

**EXPLORING SOCIAL WORKERS' INTEGRATION OF THE PERSON-CENTRED
APPROACH INTO PRACTICE WITHIN DIFFERENT WORKING CONTEXTS**

by

REMBULUWANI PAUL MBEDZI

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SUPERVISOR: MS HD GROBLER

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SUMMARY

The social work profession requires the accumulation of theory, knowledge, skills and their integration into practice. The department of social work at UNISA trains students according to the person-centred approach (PCA).

The question thus arises whether the social workers trained in PCA at UNISA are able to integrate theory into practice in their different areas of employment. Exploring this would give the department of social work an opportunity to re-visit the teaching of PCA and make some improvements if necessary.

The qualitative study was conducted with social workers employed in different welfare organizations in Pretoria. The following themes emerged from the analysis: the perceived significance of building relationship with clients, the organizational influence in counselling, unique experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated from other institutions, challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation, and lastly the nature of statutory cases.

The conclusions were drawn and recommendations were presented.

KEY CONCEPTS

Conducive environment; Clients; Frame of reference; Integration; Participants; Person-centred approach; Practice; Theory; UNISA; Welfare organizations.

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DECLARATION

Student number: 3134-891-2

I declare that

“Exploring social workers’ integration of the person-centred approach into practice within different working contexts“

is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

DATE

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a structured Master's degree in social work [Mental Health] in the department of social work at the University of South Africa. The study is aimed at exploring the social workers' experience of integrating the person-centred approach (hereafter referred to as PCA) into practice within different working contexts. These social workers studied at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and are currently employed in different welfare organizations in Pretoria. The researcher is a lecturer employed in the department of social work at UNISA and was motivated to conduct the study through the difficulties expressed by the fourth/final-year students on integrating PCA into practice in certain welfare organizations.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Barsky (2006:14), social work is internationally defined as a profession that promotes social change, as well as problem solving in human relationships, empowerment and the liberation of people to enhance well-being. He further states that social work is a profession that deals with people from a broad range of socio-economic and ethno-cultural backgrounds, and consists of the professional application of social work values, principles and techniques.

McKendrick (1990:5) asserts that the history of the development of social welfare and social work in South Africa is coloured by wars, famines, the discovery of incredibly rich mineral deposits and sudden, rapid urbanization, but its dominant pattern from the time

that white men and native inhabitants of the sub-continent first encountered each other, has been that of the relationships between groups of different racial origin.

McKendrick (1990:45) further mentioned that social work is an applied profession, meaning that social work is not only concerned with thinking, theorizing and analyzing, but with using knowledge and understanding to implement social work directly with people. This intervention always has the goal of bringing about positive changes in the client's functioning, or environmental factors impinging on the client's functioning, or both.

Schenck (in Earle, 2008:7) explicitly refers to shortages among social workers in South Africa by making reference to the first announcement of the social work profession as a 'scarce skill' by the former minister of social development, Mr Zola Skweyiya, in a Mail & Guardian article on 22 August 2003. The South African government is currently recruiting prospective students to register with institutions of higher education to train as social workers. The government is currently offering bursaries through the national and provincial departments of social development to all students in the country who are training to become professional social workers. The scarcity of professional social work skills in the country might pose threats and difficulties for the government's ability to deal with the increasing number of challenges like poverty, orphans and vulnerable children, HIV/AIDS, unemployment, family conflicts and marital disputes, teenage pregnancy, juvenile offenders, mistreatment of the disabled and elderly, as well as domestic violence. For these challenges to be addressed professional social work skills are required and many professional social workers with competence and a strong theoretical background need to be produced by the training institutions.

Van Dyk (2000:57) states that social work consists of the activities of persons trained to help individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or to restore their capacity for effective social functioning and to create societal conditions that are favourable.

The minimum duration of social work training in South Africa is four years for a graduate to qualify as a professional social worker. Social work training equips social workers in dealing with individual, group or community challenges. A professional social worker can be employed in different sectors, namely government departments, welfare organizations, and the private sector. Social workers in South Africa are required to register as such with the South African council for the social services profession (SACSSP) and also pay a yearly licence fee. The council has the power to deregister social workers found guilty of misconduct or unprofessional behaviour guided by the code of ethics to protect the integrity and the status of the profession (Nicholas, Rautenbach and Margie 2010:14).

According to Schenck (2008), the majority of students prefer to study through UNISA and that institution trains about 70% of all the professional social workers in South Africa. UNISA is an Open Distance Learning (ODL) institution which offers different career programmes including the social work degree. Through UNISA students are able to study part-time at their own pace depending on affordability and availability since some have full-time jobs.

According to Watson, Burrows and Player (2002:20), social work students are taught the understanding of the relevant theory and knowledge in the context of its application to social work practice and the ability to apply it.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

As a lecturer in the department of social work at UNISA (University of South Africa), the researcher is also involved in the mid-year and final-year oral evaluations of the fourth level students in two practical modules, namely casework and group work, and the focus is on the students' ability to integrate theory into practice. The fourth-year social work students at UNISA are placed in different welfare organizations (governmental or non-governmental) from the beginning of the year with the aim of practising the integration of

theory into practice through the guidance of their lecturers and the supervisors appointed in the department of social work by the University.

The students are expected to demonstrate their ability in integrating the required skills and theory (mostly PCA) in their involvement with the individuals, families, groups or communities and most importantly looking at the facilitation of the process of change. PCA is the core of teaching in the department of social work at UNISA as founded by the psychotherapist Carl Rogers.

During the final evaluations with the fourth-year students, the researcher witnessed that some students expressed difficulties about integrating PCA into practice for the following reasons:

- Some organizations are more structured and authoritative in nature which makes it difficult for students to practise PCA in such conditions
- Inadequate understanding and inability to apply the advanced skills to deal with the unsymbolized experiences of the client
- Inconsistent feedback and understanding of PCA by the appointed supervisors and the lecturers confuse the students

The above mentioned difficulties expressed by the students made the researcher wonder if there are also difficulties experienced by the qualified social workers in putting PCA into practice. The study focuses on the qualified social workers who are employed in different welfare sectors and are trained in PCA by the department of social work at UNISA.

According to Gillon (2007:167), a working environment can present some very significant difficulties for practitioners wishing to work from a person-centred perspective.

Nicholas et al (2010:83) highlighted that most social work practice methods are conformist in that they work within the parameters set by the government policy and employing organizations, whether working with individuals, families, groups or communities, in various ways: therapeutic (concerned with personal growth and change and fulfilment), problem solving (helping people solve problems in daily living), brokering and advocating (helping people gain access to resources), and statutory (ensuring that people conform to the laws and regulations). These all imply a process whereby social workers influence people to behave in certain socially acceptable ways.

1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

According to Fouche (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2002:108), a “goal” refers to a dream while “objectives” are the steps one has to take , one by one, realistically at grass-roots level, within a certain time-span, in order to attain the dream.

1.4.1 Goal

Mouton and Marais (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2005:105) define a research goal as having three main aims. The first aim is to explore the selected research topic. The second and third aims are to describe a topic or to explain certain concepts.

The goal of this study is to explore social workers’ integration of PCA into practice within different contexts of employment.

1.4.2 Objectives

To achieve this goal, the following objectives are identified:

- To explore the integration of PCA towards the process of change and reconstruction in different working contexts
- To explore the organizational influence on social workers regarding the integration of PCA into practice

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology refers to the research method, research design, method of data gathering and type of data analysis utilised by the researcher (Silverman, 2005:99). Mouton and Marais (1996:36) refers to the research method as the measures required to perform certain steps in the research process. Research methodology includes a description of the specific techniques to be employed (De Vos et al., 2005: 118).

In this study a qualitative research methodology was used consisting of empirical research and a literature study following an explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. According to Creswell (1994: 145), some characteristics of a qualitative approach are as follows:

- Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning – how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world.
- The qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data-collection and analyses.
- Qualitative research involves field work.
- Qualitative research is explorative by nature.
- Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in the process, meaning and understanding gained through words or pictures.

- The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstracts, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from the words or narratives from the participants

1.5.1 Research design

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 117) defines research design as a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends conducting research. According to Grinnell and Williams (1990:138), a research design is the total plan we use to assist in answering our research questions. The researcher decides on the research question, the data that will be required, from whom to obtain data, and also the best way to gather the data.

In this study the researcher utilized an explorative research design. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001:91), an exploratory study can be undertaken to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding.

The present researcher wished to explore the experience of integrating PCA into practice with the social workers who had been trained in PCA at UNISA and are now currently employed in different welfare organizations in Pretoria. The participants of this study have between two and five years' working experience.

1.5.2 Population

Mark (1996:104) defines a population as a collection of all individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and events that we are interested in finding out about. To define a population, the researcher needs to specify a set of variables or characteristics.

The population of this study is made up of the social workers who were trained in PCA at UNISA and are currently employed in different welfare organizations in Pretoria and have between two and five years' working experience.

Polit and Hunger (1995:701) refer to population as a group of people that share a common denominator that is of interest to the researcher.

The following common denominators were found to be of interest to the researcher:

- Participants are registered with the South African council of social services professions (SACSSP) as social workers.
- Participants completed their social work training at UNISA and PCA was the core of their training.
- Participants are employed and practising in welfare organizations in Pretoria.
- Participants have between two and five years' working experience.

1.5.3 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting observations (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:226). A sample can be defined as a small portion of a total set of objects, events, or persons which together comprise the subject of the study.

The type of sampling used in this study is the non-probability sampling method. According to Maritz (2008:21), in non-probability sampling, the probability of being chosen is not the same for each entity. It is not randomly chosen and it is considered biased. Neuman (2006:202) describes purposive sampling as non-random sampling in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult to reach population.

In this study, purposive sampling was used whereby the names of the welfare organizations in Pretoria were selected from the students' practical placement register in the department of social work at UNISA which contains the contact details of different welfare organizations in Pretoria. Eight organizations, namely, two different government departments and six different non-governmental organizations were contacted and

social workers who had trained at UNISA with working experience of between two and five years were identified.

1.5.4 Data collection

Grinnel and Williams (1997:41) refers to data collection as a procedure specifying techniques to be employed and activities to be conducted in implementing a research study. The researcher began the process of data collection by making contact with participants from different welfare organizations telephonically to make appointments.

After making appointments, the researcher visited the participants individually in their organizations with the aim of building the relationship and discussing the purpose of the study. Ethical considerations were also discussed and participants were requested to participate in the study. The follow-up appointment was made with the participants for the collection of data.

Creswell (1998:111) states that the principal ways of obtaining qualitative data are research interviews and group discussions. There are three main types of interviews, namely structured, semi-structured and in-depth interviews.

In this study the researcher utilized a semi-structured interview. Greef (in De Vos 2002:302) asserts that semi-structured interviews can be used to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs, or perceptions, or accounts of, a particular topic while giving the researcher and the participant much flexibility.

The tape recorder was utilized with the permission from the participants to record the information and field notes were used as a back-up.

The following request statement was used as the guideline in interviewing the participants:

Statement: *“Kindly tell me your experience of integrating PCA into practice within your organization”*

During the interview the participants were encouraged to talk through the use of PCA communication skills and the creation of a ‘conducive’ environment (this term is clarified below in section 1.8). The participants were allowed to communicate their experience of PCA integration into practice from their own frame of reference and follow-up statements were raised in accordance with the participant’s unique experience and perceptions.

1.5.5 Data analysis

Neuman (1997:426) defines data analysis as a search for patterns in recurrent behaviour, objects or a body of knowledge. The aim of data analysis is to organize and structure the data in such a manner that a meaningful conclusion can be reached (Polit & Beck, 2004:570). Once patterns are established according to the experiences of the participants, the researcher is able to interpret the information.

In this study, the researcher compared and analyzed the data based on Tesch’s eight steps as cited in Creswell (1994:155 -156) which process entails the following:

- The researcher gets the sense of the whole by reading all the transcripts carefully, jotting down along the margin some ideas as they come to mind in connection with the topic.
- Choosing the transcript on top of the transcribed interviews, the researcher reads through the transcript, asking himself what it is that he is reading. The step involves thinking about the underlying meaning, rather than the “substance” of information.
- The process is repeated until a list of the topics/themes is acquired. The topics are clustered together into baskets that could be labelled as “major topics”, “unique topics” and “left-overs”.

- With the list at hand, the data are revisited, an abbreviation for each of the topics is made in the form of codes and the codes are written next to the appropriate portion of the text. This preliminary organizing scheme is used to see if new categories and codes emerge.
- The researcher then finds the most descriptive wording for the topics and turns them into categories. Efforts are made to reduce the total list of categories by grouping together topics that are related to each other. Lines are drawn between categories to show interrelationships.
- The researcher makes a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetizes the codes.
- The data belonging to each category are assembled in one place and preliminary analyses are performed.
- Methods of data verification are applied.
- Utilized codes and descriptions from the textual data are taken as a source of evidence to justify the identified themes. The report of the results is then presented in a descriptive or narrative form.

The researcher transcribed and coded the data into themes in order to identify commonalities, as well as unique themes. The researcher re-checked the transcriptions with the taped interviews and compared them with the field notes to ensure that the data had been correctly transcribed.

The researcher read through the transcripts trying to understand the meaning behind the information provided. Through this process, common themes or patterns were identified. All the transcripts were re-read until the researcher was able to formulate a complete picture of the data. Streubert and Carpenter (1999:28) point out that the process of data analysis occurs when data are grouped together in terms of themes.

Each theme was summarized into a condensed form and similar themes were grouped together. From these themes, the researcher formulated sub-themes and categories. The presentation of the research findings is discussed in Chapter 3.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

De Vos (1998:24) defines ethics as a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual group and is subsequently widely applied. It offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents.

The following ethical guidelines were fully adhered to and communicated to participants:

- All subjects involved in the research were volunteers.
- No volunteer was to be compensated for participation in the study.
- Participants were allowed to withdraw at any time if they wished to do so.
- All literature sources of information were acknowledged.
- Confidentiality was assured to the participants.
- Informed consent was required.
- The researcher explained the nature and purpose of the study to the participants and advised them that the information would be tape-recorded.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the person-centred approach founded by the psychotherapist Carl Rogers. According to Botha (2010:18), Rogers founded the person-centred approach (PCA) after he felt frustrated with the existing psychological methods, which neglected the experiences and views of clients and primarily relied on the knowledge of the psychologist to find solution to the client's

problem. Person-centred therapy emphasised the importance of a warm, caring relationship between the facilitator and the client.

In PCA there is a belief that people are trustworthy, resourceful, capable of direction, and, consequently, able to modify their views of themselves and of their life, and to become more effective, productive and fully functioning. Rennie (1998:7) highlighted the importance of basic conditions for facilitation in PCA as being necessary and sufficient for positive therapeutic change in that they determine the client's establishment of congruence with organismic experiencing.

The literature review is fully discussed in Chapter 2.

1.8 GLOSSARY OF CONCEPTS

Conducive environment: refers to a safe space created by the facilitator during therapeutic sessions for the clients to feel free and share their innermost experiences.

Clients: refers to people who make use of the professional services of a social worker

Frame of reference: refers to a particular set of beliefs or ideas on which people base their judgement of things.

Integration: refers to the act of combining or adding parts to make a unified whole.

Participants: refers to the social workers from welfare organizations who took part in the study.

Person-centred approach (PCA): refers to an approach founded by the psychotherapist Carl Rogers and is based on the premises that a human being is a

trustworthy organism, capable of understanding him/herself in context, making constructive choices and acting up to those choices.

Practice: refers to the translation of an idea/knowledge into action.

Theory: refers to an organized system of accepted knowledge that applies in a variety of circumstance to explain a specific set of phenomena.

UNISA: refers to the University of South Africa

Welfare organizations: refers to the organizations that provide welfare services for the communities to improve the conditions of the disadvantaged.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: gives a detailed overview of the study and includes the introduction, the background of the study, the motivation of the study, goals and objectives of the study, research methodology, ethical considerations and definition of concepts.

Chapter 2: reviews literature pertaining to what is social work, history of the social work profession, social work training, social work theory and practice, the structure of social work training at UNISA, theoretical framework of the study, an overview of the person-centred approach (PCA), basic conditions required in PCA, Rogers's 19 propositions, facilitators' values, basic communication skills, advanced skills, the process of change and person-centred practice, and a summary.

Chapter 3: presents the research findings and includes the introduction, profile of the participants, the discussion of the research findings, and a summary.

Chapter 4: draws some conclusions and makes recommendations with regard to the research process and the social workers' integration of PCA into practice within their working context. The chapter includes the introduction, the implementation of the research methodology, research conclusions based on the findings, a research summary based on the conclusions and lastly recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

De Vos and Fouche (1998:68) argue that a literature study is aimed at contributing towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified. According to Neuman (1998:89), the goals of the literature study include the following:

- 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 stimulate new ideas

The literature study in this research will focus on the discussion of the following:

- What is social work?
- History of the social work profession
- Social work training
- Social work theory and practice
- The structure of social work training at UNISA
- Theoretical framework of the study
- An overview of the person-centred approach (PCA)
- Basic conditions required in PCA
- Roger's 19 propositions
- Facilitators' values
- Basic communication skills
- Advanced skills
- Process of change and person-centred practice

2.2 WHAT IS SOCIAL WORK?

According to Barsky (2006:14), social work is internationally defined as a profession that promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, empowerment and the liberation of people to enhance well-being. Social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people's lives. Social workers help people function the best way they can in their environment, deal with their relationships, and solve personal and family problems (Career information, 2010). Becoming a professional social worker in South Africa requires one to have the right kind of educational qualifications from an accredited institution and register as a social worker with the South African council of social service professions.

2.3 HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Earle (2008:14) states that social work as a profession emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as states, responding to the threat of the social crisis among the working classes brought about by the industrial revolution, began the implementation of public services and interventions such as sanitation, education, policing, prisons, juvenile correction, public workhouses and mental asylums, all of which were accompanied by relevant legislation and policies.

Historically, social work has allied itself with groups experiencing discrimination and social disadvantage, including people living in poverty and groups that have been alienated or mistreated because they were different in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, political viewpoint, or disability (Barsky, 2006: 7). In many areas, the profession of social work grew out of charitable work such as volunteers who worked with abused, neglected, or abandoned children.

According to Mazibuko and Gray (2004: 129), the social work profession has tended to focus on the management of dependency brought about by poverty, but it has also

involved the protection and promotion of the rights of particular individuals and groups in society. They further state that social work has attempted to respond to diverse needs and social challenges, in the process developing a generalist approach while at the same time promoting increasing specialization within specific fields of practice such as child welfare, aging, disability, mental health, and corrections.

The development of social work education was an important part of social work professionalization and 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). In 1924 a government department of labour was established to address the poverty and related urbanization issues in the white communities in South Africa (McKendrick, 1990). It was in the early 1940s and late 1950s that social work training for other racial groups in the country was introduced in South Africa (Mazibuko and Gray, 2004:130).

The Social Work Act was first promulgated in 1978 when the council for social work was established which regulated the social work profession in South Africa and from that time on, social workers were required by law to register for practice. This resulted in the professional associations of social workers in South Africa being developed as initiatives through which social workers sought to protect and give voice to their interests within the field of social welfare. Professional associations can be viewed as systems that enhance professional identity, provide opportunities to exchange ideas and encourage professional growth through conferences, publications, newsletters and funding research (Mazibuko and Gray, 2004:131). Professional associations also create opportunities for interdisciplinary coalitions and alliances solidifying a united force for policy and legislative advocacy at the local, state and federal levels (Miley, O'Melia & du Bois, 1998: 361).

According to Mazibuko and Gray (2004:132), the development of professional social work associations in South Africa was accompanied by the establishment of the council

of social work which is currently known as the South African council of social service professions. They further mention the major functions of the council for social work as follows:

- Advance and protect the interests of the social work profession and its clients.
- Advise the Minister of Welfare on matters relating to the profession and on national and provincial policies relating to social work.
- Administer the registration of social workers, social auxiliary workers and student social workers.
- Determine and maintain standards of professional conduct.
- Determine and monitor minimum standards for education and training of social workers.

2.4 SOCIAL WORK TRAINING

Social work training involves the teaching of theory and it ensures that the theoretical knowledge, skills and values are based on their application to practice. Social work education teaches students how to apply knowledge in helping clients deal with social problems. In other words practical learning is about relating the ideas learned in the University to the practice setting.

Social work training in South Africa requires a student to enrol or register with an accredited institution (University or College). The requirements of a bachelor's degree in social work are set out in the school calendar and they differ from one institution to another.

The minimum duration of social work training in a South African institution is four years and students are expected to accumulate all their knowledge and skills within this period. A bachelor's degree in social work (BSW) is the most common minimum requirement to qualify for a job as a social worker, but some jobs in public and private

agencies require an advanced degree such as a master's degree in social services policy or administration. Supervisory, administrative, and staff training positions usually require an advanced degree whereas college and university teaching positions and most research appointments normally require a doctorate in social work (Social Work Training, 2010).

Holders of professional social work degrees from South African institutions, however, are not restricted to working in the South African welfare system. Alternative opportunities lie in four key areas: moving into management or education within the public sector; practising in social work-related careers in the private service or corporate sectors; immigrating to countries such as the UK, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and USA to practise the profession there (Earle, 2008:3).

Barsky (2006:12) states that social workers can be employed in hospitals, schools, child welfare departments, mental health facilities, drug treatment programmes, community human rights offices, culture-specific agencies, international humanitarian organizations, immigration and refugee offices, nursing homes, group homes, and even on the street.

This training should equip the social workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to intervene at all levels in any setting and be able to deal with any challenge presented to them by the clients. After training social workers are expected to be emotionally mature, sensitive to people and must be able to work independently, maintain good working relationships with clients and co-workers.

Earle (2008:62) states that there are twenty institutions in South Africa that train social workers and the training is based on the integration of knowledge, theory, and skills into practice. Motshedi (2009) supports this by saying that some training institutions in South Africa use the integrated approach in teaching which incorporates different theories. He further states that integrated practice goes beyond perceptions of generalist practice as

merely a multi-method approach, and it is both a perspective on and an approach to practice.

The researcher could not find any follow-up studies in a literature search with regard to the integration of theory into practice by the professional social workers who are already practising in the field. Some of the studies found about the integration of theory into practice focus more on the fourth-year social work students during their practical placements with welfare organizations.

2.5 SOCIAL WORK THEORY AND PRACTICE

Social work, like all professions, uses theory to guide practice. Social workers use theory to understand and explain three main aspects of social work, namely: (1) the task, purpose, and role of social work in society, (2) practice theories, approaches or methods (how to go about doing social work), and (3) the world of service users, including the internal (psychological) world and the external (social) world (Theories of Social Work, 2010).

According to Barsky (2006:5), the practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behaviour, social and cultural institutions, and interaction of all these factors. Thompson (2000:65) states that there are a number of intervention methods and theories that are used in social work practice in order to address the challenges confronted.

A social worker is likely to work with a variety of people including children, aged people, alcohol or drug addicts, victims of crime, etc, and will have to learn to deal with them patiently. According to Bogo (in Doel & Shardlow, 1996:103), social work training considers the practical experience gained by the students to be the core of their educational preparation for professional practice and personal development as a social worker. Through students' placement in organizations students are exposed to a wide

range of social challenges and can learn to use theory and skills practically and with regard to the unique dynamics of a particular situation.

Motshedi (2009) states that the purpose of social work is built on the assumption that social workers will use theory to guide their practice. He further states that theory provides a lens through which a practitioner can obtain a better perspective and understanding of a practice situation.

Milner and O'Byrne (2004:15) state that from the early work of Freud up to theorists of the present day, there has been a succession of theories, some linked to previous theories, some outright opposite theories, but all embraced by those who found them useful in both understanding and helping clients.

According to Earle (2008:15) the professionalization of social work over the twentieth century involved a number of different aspects and one was to define a body of theory to serve as the foundation for autonomy and respect in social work practice and its education. This theory has to a large extent been borrowed from the field of psychology, and, while initially highly influenced by the psychodynamic theory, now includes sociological theories, social learning theory, systems theory, social movement theory, structural theories, deviance theory, family theory, feminism and the person-centred approach. There are thus many theories in social work training and the above mentioned are only some of these theories.

The person-centred approach (PCA) is the core of teaching in the department of social work at UNISA but no research has been done which explores the integration of PCA into practice with the social workers who were trained at UNISA.

2.6 THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL WORK TRAINING AT UNISA

The University of South Africa (UNISA) is one of the institutions that train social workers in South Africa. According to Schenck (2008), the majority of students prefer to study through UNISA since it is an open distance learning institution (ODL) and students are able to study at their own pace depending on affordability and availability. This results in some students taking a long time to complete their studies. She further states that UNISA trains about 70% of all the professional social workers in South Africa.

The department of social work at UNISA offers training to its students through workshops, study materials, assignments, discussion classes, tutorial classes and the use of technology such as 'myUnisa', video conferences, short messages (SMS), emails, and telephonic conferences. Students are expected to be independent and work on their own or form study groups with fellow students. However, continuous contact/communication with the lecturers is encouraged through the use of technology or by making appointments to meet the lecturers.

The majority of the first-year and second-year social work students usually form study groups or attend the tutorial classes arranged by the University through the department of learner support. This helps them to acclimatize to the ODL environment, and to support and learn from one another. Students are required to register for social work modules from level one until level four; however, there are other major subjects for students to choose from, namely, psychology, criminology, communication science, and anthropology, sociology, and development studies. Students only take one second major subject from those listed above to study from level one until level three.

The following modules are compulsory and all social work students at UNISA must register for them during their first and second year of study, namely, social welfare, research in social sciences, information skills for lifelong learning and marriage guidance and counselling. It is very important to note that the curriculum at UNISA changes over

time and this may imply changes in the subjects/modules offered for a degree in social work.

Third-year social work students at UNISA attend numerous workshops and group supervision sessions for the practical modules throughout the year with the assistance of trained facilitators appointed on a part-time basis by the University (Grobler, 2010:3). During the workshops students learn how to put theory into practice through role plays, case studies and written reports about the process and the use of skills in all three methods of practice, namely, casework, group work and community work. At the end of the year students are expected to present portfolios of evidence for the practical modules to demonstrate their learning experiences and competencies and they are also orally evaluated (Grobler, 2010:34).

The fourth-year social work students at UNISA are placed with welfare organizations from the beginning of the year to undertake the practical work for the practical modules under the supervisor appointed by the University to supervise their practical work and more especially the integration of theory into practice. Fourth-year students are also expected to undertake a scientific research project as part of the requirements and submit a mini-dissertation at the end of the year to the lecturer involved. For the practical modules students are expected to conduct a minimum of twenty interview sessions in casework, eight sessions in group work and be able to facilitate a sustainable project from the beginning phase (contact-making phase) in a community until at least the implementation phase (Du Plessis & Louw, 2009:27). The supervisors will mark all the reports which are included in their portfolio of evidence at the end of the year before the final evaluations.

There are two evaluations done in the practical modules which are a mid-year and a final evaluation and both the evaluations are done by the lecturers. The mid-year evaluation is mainly to check the progress of the students and provide feedback while

the final evaluation determines whether the student passes or fails the module focusing on the knowledge of theory and its integration into practice.

2.7 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the person-centred approach. The department of social work at UNISA has chosen the person-centred approach or theory because the lecturers find it useful when working with all sorts of people – individuals, families, groups and communities – to be able to apply the same principles, values and skills but this does not mean that it is the only theory that can be used effectively (Botha, 2010:18).

2.8 AN OVERVIEW OF THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

According to Hart, Atkins and Fegley (2003:2), the person-centred approach refers to an approach that uses an individual as the focal unit of analysis. Fundamental to the person-centred approach to research is the postulate that personality is the intrapersonal, dynamic, organized system of psychological processes influencing the wholeness of the person. Rennie (1998:7) highlighted the importance of basic conditions for facilitation in PCA as being necessary and sufficient for positive therapeutic change in that they enable the client's establishment of congruence with organismic experiencing. The nineteen propositions of PCA, the facilitator's values, basic communication skills and advanced skills are also very important for the facilitator to understand and integrate them into practice during the facilitation process.

2.9 BASIC CONDITIONS REQUIRED IN PCA

Van Dyk (2000:34) indicates that there are four main basic conditions required by the person-centred approach, namely Congruence, Unconditional positive regard, Empathy, and Personal power. These basic conditions are also required to be part of the

facilitator's belief system and philosophy of life before he or she will be able to practise them. The conditions must be integrated and form part of being before the facilitator can start practising them.

- **Congruence**

According to Van Dyk (2000:34), a condition of congruence exists when the experiences of the facilitator are accurately symbolized and readily available to his or her awareness. It is regarded as the state of 'realness' and genuineness that exists in people who have explored the experience of their own selves deeply and accepted the personal truths they have found in their explorations. Schenck (2000:206) states that in order to maintain congruence, one needs a high level of "self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-trust" and a commitment to being, rather than a superficial or false attempt to appear congruent.

- **Unconditional positive regard**

Unconditional positive regard is the second facilitative condition for the person-centred approach and it is said to exist when the experiences of the client are perceived by the facilitator in such a way that not one of them can be viewed as more or less worthy of positive regard (acceptance) than another.

This mean that the facilitator needs to accept the people he/she is working with without putting any conditions in accepting them. Through unconditional positive regard, the facilitator is able to treat people with dignity and respect without putting conditions.

- **Empathy**

According to Egan (1994: 123), empathy is a form of communication that involves both listening to and understanding the client. This mean that the facilitator temporarily puts

aside his or her frame of reference and attempts, without prejudice or preconceived ideas, to hear and understand the client and to convey such understanding back to the client verbally and non-verbally. With empathy the facilitator assumes the frame of reference of the client and tries to experience what the client is experiencing, and communicates his or her understanding of the client back to the client. Empathy can also be regarded as a relationship building skill/condition since it helps strengthening the trust between the client and the facilitator.

- **Personal power**

Van Dyk (2000:38) states that personal power may be defined as the ability to act effectively in accordance with one's own intentions, will, capabilities or conscious choice rather than according to external control. The more inherent the personal power of facilitators, the greater the chances that they will not try to control others, and the more effectively they can help clients tap their own sources of power and become as fully as possible the persons they are capable of being.

2.10 Rogers' 19 propositions

Grobler, Schenck and Du Toit (2003:3) state that Rogers' 19 propositions about humans and what possibly motivates people, on various levels of consciousness, provide tentative guidelines for facilitators in their efforts to understand, think about, and make sense of what we observe of others, like what they say, do, and feel when we encounter them. The nineteen propositions in PCA are very crucial since they include the attitudes of the facilitator, the so called core conditions for facilitation, namely empathy, congruency, and unconditional positive regard. The nineteen propositions form part of the theory and are the foundation towards the understanding of a person in totality.

- **Proposition 1 (Human experiences at a conscious and unconscious level)**

“Every individual exists in a continually changing world of experience of which he is the centre.” (Rogers, 1987:483)

There are three important elements to this proposition, namely for every person their experiential world is central, unique, and personal, this personal world is continually changing, and the experiences that constitute this world can be conscious and/or unconscious (Grobler et al., 2003:44). It means that every person is unique and living in the ever changing world of experiences and the person himself or herself knows his or her experiences better than the facilitator does. The facilitator can only get to know of those experiences after the person/client has decided to share with him or her.

- **Proposition 2 (Human perceptions)**

“The organism reacts to the field as it is experienced and perceived. This perceptual field is, for the individual, reality. ” (Rogers, 1987:484)

This proposition emphasises the importance of uniqueness of individuals in terms of their perceptions and their experiences. Human perception differs from one person to another and it is very important that the facilitator respect and treat people as uniquely as possible by avoiding labelling, judging and generalization. People’s experiences and perceptions are not the same and the facilitator must respect that at all times.

- **Proposition 3 (Wholeness)**

“The organism reacts as an organized whole to this phenomenal field. ” (Rogers, 1987:486)

Proposition 3 emphasises the importance of viewing a person as a complete whole without singling out some elements which are part of the holistic being. The facilitator

who works in accordance with the person-centred approach and perspective views a person as a complete whole with his or her ideas, feelings, behaviour, needs, values, and physical attributes. The facilitator cannot focus on one aspect only, for example behaviour, while ignoring the values, needs and feelings of the client.

- **Proposition 4 (self-determination)**

“The organism has one basic tendency and striving – to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organism. ” (Rogers, 1987:487)

This proposition refers to the self of the person and his or her identity. It emphasises the importance of the client’s frame of reference since he or she knows what he or she wants and how he or she wants it. The facilitator’s frame of reference is not important and he or she cannot impose his or her views on clients. The facilitator’s role is to create a ‘conducive’ environment where clients feel free to make their own decisions. Ultimately the clients must take responsibility for their decisions or actions.

- **Proposition 5 (needs and behaviour)**

“Behaviour is basically the goal-directed attempt of the organism to satisfy its needs as experienced in the field as perceived. ” (Rogers, 1987: 481)

Proposition 5 is about the behaviour which is motivated by a need. It means that a person behaves in a certain way in order to satisfy his or her need. This proposition emphasises the fact that needs and behaviour are connected and the facilitator must always consider that while working with clients. The facilitator must not only concentrate on behaviour but be conscious of the need that might have prompted the behaviour.

- **Proposition 6 (Emotions)**

“Emotion accompanies and in general facilitates such goal-directed behaviour, the kind of emotion being related to the seeking versus the consummatory aspects of the behaviour, and the intensity of the emotion related to the perceived significance of the behaviour for the maintenance and enhancement of the organism.” (Rogers, 1987:492)

It is often not easy for the facilitator to distinguish between the feelings and emotions of the clients. The stronger the feelings/emotions, the stronger the possibility that the issue under discussion is of great importance to the client. The facilitator must always observe and listen to the intensity of the emotions during the therapeutic session in order to recognise the issues which are important to client. It is more likely that the stronger the client's behaviour the greater the need.

- **Proposition 7 (frame of reference)**

“The best vantage point for understanding behaviour is from the internal frame of reference of the individual himself.” (Rogers, 1987:494)

Proposition 7 emphasises the fact that clients know better what they want and how they want it and the facilitators must always take into consideration the client's frame of reference without imposing their own frame of reference on clients. Considering the client's internal frame of reference demonstrates a high level of respect and acceptance towards the clients and they are more likely to take responsibility for their actions or decisions.

- **Proposition 8 (The self)**

“A portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the self.” (Rogers, 1987:497)

Proposition 8 emphasises the importance of the self of the client, meaning the person’s conception, perception and experience of who he or she is. It is important for the facilitator to acknowledge that all the person’s experiences are part of the self which is forever changing (proposition 1). The facilitator listens to the self of the client which is presenting itself to him or her, for instance, a 14 year old boy from a child-headed family who complains of the ill discipline and disobedience of his siblings might be viewing himself as the father of the family in his unconscious mind and therefore the facilitator must become aware that he or she is dealing with the self of a father.

- **Proposition 9 (The self and the significant others)**

“As a result of interaction with the environment, and particularly as a result of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of the self is formed (an organized, fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of the characteristics and relationships of the “I” or “me”) together with the values attached to these concepts.” (Rogers, 1987:498)

It is important for the facilitator to bear in mind that the self (proposition 8) may develop through interactions with the significant others or environment. Grobler et al. (2003:14) state that other people are an important part of the development of the self and that is the reason why clients often see the facilitator to talk about others. Interacting with the significant others and environment is a learning curve to the clients and as they interact with others, their perception of these interactions becomes part of who they are, for instance, being regarded as the father, mother, lecturer, nurse, child, grandmother etc.

- **Proposition 10 (Values, own and adopted from other people)**

“The values attached to experiences, and the values which are a part of the self-structure, in some instances are values experienced directly by the organisation, and in some instances are values introjected or taken over from others, but perceived in distorted fashion as if they had been experienced directly.” (Rogers, 1987:498)

Values attached to experiences and forming part of the self may be shaped by the individual’s own experience, but they may also be taken over from others and assimilated into the self as if they had been experienced personally (Grobler et al., 2003:65). Values in life are adopted through interaction with others. These values differ from one person to another and the facilitator must respect that regardless of whether he or she approves of those values.

- **Proposition 11 [(a and b) dealing with experiences at a conscious level]**

“As experiences occur in the life of the individual, they are either (a) symbolized, perceived, and organized into some relationship to self, (b) ignored because there is no perceived relationship to the self structure....” (Rogers, 1987:503)

Individuals deal with the symbolized experiences or experiences at a conscious level by integrating them into the self structure when the experiences are congruent with or affirm the self structure. People admit to their consciousness those experiences that affirm the self or ignore them if there is no perceived relationship to the self structure. Only those experiences that are perceived to be in some relationship with the self structure can be registered or admitted and those with no perceived relationship to the self structure are ignored.

- **Proposition 11 [(c and d) dealing with experiences at an unconscious level]**

“As experiences occur in the life of the individual, they are either...(c) denied symbolization or (d) given a distorted symbolization because the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self. ” (Rogers, 1987:503)

Experiences can be denied symbolization or be given distorted symbolization if the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self. For instance, a pastor who displays abusive behaviour towards his wife and children may refer to his behaviour as frustration or stress which is acceptable to the self structure. The pastor may completely deny the behaviour or portray it as a way of showing love to them.

- **Proposition 12 (Self and behaviour)**

“Most of the ways of behaving which are adopted by the organism are those which are consistent with the concept of self.” (Rogers, 1987:503)

People usually behave in a way consistent with the self. Grobler et al. (2003:28) state that behaviour is not merely directed at need satisfaction (proposition 5), it also has to agree with the individual’s self-perception. In other words people choose to satisfy their needs by behaving in a way consistent with the self.

- **Proposition 13 (Behaviour and unconscious)**

“Behaviour may, in some instances, be brought about by organic experiences and needs which have not been symbolized. Such behaviour may be inconsistent with the structure of the self, but in such instances, the behaviour is not “owned” by the individual.” (Rogers, 1987:509)

This proposition emphasises the fact that when an individual with a certain self-perception manifests behaviour inappropriate to that self, the individual will deny such behaviour rather than change his or her entire self-perception. For instance, the father who assaults his children may deny such action if it is inappropriate to his self-structure. The father will find it difficult to understand that he is capable of assaulting the children he loves so much and in relation to whom he sees himself as a good father.

- **Proposition 14 (Psychological tension)**

“Psychological maladjustment exists when the organism denies to awareness significant sensory and visceral experiences, which consequently are not symbolized and organized into the gestalt of the self-structure. When this situation exists, there is a basic or potential psychological tension.” (Rogers, 1987:510)

According to Grobler et al. (2003:37), Rogers’s perception of tension is more psychological and has to do with the self. This means that if a person is experiencing any thought, need, emotion, or any kind of experience that does not fit with his or her symbolized self, then he or she may experience psychological tension.

For instance, if a person has symbolized in his self structure that he or she is a good singer, he or she may experience psychological tension if he or she feels that this time around he or she might not be able to make it in the concert. The psychological tension is not about the fear of singing in a concert, but the inner conflict of failure and embarrassment while he or she is not allowing him or her “self” to harbour such fears.

- **Proposition 15 (Reconstruction of self)**

“Psychological adjustment exists when the concept of the self is such that all the sensory and visceral experiences of the organism are, or may be, assimilated on a

symbolic level into a consistent relationship with the concept of self.” (Rogers, 1987:513)

When unsymbolized or distortedly symbolized experiences are allowed full symbolization, various changes can occur (Grobler et al., 2003:76). Allowing symbolization of experiences into the self structure is a step towards the process of change. Unlike psychological tension (proposition 14), where the person denies symbolization, proposition 15 is about the reconstruction of the self through the acceptance or allowance of the symbolization of the unconscious experiences into a consistent relationship with the concept of self.

- **Proposition 16 (Defence of self)**

“Any experience which is inconsistent with the organisation or structure of the self will be perceived as a threat, and the more of these perceptions there are, the more rigidly that self structure is organized to maintain itself.” (Rogers, 1987:515)

Any experience contrary to the individual’s self-perception is considered threatening to the self and the greater the number of such experiences, the more intent the self structure becomes on self-preservation. For instance, a woman who regards herself as a caring and loving wife burns her husband’s clothes accusing him of cheating. She blames her husband for her actions and the more she is being confronted, the greater the chances that she will defend herself because her experience of burning her husband’s clothes is inconsistent with the self of a caring and loving wife.

- **Proposition 17 (condition for facilitation)**

“Under certain conditions, involving primarily complete absence of any threat to the self-structure, experiences which are inconsistent with it may be perceived,

and examined, and the structure of self revised to assimilate and include such experiences.” (Rogers, 1987:517)

This proposition has got something to do with the attitude of the facilitator and the implementation of the core conditions for facilitation in social work, namely: empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard. People need to be trusted, accepted, and believed in their personal power in order for them to grow and develop. Through the use of the professional values, such as respect, self-determination, individualization, and confidentiality, together with the basic communication skills, namely basic empathy, listening and attentiveness, the facilitator is able to create a ‘conducive’ environment in which clients will be able to trust and believe in their potential to grow.

- **Proposition 18 (Acceptance of self)**

“When the individual perceives and accepts into one consistent and integrated system all his sensory and visceral experiences, then he is necessarily more understanding of others and is more accepting of others as separate individuals.” (Rogers, 1987:520)

According to Grobler et al. (2003:79), individuals who are conscious of most of their experiences and have integrated them into a self that contains no contradictions are not threatened by other people’s experiences, even if these differ from their own. Total acceptance of the individual’s experiences results in the acceptance of others and their experiences regardless of how these experiences differ.

- **Proposition 19 (Developing your own valuing system)**

“As the individual perceives and accepts into his self structure more of his organic experiences, he finds that he is replacing his present value system -based

so largely upon introjections which have been distortedly symbolized - with a continuing organic valuing process.” (Rogers, 1987:522)

This proposition is mostly regarded as the result of the therapeutic process of change. The person has accepted himself or herself and others (proposition 18) and can now replace his or her present value system with the new one. The person here is very much empowered and independent to follow his or her decisions and plans by himself or herself without any influence from the next person. The decisions taken are not based on whether they are in agreement or disagreement with those of others.

2.11 THE FACILITATORS' VALUES

Grobler et al. (2003:86) state that values reflect the facilitator's entire attitude towards humankind. Professional values reflect the attitudes of the facilitators towards their clients. According to Grobler et al. (2003: 89 – 119), there are four main professional values, namely, Individualization, Self-determination, Respect, and Confidentiality

- **Individualization**

Individualization is the value that emphasizes the uniqueness of an individual's perceptions and experiences, needs, behaviour, values, emotions and self. Grobler and Schenck (2009:40) state that through individualization the facilitator enters the experiential world of each client from the client's frame of reference. Individualization brings about respect for people since the facilitator cannot assume that individuals with similar experiences are more likely to react in the same manner. People deserve to be treated in a unique way regardless of their circumstances and experiences.

- **Self-determination**

According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:42), self-determination means that a client determines for himself or herself, how he or she experiences and perceives himself or herself and his or her world (proposition 1, proposition 2, and proposition 8), how the client wishes to satisfy his or her needs in line with that which corresponds with his or her self (proposition 5, proposition 8, proposition 12), what the client's values are and will be (proposition 10 and 19), the direction in which to move in the exploration of painful experiences (proposition 17 and proposition 15), what the client needs to enhance, maintain and develop his or her self (proposition 4). Self-determination goes along with the principle that says that each person knows his or her self better and as a result he or she is able to tell what he or she wants. Through self-determination clients are able to make decisions by themselves and ultimately take responsibilities for their decisions.

- **Respect**

The facilitator must be able to respect and accept every person holistically and unconditionally. Grobler and Schenck (2009:40) state that there are two ways in which a facilitator can implement respect in his or her practice, namely refrain from judgement, and enable the client to work through pain. Through the value of respect the client may feel accepted by the facilitator, even when the client does not yet accept himself or herself. The facilitator shows respect for the client by empathising with the pain rather than avoiding it. The facilitator can also show respect through attending and listening to the client.

- **Confidentiality**

According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:43), confidentiality simply means that what has been said will remain private and will not be repeated to someone else. The facilitator

cannot decide to divulge any information concerning the client without the consent of the client. Confidentiality can also give rise to ethical dilemmas especially when the information received from the client poses a danger or threat to the client or another person's life.

2.12 BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN PCA

The basic communication skills are the skills used by the facilitator during the therapeutic process in dealing with the symbolized experiences of the client. The symbolized experiences are those experiences which the client is aware of and they are somehow visible to both the client and the facilitator. According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:46), the basic communication skills are applied not only during the initial contact, but continually until the termination of the process. There are three main basic communication skills in PCA, namely Attentiveness, Listening and Empathy.

- **Attentiveness**

Attentiveness is the basic communication skill used by the facilitator to demonstrate his or her interest towards the client. A therapeutic session involves both the client and facilitator and attentiveness is used to show that the facilitator is there with the client physically and psychologically. If the client feels ignored by the facilitator, the whole process may surely be disrupted and the client will find it difficult to trust the facilitator. Grobler and Schenck (2009:46) state that when the facilitator is attentive, he or she enters the client's total life world, all the client's experiences and selfhood. Being there for the client physically simply means that the facilitator is physically present with the client, and being psychologically available involves a clear mental state by the facilitator of being able to listen to the client. Observing the non-verbal messages and making use of minimal encouragers also demonstrate the facilitator's attentiveness.

- **Listening**

Grobler et al. (2003:143) state that listening is an active process and does not just happen, but the facilitator must deliberately make it happen. Some people believe that listening is one of the easiest skills to apply. Listening is more than hearing what the client is saying or telling the client that “I hear you”. Listening is the ability to hear, understand, and remember what the client has said. Hearing the sound or understanding what has been said by the client is not enough, instead the facilitator must be able to remember what has been said.

- **Empathy**

Empathy involves something very different from sympathizing with the client. Empathy is about the facilitator putting himself or herself in the client’s shoes and experiencing what the client is experiencing. There are two main important elements to look at when applying empathy, namely: assuming the state of the client and trying to experience what the client is experiencing and also communicating back to the client the facilitator’s understanding of the client. Through empathy the client is more likely to open up and trust the facilitator since he or she will be demonstrating the understanding of the client’s experiences. Grobler and Schenck (2009:53) state that empathy means being able to see what the client’s world is like to him or her and how the client sees himself or herself.

2.13 ADVANCED SKILLS IN PCA

Unlike the basic communication skills in PCA, the advanced skills are used by the facilitator to explore the unsymbolized experiences of the client. The unsymbolized experiences are those experiences of which the client is not aware or can only see half of them but what is important is that they threaten the self of the client. The therapeutic process is the process of change and the facilitator is required to make use of the

advanced skills in order for the client to symbolize the unsymbolized experiences. Grobler and Schenck (2009:148) state that the advanced skills can be divided into three categories, namely: Advanced empathy, Exploring distortions, and Immediacy.

- **Advanced empathy**

Rogers (1980:142) states that advanced empathy is a deeper kind of empathy that involves “sensing” meanings of which the client is scarcely aware. Grobler et al. (2003:179) state that advanced empathy involves the ability to see clearly what clients only half see or hint at. Advanced empathy can therefore be divided into three sub-sections: exploring the implied messages, connecting islands and developing themes.

- **Exploring the implied messages**

Listening to the implied messages simply means that the facilitator has to be able to hear more than just what the client is saying directly. The facilitator is not supposed to listen to the content of the message from the client but he or she listens to the intended message encoded in the explicit message. Grobler et al. (2003:181) state that the facilitators’ understanding of the implied message can be conveyed to the client in any way that fits himself or herself, and the client. Hearing the implied message is about listening to the message behind the message and also listening to the self (proposition 8) of the client or the message about the client self.

- **Connecting islands**

Various stories that the client tells are usually connected to each other and the self of the client in some way. The facilitator’s role in this instance is to see these connections and give feedback about them to the client. By connecting those experiences the facilitator is able to make clients aware of the broader connections of their experiences and how they relate to them as a whole.

- **Developing themes**

According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:150), through connecting islands, themes can be developed. The facilitator looks for similar experiences that are related to each other and threaten the self of the client in some way. Egans (1994:184) reminds the facilitators to make sure the themes he or she discovers are based on the client's experience and not just the artefacts of some psychological theory. If the themes are pointed out to clients, it could help them to create new symbolizations and restructure their self.

• **Exploring discrepancies**

Discrepancies refer to the inner conflicts which the client experiences and not to differences between what the facilitator thinks or expects of the client and the clients' own experiences. Sometimes there can be contradictions between the "self" of the client and what he is telling the facilitator or doing. It is useful for the facilitator to listen to these contradictions and reflect them to the client so that he or she can become aware of them. It is very important for the facilitator to become aware that exploring discrepancies with the client is not about confrontation. Usually when clients are confronted, they are more likely to defend themselves (proposition 16) and therefore facilitators must enter the client's world with care and respect.

• **Immediacy**

Immediacy is the skill used by the facilitator to understand and enhance the relationship between the facilitator and the client, and also to deal with any possible stumbling blocks that might damage this relationship. Grobler et al. (2003:201) state that immediacy relates to what is happening here and now, between the facilitator and the client and how it affects the professional relationship they are trying to build.

2.14 THE PROCESS OF CHANGE AND THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

According to Sanford (in Lago & Macmillan 1999:13), Carl Rogers stated that it was his experience that when genuineness or realness, acceptance or unconditional positive regard and empathy (which includes deep listening) are present, then positive change and growth are most likely to take place. Rennie (1998:61) emphasises the importance of transparency in building a helpful relationship with the client which is also vital in the process of change.

In this study, the process of change in PCA practice will be discussed in phases:

- **The beginning phase (creating a safe space for facilitation)**

According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:12), the facilitator working from the PCA perspective does not try to change people, their identities or their selves, instead he or she tries to create conditions in which people can explore themselves and decide if they need to change, and if they do, what needs to change. The creation of a 'conducive' environment and a trustworthy relationship becomes a core factor in the beginning phase towards the process of change and it requires a positive attitude by the facilitator. Jones, Cooper and Ferguson (2008:89) state that relationships are crucial in social work perhaps more than in any other professional activity. The quality of a relationship and ensuing communication virtually determines the nature of the work. The quality and trustworthy relationship may be optimally achieved once a favourable environment has been created and the client is free to express and explore himself.

Rogers' proposition 17 (condition for facilitation) outlines the importance of creating a safe and 'conducive' space in a therapeutic situation by the facilitator for clients to express and explore themselves freely without being threatened. Proposition 7 (frame of reference) is also important in creating a safe space since it informs the facilitator to take into consideration the internal frame of reference of the client without being judgemental.

These two propositions imply the total understanding and acceptance of people, with all their experiences, and the facilitator demonstrates that through his or her physical attitude, mental attitude and behaviour (Grobler and Schenck, 2009:13).

The four main professional values, namely respect, individualization, self-determination and confidentiality are very crucial in the creation of a trustworthy relationship with the client and they form part of the facilitator's attitude towards the client. According to Gillon (2007:44), the core conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard present a considerable challenge to the person-centred practitioner/facilitator, for they are not formulated as skills to be acquired, but rather as personal attitudes or attributes experienced by the therapist, as well as communicated to the client for therapy to be successful. He further states that the condition of congruence can be seen as a quality of the therapist, rather than an action or skill.

PCA basic communication skills, namely, empathy, attentiveness and listening, also play a significant role in the creation of a 'conducive' environment during the therapeutic intervention. Unlike values, basic communication skills are tools required by the facilitator to apply during the session. Germain and Gitterman (1995:63) state that "the worker creates an accepting and supportive service environment by demonstrating empathy (the capacity to get inside another person's life and to experience how the person is feeling and thinking)". Listening should take place from the client's own frame of reference, and it includes attending to the content of what is being said, but this content tells the facilitator about the person who is saying it (Mohapi 2010:5). According to Grobler and Schenck (2009:46), when the facilitator is attentive, he or she enters the client's total life world and he or she is able to observe the verbal and nonverbal communication.

The creation of a safe space may be regarded as the beginning stage in the PCA facilitation process and it is more likely to damage the whole process if the warm and trustworthy relationship is not achieved between the client and the facilitator.

- **The development of self**

The self becomes the cornerstone or the core of PCA, therefore the understanding of self, how it develops and maintains itself is important for the facilitator to understand during the beginning phase. Unlike in other approaches, in PCA the focus is not about the development of the problem but the development of the self which is crucial.

The facilitator must always respect the self of the client even though it differs from his or her self. Proposition 8 (the self) refers to the self as an individual conception (perception/experience) of who he or she is (Grobler et al. 2003:9). People's identity differs from one person to another based on the uniqueness of a person's perception and the facilitator must always respect that. This applies to groups and communities as well, in that their own perception of self may differ and it must not be challenged through confrontation but respected.

Through interaction with the environment and others the structure of self is formed (proposition 9). We have already elaborated on the fact that a person is not an island since he or she lives with the significant others who play a most important role in the development of the self as the result of evaluational interaction with them. People's interactions with others become part of who they are, for instance, a young boy perceives himself as a brother to his sister (in relation to his sister) or he may also identify himself as a child in relation to his mother. Facilitators always listen carefully to the implied messages to identify the kind of a person he or she is interacting with and it must be respected always.

PCA therapy is not about the facilitator since it is regarded as non-directive. The frame of reference of the client (proposition 7) is always important and under no circumstances may the facilitator impose his frame of reference on the client.

Proposition 4 (self-determination) informs the facilitator that every person has one basic tendency in striving to maintain and enhance the self. It is very important to

acknowledge that what the facilitator regards as good may not be seen as such by the client. People enhance themselves differently from one person to another and it is always good for clients to be given a chance to express how they perceive things and also how they want to enhance themselves.

During the exploration of the development of the self, the facilitator is required to make use of his or her professional values, core conditions, and basic communication skills for the creation of a beneficial environment and dealing with symbolized experiences.

- **Dealing with specific experiences**

According to Grobler et al. (2003:44), human beings have so many different kinds of experiences that can manifest at a conscious and/or unconscious level. Based on the uniqueness of clients some of these experiences can be considered as fitting with the self and are thus symbolized or perceived as not fitting with or threatening to their self and thus be denied symbolization or distorted to fit in with the existing self.

Proposition 1 (human experiences at a conscious and unconscious level) becomes very important in dealing with both the symbolized and unsymbolized experiences since it stipulates that every person exists in a continually changing world of experience of which he is the centre. This simply means that as experiences occur in the life of a person they cannot be separated from one another or from the person experiencing them. One of these experiences is perception, that is, how people perceive themselves and their world, and how this perception constitutes their reality (Grobler et al. 2003:45). Proposition 2 (Human perception) also falls under the specific experiences since it focuses on how people respond in terms of the experience and perception. This proposition is similar to the professional value of individualization since it considers the uniqueness of people's perceptions, experiences and reactions. People react to the environment as they perceive it and none of these perceptions is true or false unless a person believes that his or her perception is the only admissible one.

Proposition 3 (Wholeness/Unity) informs the facilitator in considering the wholeness of the person during a therapeutic session. The experiences, emotions, ideas, behaviour, needs, values and physical attributes form part of the wholeness of a person and cannot be treated in isolation. The facilitator, for instance, cannot only concentrate on the experiences of what happened and totally ignore the feelings, needs and other factors.

Proposition 5 (Needs and behaviour) and 6 (emotions) are also part of the specific experiences since the focus is mainly on the motivation of human behaviour by his or her need/s. In other words there is a great connection between the needs, behaviour and emotions simply because the emotions accompany the behaviour which is thus motivated by the need. Grobler et al. (2003:61) state that the intensity of the emotion correlates with the importance a person attaches to the behaviour in terms of self-presentation and self-enrichment.

Proposition 10 (values, own and adopted from other people) emphasises the importance of values attached to experiences which also form part of the self and may be shaped by the individual's own experiences. According to Grobler et al. (2003:65), these experiences may be taken over from others and assimilated into the self as if they had been experienced personally.

Unlike in the creation of a safe space and dealing with the symbolized experiences whereby the PCA core conditions for facilitation, professional values and basic communication skills are mostly used, when dealing with specific experiences of the client, the facilitator can make use of the advanced skills, namely advanced empathy to check the implied messages, identifying themes and connecting islands and/or checking distortions with the client to symbolize the unsymbolized experiences and/or immediacy to address the here and now of any stumbling block that may negatively affect the therapeutic relationship between the facilitator and the client. However, the use of the advanced skills basically depends on whether the experience is more on an unconscious level and threatens the self of the client.

- **Dealing with the symbolized experiences**

According to Grobler (2008:55), the symbolised self includes all experiences that do not threaten the self. This is the self that clients are trying to maintain and enhance, so we need to understand, respect and not challenge this self. Clients are more comfortable in discussing the experiences that do not threaten the self in the beginning stages of the therapeutic process simply because they fit with the self of the client and the facilitator is required to respect the self which is presenting its self at that moment. Symbolized experiences are mostly experiences that are visible between the client and the facilitator. In dealing with the symbolized experiences of the client, the facilitator is required to make use of his or her basic communication skills and maintain the professional values together with the core conditions of facilitation in PCA as discussed under the creation of a 'conducive' environment.

Proposition 11 (a and b) is about dealing with experiences at a conscious level which are either symbolized, perceived and organized into some relationship to the self or ignored because there is no perceived relationship to the self structure. To support this proposition 12 (self and behaviour) is focusing more on the ways of behaving adopted by people and consistent with the concept of self.

The facilitator should always be aware of the above mentioned propositions when dealing with the symbolized experiences and should utilize his or her basic communication skills. The PCA core conditions for facilitation and professional values also play a very significant role in this stage.

• **Phase 2 (Exploring the unconscious experiences)**

Grobler (2008:55) mentions that the unsymbolized experiences are those experiences that are not so clear or visible to the client and may threaten the self. These experiences are at the unconscious level and either the client cannot see them at all or can only see

a portion of them. In order for the clients to discover their new self, it is important to explore the unconscious experiences of each client since they do not fit with the self. Exploring the unconscious experiences requires the facilitator to make use of the advanced skills as discussed earlier. Through the use of the advanced skills, clients are able to symbolize the unsymbolized experiences and explore their self in greater depth.

Proposition 11 [(c and d): dealing with experiences at an unconscious level] focuses on the individual's experiences that occur in his or her life and are either denied symbolization or given distorted symbolization if the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self (Rogers, 1987:503). This proposition refers to experiences which cannot be allowed symbols to be attached because they threaten the self of the client. As a result these experiences can either be denied symbolization or given distorted symbolization.

According to proposition 13 (behaviour and unconscious experiences), behaviour sometimes can be brought about by the needs and experiences which have not been symbolized and such behaviour is not owned by the individual. Behaviour which is inconsistent with the self perception of the individual may be denied rather than changed since it is inappropriate to the self.

Proposition 14 (psychological tension) describes the tension created by the unsymbolized experiences or distorted symbolization which cannot be incorporated into the self of the client. This tension is mainly not just a tension experienced by the client, but also the inner conflict of fearing failure while not allowing himself or herself to harbour such fears (Grobler and Schenck, 2009:144).

The last proposition to be discussed under exploring the unconscious experiences is proposition 16 (defence of self). Clients are threatened by the facilitator if they behave in a way that does not accord with them and they are more likely to defend themselves. Grobler et al. (2003:40) state that if a person becomes scared, angry, evasive, or

rebellious when the psychosocial self is under threat, some facilitators tend to regard this as abnormal. The facilitators are not supposed to threaten the clients under any circumstances during the therapeutic session; instead the creation of a warm supportive environment is encouraged to avoid any form of defence from the client.

The above mentioned propositions are very crucial when it comes to the exploration of the unconscious experiences. The facilitator's role here is to stay with the self of the client, check the implied messages, identify themes, connect the islands, exploring distortions and addressing the here and now of any stumbling block that can damage the therapeutic relationship through immediacy.

- **Phase 3 (The reconstruction of the self)**

The process of reconstruction and change begins with the existence of psychological adjustment and acceptance of self and others (propositions 15 & 18)

McLeod (2003:178) describes change as a series of felt senses connecting the different aspects of experience. The client shows basic trust in his or her own inner processes. Feelings are experienced with immediacy and richness and the client speaks in the present.

According to proposition 15 (Reconstruction of self) psychological adjustments exist when the concept of self has assimilated all the sensory and visceral experiences on a symbolic level into consistent relationship with the concept of self (Rogers, 1987:513). We have learnt that psychological tension exists when the person fails to incorporate all his unsymbolized experiences with the self (proposition 14). When the person has accepted and incorporated all his or her unsymbolized experiences into the relationship with the self, he or she is able to experience psychological adjustment or reconstruction.

Grobler et al. (2003:75) state that once the process of restructuring of the self has occurred, various other changes can follow (proposition 15). The restructuring of the self can be referred to the changes that may occur in the “self” of the group, community or individual depending on the nature of services and method of practice the social worker/facilitator is confronted with.

Proposition 18 (acceptance of self) stipulates that when the individual perceives and accepts into one consistent and integrated system all his sensory and visceral experiences, then he or she is necessarily more understanding of others and accepting of others as a separate individual (Rogers, 1987:520). This becomes very important in the process of reconstruction of self since the client is aware of himself or herself better and does not put blame on others for his or her actions.

- **The ending phase**

The PCA facilitation process ends with the development of the client’s own valuing system (proposition 19: developing your own value system). At this time the psychological adjustment has occurred, the client has accepted himself and others better and replacing the present values. Grobler and Schenck (2009:107) state that it no longer matters all that much whether other people praise them and they become less dependent on others. Such individuals embark on a process of evaluation, continually testing and examining their values. The client has taken full responsibility and is in control of his or her life. According to Gillon (2007:66), the process of change involves a growing openness to all experiences. Change is not a move from one, fixed view to another, but instead from fixity to changingness.

Botha (2010:89) states that the facilitation process is about the integration of the person’s symbolized experiences and his or her concept of self. In a relationship in which the clients receive unconditional acceptance, they may risk allowing into awareness and symbolising their previously distorted or denied experience. If the

atmosphere and communication is non-judgemental understanding and congruent, their perceptions will be increasingly accurate and will have more reciprocal and positive regard for one another.

2.15 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed a literature review with regard to the social work profession and training. It also focused on the history of the social work profession and different kinds of theories that are taught in social work training. The structure of social work training at UNISA is discussed to give a broader picture on how social work training is being conducted at UNISA. An overview of PCA is discussed since it is the core of social work training at UNISA and forms the theoretical framework of the study. The integration of PCA into practice is discussed with special attention to the basic conditions required in PCA, Rogers's 19 propositions, facilitators' values, basic communication skills and the process of change in PCA. The process of change and PCA practice is discussed according to phases, from the beginning to the ending phase in order to give a clear picture of the process of facilitation in PCA.

The next chapter presents the findings of the research with regard to social workers' integration of PCA into practice within their working contexts.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study about social worker's experience of integrating the person-centred approach into practice. The research was based on the qualitative research paradigm as the topic dealt with the subjective nature of the social workers' experience of integrating PCA into practice. The research design was based on De Vos et al. (2002) and Creswell's (1997) assertion that the nature of the research question determines the type of methodology to be used. The qualitative research emphasizes the researcher's role as active learner rather than expert who passes judgement on participants.

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

What is the experience of social workers trained at UNISA of integrating the person-centred approach (PCA) into practice in different welfare organizations in Pretoria?

The method of data collection was semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using the eight steps described in Tesch's model (in Creswell, 1994: 155-156; De Vos, Fouche, Poggenpoel, and Schurink, 1998: 343-344). From the process of data analysis, the researcher identified themes, sub-themes and categories.

3.2 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In order to give clarity to the data collected, it is essential that the profile of the participants should be clearly described as the participants' backgrounds and personal

experiences will affect how the participants respond to the research questions from their contextual reference.

The researcher conducted eight individual interviews and all eight participants were qualified and registered social workers who had trained at the University of South Africa. Participants were all females between the ages of 30 and 40 years who are employed in various governmental and non-governmental organizations in Pretoria. All the participants have between two and five years' working experience which is a clear indication that they started working as social workers as mature adults or either they took a long time to complete their studies considering their age.

Table 3.1 below displays a profile summary of the participants:

PARTICIPANT	AGE	GENDER	LANGUAGE	RACE	ORGANIZATION	WORK EXPERIENCE
A	31	Female	Northern Sotho	Black	Child Welfare Tshwane	4 years
B	39	Female	Zulu	Black	Apostolic Faith Mission abba adoption	5 years
C	40	Female	Venda	Black	FAMSA	2 years
D	31	Female	Zulu	Black	Department of Social Development	2 years

E	30	Female	Tsonga	Black	NICRO	2 years
F	38	Female	Tswana	Black	Catholic Women's League	2 years
G	30	Female	Tswana	Black	City of Tshwane	4 years
H	37	Female	Tswana	Black	Department of Correctional Services	5 years

The data gathered from these participants were analysed and a comprehensive discussion of these findings is given in the next section.

3.3 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This section describes the various themes, sub-themes and categories as they emerged from the analysis of the data collected. The findings were subdivided into five themes.

- 1) The perceived significance of building relationships with clients
- 2) The organizational influence in counselling
- 3) Unique experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated at other institutions.
- 4) Challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation
- 5) The nature of statutory cases

The above five themes together with their supporting sub-themes and categories are displayed in Table 3.2 below in order to provide an overview of the findings.

THEMES	Sub-themes	Categories
Theme 1: Perceived significance of building relationships with clients	1.1 Clients must be treated with respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a 'conducive' environment
	1.2 Clients are entitled to their decisions and they know what they want	
	1.3 Clients must be treated as individuals	
	1.4 The significance of keeping information shared by clients confidential	
Theme 2: The organizational influence in counselling	2.1 Pre-planned programme of the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational intervention strategy
	2.2 Organizational policy in service delivery	

	2.3 Organizational supervision	
Theme 3: Unique experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated at other institutions	3.1 Unique treatment of the clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique models of intervention in social work training and practice
	3.2 Different approaches used in counselling	
Theme 4: Challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation	4.1 Dealing with clients' resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis interventions
	4.2 Dealing with child abuse cases	
	4.3 Clients' expectations of social workers during counselling sessions	
Theme 5: The nature of statutory cases	5.1 Foster care interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory cases and social work counselling
	5.2 Dealing with adoption cases	

TABLE 3.2: OVERVIEW OF THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

In the ensuing section each theme will be presented with its sub-themes as supported by the relevant participants' quotations.

3.3.1 Theme 1: The perceived significance of building relationships with the clients

The perceived significance of building relationships with the clients was the first theme identified during data analysis as discussed above. Citing Rogers (1990), Gillon (2007:45) states that therapeutic work is an inherently personal task with its success wholly dependent on the capacity of the therapist to enter into an experiential relationship with a client, not to hide behind professional masks or intellectual expertise. He further highlights that the person-centred approach 'core conditions' of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruency are very important in building a good and trustworthy relationship with the clients.

The participants were requested to share their experience of integrating PCA into practice and the following views were voiced relating to the building of a trustworthy relationship with the clients:

“I am what I am today because of the training I got from UNISA, the values and skills learned are very much useful and clients feel free to relate with me because I listen to them without imposing any judgment” [Participant A]

“PCA is very much helpful to me in building the relationship with my clients. My clients love me so much and they find it easy to relate with me because I do not present to them as the expert but I make sure that they feel free in the therapeutic sessions through the use of basic skills and professional values” [Participant B]

“You cannot begin the process of counselling without having a foundation of a trustworthy relationship with the client, otherwise there is no counselling at all” [Participant C]

“Through PCA I am able to connect well with my clients and build a trustworthy relationship with them” [Participant D]

“PCA helps me to create a conducive environment whereby my clients feel free to share their experiences with me” [Participant E]

“I think a positive attitude matters most when working with your clients and PCA becomes my weapon which guides and protects me from hurting my clients unnecessarily. PCA values and communication skills help me in creating a conducive environment with my clients” [Participant F]

“For me PCA is good especially in building a relationship with the clients and they become free to share their experiences to a non-judgemental and empathic listener” [Participant G]

“I so wish every social worker learn about PCA because it is so useful in practice. Through PCA I easily relate to my clients” [Participant H]

The above statements from the participants are supported by Grobler and Schenck (2009:13) who state that for the facilitator to create a safe space during the process of facilitation, he or she has to avoid certain behaviours and practise others. This implies a total acceptance of the clients with their experiences and the facilitator needs to demonstrate acceptance to all clients through his or her physical attitude, mental attitude and behaviour.

It is clear that all the participants view the importance of building a trustworthy relationship with the client as the first step in the PCA facilitation process and it is useful for them.

The researcher noted during the process of data analysis that all participants recognized the importance of building a good relationship with the clients. The following sub-themes were formed out of these views:

- Clients must be treated with respect
- Clients are entitled to their decisions and must not be judged
- Clients should be treated as individuals
- The significance of keeping information shared by clients confidential

3.3.1.1 Clients must be treated with respect

Thorne (1992:30) highlights that as facilitators we need to treat people as worthy so that they can see themselves as worthy and have positive self-regard for themselves and others. Every client must be respected, accepted and understood, with all their experiences, and also for whom they are as people (Grobler, 2008:36).

Some of the participants in this study highlighted the importance of treating clients with respect and this perception was articulated as follows:

“Respect is the key element during a counselling session and clients may never come back again if they feel disrespected” [Participant B]

“Sometimes by only listening to the client, you are showing respect to them and you will be surprised to see how much they appreciate it. One client once told me that she has been going to the social workers for the past four years and she said

I am unique from other social workers". "PCA teaches you respect to the clients and they appreciate that so much" [Participant C]

"Everybody deserves to be treated with respect and one cannot be a PCA facilitator without taking the value of respect into cognition. I always make sure that I accept my clients as they are, without putting any condition and it helps me a lot in gaining trust from them" [Participant D]

***"I have noticed that clients appreciate the respect I give them always"
[Participant F]***

3.3.1.2 Clients are entitled to their decisions and they know what they want

Grobler et al. (2003:122) state that the theory defines clients as experts on their own lives, so that clients are the ones who determine the direction and rate of the facilitation process. The facilitator's role is therefore non-directive, in other words facilitators do not decide on behalf of their clients what their experiences are or should be. In PCA clients are believed to be capable of knowing what they want and how they want it.

A few quotations below demonstrate the participants' views on the self-determinations of the clients:

"Proposition 4 (self-determination) guides me a lot in making sure that I don't try to decide for my clients or tell them what to do because they know very well what they want and how they want it. I find self-determination useful in practice and it helps in shifting responsibilities to clients with regard to their decisions or choices and they cannot blame me for their decisions in the end" [Participant B]

"I think as PCA counsellors we don't have to assume the role of the expert when entering the counselling sessions because that destroys the whole relationship

with the clients. I can now practically see that clients are capable of making their own decisions and through the use of basic communication and advanced skills” [Participant C]

“I learned from my experience that clients don’t like to be told what to do but they would prefer to be involved in the decision making process” [Participant D]

“Majority of our clients are from the poverty stricken families and in most instances they would want me to make decisions for them but through self-determination they are able to make their own decisions and choices” [Participant F]

The above quotations from the participants indicate that the participants perceive the self-determination of the client in a positive light and they find it useful in practice.

3.3.1.3 Clients should be treated as individuals

Individualization or uniqueness is one of the professional values in the social work profession. According to Rogers (1987:29), the therapist/facilitator assumes the internal frame of reference of the client, to perceive the world as the client sees it, to perceive the client himself as seen by himself, to lay aside all perceptions from an external frame of reference while doing so, and to communicate something of this empathic understanding to the client. This implies that the client’s reaction to experience cannot be the same and no generalization should be made.

The following quotations from the participants demonstrate their experience on individualization:

“I treat clients as individuals and I always find it helpful more especially in building a good relationship with them. Clients are very much clever and they are

able to see if you are not listening to them or drawing any conclusion about them based on your interactions with others” [Participant A]

“The self of client, perceptions and frame of reference is the key in PCA counselling and this is all about treating people as individuals. Generalization is mostly done by people who are lazy and there is a danger of imposing your frame of reference on client” [Participant C]

“I accept and respect every client as a person. Treating my clients as unique individuals brings me closer to them and makes my facilitation ... easier” [Participant F]

“It happens more often that clients would present similar stories to me but I always keep in mind that they are unique” [Participant G]

“The uniqueness of the clients is more evident in practice especially when you observe the reactions of the clients to a similar experience. I work in a prison setting and you will be surprised to realize that some of the inmates are very much concern of their families outside and others are not, but PCA helps me to treat them as individuals and I make sure that I do not generalize” [Participant H]

The above mentioned quotations from the participants are supported by Grobler and Schenck (2009:41) who state that ignoring or disregarding the uniqueness of the clients would mean that the unique potential, experiences and direction of the person you are dealing with are also lost.

It is very clear from the above quotations that the participants are finding the value of individualization/uniqueness useful for them in practice.

3.3.1.4 The significance of keeping information shared by clients confidential

Confidentiality means that what has been said will remain private and will not be repeated to someone else (Grobler et al., 2003:111). These authors further highlight that confidentiality is not an easy value to uphold and the facilitators need to be continuously aware of making it happen in order to create the necessary conditions for effective facilitation.

Some of the participants have the following to say about the significance of keeping clients' information confidential:

“I always find assuring confidentiality very much helpful in making the client free to share her experiences with me because the client will never be able to trust me if I do not do it” [Participant A]

“I don't always literally tell clients about confidentiality but through the correct use of the professional values and skills, clients learn to trust me with their information and become free to share even sensitive issues” [Participant B]

“I am concern about my client's confidentiality here in our organization. Our office is like a hall and the three of us share. Sometimes you can hear the conversation between the colleague and the client. I do not like this and so wish it can change soon” [Participant C]

“If clients are aware that their information cannot be shared with somebody, they go much deeper with their information sharing. As a social worker I make sure that I nurture my relationship with my clients by keeping confidentiality” [Participant D]

“I strongly believe in confidentiality with my clients but sometimes I am required to write the reports which are read by my superiors about the very discussion I had with my clients. I do not always tell my clients about these reports and feel like I am betraying them” [Participant E]

***“Confidentiality is the key to me and I always assure it to my clients”
[Participant F]***

It is clear from the above quotations that the participants value the importance of keeping and maintaining confidentiality and they are using this in building a safe space with their clients. Barsky (2006:117) states that confidentiality means maintaining the right to privacy of the client who has provided a worker with personal information in a private context.

The participants are in agreement that clients' information must be kept confidential but very little has been said about the ethical dilemma with regard to information that threatens their life or the life of other people.

3.3.2 Theme 2: The organizational influence in counselling

Social workers are people who work for the welfare of people facing certain challenges in life and therefore are mostly employed in welfare organizations. Barsky (2006:12) states that social workers work in hospitals, schools, child welfare departments, mental health facilities, drug treatment programmes, community human rights offices, culture-specific agencies, international humanitarian organizations, immigration and refugee offices, nursing homes, group homes, and even on the street.

Welfare organizations have unique procedures to follow which are based on their constitution, policy, and service delivery process. The influence of the organizational

structure was found to be one of the themes during data analysis and the following sub-themes were identified:

- Pre-planned programme of the organization
- Organizational policy on service delivery
- Organizational supervision

3.3.2.1 Pre-planned programme of the organization

Doel and Shardow (2005:125) state that some organizations/agencies have pre-planned programmes of practice and may be suspicious of creative practice because it is likely to call into question their existing practice.

The following are some of the quotations from the participants about the organizational programmes.

“I use PCA during practice in my organization but sometimes the organization prescribes what to do and give you a programme. At first it was difficult for me but I have realized that I can also fit PCA with the organizational programme”
[Participant H]

“The managers here once impose narrative theory for us to follow which focuses on the problem and excludes the person but they did not succeed because majority of us in this organization are from UNISA and we were trained in PCA, so we challenged. They wanted us to connect the narrative theory with PCA which is not possible for us”
[Participant A]

“I love my PCA so much but sometimes it is difficult to apply it always especially in group work because the organization will give you the topic to discuss with the group members and also prescribe their expectations on you”
[Participant E]

“We do not do much of counselling in our organization. We are mostly expected to conduct home visits and write reports about the client’s situation as required by the organization. I think this denies me an opportunity to utilize my PCA fully”
[Participant G]

“We work according to a program and our activities must be aligned to it”
[Participant H]

From the above given quotations, it is obvious that some organizations do have programmes to follow especially in the group work process. The participants seem to be aware of PCA but at the same time are challenged by the fact that they must live up to the organizational expectations. It is also clear that somehow the participants struggle with this issue, even though some indicate that they connect PCA with the organizational programmes.

3.3.2.2 Organizational policy in service delivery

Nicholas et al (2010:83) highlighted that most social work practice methods are conformist in that they work within the parameters set by government policy and employing organizations, whether working with individuals, families, groups or communities, in various ways: therapeutic (concerned with personal growth and change and fulfilment), problem solving (helping people solve problems in daily living), brokering and advocating (helping people gain access to resources), and statutory (ensuring that people conform to the laws and regulations).

“In our organization we do generic social work starting from foster care, marriage and couple counselling, individual counselling and many others. It is always full with clients which make it difficult for me to give my best in counselling. Sometimes I rush the process in order to attend to everybody sitting and I know it is not good according to PCA” ***[Participant A]***

“Sometimes the organization gives you target regarding the minimum number of clients to see in a month and in the process you end up wanting to reach that target and totally ignore the process”

[Participant E]

“The policies and structure of my organization is good and it makes it possible for me to apply my theory without any pressure” [Participant B]

“My organization is supportive and they do not intervene with my work at all. I am free to use my PCA without being told what to do” [Participant F]

“There is lot of admin work that we do in our organization and somehow I feel like I am not using my theory optimally. We spend a long time learning about this theory and it becomes a challenge for me to realize that you are only using just a tip of it” [Participant D]

“It is always busy from morning and i don’t think that I am using my PCA theory to my best. I feel like I am working under pressure because we are not many and I am afraid it may result in me compromising my theory” [Participant C]

Some of the participants’ quotations above reflect that even though social workers understand the process of counselling in PCA, they allege they are compelled by circumstances to rush the process. In PCA the focus is not about the social workers but the client, and therefore the pace of the session must always be determined by the clients because they are the ones who know where they want to go and how they want to get there. There are some of the participants who feel that the nature of their organizational policy in service delivery is supportive and it makes them apply their PCA theory without any pressure.

Through the above quotations it is obvious that the organizational policy on service delivery plays an important role in how social workers act during the counselling process.

3.3.2.3 Organizational supervision

Hildebrand (in Yelloly and Henkel, 1995: 178) states that some supervisors are seduced by their own sense of urgency, fearing that the therapy will only proceed properly if the supervisee works at a particular pace and in the particular style or model that supervisors themselves favour. They further highlight that this can sometimes lead to the supervisor actually going into the interview and confusing the clients.

Organizational supervision was found to be one of the sub-themes under the influence of the organization as a theme. The participants voiced their experience of supervision on the integration of PCA into practice in the following terms:

“My supervisor is trained in PCA and she also supervises the fourth-year UNISA students and that makes it easy for me to apply my theory and skills. She also encourages me a lot to use it because she can see that it is useful, especially the use of advanced skills with my clients” [Participant F]

“My manager knows PCA very well because she once worked with UNISA students and it gives me courage to continue using it” [Participant A]

“At first we used to fight with my supervisor about PCA because she does not understand it very well and she would want me to intervene as she pleases but now things are better between us. I sometimes receive good feedback from my clients about my treatment and I would pass them to her, maybe that’s when she realized that PCA is also good. Since then she does not give me any problem” [Participant C]

“I am not sure if my supervisor understands or supports PCA. She once asked me if I think PCA is the only way to go. It was difficult for me to argue with her about PCA because she is my senior. I just kept quiet but deep in my heart, I know that PCA is useful because it has worked for me in different occasions” [Participant H]

“It is difficult to be supervised by somebody who does not understand PCA. You just cannot speak the same language” [Participant E]

“For us supervision does not entail the use of theory and I don’t think I can be penalized for not using PCA. It is voluntary” [Participant G]

It is clear from the above quotations that supervision also plays an important role when it comes to the integration of theory into practice. The supervisor who understands and supports a particular model is more likely to give support and encourage the subordinates to use it, whereas a supervisor who does not understand or approve of a model is likely to discourage the subordinates/supervisee from using it.

Gould and Baldwin (2004:32) state that in order to develop professional expertise in social work, supervision should help social workers reflect and reconstruct their meaning perspectives, working orientation and ‘self-understanding’ of social work.

3.3.3 Theme 3: Unique perceived experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated at other institutions

Social work training is based on the learning of theory and its integration into practice. There are a number of theories and skills in social work practice that are being taught in various training institutions. Thompson (2000:65) supports this statement by asserting that there are a number of intervention methods that are used in social work practice in order to address the challenges the social workers are confronted with, namely, task

centred practice, crisis interventions, therapy/counselling, care management, advocacy, and mediation.

During the process of data analysis, it was discovered that the participants' unique experiences with regard to colleagues who trained at institutions other than UNISA became a theme.

The following were found to be the sub-themes linking with the main theme:

- Unique treatment of the clients
- Different approaches used in counselling

3.3.3.1 Unique treatment of the clients

Under this sub-theme, the participants raised the following:

“It becomes a big challenge for me because some of my colleagues who trained at other institutions criticize PCA saying it is time wasting but I know that it is working for me and my clients very well” [Participant A]

“Social workers who trained at UNISA are loved everywhere because of PCA theory. One day the client said to me that I appreciate the way you treat me and I would not like to be assisted by somebody if you are not in. I would rather go back home and come back when you are available” [Participant C]

“I often ask myself lots of questions about some of the social workers who do not communicate well with clients. You can tell from the communication that the person is so much in hurry to finish or even coming to the solution of the problem which mostly suits the social worker” [Participant H]

“I like the fact that some colleagues who did not study PCA consult me for advice when they get stuck, but I cannot tell them what to do because it is not PCA to give advice” [Participant B]

The above statements show that participants are valuing PCA and they are comparing their treatment of the client with that of their colleagues trained at other institutions. From these quotations, it is clear to the researcher that the participants believe that they are using PCA and they find it useful in practice.

3.3.3.2 Different approaches used in counselling

There are numerous intervention methods and approaches in social work practice. In this regard the participants compare their use of PCA in practice with that of their colleagues as observed in practice. The following statements were raised by the participants with regard to different approaches used in counselling as a sub-theme:

“I don’t think that we use the same approach as social workers in this organization. Some of us are more problem oriented and I think it frustrates clients because sometimes they don’t come back for the next session” [Participant C]

“I am not saying that PCA is the only approach to be used in counselling but I find it useful in practice than the other approaches. I am falling more in love with it every day of my life because it benefits me and my clients” [Participant B]

“My second major was psychology and I have learned about other psychological models and approaches. I prefer PCA because I don’t have to be the expert or tell the client what to do. I love PCA with all my heart” [Participant F]

“PCA is unique especially coming to the use of the advanced skills. I don’t get stuck with the symbolized experiences” [Participant D]

Through these statements, it is obvious that participants are happy with their use of PCA and would prefer to continue using it because it is useful for them and they see the benefit of using it.

3.3.4 Theme 4: Challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation

Challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation became a theme during data analysis and the following were the sub-themes:

- Dealing with clients’ resistance
- Dealing with child abuse cases
- Clients’ expectations of social workers during counselling sessions

3.3.4.1 Dealing with clients’ resistance

Rennie (1998:64) states that it is useful for the person-centred counsellors to be aware of their feelings and become congruent in the counselling sessions.

Dealing with clients’ resistance was identified as a sub-theme and some of the participants made the following statements:

“Sometimes the clients tell lies and eventually turn against you. I use confrontation and it destroys the relationship already built which is difficult to restore again” [Participant G]

“It is difficult to apply PCA especially if the client knows what he wants, e.g. foster care or divorce; you just proceed with the session as the client pleases. In some

instances clients are so in a hurry and don't want their time to be wasted and you are forced to continue as they want" [Participant A]

"Sometimes I feel like clients are taking advantage of my kindness to them and I end up telling them that I don't like what they are doing. A client can come to your office and tell you about this today and tomorrow he changes to something else" [Participant H]

"It disturbs me if the client is always quiet and does not say anything during the session" [Participant E]

The above statements by the participants show insufficient or incomplete understanding of the PCA process. In PCA clients always come first and everything is about them. The emphasis is on the use of immediacy as an advanced skill rather than confrontation which is based on the facilitators' frame of reference and can be threatening to the client.

PCA cannot be applied to some people and not others. The facilitator must always start where the client is and not where the facilitator wants to start. The PCA facilitator always uses the advanced skills to check the implied messages, identify themes and connect the islands, as well as exploring distortions.

It is clear that the above participants struggle with the integration of PCA in practice

3.3.4.2 Dealing with child abuse cases

Dealing with the child abuse cases was identified as one of the sub-themes and requires a certain intervention strategy or knowledge of working with children by the social worker. Van der Westhuizen (2009: 2-3) discusses the eight principles for non-directive work with children, namely: establish a warm, empathetic relationship with the child,

have unconditional positive regard for the child, provide a safe place for the child, give sensitive and empathic responses, value the child's potential to grow and heal, do not direct or force the child, respect the child's process and pace, and lastly provide structure.

Some participants made the following statements in connection with this sub-theme:

“Sometimes it is challenging to use PCA with children who are abused. Our organization mostly deals with the child abuse cases. You end-up not knowing what to tell them and refer them to the psychologists” [Participant A]

“Working with children is not an easy thing because children do not respond like adults which make it difficult to apply the skills. We know the theory in working with children but somehow I feel that during our training more emphasis should be placed on the application of PCA with children” [Participant C]

“I tell them what to do sometimes, especially when I am stuck which is not good because is imposing my frame of reference on them” [Participant E]

It is clear from the above statement that working with children who are emotionally affected is a challenge for the participants, especially applying PCA in working with children. The participants reveal an inability to integrate PCA in working with children.

3.3.4.3 Clients' expectations of social workers during counselling sessions

Rogers (1987:67) states that the manner in which the client perceives the counsellor and the interview is initially influenced very deeply by his expectations. He further highlights that the client may expect the therapist/facilitator to be an advice-giver or problem-solver and this may be threatening to the therapist/facilitator.

Clients' expectations of social workers during counselling sessions were identified as one of the sub-themes during data analysis. Some of the participants made the following statements:

“Some clients expect counselling to be very quick and somehow in the beginning they feel that non-directive approach is taking time, but at the end they come back and are thankful of the process” [Participant C]

“There are expectations from the clients that the social worker will solve their problems and it used to give me more pressure in the beginning because I used to feel that the client's situation is my responsibility, but I now feel grounded with my advanced skills. They help my facilitation towards the symbolization of the clients' unsymbolized experiences” [Participant D]

“If the client expects me to solve their problem, I use immediacy to address it and it helps me in gaining trust from him” [Participant B]

“It is challenging sometimes to work with adults because they feel they know what they want and expect you to do it as soon as possible. My experience with young people is that they more patient than adults” [Participant A]

The above statements tell us that clients' expectations of social workers during counselling can impose challenges to the trained PCA facilitators especially during their first period of practice. It is also clear that PCA is useful through the use of immediacy or/and other advanced skills in dealing with the clients' expectations.

3.3.5 Theme 5: The nature of statutory cases

Botha (2010:144) states that one of the main functions of a social worker working for government or an NGO, is statutory work. She further highlights that in certain welfare

agencies, up to 80% of a social worker's caseload may consist of statutory cases. Each statutory case is unique and complex but, apart from that, the case is also located within the complex context of the accused, his/her family, the victim and his/her family, the lawyers, the court proceedings, other professionals and so on.

The nature of statutory cases was identified as one of the themes during data analysis and the following are the sub-themes:

- Foster care interventions
- Dealing with adoptions

3.3.5.1 Foster care interventions

Some organizations specialize in foster care placement and the participants had this to say about the process of foster care and integration of PCA:

“My organization specializes in foster care placements and as a result we don't use much of PCA especially the advanced skills. I mostly use more of the professional values for instance, respect, individualization, confidentiality and self-determination, together with the basic skills to build the relationship with my clients” [Participant D]

“The process of foster care is different and I feel overwhelmed sometimes with the caseload and ignore the emotional aspects of my clients. We are so much into the presentation of the matter before the child welfare commissioner and ignore the emotional world of children and foster parents” [Participant A]

“We mostly do foster care here and I find PCA useful in building the relationship with my clients and also dealing with their emotion” [Participant C]

The above statements tell us that the participants are in agreement with regard to the significance of using PCA during the foster care process. However, when we look at the first two statements from the participants (participant D and participant A), it becomes very clear that they do not use the advanced skills during the foster care process, either because of high caseloads or focusing more on the process and procedure of foster care.

3.3.5.2 Dealing with adoption cases

Just as in foster care, there are also organizations that specialize in dealing with adoption cases. In adoption the child is placed permanently with the adoptive parent who then assumes the whole responsibility for the child. The following statements were provided by the participants who deal with adoption cases:

“It is an emotional situation and you cannot just start doing it without the background of PCA” [Participant F]

“We sometimes deal with parents or a parent who wants to give away child for adoption, and there in-depth counselling is always needed to deal with the unsymbolized experiences. Some even change their minds and it is my duty to respect that because it is their decisions but I don’t tell them what to do because that would be imposing my frame of reference” [Participant B]

“I use the advanced skills more and they are helpful in checking the implied messages, identifying themes, connecting islands and exploring the discrepancies” [Participant B]

There is no doubt that the above participants enjoy the use of PCA during therapeutic sessions with their clients. They understand the PCA facilitation process and it is useful for them.

3.4 SUMMARY

The research findings were presented in this chapter. The profiles of eight participants from different welfare organizations were presented and the participants were identified as A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H. The findings were discussed according to the themes and sub-themes that emerged during data analysis. Five themes emerged and were discussed, namely the perceived significance of building a relationship with clients, the organizational influence in counselling, unique experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated at other institutions, challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situation, and lastly, the nature of statutory cases. Every theme and sub-theme was supported by the participants' statements.

From the above presented themes, the researcher perceived that there are participants who integrate PCA into practice and those who struggle with integration. A critical discussion on the participants' individual integration of PCA into practice will be presented with conclusions in the next chapter.

Conclusions and recommendations based on the research process and the findings will also be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the conclusions arrived at on the basis of the research process and findings presented in the previous chapter will be discussed. The conclusions will be presented in relation to the qualitative research process and the research findings. The recommendations will also be presented.

The goal of this research was to explore social workers' integration of PCA into practice within different contexts of employment.

The following objectives were set to achieve this goal:

- To explore the integration of PCA towards the process of change and reconstruction in different working contexts
- To explore the organizational influence on social workers regarding the integration of PCA into practice

4.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher implemented a qualitative research method with an exploratory research design. The use of this qualitative research method and design allowed the researcher to explore participants' experiences from their own frame of reference without imposing his own views or being directive. The qualitative research method ensured the flexibility needed in exploring the participants experience of integrating PCA into practice.

Following the identification of the research population, a sample was recruited through the use of a non-probability, purposive sampling method. The researcher selected the sample from his existing knowledge of the population. Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with the social workers employed in different welfare organizations in Pretoria, namely, Child welfare Tshwane, Apostolic faith mission Abba adoption, FAMSA, Department of Social development, NICRO, Catholic women league, City of Tshwane, and lastly the Department of Correctional services. The use of this type of interview allowed the researcher the flexibility to make follow-up statements based on the participants' unique experience of integrating PCA into practice within their working context.

The eight steps described in Tesch's model (in Creswell, 1994: 155-156; De Vos et al, 1998: 343-344) were used for data analysis. Five themes with their sub-themes and categories were identified from the transcribed interviews. These themes were identified as follows:

- The perceived significance of building relationships with clients
- The organizational influence in counselling
- Unique experiences with regard to colleagues who graduated from other institutions.
- Challenges in handling a conflict or crisis situations
- The nature of statutory cases

4.3 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE FINDINGS

In this section the researcher presents the conclusions about the participants that he arrived at on the basis of the findings presented in Chapter 3. These conclusions focus on the integration of PCA into practice by the participants as individuals. The research question is based on whether or not social workers who trained at UNISA are integrating PCA into practice.

- **Participant A**

In terms of theme 1, the participant says she uses PCA to build trustworthy relationships with the clients during the counselling sessions. She finds the professional values and the communication skills helpful to her in building the relationship with the clients. The researcher perceives that the participant does not use PCA always, and this is supported by her statement under theme 3, when she says:

“Sometimes I rush the process in order to attend to everybody sitting and I know it is not good according to PCA”

There is also a discrepancy with this participant when it comes to her understanding of PCA. In theme 1 she regards herself as someone who understands PCA very well but her statement under theme 4 which says ***“It is difficult to apply PCA especially if the client knows what he wants”*** raises questions about her understanding of PCA.

In PCA clients are regarded as people who know and understand what they want and the facilitator’s role is to facilitate the process and not impose anything on the client. The facilitator can still apply PCA regardless of clients telling the facilitator what they want. The researcher noticed that the participant did not make any reference to the 19 propositions and the advanced skills in her statements and it makes him wonder if she ever uses them in practice.

In terms of theme 5, the participant further says:

“The process of foster care is different and I feel overwhelmed sometimes with the caseload and ignore the emotional aspects of my clients. We are so much into presentation of the matter before the child welfare commissioner and ignore the emotional world of children and foster parents”

The researcher believes that PCA fits with the process of foster care and the facilitator can still use it. The fact that the participant ignores the emotional world of children and foster parents during the process of foster care makes the researcher conclude that her understanding of PCA is limited. Proposition 6 (Emotions) talks about the intensity of the client's emotions and it prepares the facilitator for the emotional experiences of the client. PCA puts people first and emotions are part of the wholeness of a person (proposition 3).

According to the participant, she thinks that she understands and integrates PCA, but based on the above discrepancy in her statements, the researcher can conclude that Participant A's understanding and integration of PCA is limited.

- **Participant B**

This participant believes she uses PCA in building a relationship with clients as reflected under theme 1. The participant indicates that she uses the professional values and communication skills in building this relationship with the clients as supported in the statement in theme 1.

“Clients feel free to relate with me because I listen to them without imposing any judgement”

The participant believes that she does not struggle with the integration of PCA into practice and that she finds it useful always.

Her statement in theme 3 which says: ***“I like the fact that some colleagues who did not study PCA consult me for advice when they stuck, and I cannot tell them what to do because it is not PCA to give advice”*** tell us that she does not only know or understands PCA, but she lives PCA.

The participant also made reference to the propositions and advanced skills in her statements; for instance she says:

“If the client expects me to solve their problems, I use immediacy to address it and it helps me in gaining trust from him”

In theme 5, the participant talks of dealing with the unsymbolized experiences, the client’s frame of reference and the process of change. Through her statements, the participant outlines the core conditions in PCA, professional values, communication skills, and propositions.

Based on the above, the researcher can conclude that Participant B knows and understands PCA and she integrates it into practice.

- **Participant C**

In terms of theme 1, the participant maintains she uses PCA in building a relationship with the clients. The participant strongly believes that building a trustworthy relationship with the clients is the core in counselling sessions as supported by her statement which says:

“You cannot begin the process of counselling without having a foundation of a trustworthy relationship with the client otherwise there is no counselling”.

The participant finds PCA useful for her in practice and she makes reference to the propositions and the advanced skills. The participant believes in confidentiality and she expressed dissatisfaction with the organization about the fact of sharing an office with colleagues which invades the privacy/confidentiality of the client.

The fact that the participant in theme 2 says ***“I sometimes receive good feedback from my clients”*** implies to the researcher that she regards feedback as a reinforcement to continue using PCA. It also implies that the participant finds PCA useful in practice.

The client is passionate about PCA but at the same time scared that she may not be able to utilize it to the best of her ability in future due to the shortage of social workers. This is supported by the participant statement which says:

“I feel like I am working under pressure because we are not many and I am afraid it may result in me compromising my theory”

The researcher perceives that compliments from the clients become a theme to the participant (as cited under theme 1, theme 2 and theme 4) and they encourage her to use PCA more. Although the participant expressed in theme 4 that there should be more emphasis on the application of PCA in practice with children during training, the researcher cannot come to the conclusion that she does not use PCA with children.

Based on the above, the researcher can conclude that Participant C knows, understands, and uses PCA.

- **Participant D**

In theme 1 the participant feels that she uses PCA with her clients in building a trustworthy relationship with them. According to the participant, her working environment limits her in using PCA since her organization colleagues mostly do administrative work. This is supported by the participant’s statement in theme 2 that says:

“There is a lot of admin work that we do in our organization and somehow I feel like I am not using my theory optimally. We spend long time learning about theory and it becomes a challenge for me to realize that you are only using a tip of it”

This participant made reference to the advanced skills by saying that through the use of these skills she does not get stuck with the symbolized experiences. This implies that the participant uses PCA with her clients.

This participant expresses that she uses PCA in practice and the advanced skills are useful in dealing with the unsymbolized experiences. The researcher did not find any discrepancy in Participant D's statements and can therefore conclude that she knows and understands PCA and she integrates it into practice.

- **Participant E**

The participant finds PCA helpful for her in the creation of a trustworthy environment with the clients as reflected in theme 1. The participant feels that it is not easy to apply PCA in an organization that runs structured programmes. The above is supported by her statement in theme 2 which says:

“I love my PCA so much but sometimes it is difficult to apply it always especially in group work because the organization will give you the topic to discuss with the group members and also prescribe their expectations to you”

It is clear from the participant's response that she thinks that an organization can play a significant role when it comes to the integration of theory into practice. She also feels that clients must not be silent during the counselling sessions, otherwise it disturbs her. In her statement under theme 4, she mentioned that:

“It disturbs me if a client is always quiet and does not say anything during the session”

The researcher can conclude based on the above statements that the participant's understanding of PCA is limited. This makes the researcher wonder if the participant is able to use PCA at all. In PCA the focus is not about the facilitator/social worker, but about the client and clients cannot be forced to talk if they do not feel like it. Also in PCA the facilitator starts where the client is, not where the facilitator wants to. The researcher believes that PCA can be integrated into practice regardless of the programmes given to the facilitator by the organization. Starting where the clients are in PCA implies not starting with the programme at hand because that totally ignores the significance of clients as people. If the contents of the programme are relevant to the members, the group will touch on it when they are ready to do so.

The researcher therefore concludes that Participant E's understanding of PCA is limited and she struggles with its integration into practice.

- **Participant F**

In terms of theme 1, this participant feels that she is using PCA to create a favourable environment with the client. She finds the professional values and communication skills helpful in the creation of a 'conducive' environment during the counselling sessions. The participant believes that her organization does not stand in her way when it comes to the integration of theory into practice because her immediate supervisor was also trained in PCA at UNISA. This is supported by her statement in theme 3 which says:

“My supervisor is trained in PCA and she also supervises the fourth-year UNISA students and that makes it easy for me to apply my theory and skills. She also encourages me a lot to use it because she can see that it is useful, especially the use of advanced skills with my clients”

The participant seems to have a support system from the supervisor and the organization does not interfere with her integration of theory. In terms of theme 3, she says:

“My organization is supportive and they do not intervene with my work at all. I am free to use my PCA without being told what to do”

The researcher is able to come to the conclusion that the participant understands PCA and is able to use it in practice. The participant is able to provide instances where she found PCA useful especially through the use of the propositions and advanced skills. It is therefore clear that Participant F uses PCA and she finds it helpful.

- **Participant G**

According to this participant, she uses PCA and she finds it helpful in building a relationship with clients. This is supported by her statement in terms of theme 1 which says:

“For me PCA is good especially in building a relationship with the clients and they become free to share their experiences to a non-judgemental and empathic listener”

The participant statement in theme 2 makes the researcher wonder if she has a thorough understanding of PCA:

“We do not do much of counselling in our organization. We are mostly expected to conduct home visits and write reports about the client’s situation as required by the organization. I think this denies me an opportunity to utilize my PCA fully”

The researcher perceives a discrepancy with this participant. She mentioned that she does not do much counselling in her organization but conducts home visits and writes reports. On the other hand, this denies her the opportunity of utilizing her PCA. The big question is “can one not use PCA during home visits and do you just go and collect the information and come back?” The answer is no, PCA can still be used during home visits regardless of the reports required by the organization. The facilitator who works from the PCA perspective would put people first and reports later. This implies that you start where the people are and continue with them according to their own direction.

The researcher believes counselling can also come out of home visits. As the facilitator/social worker is busy with the client during home visits, it is possible to facilitate the sharing of her innermost experiences through the use of the PCA skills. There is thus a discrepancy when the participant says home visits deny her an opportunity to use PCA.

In terms of theme 4, the participant spoke of using confrontation with the client if she/he tells lies.

“Sometimes the clients tell lies and eventually turn against you. I use confrontation and it destroys the relationship already built which is difficult to restore again”

In PCA the facilitator does not use confrontation but rather uses the advanced skills, for instance, immediacy or exploring distortions. Confrontation is from the facilitator’s frame of reference and be experienced as threatening by the client, whereas with Immediacy or exploring distortion a facilitator can still communicate with the clients with respect. The researcher believes that a PCA facilitator cannot tell the client that he/she is telling lies, because clients communicate from their own frame of reference. In fact it would be the facilitator’s frame of reference to say that a client is telling a lie. Proposition 1 (Human experiences at a conscious and unconscious level) and Proposition 2 (Human

perceptions) support the above notion since they consider the unique perceptions of the individuals which might seem like a lie to the facilitator, especially if it is not what the facilitator wants to hear.

Based on the above, the researcher can conclude that Participant G struggles with the integration of PCA into practice.

- **Participant H**

This participant feels that she uses PCA in building a relationship with the clients. She says:

“I so wish every social worker could learn about PCA because it is so useful in practice. Through PCA I easily relate to my clients”

The above statement from the participant does not tell us how she uses PCA to build a relationship with the client. In terms of theme 2, the participant indicates that she works according to a programme and her activities must be aligned to it. She further indicates that she is able to fit PCA into the organizational programme.

“I use PCA during practice in my organization but sometimes the organization prescribes what to do and give you a programme. At first it was difficult for me but I realized that I can also fit PCA with the organizational programme”

The participant does not say what was difficult for her in fitting PCA into the organizational programme and also how she managed to improve. The researcher noticed the discrepancy in this participant because she says she uses PCA always but looking at her statement in theme 4, she says:

“Sometimes I feel like clients are taking advantage of my kindness to them and I end up telling them that I don’t like what they are doing. A client can come to your office and tell you about this today and tomorrow he changes to something else”

The above statement makes the researcher wonder if the participant understands PCA. Telling the client that the facilitator does not like what they are doing does not necessarily imply the use of immediacy. This statement is judgmental and does not reflect the self-determination or the frame of reference of the client (proposition 7). In PCA, clients are believed to be living in a continual world of changing experiences of which they are the centre (proposition 1). The fact that the client would change his statement today from what was said the previous day does not imply that he/she is lying. The facilitator cannot tell clients that they must not change their statements during the counselling sessions since he/she would be communicating that from his/her frame of reference.

The researcher can conclude that Participant H struggles with the integration of PCA into practice.

4.4 RESEARCH SUMMARY BASED ON THE CONCLUSIONS

From the above conclusions made with regard to the participants’ integration of PCA into practice, the researcher is able to mention that there are some participants who integrate PCA into practice and some who struggle with the integration. The researcher found that the participants who struggle with integration of PCA into practice also struggle with understanding the PCA facilitation process in counselling. The participants with a clear understanding of the PCA facilitation process do not struggle with the integration of PCA into practice in all situations.

The researcher perceives the frame of reference as a theme regarding the participants who struggle with the integration. The client’s frame of reference is the key principle in

PCA and requires the facilitators to apply it at all times. The participants who do not struggle with the integration of theory into practice, understand and respect the frame of reference of the clients in different contexts.

The researcher believes that the participants who struggle with the integration of theory into practice also struggle to consider the frame of reference of the clients. Participants indicate an inability in integrating PCA into practice due to high caseloads, organizational programmes and organizational expectations. Some of the participants indicate struggling with statutory work and working with children. The researcher believes that caseload, organizational programmes and expectations, statutory work and working with children cannot be the stumbling blocks hindering the PCA facilitator from integrating theory into practice if he/she puts clients first and considers their frame of reference.

The researcher perceives that besides the inability to consider the frame of reference of the client, some participants struggle with the use of the advanced skills. With immediacy the facilitator and the client are able to address any stumbling block in the “here and now” which may destroy or threaten the relationship between them. As a result a PCA facilitator cannot use confrontation to explore discrepancies or get stuck with a client or group member who is silent.

In PCA the facilitator also checks the implied messages with the clients. Participants struggle with the integration because they get stuck with the obvious. Therefore a facilitator cannot say he/she cannot use PCA if the client knows what he/she wants or if group members are silent when discussing the topic prescribed by the organization. The facilitator is able to listen to the message behind the message or listen to the messages the clients are saying about themselves/situation. It could be that the group members are not interested in the topic and that needs to be addressed through the use of the advanced skills.

As a lecturer in the department of social work at UNISA, the researcher is well aware that PCA in working with children, statutory work, different fields of service delivery, and intervention in three methods, namely, casework, group work, and community work, is part of the social work training at UNISA. The researcher is also well aware that the PCA facilitation process which includes theoretical propositions, basic and advanced skills is part of the training in the social work department at UNISA, from the first year of study.

The students practise the integration of PCA into practice during practice sessions and workshops in their third and fourth levels of study. The fourth level students also have an opportunity of practising the integration of theory into practice during their practical placements with the guidance of their supervisors appointed by UNISA and the lecturers.

The researcher is thus able to find that there are some participants who understand and integrate PCA into practice and some who struggle with integration into practice. Those who struggle with the integration also struggle in particular with the issue of the frame of reference.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the research findings, the researcher recommends the following:

- ❖ The department of social work at UNISA explore the issue of the frame of reference since some of the participants struggle with it.
- ❖ Further study to be conducted to “explore the integration of PCA into practice with the social workers who qualified at UNISA” focusing on the:
 - Social workers in other provinces

- Social workers from the other welfare organizations who have more than five years' working experience
- Clients' views about therapy/counselling conducted with the social worker (in terms of how they experience it)
- Organizations views and experience on PCA interventions (the supervisors' impressions)
- UNISA appointed supervisors' views on PCA integration into practice since they are also role players in social work training.

Further research would give a broader picture on the integration of PCA into practice and would also assist the department of social work at UNISA with their training.

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION TO TRANSCRIPTS

- Data were collected from eight participants who are employed as social workers in different welfare organizations in Pretoria.
- The collection of data was through semi-structured interviews with the individual participants.
- The Participants are labelled as A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H in the transcripts which are presented below.
- The researcher did not use structured questions to collect data, but used the PCA facilitation skills, namely, attending, listening, empathy, advanced empathy and immediacy to facilitate the interview sessions in exploring the integration of PCA into practice.
- The researcher respected the frame of reference and self-determination of the Participants during the interview sessions by responding only to the shared experiences without introducing a new subject.
- Responses made by the researcher were based on the participants' individual experiences of integration of PCA into practice
- As some of the participants spoke in their own languages, the researcher had to translate the interviews into English.
- Below are the transcripts in a sequence from **Participant A** to **Participant H**.

Name: **Participant A**

Age: **31**

Organization: **Child welfare Tshwane**

Work experience: **4 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **Child welfare Tshwane**

Date of interview: **28 October 2010**

Researcher: *"Morning"*

Participant: *"Good Morning. You are welcome"*

Researcher: *"It's my pleasure and thank you very much for affording me this opportunity for you to share with me your integration of the person-centred approach into practice"*

Participant: *(with a smile) "It's my pleasure. Indeed I was waiting for you to come and surely you came at the right time because today is not that busy".*

Researcher: *"Thank you but just before we start I just want to remind you that we have agreed that the information will be recorded and it shall be treated as confidential. Our interview may take about 45 minutes to 1 hour. I wonder if you are still fine with it".*

Participant: *"I am fine with it "*

Researcher: *"Without wasting anytime, kindly share with me your experience of integrating PCA into practice in your organization"*

Participant: *“Yes, I am using PCA, in fact, I am what I am today because of the training I got from UNISA, the values and skills learned are very much useful and clients feel free to relate with me because I listen to them without imposing any judgment”*

Researcher: *“Meaning that PCA fits with your daily activities here in the organization”*

Participant: *“PCA fits very well with what we do. We do generic social work here starting from foster care, handling family conflicts and marital disputes, counselling and what is interesting is that we work in partnership with other stake holders like, SAPS, family advocate and FAMSA”*

Researcher: *“If I hear you correctly, you are saying that you find PCA applicable in all situations”.*

Participant: *“What is very important for me is that I treat clients as individuals and I always find it helpful more especially in building a good relationship with them. Clients are very much clever and they are able to see if you are not listening to them or drawing any conclusion about them based on your interactions with others”.*

Researcher: *“So you find treating clients as unique individuals useful for you”*

Participant: *“Of course but not only that, the other key thing is the issue of confidentiality. I always find assuring confidentiality very much helpful in making the client free to share her experiences with me because the client will never be able to trust me if I do not do it”*

Researcher: *“You have mentioned something about individualization and confidentiality, and I am wondering if the integration of PCA values into practice works for you during facilitation process”*

Participant: *“Yes, PCA values are important. In fact PCA as a whole is very important but we also have some challenges as an organization when it comes to the integration of theory into practice”.*

Researcher: *“Maybe you would like to share those challenges with me”*

Participant: *“Like I told you earlier on that In our organization we do generic social work starting from foster care, marriage and couple counselling, individual counselling, and many others, .It is always full with clients which make it difficult for me to give my best in counselling. Sometimes I rush the process in order to attend to everybody sitting and I know it is not good according to PCA”.*

Researcher: *“What do you mean by rushing the process?”*

Participant: *“Yes, what I am saying is that we have got shortage of staff here and with many clients to attend to. This could be probably made by the fact that social workers do not stay long in our organization, they are easily taken by the department of social development. So it deprives me an opportunity to attend to my clients the way I should according to PCA.”*

Researcher: *“It sounds to me that besides the fact that you find PCA useful in practice, you also find the situation not conducive enough for integration”*

Participant: *“You are absolutely right, I will give you one example, the managers here once imposed narrative theory for us to follow which focuses on the problem and excludes the person but they did not succeed because majority of us in this organization are from UNISA and we were trained in PCA, so we challenged it. They wanted us to connect the narrative theory with PCA which is not possible for us”*

Researcher: *“So you found managers imposing on you something you did not like”.*

Participant: *“Indeed, but what is interesting is that, not all managers were in agreement when it comes to the implementation of the narrative theory, some did not like it at all”.*

Researcher: *“You were excited realizing that some of the managers were not in support of the narrative theory”*

Participant: *“It was indeed exciting, for instance, my manager knows PCA very well because she once worked with UNISA students and it gives me courage to continue using it. The other thing is that as colleagues we do not all use PCA”*

Researcher: *“would you like to elaborate further on that?”*

Participant: *“What I am saying is that, it becomes a big challenge for me because some of my colleagues who trained at other institutions criticize PCA saying it is time wasting but I know that it is working for me and my clients very well”*

Researcher: *“You have mentioned a number of challenges that you encounter in relation to the integration of PCA into practice, namely, high caseload and shortage of staff which makes you rush the process; narrative theory which was nearly imposed on you, and criticism from the colleagues who think that PCA is time wasting. I am wondering if these challenges have an impact when it comes to your integration of PCA into practice”.*

Participant: *“You see, these things do have an impact, because it threatens your integration of theory, but these cannot be the only challenges. It is difficult to apply PCA especially if the client knows what he wants, e.g. foster care or divorce; you just proceed with the session as the client pleases. In some instances clients are so in hurry and don’t want their time to be wasted and you are forced to continue as they want”*

Researcher: *“Would you like to elaborate further on being forced to continue as the clients want”*

Participant: *“What I am saying is that it is challenging sometimes to work with adults because they feel they know what they want and expect you to do it as soon as possible. My experience with young people is that they are more patient than adults”*

Researcher: *“In other words, you find the integration of PCA with adults more challenging than with young people”.*

Participant: *“You see, adults would want you to come straight to the point whereas young people would give you enough time to integrate your PCA into practice, but children also are not easy when it comes to the integration of PCA into practice”.*

Researcher: *“You also find it difficult to integrate PCA with children”*

Participant: *“it is challenging to use PCA with children who are abused. Our organization mostly deals with the child abuse cases. You end-up not knowing what to tell them and refer them to the psychologists”*

Researcher: *“If I am not mistaken you also said something about foster care earlier on”*

Participant: *“The process of foster care is different and I feel overwhelmed sometimes with the caseload and ignore the emotional aspects of my clients. We are so much into the presentation of the matter before the child welfare commissioner and ignore the emotional world of children and foster parents”*

Researcher: *“What do you mean by saying you ignore the emotional world of children and parents?”*

Participant: *“I am saying that in foster care we mostly do the investigations according to the children’s Act and your investigations are mostly based on the evidence that indeed the child is in need of care and support. So one cannot find time to provide counselling under those conditions because is mostly the collection of information”*

Researcher: *“Well, our time is almost coming to an end and I am wondering if you have got something to say with regards to the integration of PCA into practice before we come to the end of our interview”*

Participant: *“All I can say is that PCA is working and I would urge UNISA to continue using it because I am seeing the fruits of using it in practice”*

Researcher: *“Once again, thank you very much for your time and it has been a great pleasure sharing with me your experience on PCA integration into practice and most of all, being part of this research study”*

Participant: *“Thank very much, you are more than welcome to contact me for other research projects. I really enjoyed myself and it was also an opportunity for me to explore my PCA further”*

Researcher: *“Thank you very and have a good day”*

Participant: *“You too, thank you”*

Name: **Participant B**

Age: **39**

Organization: **AFM Abba adoption**

Work experience: **5 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **AFM Abba adoption**

Date of interview: **23 November 2010**

Participant: *“Morning sir. You are welcome and you can have a seat”. (With a smile)*

Researcher: *“Thank you very much. It is my pleasure to be here with you today”.
(Shaking hands)*

Participant: *“It’s my pleasure too, I hope you did not get lost this time because our offices are not so visible and you may easily pass them by”*

Researcher: *“Not at all. It was so easy and straight forward for me. Anyway how are you doing?”*

Participant: *“I am fine thanks; would you prefer a cup of tea before we start?”*

Researcher: *“I am fine thank you. We can just start with our interview if it’s fine with you”*

Participant: *“No problem, we can just start then”*

Researcher: *“Before we start, I would like to thank you once again for giving me this opportunity to share with me your experiences of integrating PCA into practice and also to remind you that our interview will be recorded as agreed, but again also assuring the issue of confidentiality as discussed before. Our interview may take about 45 to 60 minutes, is it still fine with you?”*

Participant: *“Ok. I remember very well that we discussed about it and it is still fine with me”*

Researcher: *“Kindly tell me your experience of integrating the person-centred approach into practice in your organization”*

Participants: *“Thank you Sir, I really don’t know where to start but I can tell you that I use PCA with my clients. PCA is very much helpful to me in building the relationship with my clients. My clients love me so much and they find it easy to relate with me because I do not present to them as the expert but I make sure that they feel free in the therapeutic sessions through the use of basic skills and professional values”*

Researcher: *“Meaning that you find the professional values and basic communication skills useful in practice”*

Participant: *“The most important thing is respect. Respect is the key element during counselling sessions and clients may never come back again if they feel disrespected and that is the reason why I am saying PCA guides my approach to clients”*

Researcher: *“In other words you are saying with respect you are able to keep your clients and not chasing them away”*

Participant: *“That’s correct. You know, I have learned that respect is very broad; not taking decisions for the client is another way of showing respect. Proposition 4 (self-*

determination) guides me a lot in making sure that I don't try to decide for my clients or tell them what to do because they know very well what they want and how they want it. I find self-determination useful in practice and it helps in shifting responsibilities to clients with regard to their decisions or choices and they cannot blame me for their decisions in the end"

Researcher: *"Would you elaborate further on how self-determination helps in shifting the responsibility to clients"*

Participant: *"What I am saying here is that we mostly deal with adoption cases here, for instance, you may find a pregnant women coming for counselling not knowing whether to keep a baby or not. So I cannot tell her what to do because it is not PCA, all I do is to stay with the client and use my advanced skills for her to symbolize the unsymbolized experiences and I find it useful"*

Researcher: *"You also find the advanced skills useful"*

Participant: *"Remember it is about change, so change is being facilitated through the use of the advanced skills. I use the advanced skills more and they are also helpful in checking the implied messages, identifying themes, connecting islands and exploring the discrepancies"*

Researcher: *"Ok" (nodding his head to encourage the participant to talk more)*

Participant: *"Just to give you another example, we sometimes deal with parents or a parent who wants to give away a child for adoption, and there in-depth counselling is always needed to deal with the unsymbolized experiences. Some even change their minds and it is my duty to respect that because it is their decisions but I don't tell them what to do because that would be imposing my frame of reference"*

Researcher: *"It sounds to me that you are enjoying integrating PCA into practice"*

Participant: *“Very much. “I am not saying that PCA is the only approach to be used in counselling but I find it useful in practice than the other approaches. I am falling more in love with it every day of my life because it benefits me and my clients”*

Participant: *“The other thing is the issue of confidentiality and non-judgemental attitude, they are so important in practice, but with me, I don’t always literally tell clients about confidentiality but through the collective use of the professional values and skills, clients learn to trust me with their information and become free to share even sensitive issues”*

Researcher: *“Correct me if am wrong, you do not view the integration of the professional values and skills into practice in isolation”*

Participant: *“In fact, PCA as a whole cannot be viewed in isolation; it is a complete package with all the propositions, professional values, basic and advanced skills. These help you to understand a person in totality and be able to work with him from his frame of reference”*

Researcher: *“If I am not mistaken, you have mentioned the importance of clients’ frame of reference twice and I am wondering you are saying that you find working from the client’s frame of reference useful”*

Participant: *“Yes, working from the clients’ frame of reference is useful because it helps you not to generalize. Anyway, everything is about the client and therefore my frame of reference would not be important at all. Clients are unique and some clients would simply be silent or expect you to solve their problems and I just use immediacy”*

Researcher: *“You also find immediacy useful in practice”*

Participant: *“It is very much useful, for instance, if the client expects me to solve their problem, I use immediacy to address it and it helps me in gaining trust from him”*

Researcher: *“It looks like you find the environment conducive for the integration of PCA into practice here in your organization”*

Participant: *“You are absolutely right the policies and structure of my organization is good and it makes it possible for me to apply my theory without any pressure. I also think that the feedback from the clients’ makes the management see that indeed PCA is working because once I receive feedback, I let my supervisor know about it”*

Participant: *“I also like the fact that some colleagues who did not study PCA consult me for advice when they get stuck, but I cannot tell them what to do because it is not PCA to give advice”*

Researcher: *“Well, I think our time is almost coming to an end and I am wondering if you still have something to share with regard to the integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“I think I enjoyed sharing with you my experience on PCA such that I could not even see that time was running so fast. All I can say is that we are using PCA in our organizations and I wish every social worker can learn about it because it is so useful in practice”*

Researcher: *“It is my pleasure. I also enjoyed myself listening to your experience and also how passionate you are about PCA. I can say I have learned a lot from you as well. Thank you very much and I so wish we’ll meet again next time”*

Participant: *“Thank you very much and have yourself a great day”*

Researcher: *“Have a great day too”*

Name: **Participant C**

Age: **40**

Organization: **FAMSA**

Work experience: **2 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **FAMSA**

Date of interview: **22/11/2010**

Researcher: *"Morning"*

Participant: *"Good morning sir and how are you?"*

Researcher: *"I am fine thanks. I can see that you are very busy here".*

Participant: *"Very busy indeed and everyday is like this. We have got so many clients coming in daily"*

Researcher: *"I am wondering if our meeting will not disturb your daily schedule"*

Participant: *"Not at all, it was part of my daily schedule"*

Researcher: *"I really don't want to waste your time since I can see that you are busy. I guess we can start with our interview if you are ready"*

Participant: *"I think we can start but you will just have to forgive me because we don't have enough space here and we are forced to share one office as you can see"*

Researcher: *“I think its fine with me as long as we would be able to hear one another and communicate in a way that would maintain the confidentiality of our information as we agreed”*

Participant: *“I think there is enough distance and nobody will be able to hear our conversation”*

Researcher: *“Ok. Maybe before we start I must remind you that our interview will be recorded as discussed last time, and it can take between 45 and 60 minutes. I am wondering if it is still fine with you”*

Participant: *“Of course, yes. I don’t have any problem with it”*

Researcher: *“Would you kindly share with me your experience of integrating PCA into practice in your Organization”*

Participant: *“I am using PCA and I am finding it useful in practice. You cannot begin the process of counselling without having a foundation of a trustworthy relationship with the client, otherwise there is no counselling at all”*

Researcher: *“You find PCA useful in building a trustworthy relationship with your clients”*

Participant: *“I think counselling is about the relationship I think as PCA counsellors we don’t have to assume the role of the expert when entering the counselling sessions because that destroys the whole relationship with the clients. I can now practically see that clients are capable of making their own decisions and through the use of basic communication and advanced skills”*

Researcher: *“I am wondering if you are saying that you find PCA helpful for the clients to make their own decisions”*

Participant: *“Through PCA I don’t have to take clients’ responsibilities to be mine, but what I do is to facilitate the process and be myself without having to impose my frame of reference on them. The focus in PCA is on the ‘self’ of the client”*

Researcher: *“Would you perhaps like to elaborate further on the link between PCA and the ‘self’ of the client”*

Participant: *“What I am saying is that PCA helps me to focus on the self of the person I am interacting with a facilitator. The self of client, perceptions and frame of reference are the key in PCA counselling and this is all about treating people as individuals. Generalization is mostly done by people who are lazy and there is a danger of imposing your frame of reference on client”*

Researcher: *“It sound to me that PCA fits with your daily activities”*

Participant: *“Yes PCA fits very well with my daily activities but besides counselling, we mostly do foster care here and I find PCA useful in building the relationship with my clients and also dealing with their emotions”*

Researcher: *“You sound so content by the fact that PCA enables you to build a trustworthy relationship with your clients”*

Participant: *“I should be happy because through building a trustworthy relationship, clients’ feel free to share their experience without any threat. I use the professional values like respect, confidentiality, self-determination and individualization in building this relationship”*

Participant: *“Sometimes by only listening to the client, you are showing respect to them and you will be surprised to see how much they appreciate it. One client once told me that she has been going to the social workers for the past four years and she said I am unique from other social workers”*

Researcher: *“The fact that clients comment about your treatment to them, gives you courage to continue using PCA”*

Participant: *“Besides courage it also tells you that PCA is working. PCA teaches you respect to the clients and they appreciate that so much”*

Researcher: *“It sound to me that the working environment is conducive for the integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“Sometimes it is not about the working environment which is conducive; it is about you as a person. I am concerned about my client’s confidentiality here in our organization. Our office is like a hall and the three of us share. Sometimes you can hear the conversation between the colleague and the client. I do not like this and so wish it can change soon”*

Researcher: *“If I hear you correctly you are saying that sharing the office with your colleagues does not affect your integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“Obviously it cannot affect the integration of PCA into practice because I know my theory. The other thing is that it is always busy here all day and I don’t think that I am using my PCA theory to my best. I feel like I am working under pressure because we are not many and I am afraid it may results in me compromising my theory”*

Researcher: *“Would you perhaps elaborate what you mean by compromising your theory”*

Participant: *“When I talk of compromising my theory I am referring to a situation whereby I don’t spend quality time with my clients due to high work load. I am not saying I don’t give them that quality time; I try by all means to be there for them. I so wish we all used PCA”*

Researcher: *“What do you mean by all using PCA?”*

Participant: *“I don’t think that we use the same approach as social workers in this organization. Some of us are more problem oriented and I think it frustrates clients because sometimes they don’t come back for the next session”*

Researcher: *“I am wondering if you are looking at PCA practice in comparison with the other approaches”*

Participant: *“Social workers who trained at UNISA are loved everywhere because of PCA theory. One day the client said to me that I appreciate the way you treat me and I would not like to be assisted by somebody else if you are not in. I would rather go back home and come back when you are available”*

Researcher: *“And that gives you an indication that PCA is useful in practice”*

Participant: *“Let me tell you that at first we used to fight with my supervisor about PCA because she does not understand it very well and she would want me to intervene as she pleases but now things are better between us. I sometimes receive good feedback from my clients about my treatment and I would pass them to her, maybe that’s when she realized that PCA is also good. Since then she does not give me any problem”*

Participant: *“There is something I wanted to share with you about integrating PCA in working with children. We also work with children here but I think working with children is not an easy thing because children do not respond like adults which make it difficult to*

apply the skills. We know the theory in working with children but somehow I feel that during our training more emphasis should be placed on the application of PCA with children”

Researcher: *“I am wondering if you are saying you do not find PCA in working with children useful”*

Participant: *“Not exactly, but what I am saying is that there should be more role plays and practice regarding PCA in working with children. It is useful and I am using it but I just think that maybe we did not have enough time of practicing it”*

Participant: *“I like the fact that clients appreciate the way I treat them and I know that it is because of my integration of PCA into practice. Some clients expect counselling to be very quick and somehow in the beginning they feel that non-directive approach is taking time, but at the end they come back and are thankful of the process”*

Researcher: *“I think time is not on our side now. Maybe you would like to say something with regard to the integration of PCA into practice in closing”*

Participant: *“I did not realize that time was running so fast but all I can say is that you must continue using PCA because we are using it”*

Researcher: *“Thank you very much and really enjoyed you sharing with me your experience on PCA integration into practice”*

Participant: *“Thank you and have a lovely day”*

Researcher: *“Thank you and have a good day too”*

Name: **Participant D**

Age: **31**

Organization: **Dept of social development**

Work experience: **2 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **Dept of social development**

Date of interview: **22 November 2010**

Participant: *"I am sorry you had to wait, I was busy with a client"*

Researcher: *"It is ok. I noticed that you were still busy with somebody"*

Participant: *"It is fine and I think we can just continue with our interview"*

Researcher: *"I firstly would like to thank you for your compromise and squeeze me in your busy schedule. I also want to remind you that our interview is recorded and may take about 45 to 60 minutes as discussed earlier"*

Participant: **"Ok"**

Researcher: *"Kindly share with me your experience of integrating the person-centred approach into practice in your organization"*

Participant: *"I can say that I have got only two years working experience in the field of social work but I am able to say PCA is working. I am using it"*

Researcher: *“Meaning that for the past two years you have been using PCA and you find it useful”*

Participant: *“I use PCA always and it is useful. Through PCA I am able to connect well with my clients and build a trustworthy relationship with them”*

Researcher: *“Would you elaborate on how PCA helps you in building a trustworthy relationship with your client”*

Participant: *“I use professional values like respect. Everybody deserves to be treated with respect and one cannot be a PCA facilitator without taking the value of respect into cognition. I always make sure that I accept my clients as they are without putting any condition and it helps me a lot in gaining trust from them”*

Researcher: *“So you find respect and unconditional acceptance of the clients useful in practice”*

Participant: *“They are very much useful for me but self-determination and clients’ frame of reference are also very much useful. I learned from my experience that clients don’t like to be told what to do but they would prefer to be involved in decision making process”*

Participant: *“The other thing is confidentiality. If clients are aware that their information cannot be shared with somebody, they go much deeper with their information sharing. As a social worker I make sure that I nurture my relationship with my clients by keeping confidentiality”*

Researcher: *“It sound to me that building a trustworthy relationship with your clients is very important for you and you find values in PCA helpful in doing that”*

Participant: *“A conducive working relationship is important in counselling sessions. PCA values and communication skills helps me in the creation of this environment which is conducive. We work with children, youth, adults and families and as a social worker you must be able to relate to all your clients in different age levels and I only do that through the use of PCA”*

Researcher: *“So you find PCA fitting well with your daily activities here in your department”*

Participant: *“PCA fits everywhere but the challenge that I am having is that there is lot of admin work that we do in our organization and somehow I feel like I am not using my theory optimally. We spend a long time learning about this theory and it because a challenge for me to realize that you are only using just a tip of it”*

Researcher: *“I am wondering what you mean when you say you just use a tip of PCA”*

Participant: *“What I am saying is that with admin work I do not interact with people and I would prefer more interactions with people and less admin but it is not possible because is part of our daily job”*

Researcher: *“You find administrative work challenging”*

Participant: *“It is challenging because I cannot apply my PCA skills, for instance, “My organization specializes in foster care placements and as a result we don’t use much of PCA especially the advanced skills. I mostly use more of the professional values for instance, respect, individualization, confidentiality and self-determination, together with the basic skills to build the relationship with my clients”*

Researcher: *“I am wondering if you are saying that you do not find PCA advanced skills useful in foster care placement”*

Participant: *“No, I am not saying that. Advanced skills are useful in foster care placements. PCA is unique especially coming to the use of the advanced skills. I use the advanced skills and I don’t get stuck with the symbolized experiences”*

Participant: *“Sometimes there are expectations from the clients that the social worker will solve their problems and it used to give me more pressure in the beginning because I used to feel that the client’s situation is my responsibility, but I now feel grounded with my advanced skills. They help my facilitation towards the symbolization of the clients’ unsymbolized experiences”*

Researcher: *“So far you have indicated that you find the professional values and basic communication skills helpful in building a trustworthy relationship with your clients; you also mentioned that you use the advanced skills to enable clients’ to symbolize their unsymbolized experiences. I am wondering if you still have something to say with regard to PCA in practice.*

Participant: *“All I can say is that PCA is working well in practice and as social workers we find it useful. But at the same time I perceive PCA values, core conditions, basic and advanced communication skill, and propositions as collective. They are like your tools and you need them any time when you see your clients”*

Participant: *“For me today’s interview was more like a reflection on my integration of PCA into practice”*

Researcher: *“Thank you very much for sharing with me your integration of PCA into practice and it was also a learning opportunity for me”*

Participant: *“It’s my pleasure and you are welcome to contact me next time on your research”*

Researcher: *"I am happy to hear that and have a lovely day"*

Participant: *"You too"*

Name: **Participant E**

Age: **30**

Organization: **NICRO**

Work experience: **2 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **NICRO**

Date: **04 November 2010**

Researcher: *"Morning"*

Participant: *"Morning and how are you"*

Researcher: *"It is good to be here once again"*

Participant: *"I am happy you came on time because we have got a meeting at 10 o'clock"*

Researcher: *"So I would not have found you"*

Participant: *"I knew that you were coming, but I was afraid that we were not going to spend 45 minutes or an hour as agreed"*

Researcher: *"Well, I am glad that we can spend some time together but just before we start I need to remind you that our interview will be recorded and the information shall be kept confidential as discussed"*

Participant: *“No problem”*

Researcher: *“Kindly tell me your experience of integrating PCA into practice in your organization”*

Participant: *“PCA helps me to create a conducive environment whereby my clients feel free to share their experiences with me”*

Researcher: *“If I hear you correctly you are saying that PCA is useful towards the creation of a conducive environment with your clients”*

Participant: *“Yes, we need our professional values and communication skills to create this conducive environment because you will be able to respect your clients and accept them unconditionally without imposing any judgement on them”*

Researcher: *“I guess you are saying that you find PCA values and communication skills useful in practice”*

Participant: *“Very much useful, but sometimes here you work according to a program, so I don't think that I can be PCA always because we are somehow guided by the program”*

Researcher: *“Would you perhaps elaborate what you mean by saying you cannot be PCA always and that you are guided by the program”*

Participant: *“I think it is because of the type of work that we do. We mostly do diversion programme with children under the age of 18 who are in conflict with the law. So it is part of our work that we sometimes conduct the youth empowerment programmes, namely, life skills, anger management, career path and many more depending on the*

needs at that time. That why I am saying that some programs are not PCA in nature and you cannot use it always”

Researcher: *“So you are saying that PCA does not fit with other programs”*

Participant: *“I am not saying that PCA is not working in all instances. I love my PCA so much but sometimes it is difficult to apply it always especially in group work because the organization will give you the topic to discuss with the group members and also prescribe their expectations on you”*

Researcher: *“You don’t seem to be finding the environment conducive for the integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“I think it depends on the kind of organization you work for. Sometimes the organization gives you target regarding the minimum number of clients to see in a month and in the process you end up wanting to reach that target and totally ignore the process. You can still use PCA under this conditions but I don’t think that you can integrate it thoroughly”*

Participant: *“I also believe that the issue of supervision plays a role. It is difficult to be supervised by somebody who does not understand PCA. You just cannot speak the same language”*

Researcher: *“You think that supervisors do play a role when it comes to the integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“I strongly believe in confidentiality with my clients but sometimes I am required to write the reports which are read by my superiors about the very discussion I had with my clients. I do not always tell my clients about these reports and feel like I am betraying them. Yes, the reports sometimes are about the progress of a member who is*

part of a programme and it is written within the certain time frame. My point is you cannot always follow the movement of the group if it is slow and you end-up being directive”

Researcher: *“So you find being directive to your clients useful”*

Participant: *“Not always, but sometimes it is helpful. You know, it disturbs me if the client is always quiet and does not say anything during the session. Sometimes you can be directive by hooking them in the conversation. I know it is not PCA doing that but I find it useful”*

Participant: *“I also tell them what to do sometimes, especially when I am stuck which is not good because is imposing my frame of reference on them, but it only helps for the progress of the group”*

Researcher: *“Earlier you mentioned that PCA is useful in practice but I hear you have got another side which says sometimes it is not useful”*

Participant: *“You are right. Sometimes I find it helpful, especially when it comes to the building of a relationship because you would create the conducive environment like I said in the beginning, but sometimes it cannot fit in all situations and feel that students should be taught other approaches as well and not only PCA. I think we also need other approaches to complement PCA. It is good, yes, but not always”*

Researcher: *“I think we are almost running out of time. Do you still have something you want to share with regards to the integration of PCA into practice?”*

Participant: *“The last thing that I can say is that, I am using PCA and I love it but I strongly feel that the reality of the challenges people face cannot be addressed only through the use of PCA, other approaches are needed”*

Researcher: *“Thank you very much for your time and it was nice talking to you”*

Participant: *“Thank you very much and I also enjoyed myself”*

Name: **Participant F**

Age: **38**

Organization: **Catholic Women League**

Work experience: **2 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **Catholic Women League**

Date of interview: **23 November 2010**

Participant: *"Morning sir. I am sorry for waiting I was still busy with something"*

Researcher: *"You are welcome. How are you doing this morning?"*

Participant: *"I am well thanks. Would you prefer a cup of tea or coffee before we start?"*

Researcher: *"I am fine thanks. We may just continue with our interview if you are ready"*

Participant: *"With pleasure. I am ready"*

Researcher: *"Maybe before we start I must remind you that our interview will be recorded and that the information shall be kept confidential"*

Participant: *"It's ok. Maybe I cannot remember very well, did we say it may take approximately 45 minutes to an hour?"*

Researcher: *"Indeed, we said something like that and thanks for reminding me. I hope you are not so much in hurry for something"*

Participant: *“No, I am not in hurry I was just asking” (With a smile)*

Researcher: *“Kindly share with me your experience of integrating PCA into practice in your organization”*

Participant: *“We use PCA always here. It is PCA throughout and nothing else”*

Researcher: *“Meaning that you find PCA useful in practice”*

Participant: *“Indeed, PCA is working for me. I think a positive attitude matters most when working with your clients and PCA becomes my weapon which guides and protect me from hurting my clients unnecessarily. PCA values and communication skills help me in creating a conducive environment with my clients”*

Researcher: *“In other words you are saying that PCA helps you in bringing about positive attitude”*

Participant: *“Attitude means a lot during counselling and through PCA I accept and respect every client as a person. Treating my clients as unique individuals brings me closer to them and makes my facilitation more easy”*

Participant: *“I cannot forget confidentiality because confidentiality is the key to me and I always assure it to my clients”*

Researcher: *“If I hear you correctly, you are saying that you find PCA values useful”*

Participant: *“PCA values are very important, for instance, majority of our clients are from the poverty stricken families and in most instances they would want me to make decisions for them but through self-determination they are able to make their own decisions and choices”*

Participant: *“Again, I have noticed that clients appreciate the respect I give them always. In most instances, it is an emotional situation and you cannot just start doing it without the background of PCA”*

Researcher: *“The fact that clients appreciate the fact that you respect them gives you courage to continue using PCA”*

Participant: *“It gives me courage because I can see that it is working. I think the other thing which gives me courage is the support system around me. My organization is supportive and they do not interfere with my work at all. I am free to use my PCA without being told what to do”*

Participant: *“Again, my supervisor is trained in PCA and she also supervises the fourth year UNISA students and that makes it easy for me to apply my theory and skills. She also encourages me a lot to use it because she can see that it is useful, especially the use of advanced skills with my clients”*

Researcher: *“You also find the advanced skills useful in practice”*

Participant: *“Counselling involves the facilitation of change. Change comes after the symbolization of the unsymbolized experiences; therefore we need the advanced skills to do that”*

Researcher: *“It sound to me that PCA fits with your daily activities”*

Participant: *“It fits very well. Most of our cases are foster care cases and I just find PCA being suitable. You know, my second major was psychology and I have learned about other psychological models and approaches. I prefer PCA because I don't have to be the expert or tell the client what to do. I love PCA with all my heart”*

Participant: *"I mostly like the fact that PCA fits in all situations anywhere"*

Researcher: *"I am not sure if I understood you well, what do you mean when you say PCA fits in all situations anywhere?"*

Participant: *"What I am saying is that you can still use PCA with children, youth, adults, poor and rich. It is suitable for any situation and I am not saying these to impress you but because I have seen it working for me" (with a smile)*

Researcher: *"You look so passionate about your PCA and how you find it useful in practice"*

Participant: *"That's a thing. I think as social workers we need to develop love and passion not only in what we do but also the models that we use, especially we you find it useful in practice. Otherwise we cannot enjoy our practice"*

Researcher: *"It's unbelievable to see how fast time is running. I am wondering if you still have something to share as far as the integration of PCA into practice is concern"*

Participant: *"Oh yes, I did not realize that it is almost time. All I can say is that thank you very much for your time. You remind me of the fourth year final-evaluations whereby we could reflect on our learning. I think today I reflected a lot on the integration of PCA into practice" (sense of humour)*

Researcher: *"Thank you for your reflection, it was good reflecting with and I enjoyed the session"*

Participant: *"I enjoyed myself too and have a great day"*

Researcher: *"Have a great day too"*

Name: **Participant G**

Age: **30**

Organization: **City of Tshwane**

Work experience: **2 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **City of Tshwane**

Date of interview: **09 November 2010**

Researcher: *"Morning"*

Participant: *"Good morning Sir and thanks for coming"*

Researcher: *"It's my pleasure to meet with you once again"*

Participant: *"You are welcome"*

Researcher: *"Before we start I would like to remind you that our interview will be recorded and the information shared shall remain confidential as agreed. Our session may take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. Is it still fine with you?"*

Participant: *"It's ok. No problem"*

Researcher: *"kindly share with me your integration of PCA into practice in your organization"*

Participant: *“For me PCA is good especially in building a relationship with the clients and they become free to share their experiences to a non-judgemental and empathic listener. It happens more often that clients would present similar stories to me but I always keep in mind that they are unique and I do not judge them”*

Researcher: *“Meaning that you find PCA useful in building the relationship with your clients”*

Participant: *“It is useful but I am worried that I don’t use much of PCA due to the nature of my work”*

Researcher: *“Would you like to elaborate on that”*

Participant: *“We do not do much of counselling in our organization. We are mostly expected to conduct home visits and write reports about the client’s situation as required by the organization. I think this denies me an opportunity to utilize my PCA fully”*

Participant: *“We work with the poor of the poorest and we call it P.O.P. We work with people who cannot afford the services of the municipality and conduct home visits assess as to whether they can or cannot afford basic services and thereafter we write report”*

Researcher: *“You do not believe that PCA fits with your daily activities”*

Participant: *“We don’t get deep with PCA but I can say that it is helpful mostly in building a relationship with your clients. You see we have got the policy that binds us and we work according time frames and numbers”*

Researcher: *“You do not think that PCA fits with your organizational policies”*

Participant: *“It does fit, especially on the use of the basic communication skills. Basic communication skills help me in gathering information as required by the organization. I do not use the advanced skills”*

Researcher: *“If I hear you correctly, you are saying that the advanced skills are not useful in what you do on a daily basis”*

Participant: *“If ever I use the advanced skills, it would be one in hundred times. Like I said earlier that we do not focus on counselling and our supervision does not entail the use of theory. I don’t think I can be penalized for not using PCA, it is voluntary”*

Researcher: *“You have mentioned earlier that you work with the poor of the poorest and that you do not do much of counselling, I am wondering if you are saying that there is no relationship between what you have studied for and what you are doing”*

Participant: *“You are absolutely correct. At times I feel like everybody can do what we are doing, we just get to a family, ask some questions and write report. Sometimes you can see that people are suffering but sometimes it is a matter of wanting to access free basic services”*

Participant: *“Some would share their inner problems with me and I think that is where I am saying I use my PCA skills and values”*

Researcher: *“Meaning that you sometimes get an opportunity to integrate PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“Yes, it is true but like I said that we do not use the advanced skills, only basic to build a relationship with them”*

Researcher: *“You have mentioned about your experience of integrating PCA into practice, especially looking at building of a relationship with your clients. I am wondering if you still have got something to share in as far as PCA in practice is concerned”*

Participant: *“I think what I can say is that PCA is good and it is helpful in practice but in some organizations it is not always possible to use PCA advanced skills due to the nature of services provided”*

Researcher: *“Thank you very much for sharing with me your experiences and hope we shall meet again next time”*

Participant: *“It my pleasure and thank you very much. Have a wonderful day”*

Researcher: *“Have a great day too”*

Name: **Participant H**

Age: **37**

Organization: **Dept of correctional services** Work experience: **5 years**

Position: **Social worker**

Qualification: **Bachelor of social work**

Gender: **Female**

Data type: **Semi-structured interview**

Venue: **Dept of correctional services**

Date of interview: **24 November 2010**

Researcher: *“Good morning”*

Participant: *“Morning Sir. It’s good to see you”*

Researcher: *“I am also happy to be here and I hope you have been waiting for me”*

Participant: *“I was waiting and I kept on looking outside to see if you already arrived”
(with a smile)*

Researcher: *“Well, I think we can start if you are ready”*

Participant: *“Yes, we can start. I hope you don’t mind the short space in my office”*

Researcher: *“Not at all. It is fine with me”*

Participant: *“I am happy if it is fine with you”*

Researcher: *“Maybe before we start, I need to remind you that our conversation is going to be recorded and that the information shall be kept confidential as discussed.”*

We also agreed that our interview may take about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Are you still fine with it?"

Participant: *"It is fine with me"*

Researcher: *"Kindly tell with me your experience of integrating PCA into practice within your organization"*

Participant: *"I am using PCA and I so wish every social worker learn about PCA because it is so useful in practice. Through PCA I easily relate to my clients and it makes my facilitation easy"*

Researcher: *"Meaning that you find PCA useful for you in practice"*

Participant: *"Yes, I use PCA during practice in my organization but sometimes the organization prescribes what to do and give you a program. At first it was difficult for me but I have realized that I can also fit PCA with the organizational programme"*

Researcher: *"If I hear you correctly, you are saying that despite the structure and programs being given to you, you still use PCA"*

Participant: *"Yes, we work according to a program and our activities must be aliened to it but I have realized that programs do not affect the integration of PCA into practice"*

Researcher: *"Nodding" (Non-verbal way of encouraging the client to talk)*

Participant: *"In PCA I do not generalize. The uniqueness of the clients is more evident in practice especially when you observe the reactions of the clients to a similar experience. I work in a prison setting and you will be surprised to realize that some of*

the inmates are very much concern of their families outside and others are not, but PCA helps me to treat them as individuals and I make sure that I do not generalize”

Researcher: *“It seems to me that you find the value of individualization useful in practice”*

Participant: *“In fact, all PCA values are useful. I don’t think that you can use the other and ignore the rest. If you respect people you treat them as unique and you also provide them an opportunity for self-determination. Confidentiality also is very important.*

Participant: *“I often ask myself lots of questions about some of the social workers who do not communicate well with clients. You can tell from the communication that the person is so much in hurry to finish or even coming to the solution of the problem which mostly suits the social worker”*

Researcher: *“You think that your approach to clients is different from the others”*

Participant: *“I do not like comparing myself with my colleagues, but what I am saying here is that PCA helps me to approach my clients with respect and dignity. Sometimes it hurts me when people criticise PCA”*

Researcher: *“It sounds to me that you sometimes experience criticism for your integration of PCA into practice”*

Participant: *“We cannot run away from criticism at all. I am not sure if my supervisor understands or supports PCA. She once asked me if I think PCA is the only way to go. It was difficult for me to argue with her about PCA because she is my senior. I just kept quite but deep in my heart, I know that PCA is useful because it has worked for me in different occasions”*

Researcher: *“It looks like you enjoy integrating PCA into practice”*

Participant: *"It is true that I enjoy the integration of PCA into practice but sometimes I feel like clients are taking advantage of my kindness to them and I end up telling them that I don't like what they are doing. A client can come to your office and tell you about this today and tomorrow he changes to something else"*

Researcher: *"I am not sure if you are saying that PCA makes you vulnerable"*

Participant: *"In a way I can say so because clients can see if you are not arrogant to them and they may end-up taking advantage of that. They should respect our kindness because it is all about them"*

Researcher: *"Correct me if I am wrong, I think you are saying that being kind on clients is part of the integration of PCA into practice"*

Participant: *"I don't think that you can integrate PCA without necessarily being kind to them"*

Researcher: *"You have shared much on your integration of PCA into practice and I am wondering if still have got something to talk about in closing"*

Participant: *"Yes, what I can say is that PCA is working and UNISA must continue with their good work"*

Researcher: *"Thank you very much for sharing with me your integration of PCA into practice and it has been nice spending some time with you"*

Participant: *"Thank you very much and have a beautiful day"*

Researcher: *"Thank you and have a great day too"*