my study possible.

J: I thank you.

R: Enjoy you day.

J: Same to you.

R: Goodbye.

I: Bye.

