

**THE EXPERIENCE AND VIEWS OF INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS
IN ATTERIDGEVILLE ON THE INDIGENCY POLICY /
PROGRAMME OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

by

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DECLARATION

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I hereby declare that the dissertation, “The experience and views of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville on the Indigency Policy / Programme of Local Government” is my own work and that all sources used or quoted during this study are indicated by means of a complete reference and acknowledgement.

C N LATAKGOMO.....DATE.....

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SUMMARY

The Indigency Policy / Programme was introduced by the Tshwane Municipality in 2000 to alleviate poverty by assisting the poor with subsidized limited basic municipal services. The goal of this study was to explore the experiences and views of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.

Limited literature was available on the topic and hence the researcher undertook a qualitative study that was exploratory and descriptive in nature to explore this unknown area.

The key recommendations were: There is a need for active involvement and availability of municipal social workers; continuous monitoring, education and evaluation by the municipality for the communities. It was recommended that the Municipality conduct a full scale research on indigents` experience and perceptions/ views of their Indigency Policy / Programme in Tshwane.

Key words:

Indigency Policy / Programme

Poverty

Indigent Older Persons

Basic municipal services

Experience

Local government

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE STUDY

1. ANC – African National Congress
2. IDP - Integrated Development Plan
3. RDP – Reconstruction and Development Programmer
4. GEAR – Growth , Employment And Redistribution
5. ICD – Integrated Community Development

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND PLANNED APPLICATION OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROCESS

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), Section 27 stipulates that:

“Everyone has the right to have access to –

- (a) Sufficient electricity*
- (b) Sufficient food and water; and*
- (c) Social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, and appropriate social assistance”.*

The Constitution places a responsibility on government to ensure that such services are progressively expanded to all within the limits of available resources. This means that the government is responsible to undertake reasonable legislative and other measures through its different levels, to achieve the progressive realization of these rights (Davids, Theron and Maphunye 2005:44).

To provide these services to the poor, the Indigency Policy / Programme was introduced by some local government departments as part of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). In addition, the Municipal Systems Act (No 32 of 2000) focuses on internal systems and administration of a Municipality by using the IDP as a point of departure or development. The IDP subsequently sets out the vision, needs, priorities, goals and strategies of a municipal council to develop the municipality during its term as part of a long term vision and plan for development (Davids et al 2005: 61).

The purpose of the IDP is to foster more appropriate service delivery by providing a framework for economic and social development within a municipality. It allows service delivery and development to be addressed. The IDP is expected to be a consultative process aimed at involving community participation.

The Indigency Policy / Programme should be understood against the background of local government and the state of poverty in South Africa, particularly urban poverty.

Poverty is explained as the inability of people to meet economic, social and other standards of well-being. Moreover, it occurs when and where people have insufficient resources to provide the minimum necessary to sustain life; that is when they do not have sufficient resources to be able to provide food, water, shelter, clothing or other necessities to sustain life for themselves or their family (Becker 1997:21-2). That includes the inability to afford and access basic municipal services and still be in a position to feed and adequately care for their families.

In the context of this study, “the poor” refers to vulnerable groups including the elderly. The poorest are those who cannot access state assistance designed to provide a social safety net because of institutional failure (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2005:3-4). As a consequence, the economic exclusion of the poor has also led to their exclusion from access to basic services which contributes substantially to their experience of poverty. Poor people in South Africa have a common characteristic of a need to access basic services that will facilitate their productive and healthy engagement in society (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2005:5).

Of special importance to this study is an understanding of *urban poverty* as the study is conducted in an urban area. Urban poverty is seen as one of the biggest challenges facing African countries with about two thirds of the urban population living in communities without adequate water, sanitation and health services (Vam Howe:2005). In addition, Jones and Nelson (1999: 10-15) describe urban poverty as:

- a lack of income where poor families do not earn a regular income and their needs are met with more than just cash inputs.
- a state where the poor have no access to basic education, health, good housing, water, electricity, sewerage, land ownership and secure tenure.

In addition, Stevens, Coupe and Mitlin (2006:1-2) describe urban poverty as especially manifested in expansion of informal settlements characterized by lack of basic services.

Urban poverty amongst the urban black population in South Africa was aggravated by Apartheid policies that entrenched different basic municipal services to the black population (Zegeye and Maxed 2002:15). These policies also affected service delivery within government including local government and can as such be regarded as one of the causes of black urban poverty. The City of Tshwane, like most municipalities, was not an exception; hence it still has the challenge of poverty in its areas. In spite of a change of government, the situation does not seem to have changed much.

Local government, as the third sphere of government, therefore has a constitutional duty to assist the National and Provincial spheres of government in the realization of the above-mentioned rights. At the conference on housing and urban development in 2005, it was again emphasized that urban poverty was the cause of many social ills and threatened the breakup of the social fabric of African communities. The then Deputy President of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma, also stated that the indignity suffered by families living in dire conditions where they have no access to sanitation, water, electricity or any other basic services cannot be ignored (Vam Howe:2005).

Poverty is a fundamental challenge to most municipalities in the country at local government level. The nature of problems varies from one Municipality to the other but there is a common problem of delivering affordable basic services to poor households in line with the constitutional obligations and the vision of inclusive developmental local government (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2005: 4).

Apartheid in South Africa officially came to an end with the democratically held elections in 1994, and in its wake left a population with vast inequalities across racial groups. Using a poverty line of R322 in 2002, at least 58% of all South Africans and 68% of the African population was living in poverty in 1995 while poverty was virtually non-existent for whites. By the year 2000 more than two thirds (1.8 million) of Africans in S.A lived in poverty and more than 40% (2.3 million) lived on less than \$2/day (Hoogeveen and Ozler in Borat and Kanbur 2006:59-88). The present SA government has been accused of biased distribution of services as access is given to the wealthy and the poor are given last choice and often the services are more costly than in wealthy areas (Jones and Nelson 1999: 22-23).

Unemployment and low wages made it difficult for poor people to meet their obligations to pay for services. This can be said about the plight of older persons whose pensions are often absorbed by municipal service payments. In the 1994 era, rent and service payment boycotts were rife but the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) tried to instil the culture of payment for services and encourage government to provide services.

The South African government has made different policy attempts to address poverty which include the Constitution, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy (GEAR) and the development of local government structures (Davids et al. 2005:44).

The RDP was aimed at improving the quality of life for all South Africans and in particular the most poor and marginalized sections of our communities. It was aimed at providing every person with adequate facilities for health by establishing national water and sanitation programmes. However, the RDP states that financial assistance to ensure households have access to efficient appliances is essential. The RDP attempts to meet basic needs and release previously suppressed economic and human potential in urban and rural areas. It aims to eradicate poverty (ANC 1994:15 and 29).

In addition, GEAR presented a framework of growth and job creation stimulation. When GEAR was instituted prices were stable, spending levels in education and pension programmes were adequate and access to basic services and infrastructure improved significantly. While substantial progress was made in areas of access to safe water and sanitation as well as access to old age pension programmes, the government's macroeconomic strategy failed to generate the projected growth and create enough jobs to bring down the high level of unemployment. However, it could not be assumed that substantial reduction in poverty would follow. It was believed that SA might take another 10 years from the year 2000 to reduce poverty in poor households. In reality the subsequent failure of the economy to grow and create jobs since 2000 gave rise to rising unemployment and poverty (Hoogeveen & Ozler in Borat and Kanbur, 2006: 59- 68).

Towards the end of the 1990s it became clear that due to pervasive poverty and unemployment, a substantial part of the population was being denied access to basic services, including older persons living on pensions. In 2003, an AfriCity summit was held in Cameroon where the rights of African communities to access to clean water, energy, health and education was discussed as it was viewed as vital to the improvement of the lives of inhabitants as well as increasing community productivity (Vam Howe 2005:68). This subsequently gave impetus to the development of the Indigency Policy / Programme.

Meikle (in Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002:37) argues that the quality of life of poor people is influenced by what the local governments do or do not do. As a result, the relationship between the poor and local government is crucial to their wellbeing because local government through their functions provides an environment conducive for economic growth. The development of structures and local government as third sphere of government has an important role to play in the realization of people's rights. The Municipal Structures Act 1998 and the South African Constitution 1996 (Sections 156 and 229) mention the following functions and powers of the Municipality namely; Integrated Development Plan, supply of water and electricity, sanitation and cremation among others. These functions and powers were confirmed by Idasa (2006: 2-3) where

they cited the local government's responsibility as provision of primary health care , sanitation, water and electricity to the poor while making sure service providers remain financially viable.

As a social worker working with the elderly in Atteridgeville I often observed how the older persons were really struggling to survive because 70% of their old age pensions are spent on the payment of municipal services and while they still had to maintain their families with the remaining 30%. In trying to explore how these families can be assisted, I got to know of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Municipality of Tshwane through a social worker working at the Municipality.

The Indigency Policy / Programme is explained as the measure by which local government provides free basic services to the poorest of the poor as a basic social package with the aim of alleviating poverty (Pillay 2003: 6-9). The introduction of Indigent Policies / Programmes was to ensure that households with little or no income can access basic municipal services.

The Indigency Policy / Programme is aimed at including those currently excluded from access to basic services through provision of a social safety net. The poor have a right to basic socio-economic and environmental rights and also rights to basic services and public right to a healthy and sustainable environment. The Indigency Policy / Programme's objective is to lay out a plan for how these rights might be achieved through the activities of local government. This involves working out how the needs of poor people who cannot afford to pay for services can be addressed in a manner that does not challenge the overall integrity or sustainability of the financial or natural resource base (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2004:1-15).

The social package of the Indigency Policy / Programme from the local government includes: water supply, sanitation, refuse removal, basic energy and assisting with the housing process. Due to resource constraints, municipalities are prevented from delivering a wider range of services free to the indigents. This lack of capacity in

municipalities is acknowledged as a major factor influencing the occurrence of poverty in South Africa (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2005:10–15).

The objectives of the Indigency policy are explained as follows:

Gaining access

This simply means that the indigents must have physical access to basic municipal services (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2004:15). It also means the municipalities should ensure that funds are available for the programme.

According to the manager consulted, Tshwane Municipality has already indicated that the programme is sustained by allocation of a budget by the Municipality and assistance from Treasury. The manager also indicated that jobs have been created and there was also skills development as a result of the Indigency programme (Modise, 2008).

Maintaining access

Services provided must be properly functional in the long term if the service is to have the desired impact in improving the lives of the indigent (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2004:15-6). The Tshwane Municipality has ensured that the services will be available on a long term basis by employing 14 social workers who will work exclusively on the programme. The appointment of the advisory committee also attests to this. The employment of Indigents' children by the Municipality is also to ensure they have access to basic necessities.

Targeting the poor

The Municipality needs to be *financially viable* and this simply means that it has to have the necessary finances to sustain the programme (Department of Provincial and Local Government 2004:15).

On the 27 November 2003, the Tshwane Municipality officially recommended and approved the integration of the Indigency Policy / Programme and basic services package as part of its poverty alleviation programme (Pillay, 2003 and Modise, 2008).

The programme initially allowed for indigents to be registered for 6 months. The policy was subsequently amended in the 2007/8 financial year. As title deed holders of residences, older persons were now entitled to register as indigents for life in the programme and for other registered indigents the period of registration was extended from six to 24 months.

My encounter with the introduction of the Indigency Policy /Programme while working with the older persons and during the interview with the Municipal Manager was that it was fraught with problems in the Tshwane Municipality such as:

- From working with the elderly it seemed that the Indigency Programme was introduced very quickly just before the 2004 elections. The social workers working with older persons were expected to assist elderly persons in accessing the service (Indigency Programme) without the necessary training or expertise. Municipal officials responsible for the programme also seemed to have limited knowledge of it at that stage.
- When the programme was initially implemented from 2000 to 2003 in the Tshwane Municipality, there were no policy documents and no clear guidelines setting out what the programme was about. We, as social workers, who were expected to encourage and assist older persons to register had to do so without any guidelines. It was often not clear what criteria were used to register people as indigents.
- The indigents were informed that they would be on programme for six months and after the six month period some people remained on the programme indefinitely.

- At a later stage job creation projects were introduced by the Municipality with preference given to people on the Indigency Policy / Programme. However, such programmes excluded older persons at that stage.
- Even though the indigency programme of the Municipality was aimed at alleviating poverty, my observation was that instead it seemed to have created problems for older persons, as demands by family members increased on older persons.
- The Indigency Policy / Programme originally seemed to be an isolated relief effort. After registering, the indigent were not linked or referred to available poverty relief programmes so they remained dependent and were not assisted to become independent and de-register as indigents. But since 2008, the Municipality has been striving to link it to other comprehensive poverty alleviation programmes provided by other departments such as Department of Social Development and Department of Public Works (EPWP) in order to improve on their policy / programme since it was still in its infancy. A decade has passed since the inception of the Indigency Programme but there is little indication that municipalities have achieved their aim of relieving poverty.

The researcher can deduce that even though the programme aimed to bring some relief, it also brought challenges especially for older persons as title deed holders of property.

Stevens et al (2006:4-5, 20) state that the only route to alleviating urban poverty was to adopt integrated urban development where a project/ programme undertakes several activities in a coordinated way thus increasing the linkage between local authorities and poor communities. Furthermore, Choguill (in Lane 2006:34) states that urban policy should be developed in the battle against urban poverty. He states, however, that policy alone will not solve the poverty problem but at least if adequately designed and implemented, urban policy can contribute partially to a solution to the plight of the poor

urban population.

De Beer (2008:13-20) describes the state of the Indigency Policy / Programme in the Tshwane Municipality newsletter as follows:

- The Tshwane Municipality is in the process of developing programmes that will support economically productive indigent family members. The aim is to reduce the number of indigent families through skills development, the Expanded Public Works Programme and other poverty reduction strategies in partnership with NGOs, businesses and training institutions.
- The Municipality has approved the appointment of 17 social workers who will be responsible for the registration, evaluation and exit project of the Indigency Programme.
- It is also stated in the newsletter that the ICD (Integrated Community Development) planned to increase the number of indigents and also extend the programme to include households earning less than R1700 pm.
- De Beer (2008:20) indicates that the Municipality will link emergency services to the Indigency Support Programme by rendering emergency medical and ambulance standby service to vulnerable areas.
- The appointment of the advisory committee attests to the Municipality's commitment to the Indigency Policy / Programme's implementation. The employment of indigents' children by the Municipality also ensures the indigent families can access basic necessities.

With reference to the Indigency Policy / Programme the following emerged:

- The Centre for Development Support (2002:45) found that there was no research conducted prior to the implementation of the Indigency Policy / Programme.
- Some research on poverty in Tshwane was conducted by Statistics SA commissioned by the Integrated Community Development (ICD) of the Tshwane Municipality before implementing the Indigency Policy / Programme (Erasmus 2004: 17-19).
- During the interview with the manager from Tshwane Municipality it became apparent that no research was conducted around the Indigency Policy/ Programme, especially on how the recipients experience and view /perceive the policy/programme. The research done was only around the poverty level in Tshwane (Modise, 2008).

The above shows a need for some research on the Indigency Policy /Programme.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Problem formulation starts with identifying a researchable problem followed by determining exactly what can be found or achieved by undertaking the study. This refers to the main question /statement in the study that assisted the researcher in gaining more insight into the topic under discussion. The research problem must be as specific as possible to make it operationally viable. (Fouche' in De Vos, Strydom, Fouche`, and Delport 2002:95).

The Indigency Policy / Programme was implemented since 2003 but to date no research has been done to establish the perceptions / views and experiences of poor older persons about it. This warrants a study to gain understanding of the older person's perception /

view and experience of the programme and the researcher's position in working with the elderly provides an opportunity to observe how they survive.

The researcher's social work experience in working with the older persons and her training in the person-centred approach strengthened her need to explore the experiences and perceptions of these indigents. This is in line with a statement that urban poverty can be alleviated through adopting a person-centred approach where institutions must listen to the poor and base their interventions on that. This would help to improve access to services to the poor (Stevens et al 2006: 120 and 142).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

The first step of the research process is deciding on the question. That involves continuously reworking and re-evaluating the question. In coming up with the research question the process is broken down as follows: devising research strategies; establishing the source of question; deciding on types of questions; literature review; determining the ethical issues and human diversity issues in deciding on the question (Marlow 1993:23).

Ensuing from the stated problem, the research question is stated as:

What are the views / perceptions and experiences of the older indigent persons of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality?

The terms **views** and **perceptions** will be used interchangeably in this study.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used Rogers' explanation of experience and perception. Du Toit, Grobler and Schenck (1998:3-7) explain experience from a Rogerian perspective as subjective including needs, behaviour, emotions and values of the person on a conscious and unconscious level. The implication is that experience cannot be determined objectively from outside without engaging the person concerned. To determine the person's experiences, there needs to be dialogue.

Perception is one of the experiences and it refers to how people perceive themselves and their world and how this perception constitutes their reality. In this study, indigent older persons got an opportunity to tell their experiences of the Indigency Policy / Programme from their own perceptions / perspectives.

In pursuance of the research question, the following goal and objectives were formulated.

1.4 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Goals provide the broad indication of what the researcher wishes to attain in his/her research (Mouton and Marais 1996:42). Similarly, Marlow (1993:55) defines a goal as an end product that we strive to obtain. The goal is supported by objectives which are formulated as achievable tasks and are short term.

An objective is more concrete, measurable and speedily attainable one at a time within a certain time-span in order to attain the dream or goal (Fouche` in De Vos et al. 2002:107-8)

The researcher formulated the goal and objectives of the study as follows:

1.4.1 Goal

The goal of this study is to explore the experiences and perceptions of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.

1.4.2 Objectives

The study's objectives were formulated as follows:

- To explore and describe indigent older persons' experience and views / perceptions of the influence of the Indigency Policy / Programme on their lives.
- To explore and describe how the Indigency Policy / Programme and poverty have affected the indigent older persons' lives.
- To explore and describe the indigent older person's perception / view on how the Indigency Policy / Programme can be improved.
- To make recommendations for further improvement of the programme by the Municipality.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Qualitative Research Approach

To achieve the stated goal and objectives, the researcher used/adopted a qualitative research approach that will be exploratory and descriptive in nature in order to address the topic under discussion.

Qualitative research describes and explains a person's life experience, behaviour, interactions, stories and social context without using statistical procedures or quantification (Fossey, Harvey, Mc Dermott and Davidson 2002:717). This links to what the researcher needed to research in this study namely, the experiences and perceptions of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality. In addition, Cresswell (1994) defines a qualitative research study as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a

complete holistic picture formed with words , reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting.

Furthermore, qualitative research focuses on study of human action from the insider's perspective. In qualitative research, respondents' freedom and natural development of action and representation are captured. The respondents have a more open-ended way of giving their views and demonstrate their action. Qualitative research thus describes and seeks understanding as stated by Henning (2004:3-5). In addition, Rubin and Babbie (1997:26) define the qualitative research approach as a method that emphasizes depth of understanding of deeper meanings of human experiences with the aim of generating theoretically richer observation. In the same way, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 270) and Rubin and Babbie (1997:26) suggest that qualitative research has the following characteristics:

- The research occurs in natural settings where human behaviour and events occur and the setting is not controlled. The researcher has to be as non-intrusive as possible and see the world through the eyes of the participants. In the current study the research was conducted in the households of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville.
- The researcher is the primary instrument in data collection. The researcher does field work going to the people to conduct the research. The researcher conducted the research herself and thus became the main instrument in the research process.
- The focus is on participants' perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives. The researcher conducted interviews with participants. She asked the participants to explain their experiences and views of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.
- Meanings and interpretations are negotiated with human data sources. The

information that the researcher gathered from the participants in the study was reduced to a summary report.

- Objectivity and truthfulness are critical to both research traditions. The researcher set her views aside and focus only on what was communicated to her during data collection. The researcher would have to report what was said irrespective of whether the researcher agrees with what was discovered. The researcher subjected the data collected to data verification using Guba`s model as explained in Krefting (1991:216).

1.5.2 Research Design

Mouton and Marais (1996:32) defines a research design as the arrangements of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Therefore, research design refers to the total plan to be utilized to address the study in question. This refers to the research method, research design and method to be used including the population, sample and method of data collection and how the data will be analysed and verified and finally presented.

The researcher used an exploratory and descriptive research designs. Marlow (1993:24) describes the exploratory design as a means of breaking new ground and generating exciting insights into the nature of an issue when little is known about the problem area. It further determines the study`s feasibility and raises questions to be investigated by more extensive studies adding richness and depth to one`s investigation. Furthermore, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 80 – 81) explains exploratory design as that conducted to explore a topic and provide a basic familiarity with the topic. This happens when a new interest or subject of study is relatively new. An exploratory study is done to satisfy the researcher`s curiosity and better understanding ; to test a feasibility of undertaking a more intensive study ; to determine priorities for future studies and to develop new hypotheses about existing phenomena.

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 80 -81) also explains a descriptive design as involving an in-depth description of a specific individual, event or group. It describes situations and events. Marlow (2005: 32 and 333) explains a descriptive research design as providing important fundamental information used to establish and develop social programmes and used as a process of recording and reporting the phenomenon and not primarily concerned with causes.

The study wanted to develop a rough understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the Indigency Policy / Programme by the indigent older person households in Atteridgeville before documenting it as research.

1.5.3 Research Method

The researcher explained who was involved in the study and how the sample was decided on and how the data will be collected, verified and analysed.

1.5.3.1 Population

Welman and Kruger (2001:46) define a population as the study object which may be an individual, group, organisations, human products, events or conditions to which they are exposed. It encompasses the entire collection of cases (units) about which we wish to make a conclusion. The population of this study is the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville registered in the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality identified through Age-In-Action organisation.

1.5.3.2 Sampling

Welman and Kruger (2001:87) define a sample as representative of a population. The process of sampling occurs when a certain number of people / respondents are chosen from the broader population to represent it. In addition, qualitative sampling is concerned with information richness (Fossey et al 2002:726). It means qualitative sampling requires

identification of appropriate participants being those who can best inform the study. It also requires adequate sampling of information sources. It may involve a small number of participants and there is no fixed number of participants necessary. The most important aspect in qualitative research is that sampling continues until themes emerge and patterns recur and there is a point of saturation. The sample is not pre-determined at the beginning of research. However, the process is different with convenience and snowball sampling.

In the study a combination of accidental or convenience sampling and snowball sampling was used to determine the sample. Fossey et al (2002: 726) states that the best strategies for qualitative research are purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Furthermore, Welman and Kruger (2001:62) argue that convenience (availability) sampling relies on the closest and most readily available subjects to constitute the sample for research purposes. They define snowball sampling as a means whereby a few people are approached and those individuals will lead the researcher to other members of same population (Welman and Kruger 2001: 63).

The criteria used to determine who would be included in the sample were the following:

- They had to be residents of Atteridgeville
- They had to be above the age of 60 years and above
- The older person had to be the registered title deed holder of the household.
- They had to be available and willing to participate in the research
- They had to be registered as indigents with the Tshwane Municipality's Indigency Policy / Programme

1.5.3.3 Data Collection

This section outlines the process of data collection and will explain how the researcher went about collecting data through the use of semi-structured interviews.

Data collection in qualitative research is usually in the form of interviews, field notes and reflections (diaries). How data is stored and retrieved is the heart of data management. A storage and retrieval system should be designed prior to actual data collection (Huberman and Miles in De Vos et al 1998:334).

As for the interviews schedule, Rubin and Babbie (2005:292 -294) suggest that researcher must be familiar with the questionnaire and that is attained by studying it carefully, question by question and practicing its usage. They further suggest that the researcher should follow the questions' wording exactly and not try to rephrase the questions; she should record the responses exactly and, where unclear, probe further.

In collecting data, the researcher followed the process described below:

- Preparation for data collection

In preparation for collection of data, the researcher started constructing the research instrument which was the interview schedule, and considered topics and questions to be asked and how she would gain access to prospective participants to prepare them for the interviews.

- Research instrument

The researcher used the semi- structured interviews to collect the data needed in the study. She used an interview schedule (semi-structured) to guide her using face to face questions where the respondents' non- verbal cues were observed. The respondents were given a choice of not answering questions with which they felt uncomfortable about.

Questions focused on biographical issues (e.g. Name, surname, age and addresses); the participants' motivation and expectations for registering for the Indigency Policy / Programme; the impact of the programme on the participants' familial relations; the participants' experience of the programme and the recommendations for the improvement of programme. (Refer to Annexure 2)

- Preparation of research participants

In the study, the researcher used the 2 older persons` organisations (Itireleng Luncheon Club and Atteridgeville Old Age Home) in Atteridgeville that are affiliated to AGE-in-ACTION (formerly SA Council for the Aged) as gate- keepers and asked for permission from the committee of those organisations to address the older persons. If no point of saturation is reached then more participants would be sought with assistance from the other participants to identify others in the community known to them who meet the criteria (snowball sampling). The respondents were contacted weeks beforehand to prepare them for the fact that the researcher was coming to visit and interview them, preferably in their homes and to agree on the date and time of the visit.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Fossey et al (2002: 728) state that information gathered during data collection needs to be recorded in a manner that the researcher will be able to analyse the data. Note taking and voice recording are useful methods but voice recording may be inappropriate at times as respondents fear that they might be identified through their voices and be victimized.

The procedure of data analysis involves first reviewing, identifying and coding the themes that emerged and identifying common themes across all participants and finally bringing them back together into a meaningful relation with each other. In the study the themes and their sub-themes were identified and explained with reference to available literature. At the end these findings were recorded as a report with the conclusions reached and recommendations made. Participants` verbatim reports were used to verify/ justify identified points / themes.

The primary mission of analyzing qualitative data is to look for patterns in data, noting similarities and differences. Qualitative data analysis tends to be inductive than deductive as stated by Marlow (1993:231).

Huberman and Miles (in De Vos et al 1998: 334) indicate that data management is an integral part of data analysis. It consists of the activities aimed at achieving a systematic, coherent manner of data collection, storage and retrieval.

Marshall and Rossman (in De Vos et al 1998: 342-343) explain that qualitative data analysis is done in search of a general statement about relationships between categories of data. Each stage involves data reduction as large volumes of data are reduced to manageable parts. The researcher adopted Marshall and Rossman's approach as explained in De Vos et al (1998:342 -343). The authors identified the following five stages in data analysis:

- Organising the data:

The researcher read through the data repeatedly to become familiar with it.

- Generating categories, themes and patterns:

This involves noting patterns or people chosen to participate. The themes and sub themes are generated from extracts of the interviews.

- Testing emergent hypotheses:

As categories and patterns emerge, the researcher started evaluating the plausibility of developing hypotheses and testing them. This involves evaluating the data for information adequacy, credibility, usefulness and centrality.

- Searching for alternative explanations:

The researcher challenges the pattern that emerged.

- Writing the report:

The researcher summarized and reflected on the complexity of the data and started to interpret data, giving it shape and meaning.

1.7 DATA VERIFICATION

Data verification is explained as involving the checking for biases that can influence the drawing of conclusions (De Vos et al 1998: 351-352). For the purpose of this study, the Guba model was used to explain how data was verified. It should be emphasized that the processes of testing validity and reliability are not applicable in qualitative research though they are relevant in quantitative research (Krefting 1991:214).

Agar and Guba (in Krefting 1991:214-215) state that to fit qualitative research, four aspects of trustworthiness must be used to assess the value of the findings namely: Truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

The applicability of Guba`s model in the study will now be briefly explained. The application of the verification model is discussed under section 2.6 of the study report.

1.7.1 Truth value

Lincoln and Guba (in Krefting 1991) explain the aspect of truth value as asking whether the researcher has established confidence in the truth of the findings for the informants and the context in which the study was undertaken. It establishes how confident the researcher is with the truth based on the research design, informants and context.

In qualitative research, truth value is obtained from discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants, Lincoln and Guba (in Krefting 1991) termed this *credibility*. Sandelowski (in Krefting 1991:216) suggests that a qualitative study is credible when it presents such accurate description or interpretation of human experiences that people who also share that experience would immediately recognize the descriptions. This is the most important criterion for assessment of qualitative research.

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 277) stated that credibility is achieved through the following “procedure”:

- Credibility stays in the field until data saturation occurs.
- It looks for what counts and what does not count.
- Triangulation
- Peer debriefing: Peer is outside the context of study but have a general understanding of the nature of study.

The researcher adopted the peer debriefing / *examination* approach where there was continuous consultation with the supervisor. During these consultations, the researcher got an opportunity to discuss the research process and findings. This was a way for the researcher to ensure honesty. Reframing of questions and repetition of questions on different occasions also increased credibility.

1.7.2 Applicability

Krefting (1991:216) defines applicability as referring to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings or to other groups. Applicability is not seen as relevant to qualitative research because its purpose is to describe a particular phenomenon or experience, not to generalize it to others. Guba (in Krefting, 1991) refers to *transferability* as a criterion for applicability.

Babbie and Mouton (2001:277) explains transferability as the extent to which findings can be applied in other context or with other respondents. Transferability is characterized by the following strategies: thick descriptions and purposive sampling. However, this criterion is not relevant to this study as no generalization can be made with findings derived from the study, but sufficient data will be present to allow comparison with others.

1.7.3 Consistency

Krefting (1991:216) and Babbie and Mouton (2001:278) explain the third criterion of consistency as demonstrating whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with the same subjects in similar contexts. The key is to learn from participants and not to control them. Guba (in Krefting, 1991) termed this *dependability*.

1.7.4 Neutrality

Sandelowski (in Krefting 1991:216) explains neutrality as freedom from bias in the research procedures and results. It refers to the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives. Some researchers shift the emphasis of neutrality to the researcher rather than looking at the neutrality of data and suggested that *confirmability* should be the criterion of neutrality (Lincoln and Guba in Krefting 1991:217; Babbie and Mouton 2001:278). This is, however, only possible once truth value and applicability are achieved.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the purpose of the study, the researcher has taken into consideration the following ethical issues:

1.8.1 Harm to subjects / participants

The participants were informed thoroughly beforehand about potential impact of the study. The Municipality will be informed about the findings and recommendations but the participants will not be identified.

1.8.2 Confidentiality and management of information (voluntary)

The researcher made sure the respondents are free to participate. Even though the results would be given to the Municipality, no names or identifying particulars were used, and a summarized report on study findings and recommendations was done. The answer sheets would be destroyed after the completion of the research by the researcher (Refer to the consent form as per Annexure 1).

According to Strydom (in De Vos et al 1998: 28) confidentiality and management of information refers to the handling of information in a confidential manner. It is seen as a continuation of privacy which refers to agreements between persons that limit others' access to private information. It is thought that confidentiality implies that the researcher, and possibly a few members of his staff, should be aware of the identity of participants and this commitment should be made. The research report used codes instead of releasing information about individuals that make them identifiable. The respondents were informed as to who will have access to the data and to what extent.

1.8.3 Informed consent

This implies that all possible information on the goal of the study, possible advantages and dangers to respondents must be exposed and the credibility of the researcher was rendered to potential subjects. Participants must be legally and psychologically competent to give consent (e.g. other family members were encouraged to be present) and must be aware of their liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any time. It ensures the full knowledge and co-operation of subjects while also resolving any tension, insecurity and resistance of the subjects (De Vos et al 1998:25-26).

1.9 VALUE OF STUDY

The potential value of the study for social work is as follows:

- it will help improve the quality of lives of the people

- motivate them to be active participants in their development as a community
- help improve standard of living of the people.
- the inputs will assist the Municipality in their evaluation of the programme.

1.10 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The key concepts in this study which need to be defined to ensure clarity are as follows:

Indigency Policy / Programme

The Indigency Programme is a programme on local government level according to which poor people, who own or rent property and where the family income is not more than two state pensions, are given an opportunity to register as indigents to be able to access basic municipal services.

The limited free basic municipal services refer to electricity, water and refuse removals which are given for a period of six months, and arrears on accounts which are written off on condition that recipients keep their monthly payments up to date after the period of registration (City of Tshwane, 2010:3).

[The Indigency Policy is just the guiding document to the implementation of the Indigency Programme of Municipalities.]

Basic Municipal Services

Basic municipal services mean a municipal service that is necessary to ensure an acceptable and reasonable quality of life which, if not provided would endanger public health and safety or the environment. The Tshwane Municipality refers to basic municipal services as water, electricity, sanitation; refuse removal and burials (City of

Tshwane, 2010:3).

Poverty

Poverty is multidimensional and in general refers to the inability of people to meet economic, social and other standards of well-being (Becker 1997: 2). However, Ruggles (in Sullivan 2003: 155) argues that there is no completely satisfactory definition of poverty but they define it as the uneven distribution of available resources and not necessarily just a deprivation of resources.

For the purpose of the study, poverty refers to the inability of people to afford basic municipal services that are crucial for their daily survival.

Indigent Older Persons

The researcher refers to indigent older persons (60 years and above) as those registered as indigents (poorest of the poor) by the Municipality who are the sole providers or the main regular financial contributors from their pensions to the household and are the title deed holders of their homes.

1.11 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

This dissertation is divided into five Chapters. Chapter 1 contains introduction and problem formulation, research question, goal and objectives of study and data analysis and verification. Chapter 2 is about the research methodology where a description of the application of the qualitative research process is given explaining what has been done in terms of plans in Chapter one. Chapter 3 describes the research findings and literature control, with presentation of themes and sub-themes and biographical analysis of participants. Chapter 4 contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this Chapter, the background to the research, the research problem and question were introduced. The Chapter also highlighted how the data was collected, analysed and verified. The next Chapter will explain how this was actually conducted.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter of the research report the researcher provided a research plan outlining the research methodology she executed for investigating the topic under discussion. In this Chapter of the report a description is provided about how the qualitative research process was applied in the study to get an understanding of the Indigency Policy / Programme as perceived / viewed and experienced by indigent older persons in Atteridgeville (west of Pretoria) located within the City of Tshwane Municipality.

2.2 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

At the outset of the study the research goal was formulated together with the following objectives:

2.2.1 Goal

As already mentioned, the goal of this study is to explore the experiences and perceptions of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.

2.2.2 Objectives

The study's objectives were formulated as follows:

- To explore and describe indigent older persons' experience and views / perceptions of the influence of the Indigency Policy / Programme on their lives.

- To explore and describe how the Indigency Policy / Programme and poverty have affected the indigent older persons` lives.
- To explore and describe the indigent older person`s perception / view on how the Indigency Policy / Programme can be improved.
- To make recommendations for further improvement of the programme by the Municipality.

2.3. THE RESEARCH APPROACH APPLIED

With the stated goal and objectives in mind, the following research approach and design was chosen to assist in achieving the goal and objectives.

2.3.1 Research approach

As the study focused on gaining an understanding of the experiences and views / perceptions of beneficiaries of the Indigency Policy / Programme, which involved the meaning that each individual attached to their experience, the qualitative research approach as outlined in Chapter one (section 1.5) was followed.

The following discussion describes how the qualitative approach was applied including its characteristics as explained by Rubin and Babbie (1997):

- The research occurred in natural settings where human behaviour and events occurred, namely, the households of indigent older person`s in Atteridgeville.
- The researcher was the primary instrument in data collection and conducted all the interviews herself.
- The focus of the research was on participants` perceptions / views and

experiences of the Indigency Policy / Programme. The researcher listened to their stories and interpretations of the situation.

- The researcher tried to set aside her views but was not always successful.

2.3.2 Research Design

As explained in Chapter one (section 1.5.2.), an exploratory and descriptive research design was chosen in order to develop an initial rough understanding of the experiences and perceptions / views of the Indigency Policy / Programme by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville.

2.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

To conduct a study, a population was needed as not all people could be involved in study. The population somehow puts limits to study units to be used.

2.4.1 Population

As already indicated in section 1.5.3.1, Welman and Kruger (2001:46) described a population as the study object which may be an individual, group, organisations, human products or events or conditions to which they are exposed. It encompasses the entire collection of cases (units) about which we wish to make a conclusion.

The population in this study was all indigent older persons in Atteridgeville registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality and who are clients of the Non Governmental Organisation (Age-In-Action) that renders services to older persons in Atteridgeville.

My focus area was Atteridgeville because the researcher lives and works there and had been employed by Age-In-Action rendering social work services to older persons in Pretoria, including Atteridgeville from 2001 to 2006. This background made it easy to visit the respondents late in the afternoons and over weekends. The researcher is also familiar with the area.

Atteridgeville is a township located South West of Tshwane Central Business District (CBD) and is bordered by Schurweberg to the North and the South African Police Services (SAPS) dog training school in the East (<http://atteridgeville.com>).

According to Erasmus (2004), Atteridgeville had a population of 200 000 residents of which 88 500 were older persons. During this period the statistics of Atteridgeville's older persons was 4.5% as compared to the 15.3% of greater Tshwane. It has 7 wards that determine how it is demarcated but has four main sectors.

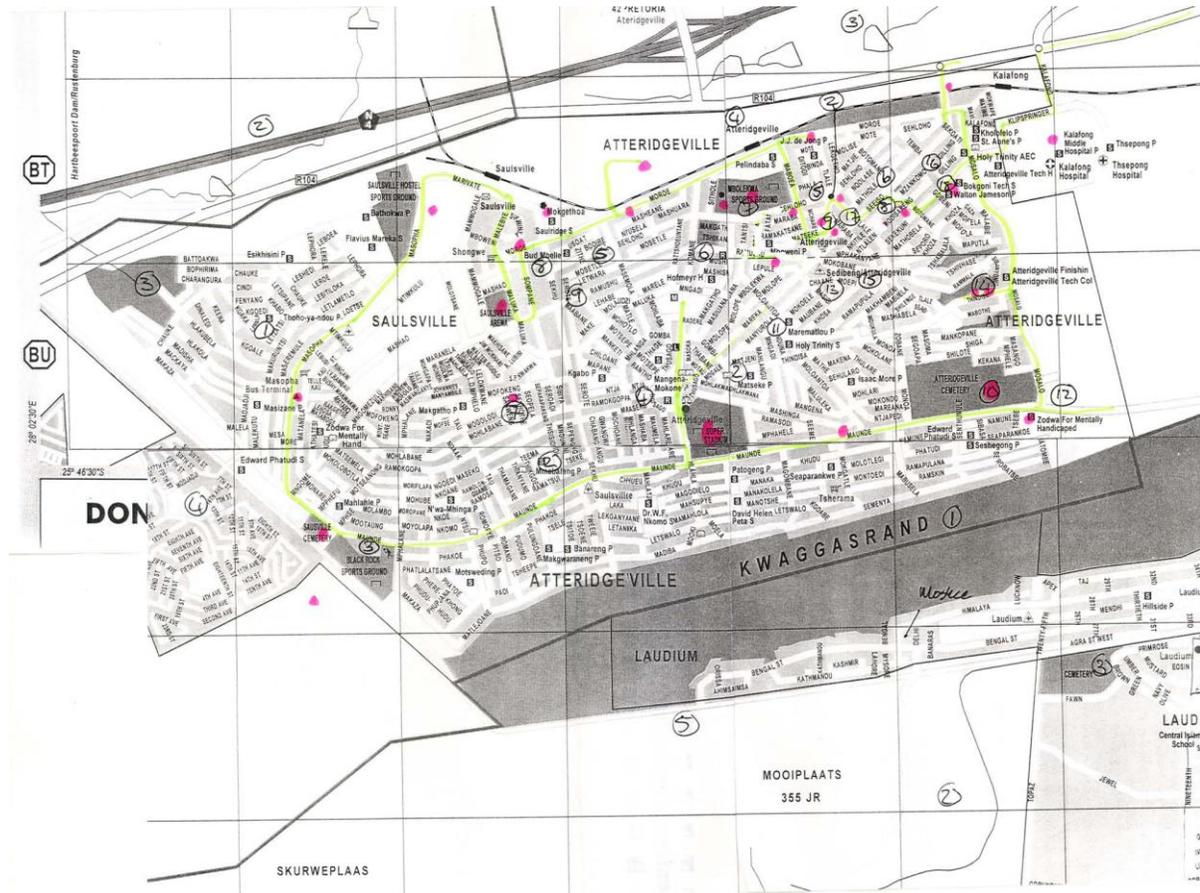
Atteridgeville was established in 1939 and named after a former City Council member, Mrs M P Atteridge. A total of 1533 houses were built between 1940 and 1949 to accommodate people removed from Marabastad, Newclare, Bantule, Lady Selbourne and Hove's Ground (www.atteridgeville.com/ SA townships).

[The cultural differences of these people led to their being located in culturally/ ethnic segregated areas when they arrived in Atteridgeville. The sections currently named sectors were named as follows: Selbourne Side was for Shangaans, Zulus and Xhosas (Sector 2); Matebeleng was for all Ndebele groups including Sothos (Sector 4); Oudstad was for all others especially those who had arrived first (sector 3 which now includes newly developed houses) and lastly sector 1 is the informal sector (e.g. Brazzaville, Phomolong and Vergenoeg).]

Below (Refer to figure 2.1) is the map of Atteridgeville which highlights the different sections / areas and how they are demarcated. It aims to give the reader the opportunity to get to know the area and its highlighted resources like stadiums, cemetery, hospitals, and

houses including the streets and main routes and schools (www.up.ac.za/dspace/bitstream//226/673/ar001ms.vw0060.pdf).

FIGURE 2.1: MAP OF ATTERIDGEVILLE



2.4.2 Sampling

In this study a combination of accidental or convenience sampling and snowball sampling was used to select the sample as explained in section 1.5.3.2.

In the study, the researcher made use of the 2 older people's organisations in Atteridgeville (Itireleng Luncheon Club and Atteridgeville Old Age Home through the Organisation, (Age-In-Action) under whose auspices they fall with permission of the committee of those organisations she was able to get participants. Furthermore, they were

also asked to identify other possible participants known to them in the community who met the criteria (snowball sampling) for the study.

The researcher contacted the two organisations (Itireleng Luncheon Club and Atteridgeville Old Age Home) to verify the list that she had obtained from Age-in-Action. The researcher was able to contact some of the participants and the others were found through other participants (snowballing). The participants' selection criteria were discussed in section 1.5.3.2.

In terms of preparation of data collection the researcher did the following:

- Preparation for data collection

The researcher first prepared by verifying the list from Age-In-Action and then she drafted the consent form (Annexure 1) and took it along for participants to sign before their interviews. The researcher then arranged dates and times for interviews at the participants' homes, at times convenient to them. This meant that the older persons were in many ways in control of the interviews and this also prepared the researcher psychologically.

- Preparation of research instrument

The researcher prepared the list of questions used (Annexure 2). The researcher familiarized herself with the questions by rehearsing beforehand and checking their relevance with her study supervisor until it was finalized. The researcher used face to face semi-structured interviews using the questions where the respondents' non-verbal cues were also observed. The respondents were given a choice not to answer questions with which they felt uncomfortable.

- Preparation of participants

The participants were contacted 2 weeks beforehand to prepare them for the visits and make arrangements in terms of dates and times. While at their homes the researcher explained the whole process to the older persons telling them why the

research was being done, showing them a copy of the consent form, checking the language preferred during interviews and telling them about feedback plans.

Many of the older persons are still very traditional in their customs and courtesy demanded that these customs had to be respected. As a younger person, the researcher had to wait until they were ready to be interviewed. They all had a great need to talk about their life experiences because the researcher had previously been the social worker of many of them (An example is what happened during interviews 2 and 3 where the researcher had to help her clean and when in interview 2 where there was family abuse and in one interview where the researcher had to take participant to the Municipal Social Worker).

The issue of recording the interviews was discussed and most were uncomfortable with the idea of being recorded as they had been used before by people posing as municipal officials just before the elections, so their level of trust was still shaken. It was agreed that note taking would be done.

As regards the interview schedule, Rubin and Babbie (2005:292-294) stated that the following guidelines must be considered:

The researcher should familiarize herself with the interview questions by studying them carefully, question by question and practicing their usage before the interviews. The researcher should follow the wording of the questions exactly and not rephrase them.

During the collection of data, challenges were encountered that were not foreseen such as, duration of interviews was longer than anticipated, as translation took a long time and the older persons wanted to explain their personal situations; at times the participants got tired and lost interest and this led to some questions not being fully answered by them; the unavailability of the researcher and, at times, of the respondents, delayed the process.

The other unforeseen development in data collection was an unplanned conversation with a social worker in the Municipality who works with the Indigency Policy / Programme who shared her experience and frustrations regarding the programme. She asked to remain anonymous. The information she shared will be incorporated as supporting comments in the discussion of the findings.

In some of the interviews the researcher started in the role as a researcher but often the role shifted in accordance with circumstances encountered during the interviews.

In one interview the researcher assumed the role of the carer in interview no. 2 and then had to give advice/ advisor (Interview no.3) when the researcher found the old lady in a state of distress as the carer had not arrived. The researcher had to first help her clear up and then conducted the interview.

However, this did not affect the quality of data as interviews were recorded as notes memorized and summary of impressions written. The researcher conducted interviews using questions from the from interview schedule.

At each interview, the researcher had a pen, book (for notes) and a copy of the questions and the consent form. The participants, who could read, read the consent forms while with others the researcher had to read and explain the contents to them which they then signed. None of them consented to having the interview tape recorded but agreed to note taking for data verification for the researcher later.

2.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis process was explained in section 1.6. In the study the themes and sub-themes were identified and explained and contrasted with available literature. At the end these findings are recorded as a report. The participants` verbatim responses were used to verify / justify points / themes identified during the discussion of findings in the next Chapter.

The researcher adopted the Marshall and Rossman approach as explained in De Vos et al. (1998:342-343). According to Marshall and Rossman qualitative data analysis is done in search of a general statement about relationships between categories of data. Each stage of data involves data reduction as a large volume of data is reduced to manageable parts. They identified the five stages in data analysis, but in this study only the following three were used:

- Organising the data

The researcher had to repeatedly read through the data to become familiar with it. The researcher used note taking and extracts from interviews.

- Generating categories, themes and patterns

This involves noting patterns or people chosen to participate. The themes were generated from extracts of the interviews. Themes and sub themes were identified. These were placed in a table (Refer to table 2), followed by a narrative presentation which included verbatim extracts from interviews with a literature control as comment (Refer to Chapter 3).

- Writing the report

The researcher summarized and reflected on the complexity of the data and started to interpret data, giving it shape and meaning. The researcher consolidated all data analyzed and then drew conclusions and made recommendations which she put it in a form of a report (Refer to Chapter 4).

2.6 METHOD OF DATA VERIFICATION

Data verification involves checking for biases that can influence the drawing of conclusions of De Vos et al (1998: 351 -352). For the purpose of the study, the researcher utilized Guba`s model for verification of data collected as follows:

2.6.1 Truth Value

To obtain truth value as described by Krefting (1991:216) and as explained in Section 1.7.1, the researcher adopted the peer *examination method*. The researcher had continuous monthly consultation with her supervisor and during these consultations the researcher had an opportunity to discuss the research process and findings. This helped the researcher to be honest about what really happened as, at times when questions were asked by the supervisor for clarification, the researcher would recall the interview and remember little things that happened during the interview that she might otherwise have overlooked.

2.6.2 Consistency

Krefting (1991:126) explains the criterion of consistency as being whether the findings would be consistent if the inquiry were replicated with same subjects in similar contexts. The key is to learn from participants and not control them. Guba (in Krefting 1991:126) termed this dependability.

The researcher argues that the findings could yield almost same findings if the same study and same participants were used but it would depend on the period that would have elapsed between the current study and another. It would depend on changes effected by the Municipality after going through the recommendations of the study.

2.6.4 Neutrality

Sandelowski (in Krefting 1991:127) explains neutrality as freedom from bias in research procedures and results. It refers to the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives.

In this study the strategy utilized by the researcher was that of *reflexivity* which refers to the assessment of the influence of the researcher's own background, perceptions and interests on qualitative research process. The rationale behind the study was also influenced by the researcher's background of working with older persons and by pure personal interest.

The researcher's motivation for the study was influenced by the researcher's previous experience of working with older persons and frustrations with the Indigency Policy /Programme when she was expected to market it amongst older persons without being given clear guidelines and policy outlines.

The researcher's role shifts to that of carer and advisor also influenced the length of time involved in interviews. In addition, the researcher's familiarity with cultural customs and some expectations had a positive influence on the study.

2.7 CONCLUSION :

In pursuance of achieving the research goal, practicalities were addressed such as the discussion of the research approach, research design, and method of data collection, data analysis and verification. The findings are expanded more in Chapter 3.

A qualitative research approach adopting an exploratory and descriptive research design was utilized; data was collected by means of interviews and analyzed and themes, sub-themes and categories were identified and are explored later in Chapter 3. Guba's model was used for data verification and Marshall and Rossman's model in De Vos et al. (1998:342 -343) for data analysis.

Availability sampling and snowball sampling were used to get a representative sample of indigent older persons even though there was not a fixed number of participants pre-planned but the principle process of saturation was applied. The final number of nine participants was used in the study as a representative of the sample to a point where saturation was reached.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Some background on the Indigency Programme, the research question, goal and objectives were formulated and explained in Chapter One and executed as described in Chapter Two. This Chapter focuses on the findings of the study. It includes the presentation and discussion of the biographical profile of participants and the findings of the study are presented in tabular and narrative format. The discussion of the themes includes a literature control in which data is compared or contrasted with existing literature or knowledge.

To answer the research question: What are views / perceptions and experiences of the older indigent persons of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality, the researcher conducted nine interviews with indigent older persons from Atteridgeville on the Indigent Policy / Programme.

3.2 BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The biographic profile was mainly compiled from the participants' responses to the following questions:

- What is your name and surname?
- Where do you live?
- What is your main language?
- What is your marital status?
- How many people are there in your household?

To ensure anonymity of participants, alphabetical letters were used as codes in the table and the ensuing narrative. The data on participants is presented in the following table

Table 3.1: Biographical profile of participants:

Partici- pants	Age	Gender	Sector	Educational level	Marital status	Period on Indigency Programme	Number of occupants in household
A	78	F	2	Std 6	Widower	2005	Daughter
B	82	F	1	Never been to school	Single	2005	Alone
C	65	F	3	Std 5	Single	2003	Alone
E	76	M	2	Teacher	Widow	2005	2 paying tenants
F	72	M	4	Std 6	Married	2003	Partner & 1 paying tenant
G	69	F	1	Std 6	Widower	2004	Alone
H	78	M	3	Teacher	Separated	2001	3 grandchildr en
I	81	F	3	Std 5	Single	2001	Alone
J	79	F	4	Std 4	Single	2005	1 paying tenant

The Table above indicates that participants` ages ranged from 65 to 82 years; there were seven female and three male participants who resided in all four different sectors of Atteridgeville; the participants` educational backgrounds varied from never having been to school to those with tertiary education.

The participants` living arrangements varied as four living alone; one lived with a spouse and had one paying tenant; one participant had two paying tenants; one had three grandchildren living with him and one lived with her daughter. It can be concluded that most participants lived alone, three had tenants and others lived with extended family members. The tenants contribute financially to the households as they pay for accommodation.

The gender ratio was representative of the population where there were more females than males in the older persons group. The participants were from all four sectors of Atteridgeville making this a geographically representative sample.

3.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

As stated in Chapter 1 (Section 1.5.3.2) during the process of data collection, semi-structured interviews were used as a guide to the discussions on the participants' experiences and perceptions of the Indigency Programme. From the participants' answers to the set questions (refer to Annexure 1) and the resultant processes of data analysis by the researcher, the following themes, sub-themes and categories emerged:

- Theme 1: Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Programme
- Theme 2: The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to register for and remain registered for the Indigency Programme
- Theme 3: The effects of the Indigency Programme as experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville who were registered for the Indigency Programme
- Theme 4: Perceptions / views of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville about the Indigency Programme
- Theme 5: Suggestions and recommendations by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville for improvement of the Indigency Programme

The themes, sub-themes and categories are presented in the following Table:

Table 3.2: The experiences and perceptions of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville of the Indigency Programme of the Tshwane Municipality:

<p>THEME 1 : EXPERIENCES OF THE INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE REGARDING BEING INFORMED ABOUT THE INDIGENCY PROGRAMME</p>	
<p>Sub-theme 1.1: Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Programme before registration</p>	
<p>Sub-theme 1.2: Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Programme after registration</p>	<p>Category 1.2.1: Being informed after registration</p>
	<p>Category 1.2.2: Not being informed after registration</p>
<p>THEME 2 : THE MOTIVATION OF INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE TO REGISTER FOR AND REMAIN REGISTERED FOR THE INDIGENCY PROGRAMME</p>	

Sub-theme 2.1: The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to register for the Indigency programme before registration	Category 2.1.1: To have arrear accounts written off
	Category 2.1.2: To be able to meet their accounts in future
	Category 2.1.3: To be increasingly financially independent because of the assistance through the Indigency Programme
Sub-theme 2.2: The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to remain registered for the Indigency Programme	Category 2.2.1: Initial positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Programme
	Category 2.2.2: Continued positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Programme
	Category 2.2.3: Mixed experiences of being registered for the Indigency Programme
<p>THEME 3 : THE EFFECTS OF THE INDIGENCY PROGRAMME AS EXPERIENCED BY THE INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE WHO WERE REGISTERED FOR THE INDIGENCY PROGRAMME</p>	
Sub-theme 3.1 : The positive effects, benefits, advantages and gains experienced by the	Category 3.1.1: Increased affordability of municipal account
	Category 3.1.2: Limited free municipal services

indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while on the Indigency Programme	Category 3.1.3: Free installation of electricity meters
Sub-theme 3.2 : The disadvantages, problems and frustrations experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while on the Indigency	Category 3.2.1: No support from Municipality when problems arose
	Category 3.2.2: Abuse by family members of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville
THEME 4 : PERCEPTIONS / VIEWS OF INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE ABOUT THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME	
Sub-theme 4.1 It was used to gain votes for the municipal elections [political opportunism]	
Sub-theme 4.2 The Indigency Programme was abused by community members	
THEME 5 : SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE TO IMPROVE THE INDIGENCY PROGRAMME	
Sub-theme 5.1: Active involvement	

and availability of municipal social workers to assist with problems experienced by indigent older persons with Indigency Programme	
Sub-theme 5.2: Continuous monitoring of users of the programme to avoid abuse	
Sub-theme 5.3: Improved communication from Municipality to the community	Category 5.3.1: Municipal newsletter distributed with municipal accounts
	Category 5.3.2 : Smaller [ward] community meetings

3.4 NARRATIVE OF THE FINDINGS:

In the following section, the above themes are presented as a narrative with direct quotes from the transcripts of the interviews and a literature control where themes are compared and contrasted with the existing body of knowledge.

The discussion is in pursuance of answering the research question: What are views / perceptions and experiences of the older indigent persons of the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality?

3.4.1 THEME 1:

EXPERIENCES OF THE INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE REGARDING BEING INFORMED ABOUT THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME

The answers to the following questions gave rise to this theme:

How did you get to know about the Indigency Programme before you registered?

Are you aware of the changes effected on this Indigency Programme since you registered?

On a closer look at responses by participants to the afore-mentioned questions, it was decided to divide the theme into the following sub-themes, namely:

- Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Programme before registration
- Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Programme after registration

Sub-theme 1.1:

Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Policy / Programme before registration

The following responses by participants disclose how and from whom the participants acquired knowledge about the programme before registration:

'' I was informed by my councillor about the Indigency Programme. '' [At a meeting]

'' It was explained in the municipal newsletter [sent with accounts] but I also asked when I went to the offices to register. The guy who was helping me explained clearly to me. ''

'' We were informed at the pension pay point that it will benefit us if we register. ''

“I was informed at an event of older persons organized by City of Tshwane, Social Development in October that year. ”

“The municipal official explained to us. the day I accompanied Ms R. Ms R had a problem. I got an understanding of how it works.”

The above storylines show how and by whom the participants were informed about the Indigency Programme before registration. They show how the Municipality fulfilled its responsibility of informing and educating the community on the programme before registration through municipal newsletters, municipal officials, at community events and at pension pay-points.

The importance of understanding and knowing about the Indigency Policy / Programme and the expectations of applicants is crucial since it enabled them to make informed decisions. Furthermore, these storylines also confirmed the recommendation of the Indigency Policy Support Report which stipulates that the Municipality has an important responsibility to inform their constituencies of Council’s policies through appropriate existing Municipal structures such as ward committees (Centre for Development Support 2002:16). This confirms the City of Tshwane policy document which states the importance of explaining the policy to applicants by the Health and Social Development department to ensure they understand its contents (City of Tshwane 2010:7).

Sub-theme 1.2:

Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Policy / Programme after registration

This sub-theme was divided into two categories, namely:

- Being informed about the Indigency Policy / Programme after registration
- Not being informed about the Indigency Policy / Programme after registration

Category 1.2.1:

Being informed about the Indigency Policy/Programme after registration:

The following responses by the participants and summaries of dialogue indicate how they remained informed after registration:

[A participant who is also registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme comments on his role of informing people about the Indigency Policy / Programme.]

“I am the co-coordinator of a lot of projects in the community, including older person groups and youth. I always preach about available resources in the community so most have registered and when I get to know of something I tell them. I invite them to community meetings.”

“Yes my contact with the councillor and this caregiver gets me updated information. I do go to community meetings when I am well but failure to go to meetings; I get information at the project.”

“Yes .The public meetings are not enough and they are mostly at night and we cannot go”.

Category 1.2.2:

Not being informed about the Indigency Policy/Programme after registration

The following response by a participant and summary of the dialogue indicate how some were not informed [updated] after registration

“No we heard nothing except from councillors when they were canvassing for the elections. That is the only time they knew we existed.”

These storylines indicate that the process of keeping the indigents [registrees] informed after registration was viewed as being less effective than before registration. The importance of continuous education of communities cannot be over-emphasized. The participants were initially informed in various ways before registration but after registration the updates became less and less.

It can be concluded from the preceding discussion that the Municipality took trouble to inform communities about the Indigency Programme before registration but then the flow of information decreased after registration as some indigents were not updated of the latest developments. It appeared that unless the indigents made contact or inquiries by themselves, they remained uninformed of changes effected.

The need for continuously informing the community was also emphasized in the conclusion of the report by the Centre for Development Support (2002:49).

3.4.2 THEME 2:

THE MOTIVATION OF INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE TO REGISTER AND REMAIN REGISTERED FOR THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME

“A motive is a factor inducing a person to act in a particular way “(Oxford Dictionary 2009 sv “motive”). In addition, Hope and Timmel (1995:53) explain that emotion is linked to motivation. What people are worried, happy, sad, angry, fearful or hopeful about will motivate them to act.

The discussion below will explain and demonstrate the motivation level of registered indigents to register and remain registered on this Indigency Programme.

The answers to the following questions gave rise to the above theme, and to sub-themes and categories:

- What motivated you to register on the Indigency Programme?
- What brought about the expectations you had from the Indigency Programme?
- What motivated you to remain registered?

On examining the answers given by the participants to the afore-mentioned questions more closely it was decided to divide the theme into the following sub-themes:

- The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to register for the Indigency Programme before registration
- The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to remain registered for the Indigency Programme

Sub-theme 2.1:

The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to register for the Indigency Programme

This sub-theme has been divided into the following categories:

- Writing off of arrear accounts
- To be able to meet their accounts in future
- Increased financial independence because of assistance through the Indigency Policy / Programme

The participants' level of knowledge and understanding has an influence on the participants' motivations and expectations when they register for the programme. As a result, the more the participants know about the programme, the more interested they were to register, especially when it fulfils their needs.

The following responses from the participants and summaries of dialogue disclose the categories:

Category 2.1.1

Writing off of arrear accounts

“Honestly to have my arrears written off and get its (pop) pre-paid meter free of charge.

“The fact that I owed the Municipality a lot of money and my arrears were over R100 000. I tried paying and my children were assisting but with the interests it was getting nowhere. I just wanted to have my arrears written off. “

“I was told it was for the poor and we are going to get more added free service and arrears written off. “

Category 2.1.2

To be able to meet their accounts in future

“We were informed at the pension pay point that the poor will be able to afford municipal services and that arrears will be written off. We also got a meter box of electricity free.” “I can now manage my account and so far I have no complain.”

Category 2.1.3

Increased financial independence because of the assistance through the Indigency Policy / Programme

“Look here before the registration, we used to pay +/- R500 pm but since 2005, I have been paying a maximum of R50 pm. At times I would be billed R0. This month I have to pay R36.00 only. This is excluding my recharge for electricity. I buy electricity of R50 which lasts me for two months. In winter I will use my coal stove so my electricity bill will be almost R0”.

The above gives an indication of the participants` expectations and motivations to be on the programme. The participants were all motivated by hope and the prospect of improving their situations. The participants knew exactly what they were getting themselves into. The participants expected to have their arrears written off, afford their municipal accounts, and get free electricity meter boxes and free added services.

The participants` answers are confirmed in the revised Indigency Policy of Tshwane Municipality where it states that part of the basic municipal service package includes free basic services (water, electricity and refuse removal),writing off of arrear accounts, affordable services rendered by the Municipality (City of Tshwane 2010:7-8).

Sub-theme 2.2:

The motivation of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to remain registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

This sub-theme is divided into the following categories:

- Initial positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy/ Programme
- Continued positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme
- Mixed experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

The following responses from the participants and summaries of dialogue disclose the categories:

Category 2.2.1: Initial positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

“I got a meter box, can manage my account and so far I have no complaint”.

Category 2.2.2:

Continued positive experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

” It has worked well for me as I am able to afford my municipal account and that I no longer go to my private doctor for medication but collects from municipal clinic. The arrears were cut off and I have peace of mind with my grant children”.

“Look here before the registration, we used to pay +/- R500 pm but since 2005, I have been paying a maximum of R50 pm. At times I would be billed R0. This month I have to pay R36.00 only. This is excluding my recharge for electricity. I buy electricity of R50 which lasts me for two months. In winter I will use my coal stove so my electricity bill will be almost R0”.

Category 2.2.3:

Mixed experiences of being registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

”I enjoyed for about 3 years and from last year, things got out of control. We started getting an abnormally high municipal bill, our meter boxes are faulty and nobody cares to come fix it. It consumes electricity at an alarming rate. I have complained but nobody listens. My electricity and water were cut off more than three times since last year.”

“I have been to all municipal offices and was told to pay it or have my water and electricity cut off. I have decided to exit from this programme than be so trapped in it”.

The above storylines show that the people’s motivation and experiences were originally met, especially in the beginning, but in the long run what they hoped for did not materialize.

In summary the participants` expectations and motivations that were realized at first but after registration some participants had negative experiences because they were keeping their side of bargain by being responsible and accountable as far as the delivery of service by Municipality was concerned.

3.4.3 THEME 3:

THE EFFECTS OF THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME AS EXPERIENCED BY THE INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE WHO WERE REGISTERED FOR THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME

The answers to the following question/s gave rise to the above theme, its sub-themes and categories:

- What benefit did you think you will gain from the Indigency Policy / Programme?
- Which of these benefits did you get from the Indigency Policy / Programme?
- What brought about the expectations you had of the Indigency Policy / Programme?
- In what way have your family circumstances changed since you registered?
- What were the disadvantages and advantages of being registered as an indigent?

The Indigency Policy / Programme had both negative and positive effects on the participants.

On closer inspection of the answers given by the participants to the afore-mentioned questions, it was decided to divide the theme into the following sub themes:

- The positive effects, benefits, advantages and gains experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while registered on the Indigency Programme
- Challenges experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while registered on the Indigency Programme.

Sub-theme 3.1:

Positive effects experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while registered on the Indigency Policy / Programme

This theme was divided into the following categories:

- Increased affordability of municipal account
- Limited free municipal services
- Free installation of electricity meters

Category 3.1.1:

Increased affordability of municipal account

“I got a meter box, can manage my account and so far I have no complaint.”

“I think if you use the electricity and water wisely, you won’t have a problem [with a smile]. This programme has made my life much easier especially to manage financially.”

Category 3.1.2:

Limited free municipal services

“I expected free water and lights and to pay at most R100 or less on my account monthly to get free burial services and writing off of my arrears.”

“The advantage is that if used correctly it [Indigency Programme] brings financial relief and we get free services.”

Category 3.1.3:

Free installation of electricity meters

“We also got a meter box of electricity free.”

The above story lines indicate how the participants have gained and benefited from being registered indigents on the Indigency Policy / Programme. In summary, the participants were able to benefit with what they needed and expected from the Indigency Policy / Programme as it is also stated in the Indigency Policy that the total package includes free basic services, writing off of arrear accounts, affordability of municipal services (City of Tshwane 2010:7-8).

Sub-theme 3.2:

The disadvantages, problems and frustrations experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville while registered on the Indigency Programme.

This theme has been divided into the following categories:

- No support from the Municipality when problems arose
- Abuse by family members of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville

The following responses from the participants and summaries of dialogue led to the following categories:

Category 3.2.1:

Lack of support from Municipality when problems arose

“I have been to all municipal offices and was told to pay it or have my water and electricity cut off. I have decided to exit from this programme than be so trapped in it.”

“I’m without water and electricity because I realized there is a leakage from my water tap and takes too much of my bill and that the electricity box is running abnormally. I

tried going to social workers, councillors, Municipality and my family. They all failed to help me”

“Yes it is not that bad. I just hope the Municipality could put measures in place to assist us when we have problems especially related to this programme and continually check if we are okay.”

Category 3.2.2:

Abuse by family members of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville

Section 6 of the Aged Persons Amendment Act No 100 of 1998 refers to elder abuse as an intentional or unintentional ill-treatment of older persons and violation of their rights that impact on their setting which diminishes their ability to realize their human rights and dignity. Elder abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, material (assets and finances), neglect and institutional.

“The disadvantage is that families think we have a lot of money at our disposal and they make unreasonable demands.”

“I was at first relieved from the arrears but then I started encountering problems with my children. They now make demands and expect me to help with some of their financial obligations because my arrears are written off and have R1050 pm where I only pay R100 towards my account and electricity.”

“Older persons are made to hand over houses to their children or grandchildren so they can continue benefiting while they are no more.”

From the extracts above, it can be deduced that most of the research respondents had experienced the programme both negatively and positively. The respondents were exposed to familial abuse but they also indirectly tried to abuse the system. The possibility of frustration and abuse was further confirmed by the findings and

recommendations of the study conducted by the Centre for Development Support (2002:49) where it recommended that the community needs to do away with abuse of system. The report emphasized the need to focus on changing the community's, including participants` attitude towards municipal services.

Although municipalities have a constitutional obligation to improve the quality of the life of their inhabitants, communities need to understand that indigent benefits are only due to those who need them the most. The applicants need to be honest when they apply and the municipal officials should verify the applications by conducting visits if necessary.

The municipalities and government have a tendency to start programmes for the poor in communities but in the end they are unable to sustain them and this consequently leaves the community despondent. This can be substantiated by reports of protests about lack of service delivery which were widespread in the country in 2010. Keepile (2010) reported in a newspaper article in the Mail and Guardian that in March 2010 there were eight (8) service delivery protests in Gauteng including one (1) in Atteridgeville on March 11. People commented on his article as follows: "The general feeling was that the ANC as the ruling party is failing to fulfil their election promises of a better life for all as they focus on their own comfort, forgetting the people who voted them to power. The protests are a sign of people's anger towards failure of government to deliver proper service to the people". As a result, the EThekweni Municipality addressed these challenges by identifying the need for an audit to halt violence amongst the poor due to lack of delivery of services. Corruption within the Municipality and government was cited as partly responsible for the widespread violence as deserving people benefited from services meant for the poor (Hlongwa, 2009: 10).

3.4.5 THEME 4:

PERCEPTIONS / VIEWS OF INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE ABOUT THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME

The answers to the following questions gave rise to the above theme and its sub-themes:

- What are the uncomfortable things about this Indigency Programme?
- What are you doing as recipients to ensure that you get out of this Programme?

On closer examination of the answers given by the participants to the afore-mentioned questions, it was decided to divide the theme into the following sub-themes:

- It was used to gain votes for the municipal elections [political opportunism]
- Abuse of the Indigency Policy / Programme by community members.

Sub-theme 4.1

It was used to gain votes for the municipal elections [political opportunism]

[The timing of the announcement of the Indigency Programme by the municipalities was used to gain votes for the ANC candidates for municipal elections.]

“I registered in 2005 just before the local elections. The councillors were going around telling us about this programme.”

“No nothing except from councillors when they were canvassing for the elections. That was the only time they knew we existed.”

“Councillors should not be part of this except when marketing it to the community in the presence and under guidance of social workers. This is purely political now.”

Sub-theme 4.2: Abuse of the Indigency Policy / Programme by community members

“People as such are abusing the system or overtaking ownership of households.”

“A lot of wealthy families are on the programme and poor families` applications were declined. You know the corruption my child. Municipal employees themselves are registered as well as business people.”

It can be deduced that that the programme is only marketed or campaigned for when candidates need votes during the local government elections. As already mentioned, the municipalities and government have a tendency of starting programmes for the poor in communities but in the end they are unable to sustain / deliver the programmes which leave the community despondent.

The Institute for Security Studies stated that the ANC, through their spokesperson, Mrs Jessie Duarte conceded that there had been service delivery protests in almost 14 municipalities in the country and that this was made worse as they were followed by the strike by municipal workers in 2009 which further crippled service delivery. The protests were apparently caused by, among other reasons, the failure to render basic services by municipalities and government despite promises made since 1994 by the ANC; high level of apathy by community members; corruption and nepotism in local government; deployment of ANC officials to positions for which they do not qualify these were confirmed by the Ministry of Cooperative Governance (Burger: 2009).

Similarly, Nkuna (2009:10) reports that since the April 2008 elections, there have been more than four service delivery protests in the City of Cape Town.

In conclusion it can be argued that the programme had some political influence and this was further confirmed by the articles quoted above.

The lack of monitoring and abuse of the system was also identified in this study. Consequently, problems with the verification of the validity of applications arose. On one hand, officials raised complaints about continuous efforts by some members of the community to manipulate the system by applying for registration as indigents while knowing that they do not meet the requirements. On the other hand, members of the

community felt that the implementation phase of the policies is characterized by poor communication (Centre for Development Support 2002: 48).

The study by the Centre for Development Support also recommended the need to do away with the abuse of the system where it stated that education of communities must, in addition to other issues, be focused on changing attitudes.

3.4.5 THEME 5:

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY INDIGENT OLDER PERSONS IN ATTERIDGEVILLE TO IMPROVE THE INDIGENCY POLICY / PROGRAMME

The answers to the following question/s gave rise to the above theme and its sub-themes: What recommendations can you make for the Municipality to improve the programme?

On closer scrutiny of the answers given by the participants to the above question, it was decided to divide the theme into the following sub-themes:

- Active involvement and availability of municipal social workers to assist with problems experienced by indigent older persons with Indigency Programme
- Continuous monitoring of users of the Indigency Programme to avoid its abuse
- Improved communication from the Municipality to the community

Sub-theme 5.1

Active involvement and availability of municipal social workers to assist with problems experienced by indigent older persons with Indigency Policy / Programme

According to Henderson and Thomas (1980:238) the role of a social worker role is that of a resource for dissemination of information. The kind of information the social worker provides is basic information, general advice – focusing on advantages and disadvantages and that of interpretation and analysis by helping people to understand details and implications. In this instance, the municipal social workers need to assist older persons to

clarify and understand implications before making any decisions about participating in the Indigency Policy / Programme. Older persons need assistance in understanding the Indigency Policy / Programme and also to be empowered with knowledge and understanding of the programme.

Unfortunately this is not happening in Tshwane as confirmed by the anonymous social worker working at the Tshwane Municipality. She said social workers are just administrative workers on the Indigency Programme as they do not deal directly with communities while councillors market the programme.

The study conducted at the Centre for Development confirmed what was highlighted by the research respondents in the extracts that follow below. The study argues that councillors should not be involved in the evaluation or monitoring process but they (councillors) be used for informing communities about municipal programmes and giving feedback on them (Centre for Development Support 2002:29 -30).

“Social workers need to verify the information on people’s applications and regularly check us. They must try to invite us to meetings where we will be updated”

“The social workers need to work and help improve the lives of the poor. Councillors should not be part of this except when marketing it to the community in the presence and under guidance of social workers.”

This leads to the following discussion by Weyers (2001:206) when he stated the social workers` roles according to his social marketing model as that of public relations and of service marketing. The social worker is expected to market the programme for the Municipality to the community and encouraging community members to utilize the programme. This links to what is expected by older persons in the study when the two authors stressed that community members can only support and use services if they have a positive image of that service. However, the study found that politicians and not social workers were the ones marketing these services.

Sub-theme 5.2

Continuous monitoring of users of the Indigency Policy / Programme to avoid its abuse

“Just continuous monitoring by municipal officials.”

“They must start re-evaluating this and ensure that the right people access this programme. This is abused like the child support grant of the government. I think the Municipality should have a wing specifically dealing exclusively with this programme and attending to issues around this.”

“I think the councillors should come to our older person meetings or at pay points to always update us on municipal issues. They always call meetings at night and I am scared to walk in the night.”

Sub-theme 5.3

Improved communication from the Municipality to the community

This theme was divided into the following categories:

- Municipal newsletter distributed with municipal accounts be re-instated
- Smaller [ward] community meetings

Category 5.3.1:

Municipal newsletter distributed with municipal accounts be re-instated

“I think they should also think of bringing back the newsletter with our accounts”.

“Yes it does. They all need to come visit us or continue communicating with us. Bring back the newsletter”.

Category 5.3.2:

Smaller [ward] community meetings

“I think the councillors should come to our older person meetings or at pay points to always update us on municipal issues. They always call meetings at night and I am scared to walk in the night.”

“When will I know what is happening with this programme? I understand there is a public meeting.”

It can be concluded that the community values the role and intervention of social workers from the Municipality and being continuously informed and monitored. This (intervention) is seen as the most important support structure in this programme. A concerted effort in the fight against poverty was also highlighted which the community feels should be done with other role players.

The study by the Centre for Development Support (2002: 5) states that: “Regardless of whether poverty is measured in terms of expenditure or income and regardless of what poverty line or poverty measure is used to address this situation, municipalities will have to make considerable efforts to design and implement effective indigent policies”.

Indigent policies will also play a crucial role in affording the poorest of the poor access to basic services, in the process partly alleviating the problem of non-payment of services.

In conclusion, it can be stated that consultation with communities in the formulations process seems to be inadequate and in certain instances non-existent. The respondents and participants were unanimous that the communication of the policy when it was introduced for the first time was done satisfactorily. Since then the communication has deteriorated and targeted people were left in the dark.

4. CONCLUSION

This Chapter has expanded on the findings of the study which are supported by extracts from the transcripts of interviews conducted using the exploratory and descriptive research methods. In pursuance of achieving the study goal and objectives, the findings were corroborated with extracts from the interviews and then contrasted with available literature so that richer conclusions could be achieved. The study`s conclusions and recommendations will be explained further in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, the researcher provided the background to the study and indicated the research question, research goal and objectives and planned the research design.

The goal of study was to explore the experiences and perceptions of the indigent older person families in Atteridgeville who had registered for the Indigency Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.

The study's objectives were formulated as follows:

- To explore and describe the indigent older persons` experience and views / perceptions of the influence of the Indigency Policy / Programme on their lives.
- To explore and describe how the Indigency Policy / Programme and poverty have affected the indigent older persons` lives.
- To explore and describe the indigent older person`s perceptions / views on how the Indigency Policy / Programme can be improved.
- To make recommendations for further improvement of the programme by the Municipality.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized a qualitative approach with an exploratory and descriptive design to ensure that the research goal and objectives were realized and did an in-depth study to gain deeper understanding of how the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville experienced the Indigency Policy / Programme.

Using semi-structured interviews utilizing convenience and snowball sampling, data were collected from nine participants in Atteridgeville chosen from an available list from Age-In-Action, the organisations for the Aged. Two interviews were conducted with municipal officials involved with the Indigency Programme to obtain background information on the Indigency Programme. Findings were contrasted with available limited literature where conclusions and recommendations were made.

4.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The demographics of the participants were fully outlined and data reported according to five themes, sub-themes and categories with a literature control.

Based on the research process this section will expand on the general conclusions reached emanating from the findings in Chapter 3. It can be concluded that the research goal and objectives were achieved and from the findings presented, the researcher was able to formulate recommendations which will be presented in detail later in the Chapter.

4.3.1 Experiences of the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville regarding being informed about the Indigency Policy / Programme

During the study it became apparent that most respondents had knowledge of the programme before registration because they had made efforts to get information. The respondents were adequately informed by councillors at their meetings or at pension pay-points before registration, but less so after registration. Only two respondents were

updated about the programme after registration. It can thus be concluded that the level of knowledge about the Indigency Programme before registration did have a positive impact on how respondents perceived it because before registration they were educated about it and ultimately chose to register. However after registration, there was little or no education and that is when they started having doubts about the programme resulting in some exiting.

4.3.2 The motivation of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to register for and remain registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

During the study the participants indicated they registered for the benefits offered but those who experienced changes in their circumstances and could not get assistance from the Municipality became negative about the programme and wanted to exit. This links to the previous conclusion that the more informed the participants perceived the programme; the more positively they experienced it.

From the data it can be deduced that the participants' expectations about the Indigency Policy / Programme were met. The participants expected to have their arrears written off; to be able to afford their municipal accounts and to receive added free services.

However, lack of follow-up assistance from the Municipality and failure to remain informed influenced some participants' lack of motivation to remain on the programme.

4.3.3 The effects of the Indigency Policy / Programme as experienced by the indigent older persons in Atteridgeville who were registered for the Indigency Policy / Programme

During the study, it was indicated that the participants expressed the opinion that the programme had both positive and negative effects. The participants were mostly satisfied with what they had gained or benefited from the programme but also expressed their

frustrations as they felt the Municipality did not support them when they were faced with challenges such as when water and electricity was cut-off and the participants did not know where to go for assistance. They also felt that the lack of monitoring and communication by the Municipality led to people abusing the system or participants losing trust in the programme.

In summary, the participants were able to benefit in terms of what they needed from the programme (i.e. free meter box, affordable municipal account and limited services as stated in the Indigency Policy stated on the package included in the programme.)

Although municipalities have a constitutional obligation to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants, indigent benefits are only due to those who need them the most. For the programme to be effective, applicants need to be honest when they apply and the municipal officials should verify the applications by conducting visits if necessary. On the contrary, municipalities and government have a tendency of starting programmes for the poor in communities but are unable to sustain them and this leaves the community despondent. This can be substantiated by reports of protests for lack of municipal service delivery which were wide spread in the country in 2010 as reported by Keepile (2010).

It can be concluded then that the participants do enjoy being registered and value the programme but that they accept the Municipality should put measures into place to ensure compliance and satisfaction by indigents. This was also supported by the study conducted by the Centre for Development Support which confirmed the need to do away with the abuse of the system. Education of communities must, in addition to other issues, be focused on changing attitudes of community members on available programmes and how to access them. Although municipalities have a constitutional obligation to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants, communities need to understand that indigent benefits are only due to those who need them the most and should not be abused.

4.3.4 Perceptions / views of indigent older persons in Atteridgeville about the Indigency Policy / Programme

On the whole, the participants expressed support for the programme. They indicated some shortcomings as it was implemented just before the elections. The opinion was expressed that its introduction had been politically motivated (political opportunism). It also seemed to have been implemented without the necessary structures in place as follow up service was difficult to get and the lack of monitoring and evaluation by the Municipality led to its abuse by community members.

As already indicated, Keepile (2010) reported in a newspaper article in Mail and Guardian that in March 2010 there were eight service delivery protests in Gauteng including one in Atteridgeville on March 11. The comments by the general public on the article were as discussed hereunder. This gave a view on how the community also viewed / perceived the service delivery protests. The public commented on his article as follows: The ANC as the ruling party is failing to fulfil their election promises of a better life for all as they are focusing on their own comfort, forgetting the people who voted them to power. The protests are a sign of people's anger towards failure of government to deliver proper service to the people (www.mail and guardian. com – accessed 29 July 2010: ANC urges calm in Gauteng after service delivery protests).

4.3.5 Suggestions and recommendations by indigent older persons in Atteridgeville to improve the Indigency Policy / Programme

During the study the following suggestions were made to improve the Indigency Programme. Social workers from the Municipality should be more actively involved in this Indigency Programme than the councillors. The participants unanimously agreed that there should be continuous monitoring and evaluation of registered indigents by the Municipality. Therefore, there should be improved communication from the Municipality to communities.

The participants were unanimous regarding the communication of the policy when introduced for the first time was done satisfactorily. However, since then the communication has deteriorated and targeted people left in the dark. Furthermore, some of the recommended ways of improving communication would be bringing back the newsletter, having social workers inform communities of programmes at community events and community meetings held at reasonable times of the day. Social workers` roles should be more those of public relations and service marketing as explained by Weyers (2001:206). On the contrary, an anonymous social worker confirmed that their current role is that of administrator and not marketer. The municipal social workers need to network with other local community workers, including those engaged with communities.

From the themes and sub-themes identified and explored, it showed or proved that there is a need for the Indigency Policy / Programme but the municipalities together with community members have roles to play to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme. This should be seen as a challenge for both the Municipality and communities.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.4.1 Recommendations pertaining to research findings for improvement of the Indigency Policy / Programme

The role of a social worker is very important in improving the Indigency Policy / Programme and there is a great need for their active involvement in the continuous education, evaluation and monitoring of the programme. Therefore, the study recommends the following:

- The Social Work Department of the Municipality needs to continuously monitor and evaluate the programme, do follow-up visits to avoid abuse of system and to keep a register of all registered indigents. As modelled by

Ekurhuleni Municipality, Tshwane Municipality should also have the indigent register that they monitor. Consequently, there should be improved communication and consultation between the Municipality and communities. The community suggested bringing back the municipal newsletter, conducting community meetings at reasonable times and central venues addressing social grant recipients at pension pay-points.

- There should be continuous education of communities and municipal officials, including councillors on the Indigency Policy and other related municipal issues by the social workers. This was also confirmed by the findings and recommendation of research conducted by the Centre for Development. The Ekurhuleni City Manager confirmed that it monitors continuously to identify gaps in its Programme. The Ekurhuleni Municipality indicated that indigents are re-evaluated and monitored monthly (Flusk, 2008)
- Other stakeholders like government departments, Non-Government Organisations, and Community-Based Organisations rendering services to older persons should be actively involved as partners in marketing and encouraging the community members to utilize the programmes so as to avoid duplication of service delivery in as far as poverty alleviation is concerned. There should be a review of policy by the Municipality management in consultation with the social work department every two years in order to accommodate all gaps identified.

4.4.2 Recommendation for social work practice relating to the Indigency Policy / Programme

What was stated by De Vos et al (1998:368) and Harrison that social work research has led to fewer improvements in practice than one might have hoped for, the following recommendations for social work are made and will be disseminated to the manager of the Integrated Community Development Office of the Tshwane Municipality.

The social workers from the Municipality should be more actively involved and available for the indigents. Weyers (2001:206) and Henderson and Thomas (1980:238) expand on the roles that social workers should assume with regard to services. They list the roles of public relations including marketer and educator, advisor and analyst of people's situations. In addition, Weyers (2001: 206) explain the role of social workers as that of public relations where social workers are expected to market and sell a positive image of their organisations and their services to potential and existing clients. This links with what was highlighted in theme 1 in section 3.4.1 and theme 5 in section 5.3.3 where it shows the importance of having knowledge on the Indigency Programme before and after registration. This made it easier for indigents to make informed decisions. The indigents further recommended that social workers should come and address community members at community meetings including at pension pay points.

Henderson and Thomas (1980:236-40) suggest the roles as that of providing resources and information. This links with what is expected from social workers as explained in section 3.4.1 and section 5.3.3. The other role of social worker is that of being supportive. This was further reiterated by the community (indigents) when they complained of getting no support from the Municipality when problems arose as explained in category 3.2.1 and that when indigents are abused by family members, social worker should be supportive and educate the indigents and help develop their confidence and competency. Social workers need to be supportive by educating on elder abuse and linking the older persons with the relevant resources (e.g. homes and place of safety).

The above stated roles could be applied by municipalities with regard to the Indigency Policy / Programme.

4.4.3 Recommendation for further research

Because of the limited scope and a small sample of the study it is recommended that the Tshwane Municipality conduct a more full scale research in the Municipality on the

perceptions and experiences of the indigents on the Indigency Policy / Programme as this only focused on older persons and not greater community of poor people. Even though some of the findings were confirmed by previous research conducted in other provinces, the research in Tshwane might yield different results.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The researcher is of the opinion that the research goal and objectives were achieved because she explored the experiences and perceptions of indigent older person families in Atteridgeville despite the limitations identified. The recommendations for further utilization and dissemination of findings have been made.

The researcher is of the view that if the Tshwane Municipality could adopt the recommendations, it would assist the effective and efficient use of their Indigency Policy/ Programme and that poverty alleviation in the Tshwane Metropolitan Area would not be their burden only but would be a concerted effort of all other service providers. A copy of the report's Chapter 4 with a covering letter will be sent to the Municipality's Integrated Community Development office of the Tshwane Municipality.

On a personal level, it was the researcher's first experience of conducting a qualitative research and it was a real challenge as I have learnt more about qualitative research and its application. The lesson I learnt was that of data verification because previously I was only familiar with validity and reliability but now with qualitative research I have learnt about the Guba model and other models that I did not know prior to the study. The study was thought-provoking and interesting. The study also further taught me the importance of continuous professional and academic development.

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ANNEXURE 1:

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, , agree out of my own free will to participate in this research study which focuses on: **“The experiences and views of indigent older person in Atteridgeville on the Indigency Policy / Programme of the Tshwane Municipality”** conducted by C N LATAKGOMO as a social worker employed by the South African Police Service in Atteridgeville and also an MA SS (Mental Health) student in the Department of Social Work at the University of South Africa.

I was invited to participate in this research study by C N LATAKGOMO (researcher) and the following aspects were explained to me:

1. The goal of the study was explained as: To explore the experiences and views / perceptions of the older person supported families in Atteridgeville making use of the Indigency Programme of the Tshwane Municipality.
2. The information will be used for research purposes and also inform the Municipality.
3. I understand my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw anytime from the study without any penalty. The researcher will conduct 1 (one) face to face interview with my family at my home.
4. The study supervisor (presently Dr H Louw) will be the other person who will have access to the notes as she will be assisting and guiding the researcher during the study.
5. I understand also that there might be questions that I may experience as sensitive but I am free to not answer them.
6. I was informed that the transcribed interviews will be shown to me for comments.

7. The possible benefits as a result of my participation are that my inputs can be used as recommendations towards the improvements of the programme. It can help me enjoy the benefits of the programme as intended by the Municipality.

8. The information above was explained to me by **C N LATAKGOMO** in.....
and I understand this language. I was given an opportunity to ask questions and was answered satisfactorily.

I HEREBY CONSENT VOLUNTARILY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE PROJECT.

Signed aton..... 2009.

.....
Signature or thumbprint: Participant

.....
Witness

ANNEXURE 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

- 1) Name and Surname
- 2) Where do you live?
- 3) What is your main language?
- 4) How old are you now?
- 5) What is your marital status?
- 6) Number of people in your household

B. INTERVIEW CONTENT

- 7) When did you register?
- 8) How did you get to know about the programme?
- 9) What motivated you to register in the first place?
- 10) What benefit did you think you would gain from the programme?
- 11) Which from these benefits did you get and which did you get that you did not get?
- 12) What brought about the expectations you had from the programme?
- 13) Should this programme be stopped, how are you and your family going to ensure that you pay for the services?
- 14) What recommendations would you like to make on the improvements of this programme?
- 15) Will you recommend others to register as indigents? (Motivate your answer)
- 16) What are you as a recipient doing to ensure that you get out of this programme?
- 17) Did your family circumstances change since you registered?
- 18) If you answered YES to question 17, did you inform the Municipality?
- 19) If you answered NO to question 17, to what can you attribute this?