

**TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY**

by

LORRAINE COCK

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SUPERVISOR: DR H VON SCHLIGHT

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ABSTRACT

The release of ex-president Nelson Mandela on 10 February 1990, introduced transformation in South Africa. The road to transformation, in a post apartheid era, placed pressure and demands on the social work profession and the professionals. Change was inevitable (Lesnik 1997:164) while the inequities and the disparities of the past had to be eliminated and replaced with transformed services.

This study explores the transformational challenges experienced in contemporary social work practice at The Department of Social Development, Johannesburg, South Africa.

A non-probability sample was selected (Babbie and Mouton 2004:166). A combination of the qualitative and the quantitative approaches, with more emphasis on the quantitative approach was utilized. Questionnaires were used for data collection and analysis was done according to the framework as described by Tesch in De Vos et al., (1998:343). The transformational challenges were identified and guidelines are drafted to assist in addressing the identified challenges.

Key terms:

Transformational challenges; Inequities; Disparity; Contemporary social work practice; Post apartheid; Transformed services; Guidelines; Pressure; Demands; Experiences; Change; Social work profession; Identified; Addressing

OPSOMMING

Die vrylating van die voormalige president Nelson Mandela op 10 Februarie 1990, het 'n periode van transformasie in Suid Afrika ingelei. Die weg na transformasie, in 'n era na apartheid, het druk en eise aan die professie en die vakkundiges gestel. Verandering was onafwendbaar (Lesnik 1997:164) terwyl die ongelykhede en dispariteite van die verlede geïlimineer moes word en vervang moes word met getransformeerde dienste.

Hierdie ondersoek sal die uitdagings wat verband hou met transformasie binne die maatskaplike werk beroep, in die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, Johannesburg, Suid Afrika, vas stel.

'n Nie-waarskynlikheidssteekproef in ooreenstemming met Babbie en Mouton (2004:166) is gebruik. Die kwalitatiewe en 'n kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetode is gekombineer hoewel groter klem geleë is op die kwantitatiewe metode, vanweë die aard van die data wat ingesamel moes word. Data is met behulp van vraelyste ingesamel en is geanaliseer na aanleiding van die raamwerk soos beskryf deur Tesch in De Vos et al., (1998:343). Die uitdagings van transformasie op die beroep is uitgelig en riglyne is ontwikkel om te help om die uitdagings te hanteer.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher deemed it necessary to first look at what social work is, before looking at what has happened to the profession in the process of transformation. Social work is a professional service, rendered by a registered social worker, to promote, enhance or restore the capacity and social functioning of individuals, groups and communities according to Payne (1997:40) and the Terminology Committee for Social Work (1995:60). Since 1999 it was expected that social work functions should be executed within an empowering and developmental paradigm as cited by Midgley (2001:245) as well as the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997:15). According to Lesnik (1997:34), social workers were not capacitated to implement the changed approaches, within a changed environment and in accordance to a changed legislative framework

Change is not new to the social work profession. Social work was exposed to challenges of change since its inception from the first charity organization in America in 1877 until professional status was reached as cited by Bernstein and Gray (1997:39-40) as well as Potgieter (1997:4-5). Although change is synonymous to the profession, the speed at which transformational changes took place, did not allow the profession to adapt to the new expectations such as fundamental policy changes, the challenges of attending to high case loads, the challenges of serving the vast needs of the previously disadvantaged communities and to manage increased development needs as cited by Gray (1998:1).

The rapid political transformation in the country, took place within short timeframes and placed pressure and challenges to social work in South Africa as supported by Lesnik (1997:164) as well as Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21).

The re-engineering of social work, in line with the new South Africa as cited by Lesnik (1997:164) and Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21) was however inevitable. The image of the social work profession in South Africa was affected, as the profession had to keep up with the speed of transformation according to Gray (1998:1).

Social work in the global society was also confronted with having to adapt to a developmental paradigm. The global view of social work is that the profession is effectively responding to the changing trends and needs of society as cited by Kirst-Ashman (2007:202) and Midgley (1995:34). The situation in South Africa is however different as the profession had to adapt to a new paradigm, and implement change, at the same time. Gray (1998:1) is of the opinion that the ground under social workers in South Africa, has literally shifted as the process of transformation in South Africa had a destabilizing effect on the social work profession. According to Gray (2000:100) the profession came under criticism, was sidelined and marginalized on the road to transformation. The experiences of social workers affected the services rendered by them as cited by Gray (1998:1) and Parton (1996:82). In order for the profession to respond to clients efficiently, the well being of both the client system and the professional social worker has to be in tact (Bisman 1994:12). The transformational challenges on social work in South Africa will be explored and will be measured against the literature. Recommendations that could assist the profession while still on the road of transformation will be proposed in Chapter 5.

The South African Government provided guiding documents to ensure that the process of transformation is rolled out smoothly as confirmed by Terreblanche (2003:45) and Lesnik (1997:159). The implementation of the guiding documents was hampered due to a lack of training and dissemination of information to operational staff by managers (Lesnik 1997:34). Lesnik (1997:34) further states that uninformed and unequipped staff could not be expected to know how to change their practice. This led to confusion, poor standards of practice and failure to meet developmental statutory requirements as cited by Lesnik (1997:34).

Social workers and managers were overwhelmed and overlooked the strengths of their professional training. They failed to link transformation to the basic principles and methods of the social work profession, such as community development as cited by Mckendrick (2001:108) and confirmed by Gray and Collett van Rooyen (2002:193).

Instead of drawing from their existing professional knowledge (Lesnik 1997:167), they perceived the lack of transformational training as problematic and as an implementation challenge (Lesnik 1997:167). The change that had to be effected on all levels of service delivery had to be managed and will be discussed in the next paragraph in accordance with the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006).

The manner in which change was managed, had a direct impact on staff as it raised pressure and increased harmful stress on the workers according to Joyce (1999:22), Lesnik (1997:35), Neil and Winslow (1993:34) as well as Parton (1996:139). Attention was given to the development and management of the change processes as cited by (Daniels 1999:210). The researcher is not convinced that social workers were empowered to manage the process of change. This view is supported by Gray (2000:9) when she mentions that social workers were left behind in the process of transformation, which led to the services as well as the social worker as a person, being affected. The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11), further states that social workers had to adopt a “make do” approach in order to cope with transformational changes. The transformation processes were rolled out while social workers were still confused about the difference between community development and developmental social work as cited by Lesnik (1997:167).

1.2. MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

The researcher has been driven by her concerns in the field of social work, to embark on researching this particular topic.

The exposure to all the transformation workshops offered by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape, transformed the manner in which the researcher practices social work.

Despite the advantages of transformation in service delivery, the researcher observed the frustration of social workers and clients, when confronted with transformed processes. The researcher observed situations where clients were referred from pillar to post, without being assisted, while the social workers were highly frustrated by transformation policies for example, Project Go (1996).

Project Go (1996), in line with the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:7) is a departmental policy document, outlining a process that was introduced to move youth and children out of institutions, back into the communities.

With the necessary training and resources, social workers would be empowered to implement policies such as Project Go (1996). Compliance to the transformational policy regarding children and youth at risk, as cited by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Youth at Risk (1996:76, 77-81) (hereafter referred to as the IMC) would thus be ensured. The policy is can assist social workers in transformed services delivery.

The researcher observed social workers with unmanageable caseloads going through experiences of burnout (Weinbach 2003:281) versus rust out, as cited in Humphreys (2000:65). The researcher also observed social workers having nervous break-downs on duty or using anti-depressants and other medication to cope with increasing pressure at work, as cited by Grobler, Warnick, Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield (2002:440-441). Although the researcher personally experienced the positive aspects around transformation, the researcher was overwhelmed by the negative observation and the impact it had on the social workers around her.

The experiences of social workers have a direct impact on service delivery.

The researcher was therefore prompted by her day to day interactions and activities in the work place to embark on researching this particular topic as cited by Fouché and De Vos, (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, Poggenpoel and Schurink, 1998:51). Transformational challenges facing contemporary social work practice were explored and recommendations which could assist in addressing the challenges will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this study.

1.3. PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.3.1. The Problem Statement

The research problem arose from the concrete problems that the researcher observed in reality (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:17).

The researcher was concerned about the degradation of the social work profession which she observed, as well as the negative attitude of practicing social workers. The topic was refined and narrowed to a problem or question as cited in Neuman (1997:119). The researcher opted to focus on transformational challenges from the practitioners' perspective. In the light of the literature study, it seems as if social workers in South Africa could not manage the challenges posed by transformation neither could they cope with the implementation of the prescribed transformational policies and procedures.

Joyce (1999:92) indicates that if change is not managed properly, it could lead to increased emotional tension on staff. Social workers find themselves in a situation which impacts negatively on themselves, the profession and service delivery, as they had to practice in a transforming environment, with a lack of specific guidelines and relevant training as cited by Midgley (1995:30-31).

The researcher explored the current position of social workers and how challenges such as the amalgamation of separate social work departments, implementation of transformation legislation, working from a transformed perspective within a developmental paradigm, with a mandate to meet the needs of the masses, without added resources, within a diverse and new democracy. The experiences of social workers is explored for the purpose of the research and measured against the contribution of existing literature.

1.4. GOAL FORMULATION

1.4.1. Goal of the Research

A goal is described as a broad and abstract idea towards which research efforts or ambitions are directed (De Vos et al., 1998:7).

The aim of this study was to explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of the social workers and the impact it has on the social work profession in Johannesburg. Hereafter conclusions and recommendations were formulated to assist social workers to move beyond the transformational challenges.

1.4.2. Objectives of the Research

The goal of the study, expressed and presented in concrete, measurable and attainable segments as cited by Fouche and De Vos, (in De Vos, Strydom Fouché & Delport, 2005:104) as well as Mouton (2005:240), forms the objectives of a study. This is why Mouton (1996:25) describes objectives as a route to a destination. In order to realise the goal of this particular study, the following objectives had to be realized.

- 1.4.2.1.** To contextualize the position of the social work professions before and after transformational changes took place.

- 1.4.2.2.** To explore the general and legislative transformational changes that was brought about, as well as the manner in which it was done.
- 1.4.2.3.** To explore the impact of transformational challenges on the social work profession and on the social worker as a person.
- 1.4.2.4.** To arrive at recommendations on the management of the transformational challenges in the profession, as well as recommendations on the management of the effects that the transformational challenges has on the social worker as a person.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1. The Research Approach

According to Dey (1998:147), De Vos et al., (2005:357) and Mouton and Marais (1996:169) qualitative and quantitative research reflects the interest of the researcher and what the researcher wants to make of it. The researcher found a combination of the qualitative and the quantitative approach more suitable for this study because it firstly granted the opportunity to gain insight into the perception of social workers regarding the impact of transformation.

Secondly, it enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the profile of social workers in contemporary social work practice. It also allowed the researcher to explore the quantities managed by social workers. The emphasis in the study is however more on the quantitative approach due to the nature of the study and to minimize subjectivity. The qualitative knowledge can be used in a quantitative study as cited by Campbell, (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport, 2002:369).

A combination of methods can assist with the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods according to De Vos et al., (2005:357). In line with the previous paragraph, qualitative research strives to obtain and understand the experiences of the participants on a particular topic, while the quantitative data will provide data regarding the challenges such as caseloads and training sessions. The phenomenon being investigated in this involved research was the experiences substantiated by statistics and perceptions of the social workers in contemporary social work practice.

The social workers' understanding and experiences of transformational challenges and their adaptability to deal with the transformational challenges as cited by Mouton and Marais (1996:169) is explored.

1.5.2. The Research Design

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:63) a research design could be seen as the planning to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed and collected data. Mouton and Marais (1996:43) describe the goal in exploratory studies as the exploration of an unknown research area. The researcher found that there was limited literature available around the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker and the social work profession. The researcher therefore had to explore the impact of transformational challenges from practicing social workers as cited in Weinbach (2003:114-121).

The aim of this particular study was to gain insight into the phenomenon and how to deal with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice. The limited literature available on the area indicated to the researcher that this is not a well researched topic. The researcher therefore opted for the exploratory design (Neuman 1997:20).

1.5.3. Population and Sampling

1.5.3.1. Population

Neuman (1997:203) refers to the term, “target population” as a specific pool of cases that a researcher wants to study. The population for this study can be defined as registered social workers in the Department of Social Development in Gauteng.

1.5.3.2. Sampling

Sampling, according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:86), is the study of the relationship between a population and samples drawn from it. The sample taken from the population should be representative of the population from which it was drawn. Researchers however sometimes need to draw a sample from a small population to deal with an exceptional phenomenon as cited by Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:193). The researcher therefore resigned herself to using 10 (ten) cases as a sample for this particular study. The topic for the research is specifically aimed at social workers in contemporary social work practice, who had first hand experience in the transformational process in the Department of Social Development.

A non-probability sampling method namely the purposive sampling technique was used for the purpose of this research (Strydom, in De Vos et al., 2005:202). This sampling method was suitable as the researcher was able to gain specialized insight from selected people, based on her own judgement as described in Neuman (1997:206).

The researcher collected data, sufficient to the purpose of the study (Babbie and Mouton 2004:166). The researcher is familiar with the knowledge and experience levels of the members of the sample and knew that they could provide the required information from their experiences (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:95).

1.5.4. Method of Data Collection

Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:107) states that there are different ways of getting information from participants, one of these ways are through questionnaires. This method is useful in an exploratory research according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:107). To formalize the interview between researcher and participant as suggested by Greef (in De Vos et al., 2002:302) researcher planned a semi structured, in-depth interview. Greef, (in De Vos et al., 2002:302-303) also states that an interview is built up of three kinds of questions prior to talking to the participant.

The researcher planned to implement the aforementioned with understanding and respect for the participants, in line with the prescribed manner in which the interviews must be conducted according to Greef, (in De Vos et al., 2002:301-303). It was however very difficult to get the individual interview scheduled due to unplanned political mandates and high workloads. The researcher then had to opt for only utilizing the questionnaires.

The questionnaires were delivered by hand to each participant for completion in their own time. The questionnaires consisted of open and close ended questions which could assist in revealing the participants reasoning as cited by Neuman (1997:241).

1.5.5. Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is defined by Neuman (1997:426) as a search for patterns in recurrent behaviour, objects or a body of knowledge. Once patterns were established according to the experiences of participants, the researcher was able to interpret the information.

The process of data collection and data analysis can be seen as inseparable according to De Vos et al., (2002:341).

Colour codes for certain responses simplify the collation in the final report as cited by Poggenpoel, (in De Vos et al., 1998:336). The researcher read through all the transcripts and analysed all the questionnaires to determine the meaning of the information. Topics were identified and clustered into categories. The material was assembled according to the categories for preliminary analysis and the researcher collated the existing data (Tesch, in De Vos et al., 1998:343).

1.5.6. Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to improve the effectiveness and success of the study and the questionnaires (De Vos et al., 1998:182). A pilot study can be described as a small study conducted prior to the larger research, to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:50). The pilot study involved the literature study, consultation with experts, feasibility of the study and the pilot testing of the measuring instrument. The Pilot Testing will be dealt with later in this chapter (Refer to 1.5.10.)

1.5.7. Literature Study

The study of literature was essential as it assisted the researcher to familiarize herself with the latest developments on the research topic and to identify gaps and weaknesses in previous studies (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:23). The sources of literature for this study were books, personal interviews, journals, dissertations, departmental memos, legislation and documentation.

1.5.8. Consultation with Experts

According to De Vos et al., (1998:180) it is important to consult with specialists in the field who can add value to the study.

Due to the lack of literature on some aspects of the study, the researcher had consultation sessions with a number of experts as cited in Strydom and Delport, (in De Vos et al., 2002:337). Personal interviews were conducted with experts on areas that were not sufficiently covered in literature such as the amalgamation of the different government departments and the substantial knowledge of how transformation was initially rolled out in the department (Strydom and Delport, (in De Vos et al., 2002:337). Some experts could provide information around the legislative and policy changes within the department due to their location at the time. Knowledge on the process of transformation of social work services, as well as training and capacity building of social workers, was gathered from experts and presented with the literature that was available.

1.5.9. Feasibility of the Study

The researcher is a manager in the Johannesburg Regional office of the Department of Social Development and could gain easy access to the target group. Due to the value that the study could have for the department, the researcher was allowed to distribute and explain the questionnaires in working hours to the participants.

The region is however very big and the participants were not all in the same Cluster. The researcher experienced difficulty to collect all the questionnaires from the different Clusters. More questionnaires were distributed to ensure that the required number will be covered, despite the possibility that all questionnaires might not be returned.

1.5.10. Pilot Testing of the Measuring Instrument

Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:50) cites that the pilot testing of the study provides an opportunity to determine and uncover any difficulties that might be experienced by the final participants.

The researcher pilot tested the questionnaire with two social workers in the department who were not included in the final study. The questions were clear and provided the information needed to address the research question. The approved questionnaire was therefore used as the final instrument to collect the data for the final study.

1.5. 11. Ethical Considerations

De Vos et al., (1998:25) and Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005: 56) indicates that ethics can be described as a set of moral principles, which offers rules and behavioural expectations, about the most correct conduct towards participants in research.

The researcher adhered to the following ethical principles:

1.5.11.1. Informed Consent

Informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which the participants may be exposed, be discussed according to Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:59). The consent of the participants was obtained before the commencement of the research. The participants were provided with all the information around the research and after an indication that they would avail themselves to participate, they were served with the consent forms to be completed by them (Annexure B).

1.5.11.2. Confidentiality

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:103) it is imperative that participants are assured of confidentiality despite anonymity and that data will only be used for the purpose of the research.

The researcher utilized a form signed by her, committing to confidentiality. The confidentiality forms were signed as it is the researcher's responsibility to protect the participants and to ensure that the information gathered or the findings reached, are not used at the cost of the participants. (Annexure C)

1.5.11.3. Violation of Privacy

Privacy, according to Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:61), is defined as aspects which is not normally intended to be observed or analysed by others. It is the duty of the researcher to ensure that the rights of the participants are protected and that their privacy and anonymity is paramount. As a co-employee of the participants, the researcher has an even greater responsibility to respect the privacy of the participants. The participants were assured of anonymity and the protection of their privacy in the signed covering letter to them.

1.5.11.4. Debriefing

The Department of Social Development has an Employee Assistance Programme, with outsourced psychologist's, which is available to all staff members, at no cost. The participants thus have access to this service should they need to work through their experience and it's aftermath as cited in by Judd et al., in De Vos et al. (2005:66). The researcher encouraged the participants to utilize the opportunity for debriefing, should the need arise.

1.6. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts for the study can be defined as follows:

1.6.1. Transformation

Transformation occurs as people are empowered through raising consciousness to see alternatives, a vision of social change and throwing off oppression in one's life as cited by Lee (1994:14).

1.6.2. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to a leader who is able to take his or her followers to a destination that they are too afraid to approach on their own as cited by Smit and Cronje (2002:294).

1.6.3. Empowerment

The concept of empowerment is central to the ethos of generalist services in that it does not focus on the individual pathology and inadequacies but draws on peoples strengths, also referred to as assets. Empowerment also addresses the social and economic inequalities as cited by Patel (2007:160).

1.6.4. Developmental Statutory Social Work Services

Developmental statutory social services are protection services to children, families and communities, provided in an integrated manner. All the core social welfare services including formal protection services, such as the administrative procedures prescribed by legislation, as well as those services required to address the needs and concerns which created and initiated the statutory process in the first place, to improve their social functioning in relation to the demands created in their interaction with their environment as cited by Lombard (2006) and Mashego (2002:202).

1.6.5. Ubuntu

Ubuntu is an African metaphor that describes the significance of group solidarity, on survival issues central to the survival of African communities which as a result of poverty deprivation, have to survive through brotherly group care and not individual self reliance (Mbigi and Maree 2005:5). Ubuntu can also be described as a spirit of humanity which encompasses a principle of people caring for each other's well-being with an attitude of mutual support (White Paper for Social Welfare 1997:6).

1.6.6. Developmental Approach

A developmental approach refers to a focus on strengths rather than on pathology, to built competencies rather than attempting to cure, and to belief in the potential of people and to move them towards healthy functioning as cited by Gray (1998:58).

1.7. CHAPTER OUTLINE IN THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1

This chapter consists of a general introduction and orientation to the research report under the following headings: Introduction and motivation for the study, problem formulation, goal formulation, research methodology, research method, research design, population, sample and sampling, data collection, data analyzing, ethical considerations; clarification of key concepts; the content plan of the research report and the budget.

Chapter 2

This chapter consists of a theoretical orientation to the study discussing the following: The historical background of transformational challenges to social work in South Africa. Due to the magnitude of information covered in this chapter it is divided into two sections. Chapter 2, Part One, consists of the general background of transformational changes and challenges posed to the profession. Chapter 2 Part Two consists of the legislative and policy changes and challenges posed to the profession.

Chapter 3

The nature and impact of transformational challenges experienced by social workers and its impact on the social worker, the service delivery as well as on the image of the profession.

Chapter 4

In this chapter the empirical study and findings are presented. A summary of the fieldwork/data collection as well as the results gathered, are provided in this chapter.

Chapter 5

This chapter consists of the conclusions and recommendations which may serve as guidelines in addressing the current challenges in social work practice. It includes a summary of the aims of the research and the way in which the objectives were reached.

1. 8. SUMMARY

The social work profession is constantly exposed to change. In South Africa the profession was challenged to adapt to the rapid changes, brought about by transformation in the country. This chapter provides a background and outline the goals and objectives of the study. The objectives are outlined in accordance with the research question. The content of this chapter provides a basis for the formulating of the said research goal which is namely: To explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of the social workers and the impact it has on the social work profession in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGES THAT POSES CHALLENGES TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter consists of a theoretical orientation to the study discussing the historical background of transformational challenges to social work in South Africa. The chapter is divided into two sections due to the magnitude of the information and to differentiate between the focus areas of transformational changes and challenges. Part One of this chapter covers the general background of transformational changes and challenges posed to the profession. Part Two consists of the legislative and policy changes and challenges posed to the profession.

PART ONE

2.2. INTRODUCTION

This section covers the background of social work in South Africa; the distribution of trained social workers before and after 1994 well as the impact of a leaner public sector on the social work profession. The amalgamation of the following own affairs departments is discussed and the challenges with specific reference to the manner in which it was done. The challenges of a diverse workplace with a new organisational culture are explored and unpacked in this section of Chapter 2.

2.3. THE BACKGROUND AND POSITION OF SOCIAL WORK IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Social work in South Africa started in 1929 as an outcome of the Carnegie Commission of enquiry into the poverty of white people in South Africa according to Gray (1998:7) and Pieterse (1976:39). This process also supported the profession to reach professional status.

According to Drower (2002:8) the Dutch Reformed Church started with the training of white social workers in 1938. The first government to lead social service delivery was established in 1937 and focused on the needs of the minority of the population of the country as cited by Pieterse (1976:46).

Separate government departments were responsible for the welfare functions of their own population groups, inline with the apartheid legislation of that era, according to Gray (1998:10), Lesnik (1997:157), as well as the Social Welfare Circular (No. 29 of 1996). The government and business resources, in compliance to the apartheids-system, were mostly directed to the white communities, despite the needs of the other population groups, as mentioned by McKendrick (1998:99-101). When transformation had to be introduced in social work service delivery, the profession was confronted with the history of social work in South Africa. The unequal distribution of services and resources to disadvantaged communities was one of the mayor challenges as the majority of the disadvantaged communities were under-resourced and poor as cited by McKendrick (1998:99-101) and Terreblanche (2003:444). The researcher is of the opinion that the impact of transformational challenges cannot be measured without looking at the history of where social work in the country is coming from.

The government had to put strategies in place to start the process of transformation in social work services and formulated a Ministry for Social Welfare in 1994, aimed at assisting the process of transformation to (Patel 2007:94).

Patel (2007:95) indicates that the National Government established the Restructuring and Transformation Committees to ensure that the amalgamation of the fourteen (14) racially based social welfare administrations, into nine (9) Provincial Departments with one National Department. A shift from an apartheid and remedial welfare model also required changes in policies and practise to enable social workers to serve a democratic society (Terreblanche 2003:45). Patel (2007:95) states that the social work profession was challenged with the implementation of the new policies. The distribution of social work practitioners in the country will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.4.

2.4. THE DISTRIBUTION OF TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

As mentioned earlier in the study, social work services were rendered based on the principle of each population group serving its own community (Loffell in Du Toit, Beeld 31 January 2005). The distribution of social workers was, however, not in line with the needs of the respective communities. The biggest percentage of social workers was located in the former Vaal-triangle (37.5% of the total number of social workers in the country). There were also differences in the number of trained social workers available for the different race groups. The majority, namely, 66% of social workers were White, 12% were Coloured, 6% were Indian and 16% were African (The Council for Social Work 1994). The minority group in the country had the largest number of trained social workers. A report brought out by the Pretoria Witwatersrand and Vereeniging (hereafter referred to as PWV) Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994), indicates that there were two thousand one hundred and seventy five (2175) social workers employed in government departments in 1991.

The Distribution of Trained Social Workers before Transformation (PWV Health Services Transitional planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994)

Government Departments according to the different Race Groups	Trained Social workers	Distribution of Social workers	Involvement in/or from other Departments
Provincial Administration (Black Department)	16%	28%	12% from other Dept.
House of Representatives (Coloured Department)	12%	17%	5% from other Dept.
House of Delegates (Indian Department)	6%	4%	2% in other Dept.
House of Assemblies (White Department)	66%	20%	46% in other Dept.
Self Governing Territories (Homelands)	Covered by the 6% of the provincial Administration	31%	

Table 2.1. The distribution of trained Social workers before transformation

The table above indicates that the Coloured and Black Departments had to use trained social workers from the Indian and White Departments to augment the shortages in the particular groups. The White and Indian Departments had a surplus of trained social workers who were afforded the opportunity to work across the racial barriers, in the Black and Coloured Departments. According to Jacobs (2006), the white social workers who were rendering services to other population groups, were compensated with danger allowances and insurance policies for their willingness to work across the racial barriers. In an post apartheid era all of the above was about to change as social workers of all race groups would be rendering services to all South Africans.

The government attempted to consult with communities by the establishment of technical committees, to conduct consultative processes and research, to assist the process of transformation as cited by Patel (2007:96). While government was consulting with the communities, (Van Wyk: 2006) the social workers were concerned about their own future in the Department of Social Development.

According to Van Wyk (2006) there was tension amongst staff around senior posts, as most of the senior posts in the “Own” Affairs Departments were filled by white social workers, while the senior post in the “Homelands” were filled by black social workers. It was also highlighted by Van Wyk (2006) that men occupied a misappropriate number of posts at senior levels, regardless of race and despite the fact that women are dominant in the social work profession. There were thus a large number of staff related issue that needed to be dealt with, which led to delays in the process of transformation in the profession. Smith and Cronje (2002:246) cite that the female component of the workforce diversity rose by 33% every year from 1996 to 2001. The situation cited by Van Wyk (2006) indicates tension experienced by social workers around their future in the “New” South Africa.

The Restructuring and Development Programme (hereafter referred to as the RDP: 1994) expected that the public sector would transform within two years from 1994, to reflect the South African society in terms of race, class and gender, and to effect service excellence to all.

Transformation would therefore facilitate equity in the field of social work in South Africa. The reality was however that the inequities had to be addressed and that people would be affected in the process (Gutto 2001:27). The PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March 1994) highlighted the need for an Affirmative Action Policy to be developed in consultation with staff (Grobler et al., 2002:54). This policy would ensure employment equity in relation to race, gender and disability, to rectify the availing situation.

Transformation also required a general review of all old policies and legislation within the field of social work as cited by Cloete and Wissink (2000:11) and Patel (1992:33). In order to unpack transformational challenges experienced in the social work profession, the relevant legislation which guide and inform social work practice will be discussed later in this study (Chapter 2 Part Two). The following paragraph will address the amalgamation process of the different Welfare Departments.

2.5. AMALGAMATION OF FOUR SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

A Departmental Circular No. 13 of 1994, issued by the Chief Director of Social Services, House of Assembly on 18 March 1994, refers to the President's announcement that the own affairs departments had to be phased out by 31 March 1994. The amalgamation of social work departments in all provinces therefore had to take place in March 1994 according to the RDP (1994:54). Van Wyk (2007) acknowledged that the amalgamation of the four departments posed great challenges to all those involved in social welfare services. According to Circular (13 of 1994) the amalgamation took place on 1 April 1994, less than 15 days after the circular was issued.

The amalgamation has been done in great haste which did not allow enough consultation and preparation of staff as cited by the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994), Hoffmann (2006) and Jacobs (2006). The much needed amalgamation set the ground for challenges due to the hasty manner in which it had to take place.

The sincere political innovation to transform social services was hampered by the challenges it posed to staff, which also led to them resisting the change that was brought about by transformation (Mbigi and Maree 2005:3). Challenges identified during the initial phase of transformation and captured from internal departmental communication documents (1994) which was circulated after a meeting in Johannesburg, were the following:

- Lack of representation in terms of race, gender and disability.
- Lack of popular legislation.
- Poor and discriminatory service delivery, especially for the black majority, referring to African, Indian and Coloured communities.
- Centralized control and top-down management.

- Lack of public accountability and transparency.
- Absence of effective management systems, essential for successful planning; Low productivity and wasteful duplication.
- Low pay and morale; poor professional service ethos and work ethic.
- Fear and anxiety about change, leading to low morale and the danger of a brain drain.
- Resistance to change.
- Popular impatience at the pace of change.

The above mentioned challenges were highlighted and expressed by staff within the Department of Social Development, during the initial stage of transformation. The comparison between the above mentioned challenges and the findings that will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this study will influence the recommendations and guidelines in Chapter 5 on how to deal with identified transformational challenges.

2.6. THE IMPACT OF A LEANER PUBLIC SECTOR ON SOCIAL WORK

The RDP (1994:80) indicated government's plans to reduce the Public sector in certain areas, but also highlighted the need for an increase of social workers in the new paradigm (RDP 1994:56).

According to the Annual Performance Plan of the Department of Social Development (2006:13) the ratio of social worker to the population in need, was one social worker to two thousand nine hundred and forty seven people in Gauteng. The impression was thus that the human resources in the province were insufficient to address the needs of all communities from an empowering and developmental perspective. The optimal utilization of the profession had to be ensured by differentiating between core and non-core services (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14).

The idea was to only allocate core social work functions to registered social workers and to recruit para-professionals to deal with non-core services, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). A time frame of two years was given for the transformation of the public sector to reflect the South African society in terms of race, class and gender, to effect service excellence as cited by Lesnik (1997:164) and Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21).

The government's agreement with trade unions to a leaner public sector, either through voluntary retrenchments or by doing away with vacant posts, affected the social work profession negatively (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14). According to Grobler et al., (2002:21-22), retrenchment packages could result in a loss of enthusiasm, commitment, loyalty and trust. The rationalization and reorganization process of the public sector focused mainly on reducing the size of the public sector and not to retain social workers (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14). When people leave, it has an effect of increased stress on the remaining staff due to increased workloads. They also tend to feel guilty that they are still in their jobs (Gobbler et al., 2002:21-22). Although the process of reducing the public sector might have been necessary for a great part of the sector, the decrease was detrimental for the social work profession, which was already not meeting the demand.

Resolution 7 (2000), was a departmental mandate which placed a moratorium on all appointments from 2000. The fact that no vacant posts could be filled for a specific period, further depleted the social work cadre in government. The number of practicing social workers decreased, while the needs for services increased according to a Department of Social Development's Regional Model (2004).

The limited human resources forced social workers to only do what they could manage. Although this was a coping skill, it left them frustrated as the needs of the clients could not always be met (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006: 8).

The aforementioned situations could result in a lack of job satisfaction for social workers. It also contributed to the profession being criticized for not meeting the community's developmental needs as described by Gray (2000:100) and Lesnik (1997:166). The lack of job-satisfaction is enough reason for a person to leave a job. The exodus of social workers out of the profession and out of the country according to the researcher's view might be related to the aforementioned transformational challenges.

2.7. THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT ON SOCIAL WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

With the acceptance of South Africa back into the international arena, there was a high percentage of social workers who have left South Africa on short term contracts, to provide services particularly in the present Common Wealth Countries, as cited in the Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy (2006). The Department of Social Development is further challenged with retaining social workers due to the status, remuneration and the absence of credible career paths for social workers, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). The international recruitment is also responsible for the decreased number of social workers available to address the social work needs of the people of South Africa (Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy 2006). Increased work loads were inevitable and had to be managed by the remaining social workers, in the midst of other workplace challenges which now will be discussed.

2.8. WORKPLACE CHALLENGES FACING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

2.8.1 Diversity in the Workplace

The amalgamation as discussed earlier in this Chapter was announced and the date was set for the different departments to move into the one building (Circular 13 of 1994).

The amalgamation brought a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs to one organization according to (Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia 2001:65). Diversity can be experienced by staff as a melting pot as cited by to Smith and Cronje (2002:243), which refers to people losing their identity and culture in an attempt to become one organisation. It could also be seen as a mosaic where differences are respected and embraced (Haessly 2001:160).

Many South Africans found it difficult to adapt to working with people, whom they perceived to be different from themselves, as confirmed by Smith and Cronje (2002:243). When the different departments amalgamated, each person brought with themselves their own uniqueness as well as the uniqueness of their organisation. The reaction of staff depended on their willingness to understand and value the uniqueness of others as cited in Smith and Cronje (2002:250). The study attempted to determine whether an "us or them" mentality was created or whether the emphasis was on the commonalities that existed as cited by Smith and Cronje (2002:235), as well as Hughes and Pengelly (1997:156).

One of the challenges around diversity was the language issue, as South Africa has eleven official languages and clients should be allowed to express themselves in their own language (Smith and Cronje 2002:245). English has become the official language despite the fact that large numbers of the population are not English speaking as cited by Rissik (2001:86-87). According to Raath (2006), social workers find it difficult to express themselves in reports as they are expected to communicate in English. For many people in the English-speaking environment, English is not their first language and is thus a disadvantage to them (Rissik: 2001:86). The quality of psycho-social reports submitted to the Department of Justice and other stakeholders are compromised, which further affects the image of the profession (Raath 2006). Social workers had to learn to understand the value as well as the challenges of diversity and approach it appropriately (Smith and Cronje 2002:251).

Specific languages used by social workers could reinforce discrimination or undermine the continuance of a discriminatory discourse as cited by (Rissik 2001:86). The researcher explored the impact of language on the service.

According to Patel (1992:48) the voluntary welfare sector changed faster than the government sector, which is evident in the following report after a consultative conference with social workers in 1991:

- Meetings were held with staff to discuss racism in the organisation.
- Attempts were made to desegregate management structures of agencies from being dominated by white middle-class altruists and experts.
- Agencies which have traditionally served only black clients, were reaching out to white communities.
- Racial inequalities in service delivery were being addressed in some agencies through strategic planning of future services.

It is however still important that staff and organisations accept and respect differences, continue to monitor behaviour and attitudes, pay attention to dynamics, and strive to adapt to the demands of a diverse clientele. Culturally competent organisations would welcome and celebrate diversity while holding all other cultures in high esteem as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:39) as well as Haessly (2001:160). The study explored the experiences of the social workers around cultural diversity in a transforming government department.

2.8.2. Changing Organisational Culture

Organisational transformation indicates a step by step process of restructuring an existing organisation by removing what does not work, reinforcing what works and implementing new systems or cultural values, according to the need (Head 1997:5).

In order for any changes to be sustainable, it has to be clearly communicated and understood by everybody who has to implement the changes as cited by Tossell and Webb (1997:305). Culture may sometimes be confused with race, colour, or ethnicity. The concept is however much broader and has to be unpacked to explore all aspects thereof as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:31). This could be achieved in cultural diversity workshops which could assist to create a new identity, to regulate relationships and to regulate cultural dynamics as cited in a Strategic Competency Document (2006). Gray (1998:34) cites the importance of respecting individual, cultural and social differences, to ensure that techniques used in interventions is cross-culturally acceptable. Radical and cultural changes in an organisation could result in greater resistance than incremental change (Smith and Cronje 2002:231). Transformational change in the public sector had a negative side to both services to the public and to the quality of the work. The impact of cultural diversity is explored and will be revealed in the findings and recommendations will be discussed.

Culture becomes a liability when important beliefs and values interfere with the strategy and structure of an organisation according to Grobler et al., (2002:50). The researcher is of the opinion that clashing of beliefs and values could be found in government organisations with the ideology of the new regime and vice versa. Cultural difference could be a significant liability as personal ideological beliefs cannot always match the dominant ideology of an organisation's culture (Smith and Cronje 2002:223). It is also time consuming to realign an organisational ideology to personal cultures of all employees in this unique situation.

The employees came from different organisations, each with a unique culture, which composes of a set of assumptions that directs activities within the organisations as cited by Brevis, Ngambi, Naicker and Vrba (2002:227).

It was therefore imperative for staff in the department to have been orientated and assisted to develop the necessary competencies to work with different cultures, considering the past of separate development in the South African communities as suggested in Grobler et al., (2002:50).

Social workers had to strive to become culturally competent by increased cultural awareness. Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) states that a person should be vigilant in monitoring one's own behaviours and attitudes in the process of cultural sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity is a deliberate action and should be practiced by all employees in the new situation (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). Staff could invite feedback from others about their engagements to encourage sensitivity towards others. This reflection would assist the employee to discover his or her cultural contribution in the organisation (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway, 1998:40-41).

The following implementation steps as suggested by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) can assist staff in a culturally diverse workplace:

2.8.2.1. Cultural Awareness

The first step to cultural awareness is simply to develop an awareness of culture and an understanding that not all persons and cultures are alike. The organisation could use opportunities of festivals and religious gatherings in the communities, to learn about other cultures. It is important to examine and pay attention to the limitations and difficulties in your own culture and how it impacts on your life and on others (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). Whether sufficient time was allowed to instil cultural awareness amongst staff, is one of the questions that will be unpacked in the findings of the study.

2.8.2.2. Cultural Competence

A cultural competent social worker demonstrates a willingness and ability to bridge differences between the agency and the person seeking help, within the helping relationship (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). The focus will then be on the needs of the client rather than the needs of the social worker.

The social worker will be able to assess the strengths of the person, family, community and culture as well as identify resources that already exist in the environment, irrespective of the culture of the client (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41).

A culturally competent social worker is able to advocate for the rights of the client despite cultural differences as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) and well as Payne (1997:7). Cultural competency can only be acquired over a reasonable period of time. Whether the process of transformation allowed sufficient time for social workers to become culturally competent, is a question which was explored through this study. The study will determine whether a new organisational culture was formed as well as the level of awareness and competency of social workers to cope with the cultural diversity. The next paragraph will highlight the changes in legislation to affect transformed services.

PART TWO

2.9. INTRODUCTION

This section of Chapter 2 focuses on the transformational challenges around legislation and policy changes, transformational approaches to service delivery such as developmental-, integrated and intersectoral models, as well as the impact thereof on service delivery. In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the transformed service delivery framework, the challenges posed by it and the impact thereof on social work in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development.

2.10 CHANGES IN LEGISLATION TO INFORM TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A new interim Constitution, with a built-in Bill of Rights was accepted in 1994 and nine provinces with new borders and their own legislatures came into effect (Lesnik 1997:155). The RDP (1994) was also accepted as a policy framework for a comprehensive approach to harness resources in order to reverse the crisis created by apartheid (ANC 1994:3). According to Lesnik (1997:156), Patel (2007:155) and the RDP (1994:53), a comprehensive review of all the policies and legislation, regulating Social Welfare and Social Security in South Africa, had to be done almost overnight. A new legislative umbrella was developed to provide the framework for development orientated social welfare, based on the principles of equity, access, user involvement and empowerment. The RDP (1994:53) proposed amendments to all existing legislation and policies to include services to the previously disadvantaged groups in the country. The welfare services prior to 1994 were inequitable and discriminatory, with more emphasis on statutory interventions (Patel 2007:155). It was inevitable for the human service organisations to be open to change after the first democratic elections in 1994. Change was inevitable whether it was environmental change or change in addressing the clients needs (Brevis et.al. 2002:101) and (Frigenti 1993:1).

The profession was criticized for not developing people to be self-reliant as cited by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23), Patel (2007:155) and Lesnik (1997:164). In order for the profession to meet the needs of the majority within a changed and transformed framework, legislation had to be amended (Patel 1992:33). The changed legislation was meant to provide guidance to the profession in the process of transformation.

According to the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) the following needs were identified with regards to legislative reform after a survey, conducted in 1994:

- Duplication of Legislation which directed different racial groups had to be replaced: The National Welfare Act 100 of 1978; The National Welfare Act (House of Representatives) 18 of 1986 and the Community Welfare Act (House of Representatives) 104 of 1987. These Acts prescribed the way in which welfare services had to be rendered to all the relevant population groups.
- Changed in marriage and divorce that were guided by multiple laws such as the Divorce Act 70 of 1979, The Black Administration Act 38 of 1927, The Matrimonial Property Act 88 of 1984, The Matrimonial Affairs Act 37 of 1953, The Marriage Act of 1961, The Maintenance Act 23 of 1963 and Mediation in certain Divorce Matters Act of 1987 had to be effected.

It was suggested that the views of social workers in the public sector as well as those in welfare organisations, subsidised by government, be taken into account when legislation are reviewed. The rational was that social workers are directly involved in implementing certain provisions of the acts, according to the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) and a Strategic Competency Document (2006:5).

Some Women's organisations and research institutes contributed by developing proposals for reform in relation to the legal status of women and children. The proposals had to be included in the drafting of the new legislation and policies as cited in the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994). Various professional groups also developed proposals for the reform of the juvenile justice system to be brought in line with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

The PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) further suggested that the policy development should be done in phases and should not be short circuited by the pressure to produce legislation. Patel (2007:97), Lesnik (1997:164) and a Strategic Competency Document (2006:5) states that the principles of participation and transparency could not be fully achieved, due to tight timeframes. According to Gilbert and Tossell (2002: 2) policies provide an explicit course of action for a definite process. It was necessary for staff to be properly trained on policies and legislation to do justice to the implementation thereof.

The following policies and legislation were developed to arrange and order services and resources to meet specific needs of society and to inform service delivery in a transformed manner (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:23):

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No. 108 of 1996).
- The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997).
- The Interim Policy Recommendations of the Inter- ministerial Committee for Youth at risk (1996).
- Minimum Standards for institutional care (1996).
- The Batho Pele Principles (1999).
- The Public Finance Management Act (1999).
- The Social Services Professions Act, 1998 (Act No. 110 of 1998).

- Child Care Act, 1983 (Act No. 74 of 1983).
- The Aged Persons Act 1967 (Act No.81 of 1967).
- The Probation service Act, 1991 (Act No. 116 of 1991) and the Probation Amendment Bill (2002).
- Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act, 1992 (Act No. 20 of 1992).
- Social Assistance Act, 1992 (Act No. 59 of 1992).
- Non-profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act No.71 of 1997).
- National Development Agency Act, 1998 (Act No. 108 of 1998).
- Advisory Board on Social Development Act, 2001 (Act No. 3 of 2001).
- Mental Health Act, 2002 (Act No. 17 of 2002).
- Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act No. 116 of 1998).
- Divorce and Mediation Act, 1979 (Act No. 70 of 1979).
- Maintenance Act, 1998 (Act No. 99 of 1998).
- Criminal Procedures Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).

According to the Strategic Competency Document (2006:4) the human capacity in the public sector was not brought in line with the service delivery demands required for the implementation of the aforementioned Acts and Policies (The Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:8 and Venter 2003:64). The following selected policies and legislation guide and enhance social work service delivery in a transforming South African context:

2.10.1. The new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) formed the basis of transformation and required the public sector to demonstrate the following principles:

- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources.
- Provision of developmental services.

- Impartiality, fairness and equitability of services without any bias.
- Consultation with citizens.
- Accountability of the public service to the citizens.
- Representative public service based on ability, objectivity, fairness and redress of past imbalances.

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) places emphasis on equality in all spheres of life, human dignity, and the right to social security, respect and security of children's rights. The constitution is therefore the overarching document providing guiding principles for all the legislation and policies developed thereafter.

2.10.2. The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006)

The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23) and Venter (2003:37) alludes to the rights of children, youth, woman and older persons as stated in various international conventions and established in the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). The expectation is that intensive services to these focus groups have to be rendered by social workers. According to Lesnik (1997:166) integrated and development services have been promoted from the beginning of the transformation process, but with limited success. Integration was however proven to be easier to establish in some of the deprived under serviced communities as cited by Lesnik (1997:166).

Cooperation between different Departments is geared at minimizing cost, as very often clients of the one agency become the workload of the other according to Holzer and Callahan (1998:95). Integrated service delivery, in line with The Public Finance Management Act (1999), hereafter referred to as the PFMA (1999), is imperative and should be excised by all social workers. If the skill to work integrated is not imparted as yet, this might be experienced as a transformational challenge in contemporary social work practice, from the researcher's perspective.

2.10.3 The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997)

As a primary policy document the White Paper (1997) serves as the foundation for social welfare in a post apartheid era (Patel 2007:163). It sets out the principles, guidelines, proposed policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa (Patel 2007:163).

The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997:3) states that despite the fact that social workers are also trained in community development, their approach to service delivery is largely rehabilitative instead of developmental and preventative, as cited in Patel (2007:154). According to Lombard (1999:98) social workers are not clear on how to integrate the theory of developmental social work into practise. They were however still responsible to adhere to the following restructuring priorities outlined in the White Paper (1997:3):

- The phasing out of all disparities in social welfare programmes.
- The restructuring and the rationalization of the social welfare delivery system to be embraced (White Paper on Social Welfare 1997).
- The actual performance of social workers had to be monitored and measured within particular reporting timeframes to ensure that deviations are identified and rectified according to Brevis et.al., (2002:395).
- Improving service delivery was therefore according to the Strategic Competency Document (2006: 10) the ultimate goal of the transformation programme in the public service.

The challenge posed by the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) is the implementation of sustainable development which involves active participation by clients in making decisions for their own development. This process suggests that people have to take part in policy development and implementation.

The result is that clients have to be involved in the process of meeting their needs, addressing their problems and exercising their potential to become self-reliant as confirmed by in the Public Finance Management Act (1999:9). The challenge to social workers is that they are expected to comply with the White Paper (1997) despite their limitations such as the lack of knowledge, training and resources for the integration of theory into practise (Venter 2003:64).

2.10.4. The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) 1999

The PFMA (1999) promotes objectives of good financial management to ensure effective and efficient service delivery despite limited resources. The PFMA (1999) indicates why and what should change in social service delivery towards a developmental approach. It does not provide clear guidelines with regards to how the shift should be made. Due to the gaps identified in the PFMA (1999) the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004) was formulated.

The Department of Social Development identified thirteen challenges posed by the PFMA (1999) which had to be managed by social workers in contemporary social work practice, such as:

- Accessibility.
- Equitable distribution of services and resources between rural and urban areas.
- Development of more community based services.
- Management boards and structures which reflect the demographic profile of the region and province it serves.
- Ensure the sustainability of emerging and disadvantaged non profit organisations.
- Building the management and financial capacity of emerging organisations, ensuring a transfer of skills from established organisations to emerging organisations.

- Development of affordable costing models.
- Improving the infrastructure and resource base of historically marginalized non profit organizations and communities.
- Halt the process of continued fragmentation of social services.
- Moving away from a competitive individualistic service to cooperative and collective approaches that facilitate skills transfer and service integration.
- Provision of an integrated service that appropriately responds to the needs of the community, recognising their strength and capacity for empowerment.

Despite the above mentioned challenges, social workers in the department had to try and make sense of the PFMA (1999) from 1999, as implementation could not be delayed until the development of the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004), (De Jager 2007). The social work profession was in the middle of this dilemma and had to perform with, or without clear guidance as confirmed by de Jager (2007). Despite the challenges, the philosophy behind the PFMA (1999) according to Booyens (2004:24) allows freedom to manage resources while holding managers accountable to decide how they should manage the resources. The PFMA (1999) advocates greater devolution of decision-making and empowering according to Booyens (2004:24). The PFMA (1999) thus sought to transform welfare services to promote universal access to services that are differentiated and integrated as cited by Patel (2007:163). The PFMA (1999), the IMC (1996:20), and the Integrated Social Development Model (2006: 20). The results of this study (Chapter 5) indicate the social workers knowledge, understanding and compliance to this policy.

2.10.5 The Interim Policy Recommendation (Inter Ministerial Committee : 1996)

The Interim Policy Recommendation (1996) is an output of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), formed in May 1995, to manage the process of transformation of the Child and Youth Care System. The then Deputy Minister of Welfare took the leadership to have this policy developed (IMC 1995:8). The IMC document (1996:76) outlines several social work functions and responsibilities.

Concern was however raised according to Gray (2000:100), that social workers and social educationalist were not widely enough consulted in the drafting of the interim policy. The IMC (1996) requested that each sector integrate the relevant recommendations into their broader transformation processes where appropriate (IMC 1995:8). The recommendations proposed by the IMC are filtered into the new Children's Act as well as in the Child Justice Bill.

Social Workers were identified as the key role players on Prevention, Early Intervention, Statutory and Continuum of Care levels of service delivery to children, youth and families at risk (IMC 1996:76). It is evident that the policies brought out by the IMC (1996) are in line with the expectations indicated in the PFMA (1999) and the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997). The recommendation by the IMC (1996) clearly addresses the rights of the individual as unpacked in the next policy document to be discussed.

2.10.6. The Batho Pele Principles (1999)

Batho Pele is the Sotho translation for "People First". The Batho Pele Principles (1999) advocates for the rights of the citizens to be consulted about the services rendered to them. Provision is also made for the public to be given choices where possible. According to the Batho Pele Principles (1999) citizens is entitled to receive services of acceptable standards. Information about the service and what to expect must be available. The Batho Pele Principles (1999) clearly state that services should be accessible to the person who needs the service. Accurate information must be communicated to the citizens. The services should reflect value for money as cited by Koehler and Pankowski (1996:62). Retraining of service providers in government to implement new policies and legislation is strongly suggested in the principles. The redressing of the imbalances of the past, in line with the White Paper (1997) and the Regional Model (2004:3) is also underlined by the Batho Pele Principles (1999).

The public is educated on what they should expect from services in line with the Batho Pele Principles (1999). Expectations are thus raised while resources are limited as confirmed by de Jager (2007). The result is that Social workers often fail to satisfy the high expectations of the client due to limited resources as cited in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006: 8). This could be perceived as a transformational challenge as it leads to the profession being criticized for not meeting the community's needs as described by Gray (2000:100) and Lesnik (1997:166).

2.10.7 The Probation Service Act (No 116 of 1991)

The Probation Services Act (No 116 of 1991) provides for the establishment and implementation of programmes aimed at combating crime and for the rendering of assistance and treatment of persons involved in crime (Patel 2007:164).

Patel (2007:164) also alludes to the Child Justice Bill that has been introduced to parliament and that makes provision for the institutionalisation of restorative justice to youth in conflict with the law (Patel 2007:164). The Probation Service Act (No 116 of 1991) and the Probation Amendment Bill of (2002) guide probation officers, who are currently, social workers in a highly specialized field. It describes the role and functions of the probation officers towards the court and the youth in conflict with the law. Probation officers do investigations, compile reports and recommend to the court suitable sentences for youth in conflict with the law (Shabangu 2004:23). Probation services are also currently rendered according to amendments to the Act in 2002, in accordance with the interim recommendation of the IMC (1996) which underpin restorative justice, diversion and developmental interventions. These recommendations are also embodied in the Child Justice Bill as mentioned by Patel (2007:165).

The challenge currently posed by the Probation Services Act (1991) according to Shabangu (2004:5) is the fact that probation services are performed by social workers who are not adequately trained on transformation of the Child and Youth Care System.

Shabangu (2004:50) also mention that probation services are overloaded and understaffed, which compromises the quality of services to the courts. The implementation of transformation policies and legislation is therefore hampered according to Shabangu (2004:5) as confirmed in Chapter 1.2.

All the transformation policies and legislation derives from the constitution of South Africa and is linked to each other.

It provides a framework that clearly states the expectation from social workers as well as the rights of the communities. The value and intentions of the policies and legislation can thus not be questioned. The challenges that were experienced to translate and integrate the theories into practice will now be discussed.

2.11. THE CHALLENGE TO TRANSLATE TRANSFORMATIONAL POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

Social workers were expected to take responsibility to acquaint themselves with the departmental policies and legislation as well as the transformation legislation administered by other government departments such as the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, Correctional Services, and the South African Police Services (Patel 2007:163). Without formal orientation to legislation, the risk was that the legislation could be interpreted differently by different practitioners.

Despite the above mentioned challenge social workers had to implement the prescribed policies before 2004 (IMC 1996). Service delivery had to reflect transformation on different levels within set time frames (IMC 1996). According to a Strategic Competency Document (2006) the biggest challenge for social workers in implementing policies and legislation was the fact that it was not clear from the onset and by the time it became clear, constant changes had to be accommodated.

The following discussion will provide a description of the nine levels of service delivery in accordance with The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA:1999), the IMC (1996:20), and the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006: 20) as well as Patel (2007:163).

2.11.1. Prevention

The aim of prevention services is to ensure that identification of vulnerable communities, families, groups and youth takes place and intervention is affected before crisis status is reached (Integrated Social Development Plan 2006: 20). Prevention services further aims at strengthening existing capacity and developing new capacity to promote resilience and increase ability to benefit from developmental opportunities (IMC 1996:20). Funding for prevention services is a high priority in terms of the PFMA (1999). Instead of appointing more social workers, a moratorium was placed on the filling of posts in terms of Resolution 7 (2000).

The number of social workers was decreasing while the expectation was that prevention services had to be prioritized (Integrated Social Development Plan 2006: 20).

Social work services is however still reactive according to Lombard (2006:24) and therefore not in compliance to the PFMA (1999) in this regard. Crisis intervention related to poverty, unemployment and violence, has to be prioritized and allows little or no time for the social workers to get to prevention services (Terreblanche 2003:25). This poses a direct transformational challenge on practicing social workers as some of the poor communities needs still remain unmet, which leave social workers feeling powerless (Terreblanche 2003:35) in terms of rendering prevention services.

2.11.2. Early Intervention

Early intervention is a level of intervention after assessment, which includes intensive support, capacity building, social relief; home based developmental support and therapeutic programmes (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). These services need to be widely developed and rendered by multi-disciplinary teams, across a variety of stakeholders (Integrated service Delivery Model 2006:20).

Services on this level is imperative, to ensure that there is no further deterioration in social circumstances of clients and that reunification or restoration is acquired where possible (Integrated service Delivery Model 2006:20). The success of early intervention is dependent on the client's cooperation as cited by Mbambo (2004b:39) and Patel (2005:23). The high statutory caseloads are currently prioritized above early intervention due to backlogs and the lack of human resources (Lombard 2006: 24).

2.11.3. Statutory Services

The fact that cases mostly enter the department at the level when statutory intervention is inevitable. This is the stage where court proceedings are embarked on, as cited in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23).

Multi-disciplinary involvement is crucial at this level of service delivery as statutory processes for interim or final statutory placement of children or youth are already in process (IMC 1996:22).

The greatest challenge for social workers is the shift from deficiency-based approaches and interventions to strength and empowerment approaches and strategies as cited by Sturgeon (1998:26) and Landman (2004:79) in Lombard (2006:11). The process should be child friendly and child-centred with the involvement of the child, the family and significant others (IMC 1996:22).

The crisis intervention does however not always allow enough time to involve all stakeholders and significant others at the initial stage, which again open social workers up for criticism in terms of transformation according to (Lombard (2006) and Terreblanche (2003:25).

2.11.4. Continuum of Care

The IMC (1996:22) indicated that regardless of the re-prioritisation of resources and greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention, 30 000 children were already within the child and youth care system in 1996. It is thus evident that the implementation of the full framework for transformation of the child and youth care system would take time (IMC 1996:22). The notion however exist that there will always be a need for children to go deeper into the statutory system, due to the increase and the impact of HIV and Aids (Lombard 2006). Social workers who where not properly trained to implement the transformation policies of the child and youth care systems were not able to do so (Cloete and Wissink 2000:303).

2.11.5. Promotion and Prevention Services

Promotion and prevention services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20) are those services which would lead to the upliftment of people and communities by the promotion of their wellbeing. Guidance and support in choices and sound decision making is part of prevention services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

According to the Annual Departmental Operational Plan 2006/07, the celebration of calendar events and awareness campaigns are ways in which promotion and prevention services are executed. According to Lombard (2006) social workers find it difficult to balance statutory social work services with the proposed promotional and preventative services.

2.11.6 Rehabilitative Services

The services, according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:20) are rehabilitative and aim at improving and maintaining the social functioning of clients.

The impaired functioning could be due to disability or chronic conditions (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). Departmental social workers rely on organisations registered and funded by government, to render rehabilitative services on behalf of the department (Lombard 2006:23). The departmental social workers are however still responsible to monitor, evaluate and quality assure the services rendered by organisations, which could be seen as adding to the already heavy loads as cited in Lombard (2006:23).

2.11.7 Protection Services

A protective service (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20) is rendered by social workers within a legislative or policy framework, and therefore includes statutory services. It is aimed at safeguarding the well-being of individuals and families. These services could be rendered in terms of The Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act No. 116 of 1998) as well as the Child Care Act (Act 74 of 1983), as amended in 1999. Protection services were always high on the social work agenda. The intensity had to increase due to the impact of HIV and Aids on the communities (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

2.11.8 Continuing Care Services

The continuing care services are aimed at maintaining or improving the physical, social and psychological functioning of individuals, who for various reasons are not able to care for themselves fully (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). The goal of continuing care is to improve independence and quality of life. Access to all services is available due to progressive and flexible systems, according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:20).

2.11.9 Mental Health and Addictive Services

These services encompass the area of mental health, addiction and family violence through prevention, treatment and aftercare in an integrated manner (Integrated Social Development Model 2006:20). This service is managed in the same manner as rehabilitative services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

2.12. THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

According to Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:79-80) as well as Midgley (1996:3) the developmental approach was a key instrument to implement transformational policies. The writers summarise the developmental approach as follows:

- Focusing on strengths rather than on pathology.
- Building competency rather than attempting to cure.
- Encouragement of trial- and- error learning.
- Always taking the context into account.
- Understanding and responding appropriately to developmental tasks and needs.
- Working with the total person not the so called pathology or problem.
- Work aimed at maximising potential rather than minimising the problem.
- A multi-disciplinary team approach involving the child and the family.

A changed approach according to Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:80), to the problems of clients was needed. Social workers had to assess the situations reported by clients differently than before. The problems now have to be viewed as challenges and strengths in stead of emphasising pathologies. This new approach necessitated a reorientation of thinking for social workers as cited by Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:80) and mentioned in the Batho Pele Principles (1999), the RDP (1994:57) and the White Paper on Social welfare (1997).

Social workers had to enter into partnerships (Payne 1997:259 and Venter 2003:30) with clients in order to implement the developmental and strength-based approach as cited by Gray (2002:193). This changed approach posed a challenge to social workers who were used to historically being responsible to complete the work according to their plan of action (Gray 2002:193). Since social workers are assessed on the completion of their work, it was much easier to just do it themselves than to rely on the strengths of the client as stated by Gray (2002:193).

Social work practice did not only have to adapt to the developmental approach, the practice was also affected by the focus over the last decade on Social Security, to the detriment of social work services (Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng 2006:34). The move of Social Security to the separate agency separated the high number of grant recipients from the clients receiving social work services as cited in the "Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:8). During the Gauteng Provincial Government Budget Lekgotla (2005) appropriate budgeting, post social security had to be refined to ensure that the allocation of funds is according to the need for social work services in the communities (Annual Performance Plan 2006:34). If money was only allocated post 2005 for developmental social services, the opinion is that financial resources were not sufficient to enable social workers to implement the developmental approach prior to 2005. The study will discuss the implementation or challenges around the developmental approach as a transformed model for social service delivery.

2.13. THE INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

According to Lombard and Van Rensburg (2001:325) partnerships is meant to enable social service organisations to make a shift from fragmented, specialized services to developmental integrated services. Different professions therefore have to integrate in the best interest of their client (IMC 1996:58). Integration will alternately ensure a holistic approach and assistance to clients (IMC 1996:58).

Lack of integration between core services in the department was highlighted in the Regional Model for Gauteng (2004:50). According to Lombard (2005) the guidelines for integration in statutory social services are not so clear and still need more development. These guidelines should incorporate clear directions with regard to the levels of service delivery, the core social services as well as how implementation will be monitored and evaluated (Lombard 2005). The following guidelines for integration as suggested by Lombard (2005) would be valuable to assist social workers in the process of integration:

- The protection of human rights, for example, the rights of the child, the family and community with regard to participation in protection decisions and processes.
- Participation strategies for engaging families and communities in decisions and activities.
- Addressing the fundamental causes of family disintegration.
- Respect for social and culture contexts of children and families when placement out of home is considered.
- The fostering of self-reliance, capacity-building and empowerment of at risk families and communities due to causes of children and families being at risk such as poverty and unemployment.
- Partnerships between government and NGOs, service providers and relevant role players within the community, including business and community structures such as schools and religious organisations.
- Integration of core services within the social service delivery framework of statutory intervention and prevention and early intervention within the context of reconstruction and aftercare.

Integral to an integrated plan for social service delivery, is to clarifying the respective roles of service providers with regard to core service delivery areas and levels (IMC 1996:58).

This includes the general, versus specialised services and more specifically, what one social worker can manage when involved in developmental statutory social service delivery (IMC 1996:58). The social worker is also identified to lead the process of integrating the multi-disciplinary team to ensure compliance (IMC 1996:58).

Social workers were expected to fulfil conflicting roles, such as to be a community developer as well as the statutory worker in the process of integration according to Landman (2004:98). Community development can however not be integrated with social service interventions by the same social worker, due to the distinctive nature of the two interventions (Landman (2004:98). The trust relationship of a community development worker will be affected if that same worker has to remove an abused child. Wexler (2003:45 - 47) states that the same caution is needed with regard to early intervention and statutory services due to possible conflicting roles. It seems to be advisable for different practitioners to take on specific functions on specific levels for the reason identified above (Wexler 2003:45 - 47). How the social worker engages depends on the design of the integrated plan as cited by Wexler (2003:47). The underlying challenge to an effective integrated plan for social service delivery is partnerships and inter-sectoral collaboration, led by the social worker (IMC 1996:58). Integration, involving a multi disciplinary team, could result in each team member having specific roles within the integration process (IMC 1996:58).

2.14. PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERSECTORAL COLLABORATION

Integrated plans with visionary leadership are needed to built partnerships and coordinate service delivery according to Lombard (2005). Lombard and Du Preez (2004:233) cite the various categories of 'partnership' and highlights trust as an underlying fundamental value for partnership. Government and Non Governmental Organisation's (hereafter referred to as NGO"s), need to work very hard on building such trust in order to jointly take developmental social services forward in South Africa (Lombard 2005).

There are still unanswered questions and a great deal of mistrust emanating from 1994, which impacts seriously on social service delivery and sound partnerships according to Loffell and Du Toit, Beeld, 31 January: 2005:11). As early as 2005 people were still asking questions such as “what is understood by transformation?” According to Lombard (2005) it is significant for the way forward to remember that there has never been clarification on what exactly the government, the business and private sector’s roles, are in respect of transformation.

The lack of consensus and common understanding has a huge impact on the services that are funded by government (Lombard 2005). According to a Developmental Quality Assurance report (2005:3) of the Johannesburg Child welfare Society, NGO’s lose social workers to the government due to the disparity in salaries between government and non-governmental posts. The report states that NGO’s are constantly training new social workers just to lose them to the department. NGO management is therefore highly challenged to find ways of retaining inexperienced staff due to the fact they are competing with government which can offer better salary packages (Weinbach 2003:280-281). The disparities between government and NGO’s are also affecting the partnership. Partnership according to the researcher’s view should benefit both parties and not be at the cost of the other stakeholder.

2.15. THE CHALLENGE BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND LEGISLATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF

There is a challenge between the development of legislation, having it passed and the ultimate implementation thereof. Change in legislation takes people out of their comfort zones and can be traumatic as cited by Lesnik (1997:164). Apart from the resistance to change, a number of factors could go wrong according (Lesnik 1997:164) in the implementation phase which could jeopardise the successful implementation of legislation, such as:

- Insufficient financial resources (Terreblanche 2003:45).
- The lack of skills by personnel who must implement the legislation (Terreblanche 2003:447).
- Communication challenges between policy makers and implementers which leads to ineffective implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Inadequate time devoted to a programme as to much mat be expected within unrealistic time frames (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Policy goals being vague, conflicting and multiple, which leads to ineffective implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Implementation which acquires intersectoral cooperation is a challenge as input from others is not easy to manage, but it determines the successful implementation of the legislation or policy (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Legislation is often framed in a broad fashion which allows implementers to influence the content of the policy when it comes to implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- External circumstances can provide crippling constrains to the implementation process (Lesnik 1997:164).

From the literature study, it can be concluded that the above mentioned experiences provide firsthand transformational challenges cited by social workers during the development and implementation phases of the transformation legislation in Johannesburg.

The development and implementation of some of the transformational policies had far reaching implications on the social work profession (Gray 2000:99) as well as Streak and Poggenpoel (2005:4). The social work profession was marginalized when government support was withdrawn from the profession and other occupational groups were elevated (Gray (2000:102). The fact that the profession was associated with the apartheid Government, led to the profession being criticised according to Gray (2000:101).

Mckendrick (1998: xii) states that social work models and practices were transplanted from the Northern Hemisphere countries to address the “poor white problem”. The impression was therefore that social work in South Africa is not geared to meet the development and economic needs of the communities in accordance with the South African Constitution and the Intergrated service Delivery Model (2006:18).

The policy changes have presented the profession with a crisis of confidence, arising from the need to learn new ways of doing things and of functioning in a new policy environment (Patel 2007:210). This led to a sense of marginalisation to the social worker as professional (Patel 2007:210). Approaches to service delivery had to change. The researcher was not able to establish how the changing of approaches was managed, through the literature study. The above mentioned levels of service delivery was dependant on the implementation and change management plans as indicated in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:41). The effective implementation of the legislation and policies had to be done in accordance with the service delivery model (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:41).

The transformational challenges experienced by practising social workers from the explored literature thus far in the study, can be summarized as follows:

The lack of skills to implement integration, developmental social work, the gaps in the PFMA (1999) as well as the lack of skills to implement the transformation of the Child and Youth Care System and other policies. The expectations of clients were raised while a lack of resources prevailed in the social work profession (Lesnik 1997:159).

Social workers also found it difficult to implement the strength based approach, to focus on strengths in stead of emphasising pathologies and to make a shift to empowerment interventions as cited by Sturgeon (1998:26) and Landman (2004:79) in Lombard (2006).

Recommendations have been drafted in Chapter 5 to manage the identified transformational challenges to contemporary social work practice.

2.16. CONCLUSION

According to the literature, social work is a profession geared at helping people to help themselves under constant changing circumstances. The profession is globally influenced and directed by political changes due to its position in the welfare sector. Social workers in South Africa were distributed unequally and served the needs of the minority in the country, to the detriment of the majority. Transformational challenges led to a leaner public sector which was further affected by international recruitment of social workers. The process of amalgamation of the different own departments to one democratic department, posed challenges which included working in a diverse workplace, practicing in a prescribed national language and adapting to a new organisational culture.

The readiness of social workers to implement the said legislation and policies was challenging to the profession. The paradigm shift of social workers from rendering purely statutory social work services to developmental social work services was a challenge (White Paper on Social Welfare, the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001: 245). Social workers were also confused about the differences between community development and the developmental approach at the point of implementation. Lesnik (1997:162) further states that an introduction were given to social workers but reorientation as it relates to implementation, still had to be done.

Developmental statutory social services are an integral part of developmental social welfare services, which can be implemented on the various levels of social service delivery. The integrated model as well as intersectoral collaboration was new concepts that had to be led by social workers.

These changes went hand in hand with organisational changes, change in organisational culture, diversity in the work place and the implications of different languages on service delivery. It becomes evident that it is not only unclear policy directives, but also the inability to control and address the variables in the practice environment, that hold social workers captured in a residual policy framework for statutory social service delivery. It is therefore not only social policy, but also the attitudes and abilities to implement these policies which are determining factors for the successful shift to developmental statutory social services.

The next chapter will elaborate on the impact of the transformational challenges on the social worker as a person.

CHAPTER 3

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES POSED TO THE SOCIAL WORKER AS A PERSON

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the impact of the transformational changes on the social worker, the image of the profession, the preparedness of social workers to implement transformation policies and legislation, the attitude of social workers towards the transformational paradigm shift, high caseloads, motivation and support, stressors, and employee assistance programmes. Special reference is made to the challenges imbedded in the transformational approaches, the inability of social workers to meet expectations and their attitudes which emanate from transformational stressors.

3.2. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES POSED BY ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

According to and Tshabalala (2001:170) transformational changes is bound to have an emotional impact on employees and can cause physical fatigue, de-motivation frustration and an undermined ability to cope. Fear and anxiety is common when people have to move out of their comfort zones (Tshabalala (2001:170). The researcher managed to obtain an internal document in which the impact of amalgamation on staff is discussed. Fear and anxiety as described by Tshabalala (2001:170) were present, but not dealt with, which cause social workers to develop burnout. As much as the impact of the amalgamation process is documented, no evidence could be found by the researcher that indicated how the identified effects were dealt with.

The study will reflect the impact of the change in organisational culture as discussed in Chapter 2, on the social worker as a person, against the possibilities as stated in the literature.

Social workers found themselves in the dilemma of reorganisation and reorientation to unfair and extended functions (Hughes and Pengelly 1997:6). In this situation a new sense of belonging had to be created in the midst of upheavals and disorientation (Hughes and Pengelly 1997:6). Social workers were expected to take on more work without increased resources which clearly indicated that the work were given priority over emotional and psychological needs of the social worker as a person as confirmed by Hughes and Pengelly (1997:6). The threat of a decreasing public sector was real and forced people who needed to practice, to comply with the unfair expectations (RDP 1994:80). An internal departmental document indicates that social workers complied with whatever was expected from them due to the uncertainty they found themselves in. Based on the absence of literature in this regard it is possible that the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker has not been unpacked.

3.3. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGE TO THE STATUS OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

The transformation of the welfare sector has raised critical questions about the role and status of the profession (Patel 2007:210). It was suggested that social work is not relevant to the developmental needs of the communities after transformation (McKendrick 2001:106). According to Lombard (2002:30) it is imperative that the profession remain relevant, within the socio-economic changes and that the profession should maintain high standards of ethical conduct and accountability. The government questioned the value of the social work profession in a transforming South Africa (Gray 2002:100). According to McKendrick (2001:106) social workers did not defend the profession or the relevance of their training.

In the researchers consultation with experts, Stevens (2004) indicated that it would be better to rather leave the profession than to try and convince others of the wealth of knowledge in the profession. This is an indication of a low morale illustrated by a practicing social worker.

According to Patel (2007:210) social workers have expressed the concern that the new policy directions which include paraprofessionals, could lead to the de-professionalization and consequent loss of status for the social work profession.

Patel (2007:210) as well as the Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng (2006:14) states that the new policy directions was motivated by the need to manage the vast backlogs in services post apartheid.

The idea was to increase human resource capacity, in a cost effective manner, by appointing other professionals to complement social work (Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng (2006:14). The efforts of government to assist in addressing the communities' needs were not perceived positively by social workers (Patel 2007:210). Instead, social workers experienced it as interference with there work and felt unpreciation (Patel 2007:210). The apathy of social workers to defend the profession when they felt it was threatened (McKendrick 2001:106), is symptomatic of the loss of professional status, experienced by social workers. The researcher is of the view that all of the aforementioned issues influence the attitudes of social workers towards the transformational changes and the challenges it posed on the profession.

3.4. PREPARATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS TO IMPLEMENT AND EXECUTE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

The ANC congress (RDP 1994), suggested that resources be availed for the training of staff, on the following four different levels to fast tract the process of transformation:

- Lateral entry for progressive academics, activists;
- Organisers and NGO workers;
- Top level management development;
- Promotion within the public service.

The retraining of present incumbents of posts was mandated according to the RDP (1994). Patel (2007:275) however stated that there was a number of risk factors that needed to be addressed before implementing the mandated changes and strategies. She stated that social work staff and managers could have been threatened and undermined by the processes of change (Patel 2007:275). According to Patel (2007:275) additional projects were identified to address the need for staff development and to build management capacity.

This would assist staff on all levels to cope with transformational challenges. The training, retraining and orientation of social workers to implement the transformational legislation were imperative as cited in the Batho Pele Principles (1999).

The paradigm shift from purely statutory social work services to developmental social work services, in line with the need for empowerment of the client-system, was suggested by a number of policies such as the White Paper on Social Welfare, the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001:245). The researcher could not obtain any literature as evidence that to ensure a paradigm shift, was initiated from a social work perspective. Lesnik (1997:156), however stated that there were high expectations that the new dispensation would deliver radical change in service delivery.

The challenge for social welfare organisations post 1994 was to improve service delivery and make services more accessible and responsive to the needs of the vast majority of the population (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers, 2004:5). Streak and Poggenpoel,(in Lombard 2005:4) indicate that, one of the most difficult, yet urgent, tasks which faced the first democratic government was to transform and extend the social welfare system.

Social work services was however also challenged by the fact that there was virtually no funds available for any new services and that funding would instead be decreased as cited by Lesnik (1997:159).

The needs and expectations of communities in Gauteng have increased and had to be addressed with no increase in the budget after the constitutional change (Lesnik 1997:159). According to Raath (2006), social workers were not trained properly to implement the transformation policies (Cloete and Wissink 2000:303). This was more due to budgetary constraints while the need for training existed. A study conducted by Mashego and Lombard (2002:207) in Gauteng however indicated that 36% of probation officers had no experience in probation work, 83% had training in Developmental Social Welfare. Despite the high number of trained social workers according to Mashego and Lombard (2002:207), only 27% of the respondents implemented the Developmental Social Welfare Model.

The resistance of social workers to implement the training indicated a negative attitude towards transformation as cited by Mashego and Lombard (2002:212). The researcher explored the attitudes as well as the exposure of staff at the Johannesburg Regional office to transformational training.

Lesnik (1997:162) makes reference to the process of consultation to realign services with fewer resources, but does not make any reference to training. According to Lesnik (1997: 162) it was however evident that social workers were confused about the differences between community development and the developmental approach at the point of implementation. Lesnik (1997:162) further states that transformation policies were introduced to social workers, but reorientation as it relates to implementation, was not done.

In line with the RDP (1994), training had to be rolled out to fast track the process of transformation. Training on policies was rolled out to managers according to Hoffmann (2006), but the social work incumbents were not trained to be more effective in their service delivery. According to Dalton and Wright (1999:278) social work training institutions had to lead in education for service delivery in a changed environment. The need for training cannot be over emphasized as it would have allowed staff to express concerns and reinforce learned skills as cited by Koehler and Pankowshi (1996:65).

3.5. ATTITUDE OF SOCIAL WORKERS TOWARDS THE REQUIRED PARADIGM SHIFT

The effects of transformation on the social work profession influenced the attitude of social workers towards the transformation process (Mashego and Lombard 2002:212). The negative attitudes towards the developmental paradigm, which is directly linked to the transformational legislation and policies as published in several articles locally and internationally, is evident according to Brown and Portab (2001:138-151), Drower (2002:7-20), Lombard (1997:11-23) and Pozzuto (2001:154-163).

A paradigm shift which is in essence a mind shift that would require a change of attitude amongst social workers to transformed services delivery (Mbambo, 2004b:40) and Terreblanche 2003:443). Negative attitudes could promote resistance to change. According to Lechuti (2004), social workers resisted change, as it interfered with their stability. She also stated that changes were not communicated to grass root social workers, which further hamper compliance and influenced the attitudes of social workers.

The negativity of social workers towards developmental social work according to Mashego and Lombard (2002:212) is the reason why social workers are currently still performing their statutory work in exactly the same way as before 1997. It is important for social workers to adopt a more positive attitude to be able to make a shift to transformed social services (Terreblanche 2003:443). Lombard (2005) suggests that developmental social work will simply be discarded as impossible, without the right attitude. De Jager (2007), however stated in a paper delivered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, that the younger social workers were more open to the implementation of the developmental approach than their seniors, who were exposed to the old paradigm. The results of this study do reflect the implementation of the developmental approach by social workers in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development.

3.6. HIGH CASELOADS VERSUS TRANSFORMATION

High case loads are symptomatic of a lack of resources, discrepancies in salaries between NGO's and government social workers, and an exodus from the profession to further careers either in another country or outside of the social welfare sector (Lombard, 2005). Although these factors have been prominent in the media over the past years, resulting in government recognising social work as a scarce skill in South Africa, the devastating impact has reached crisis proportions for social services in South Africa as cited in the Draft Retention Strategy (2006).

A very high percentage of social workers' caseloads entail statutory work and therefore focus on children and families (Lombard 2005) and Venter (2003:53).

According to Lesnik (1997:165) high statutory case loads can be overwhelming and, time consuming. The high caseloads makes the shift to transformational approaches difficult (Lombard 2006). Within the context of developmental social welfare services, the focus needs to shift from the individual to the masses as cited in the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004:5) as well as Streak and Poggenpoel (2005:4). The researcher will explore how the social workers in the department cope with the challenge of high case loads versus developmental social welfare services. There is an increase in statutory cases due to the shortage of social workers in the field (Jacobs 2006).

According to Jacobs (2006) social workers in the Department of Social Development have to attend to all cases allocated to them, while NGO's can refuse to take a case if they have a vacancy and would not be able to attend to the case. This places social workers in the department at risk of being charged with misconduct (Lombard 2005). There is evidence of social workers who are formally being charged with unprofessional conduct when they cannot cope with the demands arising from unmanageable work loads (Lombard 2005).

The Gauteng Social Service and Welfare Development Forum's Crisis Committee, the National Coalition for Social Services (NACOSS) and the protest marches in 2005 by social workers, students, academics and clients demonstrated the frustrations of social workers. Du Toit: (2006) stated that social services in Gauteng are on the brink of collapsing. A survey by the Gauteng Welfare Forum Crisis Committee highlighted that a quarter of the NGO's experience a staff turn over of 50% in six months (Du Toit: 2006). The turnover could be as a result of frustration, lack of job satisfaction or a low salaries.

Government and society still expect overburdened social workers and welfare organisations to take on more statutory work and register as many as 300 - 500 cases at a time (Du Toit 2006). The Department of Social Development's policy indicates that a social worker who works with a variety of welfare cases should not have more than 60 files at a given time as cited by Du Toit (2006) as quoted by Lombard (2005) and substantiated by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:39).

The recommendation of Loffell is that 20 cases should be the norm for social workers dealing with abused cases (Du Toit, 2006). An example of the heavy case loads is the foster care backlog of 26 000 in the Gauteng province, according to a backlog report to the Minister of the Executive Committee hereafter referred to as the (MEC) in July (2006). The MEC for the Department of Social Development, Mr Lekgora, committed to have the foster care backlog eliminated before the end of the financial year 2006/2007 according to the Backlog Report (July:2006).

Intensive monitoring and evaluation of this process was done by the Gauteng Provincial Office of the Department of Social Development. The political commitment of the MEC placed increased pressure on contemporary social work to prioritise children's court investigations in order to attend to the foster care backlog and have children placed in foster care with the receipt of a foster parent grant (Koutoulogeni : 2006).

This crisis work approach implies that social workers are unlikely to have the time or energy to apply a human rights approach and to explore available community protection options (Terreblanche 2003:25). The decision to remove a child is, in many instances made under pressure.

The social worker with the best intentions to provide the most appropriate services simply does not have the time to formulate a well developed, integrated plan of action Lombard 2006 and Terreblanche 2003:5). The collaboration with clients and other relevant role players in accordance with transformation policies cannot thus not be considered (IMC 1996:58). This scenario reflects the old residual social welfare paradigm for statutory services and reinforces the perception that it is not possible to provide statutory social services from a developmentally focused approach (IMC 1996:58).

3.7. MOTIVATION FROM SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS TO COPE WITH TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING THE SOCIAL WORKER

A framework for balancing challenges and support can be seen as a helpful way of creating a positive atmosphere in which reflection and learning are both supported and encouraged Tshabalala (2001:170).

Social workers, who were part of the process when transformation was introduced, need support to manage in the continuously challenging environment. The balancing of challenge and support according to Tshabalala (2001:170) as follows:

- Low support plus low challenge is likely to contribute to low morale and possibly a lack of commitment.
- Low support plus high challenge can easily produce an atmosphere of fear and thus encourage defensiveness.
- High support and low challenge runs the risk of leading to a too cosy atmosphere and complacency.

- High support plus high challenge is clearly the most effective combination as it encourages learning through challenges while providing the supportive atmosphere which gives confidence to take risks.

Motivation is one of the most important managerial functions. Social workers are a unique and complex group of professionals as cited by Werner (2004:310). Motivation and support is important to enable social workers render services to the of their ability. The following factors could serve as motivation for social workers according to Weinbach (2003:138-144):

3.7.1. Professional Values and Ethics

Staff would be more motivated if what is expected by managers is in line with their own values and ethics. Mutual reinforcement will be enhanced and according to Weinbach (2003:138-144) staff in this situation is often willing to go the extra mile in delivering services. If the transformational expectations are inline with the ethics and values of the profession, the implementation would be enhanced (Weinbach 2003:138-144):

3.7.2. Influence of Work Groups

The influence of the group often becomes a powerful motivator (Brevis et.al., (2002:344) as well as De Cenzo and Robbins (1999:15).

Supervisors should therefore create norms with the group to foster desirable behaviour in the interest of the organisation (Tshabalala 2001:170). Complying with the norms of the group will provide a sense of belonging and serve as a motivator for the social worker (Weinbach 2003:138-144).

3.7.3. Competition and Conflict

Competition amongst different sections is inevitable and could be utilised positively. Social work is however placed in a competitive position to para-professions without the acknowledgement of what the profession has to offer (Mckendrick 2001:108). This situation could encourage conflict between the social worker and the para-professional (Weinbach 2003:138-144).

3.7.4. Group Cohesiveness

Employees tend to be more satisfied and motivated to do their work when inspired by being part of a cohesive work group Tshabalala (2001:170). The amalgamation process however brought changes to the group cohesion. This affected the level of commitment to achieving objectives as reflected by Weinbach (2003:141).

3.7.5. Supervising Growth

Supervision and continuing education are important components of supportive growth (Weinbach 2003:138-144). It provides knowledge to improve work performance and to set a climate of reasonable certainty. If supportive growth was the practice from the beginning of transformation, informed and intelligent decisions around the changes could be made by empowered social workers as cited by Weinbach (2003:141).

Motivation according to Brevis et al., (2002:344) as well as De Cenzo and Robbins (1999:15) is one of the factors which directly influences employee performance, as motivation emanates from within a person to satisfy an unsatisfied need. It is proven by research that people do what is in their best interest (Weinbach 2003:141).

Employees, who can align themselves with the organisational goals, will be motivated to achieve those goals as it will bring about fulfilment for them (Weinbach 2003:141). The literature did not give an indication that an atmosphere of fulfilment to social workers has been created as they aligned themselves to the transformational goals.

Gray (1998:111) describes an empowerment management model as a facilitative management style which goes hand in hand with staff development and empowerment. This model was effectively implemented in an established municipality in the Cape Peninsula in 1994 and can be seen as an exiting challenge to social work agencies, in the process of transformation (Gray 1998:113-116).

3.8. TRANSFORMATIONAL RELATED STRESS EXPERIENCED BY SOCIAL WORKERS

Stress can be defined as an individual's reaction to too much pressure (Grobler et al., 2002:441). It is when the situation creating the pressure does not seem to be avoidable (Grobler et al., 2002:441). The reaction could be negative, professionally and personally. The central challenge for empowering social care is how anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice can be implemented in agency context where statutory duties and regulations are predominating, such as at the Department of Social Development as cited by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11). The expectation is that social workers have to cope with this challenge in compliance, not only to transformation but also to social work ethics according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11). In a transforming South Africa, the normal deliverables became stressful due to the deliberate focus on anti-discrimination and anti oppression (White Paper on Social Welfare: 1997).

Everybody will have experienced stress at some time in their lives. It should not be confused with pressure, although, to some, the terms are interchangeable (Grobler et al., 2002:441). Work pressure becomes stress when it causes negative emotions such as worry, frustration and anger, according to Grobler et al., 2002:440). There are certain typical stress factors such as time pressure, poor communication or pressure from the boss as cited by Grobler et al., 2002:440).

The researcher aims at focussing on the stress factors posed by transformational challenges on contemporary social work. A social worker who is confronted with a heavy and complex caseload, in a situation of systemic conflict and change could be de-motivated, have a lack of confidence and may present with emotional or health problems (Grobler et al., 2002:441). Increased stress could thus hamper reflective practice (Humphreys 2000:65).

As the level of stress increase, the level of reflection on one self will decrease as cited by Tshabalala (2001:170). Grobler et al., 2002:444) provides clear guidance to manage work overload under normal circumstances and within the control of the person. This could also be applicable to a transforming work environment. The need for social work in the country is however bigger than the supply, which allows very little, if any, control by social workers or managers (Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy 2005). Social workers should still be cared for during supervision sessions, where reflection and prioritizing should take place (Tshabalala 2001:170)

Challenges in the work situation can result in, what Humphreys (2000:65) refers to, as rust out and work avoidance. The writer explains rust out as the opposite of burnout but with equally devastating results. When social workers attempt to cope with increasing, multiple internal and external demands at the cost of their health and private lives, they end up being burned out according to Humphreys (2000:50).

Burnout can be identified by the following symptoms:

- Absenteeism.
- Physical exhaustion.
- Appetite problems (eating disorders).
- Insomnia.
- Psychosomatic complaints (headaches, back pains chest pains, stomach problems, bowel problems).
- Irritability.

- Reliance on drugs such as alcohol, tranquillisers, antidepressants and nicotine.
- Pessimism and fatalism.
- Increasing discouragement.
- Defensive attitudes to work.
- Poor relationships with colleagues.
- Loss of self-esteem.
- Loss of motivation for self development.
- Reduced involvement in life.
- Loss of creativity.

Burnout is a result of a combination of the enmeshment of self, with work and work pressures as cited by Humphreys (2000:51). Social workers who suffer from burnout are left with feelings of powerlessness and with no intention to even address the challenges (Humphreys 2000:51). Should burnout continue untreated or unattended to, it could result in "rust-out" (Humphreys 2000:51). The researcher witnessed a social worker having a nervous breakdown on duty, but cannot with certainty say that the challenges in the profession caused her stress. "Rust out" can be identified by the following symptoms according to Humphreys (2000:51):

- High job dissatisfaction.
- Learned helplessness.
- Apathy.
- Hopelessness.
- Frequent absenteeism.
- Non-caring attitude and sometimes cynical about work.
- Avoidance of responsibility and new challenges.
- Isolation from other members of staff.
- Non-involvement in or non-attendance of staff meetings.

- Psychosomatic complaints. (low energy, low blood pressure, poor appetite)
- Depression.
- High protective self-esteem.

Similar to the people who suffer from burnout, a person who suffer from rust-out, would do the minimum and do not see the possibility of any positive changes taking place (Humphreys 2000:66). They do not constructively confront challenges but they do condemn employees who do not comply (Humphreys 2000:66).

According to Humphreys (2000:66) rust-out is the tail-end of a stressful sequence and early identification of stress with appropriate actions could prevent rust-out. It is important for both employee and employers to attend to the stress factors in the work place (Humphreys 2000:66). The stress imposed by transformational challenges should therefore be identified and appropriately addressed. Work, should not be allowed to become a source of threat to a person's emotional, social, intellectual, physical, sexual or creative life as cited by Humphreys (2000:66). Transformational stressors, if not attended to, could thus cause rust out.

3.9. POLITICAL STRESS FACTORS

Politicians are playing a decisive role in the public sector (Joyce 1998:168), which leads to the complex relation between elected officials and appointed workers. Instead of following professional procedures, the elected officials are concerned with immediate intervention and often blame the appointed officials of bureaucracy (Joyce 1998:168). According to Salmon and Salmon (1999:2) we have to learn that despite political and social upheavals, blaming would not help to change the status quo. Political understanding however needs to inform practice in observing both constraints and opportunities as cited in Payne (1997:286). This means that politicians should be realistic when making commitments to communities to ensure that social workers can deliver and are not challenged with constraints (Payne 1997:286).

When political goals are experienced as oppressive and against the purpose of social work service delivery, it can lead to frustration for social workers (Payne 1997:286). If this situation continues, it leads to job frustration and disappointment which leaves employees with one of three options namely, to fight flight or freeze according to in Salmon and Salmon (1999:5). These options are reactive rather than proactive and could be prevented by addressing the challenges as they occur before it ends in career-ending choices (Salmon and Salmon 1999: 5).

This kind of frustration could encourage social workers to leave the profession. Changes in social work organisations are often instigated on political grounds and in an attempt to manage growing demands, which increase anxiety (Dominelli 2002:43). These imposed changes place social work in uncertainty as social work practice has to be adjusted to adapt to undue change on a continuous basis (Dominelli 2002:43). The political leaders determine the priorities in the department, which means that the priorities change as the political leadership changes (Dominelli 2002:43). These priorities are not always based on researched needs which place social workers in the position to attend to the political priorities and not necessary to address the community's needs (Dominelli 2002:43). .

According to (Payne 1997:286) social workers at all levels see themselves as "slaves" to bureaucracy, with little power and little autonomy. They see themselves mostly involved in reactive work, carrying out assessments, with not many opportunities to exercise skills learnt (Payne 1997:286). A research study in Kwa-Zulu Natal indicated that the government was compared with Santa Claus and citizens sat waiting to be assisted, instead of playing an active role in the countries endeavours towards restructuring and development (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183). It was concluded that the so-called culture of entitlement which currently exist, is hampering development and empowerment (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183). The above mentioned scenarios are directly caused by political involvement and poses challenges to the social workers as they have to fulfil the 'Santa Claus' role (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183).

3.10. ORGANISATIONAL STRESSORS

The following organisational stressors from the perspective of Fineman (2004:143-144) will be compared to transformational challenges at organisational levels:

3.10.1. Organisational Structure

Organisational structures either very rigid or very flexible, can affect feelings and emotions (Fineman 2004:143-144). The one leads to too much psychological space and to few markers, while the other leaves no room for self expression (Fineman (2004:143-144). The social worker's experiences of changes in organisational structures post transformation, is explored in this study and captured in Chapter 5. Different social workers would experience these changes differently. Superior stress-provoking bosses tend to give inconsistent or inadequate instructions, fail to provide emotional support, over emphasize productivity and only give feedback on poor performance (Fineman 2004:143-144). Neurotic leaders in turn create neurotic organizations.

Transformational leadership is needed to provide adequate empowering leadership (Head 1997:18) in a transforming organisation. With the right leadership, social workers would be able to cope even when being confronted with clients having unrealistic expectations or cultural differences between client and social worker as cited by Trotter (1999:56). Transformational leadership would thus prevent burnout or rust out as mentioned earlier and provide adequate empowering.

3.10.2. Role Overload

Role overload is when the number or frequency of demands exceeds the jobholder's expectations of what is reasonable and manageable (Venter 2003:53). The persistence of the overload can be stressful.

Work overload occur when vacancies exist and clients from the vacant post need to be attended to despite the social workers own work load as highlighted by Jacobs (2006) and Venter (2003:53). Transformed social work services to the masses inevitably led to work overload of social workers in the department (Jacobs 2006).

3.10.3. Qualitative Role Overload

When the job is beyond the worker's capacity, training and experience can alleviate the stress. It is more stressful in a climate where there is little tolerance for inexperience. Jacobs (2006) cited that inexperienced staff was appointed as acting supervisors in vacant posts, despite their levels of experience which caused role overload. The researcher is of the opinion that this situation was not just conducive to work overload, it can also explain the job frustration that staff might have experienced as they are supervised by inexperienced supervisors.

3.10.4. Role Ambiguity

Social workers experience role ambiguity when uncertainty exists about how they have to perform their jobs (Lesnik 1997:13). Mixed or vague demands from significant people who compromise the roles set, such as supervisor's colleagues and other team members. Social workers who do not understand their role in terms of transformation legislation and policies are exposed to role ambiguities which would affect effective service delivery and increased stress (Lesnik 1997:13).

3.10.5. Role Conflict

Stress occurs when a person has conflicting expectations within their work role or between separate competing roles. The feeling of "I can barely keep up with the demand" is experienced by social workers who are given duties that they are not responsible for (Wexler 2003:45 - 47).

This could also be applicable to the role of the social worker when working integrated or working within a multi disciplinary team. Statutory social work is guided by prescripts in legislation for example what to do when a child is found to be in need of care and have to comply with legislation according to Lombard(2006). It seems as if, statutory social workers were clear about their roles prior to the legislative changes. According to de Jager (2007) social workers were not sufficiently capacitated for the transformed roles.

3.10.6. Social Workers and Technology

Social workers need to overcome their aversion to computers as technology can enhance their practice (Lesnik 1997:29). The development of new technology has brought a range of changes in the work practice of social workers according to Lesnik (1997:29).

These changes went hand in hand with anxiety and forms of resistance. The new technology could also bring new challenges to the profession such as the discouragement of creativity, intuition and experience (Lesnik 1997:29).

Social workers are expected to produce outputs in a more accountable manner with tangible proof in their recordkeeping, computerizing data and filling of forms (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers 2004). Administrative responsibility has increased and a higher priority is placed on records management than on face to face social work due to political accountability and changes (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004). Social work practice has moved away from preventative and therapeutic services, to more time spend on budgeting and procurement with limited resources, which leads to less job satisfaction, and stress (Lesnik1997:13). It is therefore imperative for social workers to master technology.

3.10.7. Quality of Service Delivery

A Shift was made in the last years from an inward approach in the public sector to quality and improved service delivery (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers 2004). The public have the expectation to receive improved services within a client-orientated service delivery system, where the client's interest is put first according to the Batho Pele Principles (1999). In terms of the regional model in the Gauteng Province, management authority is devolved to allow more decision making discretion to meet the needs of communities in the province (Regional Model 2004).

The focus in service delivery has shifted from pure production to client satisfaction which in essence means directing services to meet or exceed the customer expectation instead of just concentrating on the process (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006). It does not mean that every customer would be satisfied or pleased with the service as social workers often have to intervene against the preference of the client (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). Previously it was good enough for the social worker to meet the objectives and quotas.

Within the empowerment system however, the impact of the service must be experienced and communicated by the client themselves (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). Social workers therefore cannot only focus on doing the right thing without ensuring customer satisfaction (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). The researcher's view is that keeping the client happy might not always be possible as the right action very often disturbs the clients.

The empowering of clients raised expectations (Batho Pele Principles 1999) without equivalent increase in resources, which leads to conflict and add to the social worker's stress. The clients have become more aware of their rights and are making more demands for quality services (Batho Pele Principles 1999).

They become more hostile and aggressive if their demands are not met and raise their frustration to the media or to ministerial levels (Jacobs 2006). More and more is expected from the social workers according to the aforementioned view.

3.11. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME VERSUS WELLNESS PROGRAMMES IN THE TRANSFORMING WORKPLACE

According to Tshabalala (2001:17) an Employee Assistant Programme could be used to address the emotions of fear, anxiety and other emotions that emerge as a result of change. Change and transition are situational and psychological in that people are forced to move to new sites, adapt to new bosses, work in new teams and implement new policies as cited in Tshabalala (2001:18).

Wellness Programmes according to Grobler et al., (2002:450) is geared at change in behaviour by awareness and helping employees to gain knowledge to prevent a potential early death. Employee assistance programmes and wellness programmes can be offered through education, incentives, programmes, self action and follow up support (Grobler et al., 2002:450). It could be beneficial in dealing with the effects of transformational challenges on social workers (Grobler et al., (2002:450). If the workplace needs of the employees are met, they will be able to deliver in accordance with expectation or they could even over perform. Where wellness programmes concentrate on prevention, it is clear that employee assistance programmes are treatment orientated according to Grobler et al., (2002:451). Wellness programmes should therefore be a standard practice in the Department of Social Development as it can be seen as a preventative programme.

Employee assistance programmes could be used to identify troubled employees, refer appropriately, solve problems and measure the success by continued service delivery (Grobler et al., 2002:450). It is clear that social workers who were affected by the process of transformation, can benefit from both the employee assistance programmes and the wellness programmes as cited by Grobler et al., (2002:440).

The writers indicate that before any intervention can be initiated; the causes of stress must be identified (Grobler et al., (2002:440). Stress could be caused by different aspects such as: pressure at work, too many commitments generated, an uncomfortable working environment, the inability to organise or manage time (Grobler et al., (2002:440).

The measurement of employee stress will enable employers to ensure appropriate organisational and environmental change in order to lower levels of stress in the organisation (Grobler et al., 2002:441). The controlling of stress also depends on the efforts of the employee (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Employee fitness facilities according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) are increasingly provided by organisations in South Africa to improve employee's health and morale as well as to reduce stress.

The Department of Social Development also has an Employee Assistance Programme to assist social workers in this regard as cited by Jacobs (2006). It is thus not just the employer's responsibility to take care of the staff. Each staff member should take responsibility of self-care.

Personal strategies to manage stress according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) is also explored in this study and can take different forms. It could be managed through medication which can reduce anxiety, improve work performance and job satisfaction (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Mental health as well as physical health can be managed by exercises, by removing the causes of the stress if possible, by becoming a mentor if you mastered your own stress, by seeking counselling to obtain stress relieving techniques (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Staff could also apply for extended leave if needed to deal with stress.

3.12. CONCLUSION

Based on the literature it seems as if transformational challenges affected social work as a profession as well as the social worker as a person. The threat of a decreasing public sector was real and forced social workers who needed their work to comply with the unfair expectations (ANC 1994:80). Social workers found themselves in the dilemma of reorganisation and reorientation to unfair and extended functions. This includes the implementation of transformation policies and legislation and models without proper preparation or training which led to implementation challenges. This places social workers in the department at risk of being charged with misconduct. Trying to cope with increased workloads, political pressure, organisational stressors, the move from productivity to client satisfaction and the challenge of technology, was at the cost of the private lives and health of social workers in the Department.

According to Patel (2007:210) social workers were also concerned that the profession would lose its professional status as little appreciation was shown to the profession (Patel 2007:210). The aforementioned could lead to increased stress on the social worker as a person. Without changed attitudes transformational challenges will remain and not be addressed with success. It is imperative that the individual stresses of social workers be identified and addressed. Social workers can therefore benefit from both employee assistance programmes and the wellness programmes. Personal strategies could also be implemented to manage stress and improve job satisfaction within a transforming environment.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL STUDY AND FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the researcher discussed the different stages of transformation which impacted on the social work profession as well as the social worker as a person. The challenges which derived from transformation was unpacked as well as it's impact on both the profession and the social workers in the Johannesburg Regional office of the Department of Social Development.

An empirical investigation was conducted and this chapter reflects the results of the study and the analysis of the data collected. The purpose of the analysis was to reduce the data to an intelligible interpretable form and test the relation of the research problem and arrive at conclusions as cited by De Vos (1998:203). Where possible the researcher will integrated the applicable literature with the relevant findings.

4.2. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 consists of a detailed discussion on the research methodology for this particular study, from a theoretical perspective. The researcher also provides a broad overview of the research methodology, as applied to this study.

4.2.1. The Research Approach

The phenomenon investigated in this involved research, is transformational challenges facing contemporary social work practice by exploring the social worker's experiences and adaptability to deal with the transformational challenges as cited by Mouton and Marais (1996:169).

A combination of approaches assisted the researcher to implement both qualitative and quantitative methods as cited by De Vos et al., (2005:357). Due to nature of the study, more emphasis was placed on the quantitative approach. The qualitative approach was thus used to obtain and understand the experiences of the participants while the quantitative approach provided data regarding the challenges such as caseloads and training sessions (De Vos et al., 2005:357). The research findings were interpreted according to perspectives experiences and numbers provided in completed questionnaires. An appropriate design was selected for this study.

4.2.2. The Research Design

Mouton and Marais (1996:43) describe the goal in exploratory studies as the exploration of an unknown research area (Neuman 1997:20). Due to the fact that this was also an unknown research area from the researcher's perspective, the researcher opted for the exploratory design (Neuman 1997:20). During the literature study it was found that there was limited literature available on the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker and the social work profession. The researcher decided to implement an exploratory study to gain knowledge of the impact of transformational challenges, from practicing social workers as cited in Weinbach (2003: 114-121). The study enabled the researcher to arrive at guidelines on how to deal with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice.

4.2.3. The Research Procedure

A non-probability sampling method, namely the purposive sampling technique was used for the purpose of this study (Strydom, in De Vos et al., 2005:202). Questionnaires were utilized to collect the data by delivering the questionnaires to participants who were practicing during the initial stages of transformation in social work services within the Department of Social Development.

The participants were informed of the purpose of the study and were served with the consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the study (Strydom in De Vos et al., (2005:59). Several attempts were made to schedule appointments with participants to complete the questionnaires.

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study during working hours but the participants found it difficult to avail themselves during office hours or after hours, due to work demands. It was then agreed that participants would complete the questionnaires as they have time available and contact the researcher should need clarity on any question.

The collected data was analyzed according to the process as stated by Tesch, in De Vos et al., (1998:343) and is presented by figures and tables.

4.3. BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

4.3.1. Age Distribution of Participants

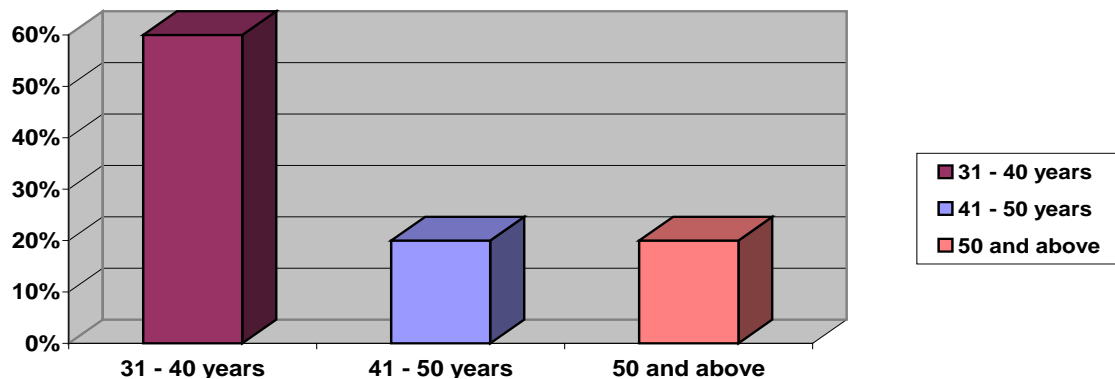


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Participants

The above figure provides an analysis of the age distribution of the participants. It is clear that six (60% of the participants are between the ages of 31 years to 40 years of age. There were two (20%) participants between 41 years and 50 and two (20%) above 50 years of age.

This is an indication of the years of experience in the field of social work as well of their exposure to the process of transformation in government and in the profession. Figure 4.1 reflects a richness of years of social work experience amongst the participants.

4.3.2. Gender and Race of Participants

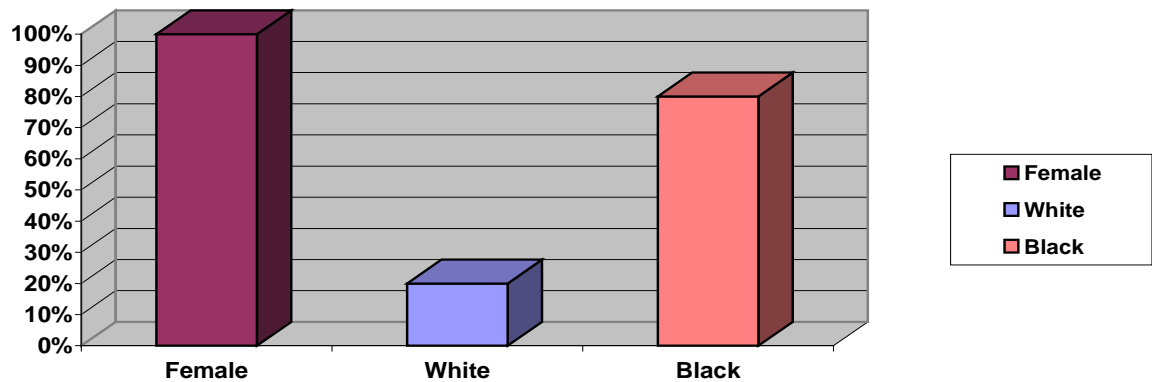


Figure 4.2: Gender and Race of participants

Figure 4.2 indicates that all the participants were female. The absence of males who served in the department during the initial process of transformation is evident. This finding can be linked to the statement of Smith and Cronje (2002:246) that the female component of the workforce diversity raised by 33% every year from 1996 to 2001.

The race distribution according to figure 4.2 reflects that the participants represented two race groups. There were eight (80%) Black participants and two (20%) White participants involved in the study. There was a total absence of Coloured and Indian social workers amongst the participants. This finding indicates a turn around in comparison to the statistics presented in Chapter 2.4, where the researcher quoted that in 1989, 66% of the social workers in the country were White. The expectations of the RDP (1994) that the officials should represent the people were reached in this small sample.

4.3.3 Positions Held by Participants in the Organisation

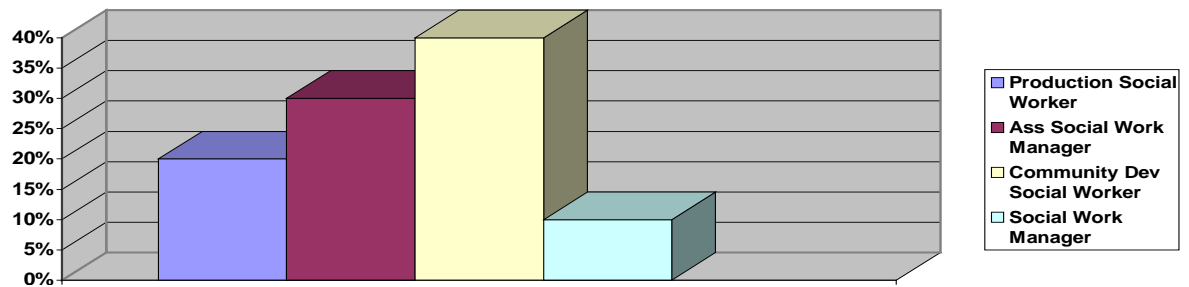


Figure 4.3: Positions held by participants in the organisation

It was found that two (20%) of participants were generic production social workers, responsible for social work interventions in frontline services to clients. Three (30%) of the participants are working as Assistant Social Work Managers, which can be further unpacked as two (20%) Black managers and one (10%) White managers. This is an indication of transformation in the management of social work services within the sample. Four (40%) of the participants are working in the Community Planning and Development section, responsible for the development aspects of social work in the particular office. One (10%) of the participants is a Social Work Managers also known as Assistant Director Statutory Social Work, who is responsible to oversee and manage the work of the other categories of workers.

The above findings indicate that four (40%) of the participants are in managerial positions within the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg. The other six (60%) are production workers from the beginning of the transformation process. The presence of the different levels amongst the participants allowed the researcher to obtain the views of both production workers and managers around transformational challenges.

4.4 THE DISCUSSION OF THE DIFFERENT THEMES IN ACCORDANS WITH RESPONSES FROM PARTICIPANTS

4.4.1. The Case Loads of Social Workers before and after Transformation (1994)

According to Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005) there was an increase in caseloads of social workers since 1994. This is confirmed by five (50%), of the participants who indicated that their case loads have increased since 1994, two (20%) of the participants indicated a decrease in their caseloads after transformation and explained that the caseloads differ from area to area. The participants indicated that previously disadvantaged areas have higher caseloads than the more advantaged areas. Three (30%) of the participants are managers and does not have case files allocated to them. They did not indicate the number of social workers that they were responsible for.

The indication is however that more than half of the production workers, who participated in the study, had increased caseloads after 1994 as cited by Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005). They indicated that the quality of service delivery was compromised due to high caseloads and high numbers of clients reporting for services unannounced.

4.4.2. Transformation Models Implemented by the Departmental Social Workers

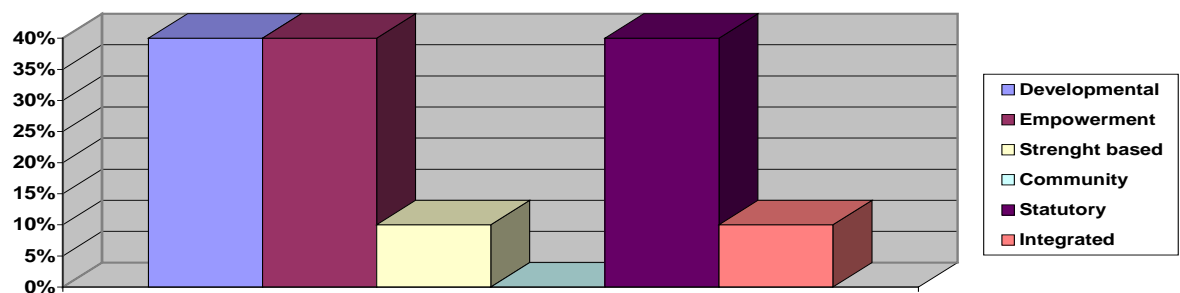


Figure 4.4: Transformational Models Implemented by the Departmental social Workers

Figure 4.4 illustrates the extend to which the participants are implementing the transformed models of service delivery as required by the transformational policies.

4.4.2.1 Developmental Approach

The Developmental Approach is required since 1996 as the first model to transform service delivery (IMC: 1996) and is implemented by four (40%) of the participants. The indication is thus that it is not only the new graduates that implement the developmental approach (de Jager 2007). According to figure 4.1, all the participants are over the age of 30 and four (40%) made the shift to implementing the Developmental Approach. The remaining six (60%) of the participants indicated that they are not implementing the Developmental Approach in their service delivery. The literature study highlighted different reasons that could prevent social workers from implementing this model. The high case loads as indicated in Chapter 4.4.1 can be linked to the six (60%) of the participants who are not implementing this particular model.

4.4.2.2 Empowerment Approach

The same four (40%) of the participants who indicated that they are implementing the Developmental Approach is also implementing the Empowerment Approach. To be able to implementation this approach, social workers needed a paradigm shift in terms of the transformation legislation such as the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999). The Developmental Approach and the Empowerment Approach are closely related. The remaining six (60%) of the participants are thus not implementing the Empowerment Approach. The policies clearly states that without empowerment, clients can not be brought to self reliance as expected by the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997).

4.4.2.3 Strength Based Approach

The responses indicates that ten (10%) of the participants use the Strength Based Approach in service delivery. As mentioned in Chapter 2 of the study, Midgley (1995:30-31) states that the lack of training could result in poor implementation of transformational models. The finding confirms the statement of Lombard (2002:212) in Chapter 3 that social workers are currently still performing their statutory work in the same way as before transformation.

4.4.2.4. Community Development

None of the participants indicated that they are using the Community Development approach. It is a challenge if even the four (40%) participants (figure 4.3) who are attached to the community and development section are also not implementing the Community Development Approach in their services. Community Development as cited by Mckendrick (2001:108) is imperative as a method of social work in the new paradigm. Community Development seems to still be a challenge to the participants who were involved in the study. This is one of the eras on which service delivery is measures while it is not part of the models currently implemented by social workers in the department.

The statement by Gray (2000:100) that social workers are under criticism for not meeting the needs of the community could be because of the absence of Community Development in service delivery.

4.4.2.5. Developmental Statutory Interventions

The responses indicated that four (40%) of the participants are implementing Developmental Statutory Interventions. All the participants by virtue of their appointment in the department are involved in statutory work.

The researcher could not find any evidence that social workers were trained to integrate developmental work into their statutory interventions (Lesnik 1997:156). The four (40%) of the participants, in line with a number of policies, the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997), the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001:245), have started to implement Developmental Statutory Interventions. It was also found that it is the same four (40%) of the participants who indicated the implementation of the Strength Based Approach and the Developmental Approach (figure 4.4). The remaining six (60%) does not implement any of the transformational models as indicated by the transformation policies (White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999).

4.4.2.6. Integrated Service Delivery

Only one (10 %) of the participants indicated that they are using the Integrated Service Delivery as a model for intervention. The high percentage of nine (90%) of the participants are not working from an integrated perspective. This indicates that each social worker takes sole responsibility for the clients allocated to them in contrast with all the transformational expectations as indicated in the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999).

The findings further indicate (Gray 2002:192), that not all the social workers that were part of the study, implements the transformational models in service delivery. None of the participants implements Community Development as a model of service delivery.

There is therefore an indication that some of the social workers in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development are in the process of managing this particular transformational challenge as cited by O'Melia, Miley, and Du Bios (2001:80) as well as the White Paper on Social Development (1997). The six (60%) of the participants who are not implementing any of the transformational models are working outside of the prescribed transformational framework as cited by (Lombard (2002:212).

4.5. HOW AMALGAMATION WAS EXPERIENCED BY SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers in the Department of Social Development were informed by a circular (13 of 1994) that they were to amalgamate within one month from the time that the notice was received (Refer to Chapter 2). The participants in the study were requested to share their experiences in this regard.

4.5.1 Preparation of Social Workers for a Multi Cultural Environment

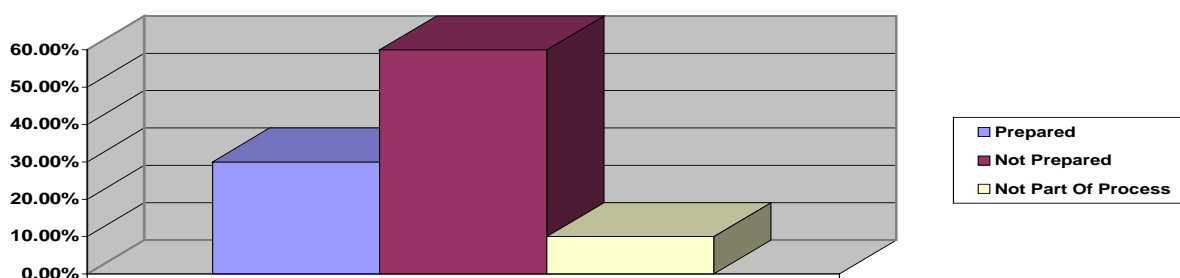


Figure 4.5: Preparation of social workers for a multi cultural environment

Figure 4.5 indicates that three (30%) of the participants were sufficiently prepared for a multi cultural working environment, six (60%) of the participants were not prepared prior to the amalgamation process to work in a multi cultural environment. (Refer to Chapter 2.8.2.1. and 2.8.2.2.) They stated that they were just told that they had to amalgamate without any preparation. The remaining one (10%) indicated that she was not part of the process because she was not practicing social work in the Department of Social Development when transformation was rolled out.

The participant was working in the NGO sector that was already working across the racial boundaries and within a multi cultural environment. More than half of the participants responded in accordance with Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40) who indicated that preparation for the change to one department needed to take place over a period of time to ensure involvement of staff.

They indicated that the amalgamation of the four departments held great challenges for all those involved in social welfare services. According to circular (13 of 1994), the amalgamation took place shortly after the notice was given (Chapter 2.5).

4.5.2. The Integration of Administrative Documentation of the Different Departments

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) places emphasis on equality in all spheres of life, human dignity, and the right to social security, respect and security rights. This very important overarching document was only available in 1996 (Chapter 2.10.1). The amalgamation of the different Departments however took place in 1994 when most of the apartheid legislation and policies were not in place. The amalgamated departments had to have an agreement or interim policy to guide the day to day service delivery. The participants were given the opportunity to indicate how the administrative documentation and processes were aligned in the new amalgamated department.

The participants indicated that the documentation from the Transvaal Provincial Administration was not considered for use in the new department. The experience of the participants, previously from the Transvaal Provincial Administration, was that their department was absorbed by the House of Assemblies. All forms of the House of Assemblies and the House of Representatives were adopted. The exclusion of documents from the Transvaal Provincial Administration was mentioned as a challenge by eight (80%) of the participants who originated from the Transvaal Provincial Administration. They stated that almost everything they brought to the table was discarded and only the escort claim forms were acknowledged and used.

Other challenges were that forms were mostly in Afrikaans and English and that the other languages were not accommodated. The participants, originally from the House of Assemblies, confirmed that all the forms and administrative documents from their department of origin were used.

They did not have to adapt to new documentation, as those of their department was adopted. Reports on files allocated to social workers contained Afrikaans information, which made it difficult for non-Afrikaans speaking social workers to continue working on existing files. New files had to be opened to accommodate all the groups in the new department.

The above responses indicate that the participants who were originally from the Transvaal Provincial Administration were more challenged than other participants to adapt to change. The participants had first hand experience of the challenges of change as set out by Brevis et al., (2002:227) and Grobler et al., (2002:50).

4.5.3. Changes in the Procedures of Service Delivery

Participants were requested to indicate any changes in procedures after amalgamation and had to elaborate on their responses. Only four (40% of the participants responded to the question. The remaining six (60%) of the participants left the question unanswered. Some participants mentioned that the best practise models in departments were retained. Others experienced the work as being unstructured and with no clear procedures. The changes were frustrating according to some responses, as it was different from practices used to in their previous departments.

Some participants indicated that there was a lack of planning in their daily work, as appointments were not made with clients. Clients would just flock to the office for services. They indicated that clients had to be educated on procedures and processes that had to be followed in a structured environment. It was mentioned that social work administration had to be aligned to that of other departments. The focus of the statistics changed but the national format was retained. Later in the transformed department, administrative functions had to be done electronically instead of manually which posed challenges to some participants.

4.6. EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN ADAPTING TO A CHANGED ENVIRONMENT

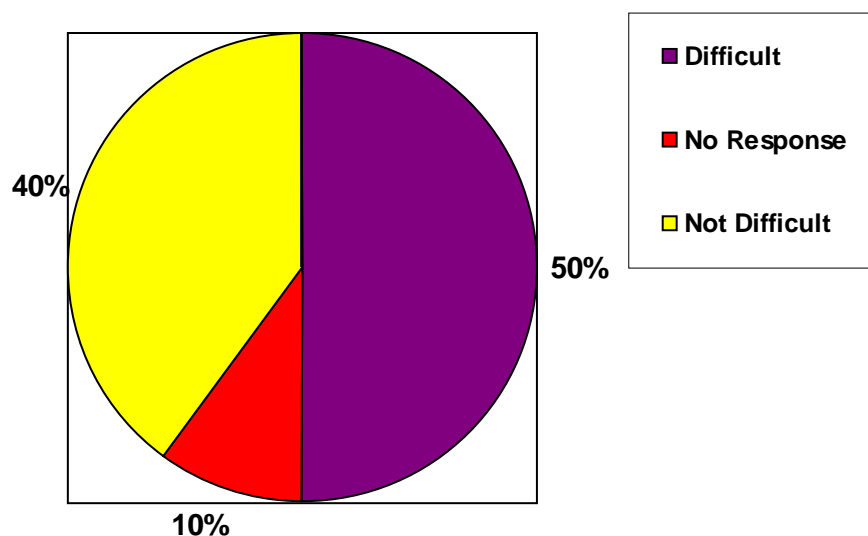


Figure 4.6: Experiences of social workers adapting to a changed environment

According to Smith and Cronje (2002:231) change could be resisted but four (40%) of the participants in this study indicated that they did not have difficulty to adapt to a changed environment while five (50%) indicated that they experienced difficulty to adapt to the changed environment. The remaining one (10%) disregarded the question and left it with no response. The responses of the participants will now be discussed as follows:

4.6.1. The Participants who Experienced Difficulty to Adapt

The participants elaborated on why they experienced difficulty to adapt to the changed environment and mentioned the following-.

“We had to comply and execute whatever was prescribed by senior managers”.
 “Change was not effected in a consultative manner but was forced upon us with no regard for the implementation difficulties” (Chapter 3.10.4). Some indicated that the standards for service delivery were not the same across the previous departments.

The different standards maintained by the different departments had to be integrated and made it difficult for some to adapt. Some participants indicated that transformed attitudes of social workers in Places of Safety, made it difficult to place children in facilities. The variety of cases that social workers had to address was broad and necessitated the implementation of generic work, which they found difficult. They indicated that adapting to the drafting of treatment-plans were challenging. Resources were fewer for the larger clientele. Decentralisation were not planned well and resulted in a lack of resources at decentralized points, which hampered service delivery. The distribution of work in sections was not equal. This can be linked to the difference in case loads indicated in Chapter 4.4.1.

The challenges mentioned by five (50%) of the participants were ranging from organisation to procedural and work expectations. It confirms a variety of challenges highlighted in the literature, as captured in Chapter 2 and 3 of the study.

4.6.2. Participants who did not Experience Difficulty to Adapt

The four (40%) participants, who indicated that they did not experience any difficulty to adapt to a changed working environment, mentioned that the process of change was gradually to them and allowed time to adjust (Chapter 2.8.2.2). Some participants indicated that they were ready to work with clients from different race groups due to their experiences in the NGO sector. Some participants were able to assist their peers to understand the different race groups better. The responses of the participants indicate that different people respond differently to change. Participants, previously from the House of Assemblies were allowed to work in other departments prior to amalgamation and had less difficulty to adapt.

4.7. OTHER CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATION CULTURE AFTER AMALGAMATION OF THE DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS

The responses of the participants will be unpacked according to the different themes:

4.7.1. Changes in Management Approaches

It was found that the four (40%) of the participants in management positions, indicated that they experienced changes in management approaches (Chapter 3.10.1). The six (60%) of the participants who are production social workers, did not respond to the question at all, which might indicate that it was not of importance to them. The participants who responded indicated that non-social work managers were appointed to manage social work services, which directed the focus of service delivery away from social work. They also indicated that an opportunity for integration was created within the organisation as well as with other departments. Formal working relations disappeared as work engagements became more informal. This informal environment was a challenge to the participants who preferred the formal setup that they were used to before. Interaction and communication with supervisors changed to informal discussions. Management processes changed drastically and managers found it difficult to adapt to consultative decision making. Gray (1998:111) describes an empowerment management model as a facilitative management style which goes hand in hand with staff development and empowerment. Transformational management would have assisted the process as it is empowering and it also provide guidance as cited by as cited by Lee (1994:14). The participants who responded were challenged by the managers appointed in the new department.

The responses can be summarised as a need for structured management and supervision sessions. The challenges of working under none social work managers was also raised as a challenge to participants.

4.7.2. The Impact of English as the Official Language in the Workplace

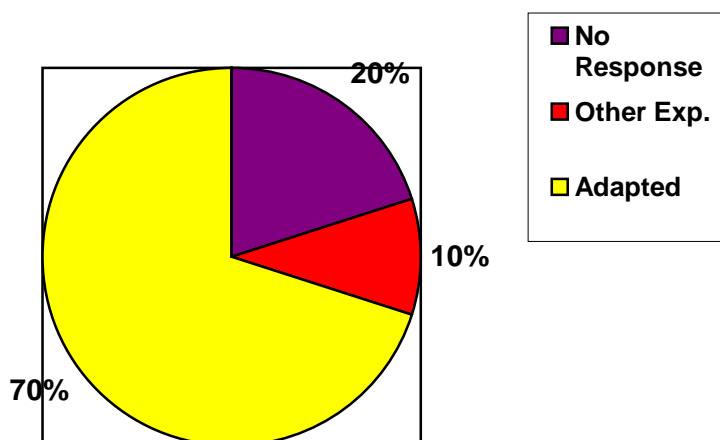


Figure 4.7: The impact of English as an official language in the workplace

The participants mentioned in paragraph 4.5.2. of the study that language was a challenge to them as they were frustrated with both Afrikaans and English in the workplace. About English as the official Language, seven (70 %) of the participants stated that they adapted well to English as the official language in the workplace, two (20%) of the participants did not respond to the question and one (10%) indicated other experiences.

Some of the participants indicated that it was not difficult to adapt to English in the workplace, it was however challenging when supervisors and other staff members communicated in Afrikaans, which was difficult to follow. Participants indicated that the fact that all social work literature was available in English, made the language as a medium of communicating in the workplace, easy. The fact that English was accepted as the official language, left staff with no choice but to adapt.

The presence of Afrikaans was more of a challenge, as it was still prevalent amongst staff from certain departments. The languages used in the workplace could be interpreted by the participants as reinforcing discrimination or undermining the continuance of a discriminatory discourse as cited by Tshabalala (2001:170).

One of the challenges around diversity was the language issue, as South Africa has eleven official languages and clients should be allowed to express themselves in their own languages (Smith and Cronje 2002:245).

4.7.3. The Attitudes of a Diverse Clientele towards Social Workers in the Transforming Environment

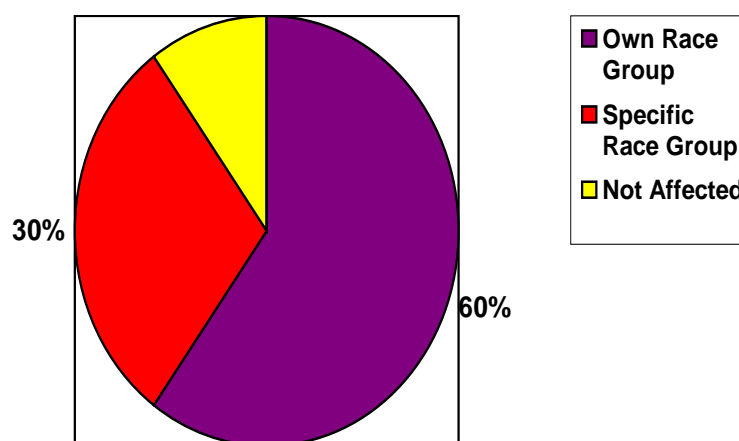


Figure 4.8: The attitudes of a diverse clientele towards social workers in the transforming environment

The participants responded to this section from their observations and experiences after 1994. Six (60%) of the participants indicated that clients insisted to see social workers of their own race group.

Three (30%) of the participants indicated that clients requested to see social workers of a specific race group. One (10%) indicated that clients were not affected at all in the transforming environment. According to the participants, clients preferred a social worker who understood them, irrespective of race and culture. Some indicated that clients responded in accordance with how they were received by social workers. Both clients and social workers were challenged with understanding people from different groups. Clients from certain race groups had to deal with the termination of certain rights previously granted to them and social workers had to manage angry clients.

According to some participants black clients presented themselves in a timid manner while clients from other groups were assertive. Some clients demanded to be assisted by white social workers. Resentment from clients was experienced by some of the participants due to the fact that they had to communicate in English in order to be understood. It is thus evident that clients from all race groups posed challenges to social workers. It is also clear that black clients needed to be empowered and had to learn what their rights were. This explains the significance of the Batho Pele Principles (1999), which encourages the “people first” concept (Chapter 2.10.6).

4.7.4. The Effects of the Different Languages on the Engagement and Representation of Clients

According to the participants social workers find it difficult to express themselves in reports as they are expected to communicate in English. For many people in the English-speaking environment, English is not their first language and is therefore a disadvantage to them (Tshabalala (2001:170)). The quality of psycho-social reports submitted to the Department of Justice and other stakeholders in English is a challenge for five (50%) of the participants.

The participants indicated that they had to get assistance from interpreters in the interviewing processes, in reports and representation at court. Raath (2006) highlighted the difficulty that social workers experience when having to write their reports in English.

One (10%) mentioned that the clients and social worker relationship is affected in the process as stated by one (10%) of the participants, while two (20%) mentioned that they found it difficult to present the circumstances of diverse cultures verbally as well as written, because of the different values attached to different circumstances. Interviews and assessment was more time consuming when you work with clients who express themselves in different languages as indicated by two (20%) of the participants.

Some black social workers indicated that they found it challenging to express themselves in Sotho or Zulu as many of the words had different meaning in these languages. The remaining one (10%) of the participants indicated that the language differences poses as a barrier to service delivery. It is evident that practicing social workers are still challenge with the effects of the different languages.

4.7.5. Changes in the Organisational Culture post 1994 in the Department of Social Development

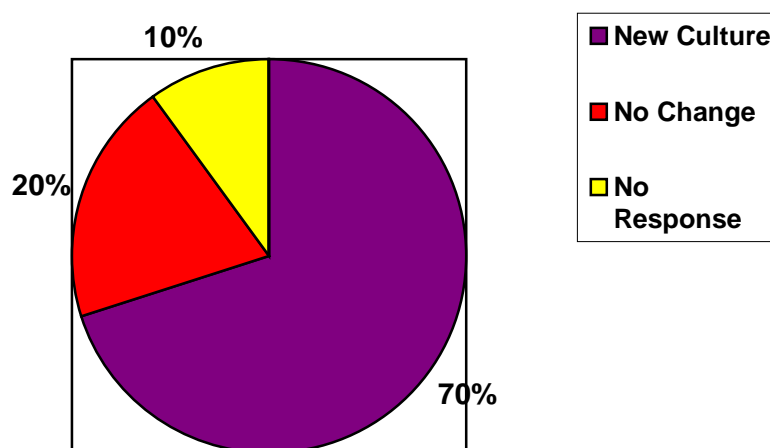


Figure 4.9: Changes in the organisational culture post 1994 in the Department of Social Services

A new organisational culture was formed according to the responses of seven (70% of the participants, two (20%) indicated no changes and one (10%) did not respond to the question in this regard. The amalgamation brought a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs to the organization according to (Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia 2001:65). They were challenged with the different perspectives of diversity as cited by Smith and Cronje (2002:243). Social workers had to learn to understand the value of diversity (Smith and Cronje 2002:251 and Chapter 2.8.2). The fact that every decision had to be negotiated by managers, were experienced as problematic by some participants who are managers. Democracy and integrated work, was challenging as staff first had to integrate internally.

Differences in commitment and priorities from the different staff that came from different departments were also identified as challenging as reaching common agreement was difficult and time consuming.

It took time for the different departments to unite and form a new culture as people stayed in their comfort zones and related to the groups that they were used to. There was tension to obtain representation of all racial and cultural groups at all management levels, as the management from the old department were absorbed in their managerial roles. Many white social workers left the department as the process of transformation was rolled out. New vision and mission statements were developed for the new department (Chapter 2.8.2.)

4.8. CHALLENGING EXPERIENCES POSED TO THE PROFESSION IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

Social work was marginalized when government support was withdrawn from the profession and other occupational groups were elevated (Gray (2000:102). Clients were empowered while social work was disempowered (Chapter 2.8.6). Empowered clients were more demanding, dependant and expected first preference. The responses in Chapter 4.7.3 however implies that empowerment took place over a period of time as black clients were experienced as timid during 1994. Client's expectations increased with increased workloads of social workers (Chapter 3.10.7). This led to overworked and de-motivated social workers who were not concerned about dissatisfaction of clients.

4.8.1. Awareness of Political Mandates before and after Transformation

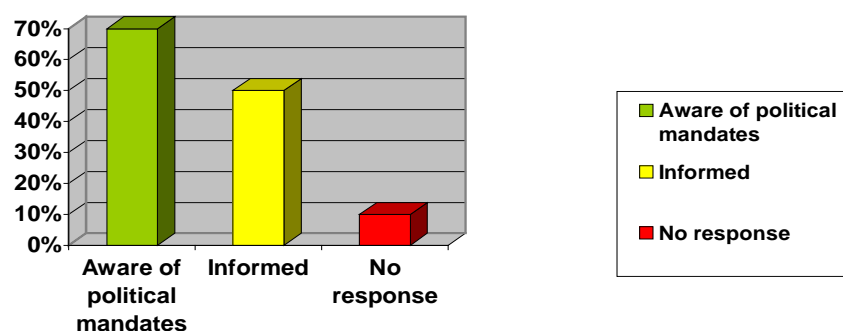


Figure 4.10: Awareness of political mandates before and after transformation

Seven (70%) of the ten of the participants indicated that they are more aware of political mandates than before transformation (Chapter 3.10). Two (20%) of the participants indicated that they are not more informed than before. One participant one (10%) did not respond to the question. The participants confirmed that politician are more involved in social service delivery than before and communicate political mandates in a transparent manner. According to Joyce (1998:168) the politicians are determining what should be delivered by social workers.

4.8.2. Involvement of Social Workers in the Execution of Political Mandates as Compared to Pre - Transformation

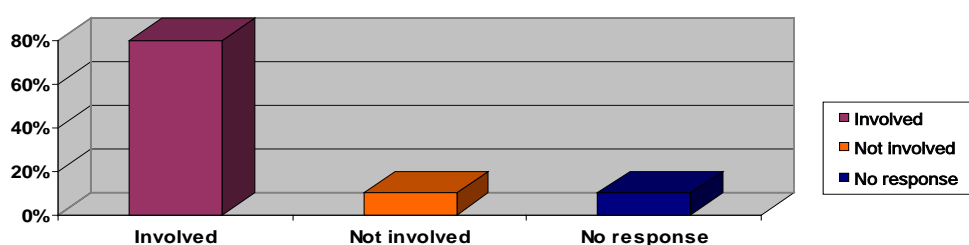


Figure 4. 11: Involvement of social workers in the execution of political mandates as compared to pre-transformation

Eight (80%) of the participants indicated that they are more involved in executing political mandates.

One (10%) indicated that there is no difference in involvement and in the execution of political mandates than before. One (10%) participant did not respond to the question.

The participants indicated that:

Political mandates are now included in the strategic plan and in the operational plans of the department. In this way service delivery has to be aligned to political mandates. Social workers have no control over the mandates created for them as cited by Joyce (1998:168). They also have no input prior to the mandates being communicated. The participants indicated that social worker services are used to obtain political votes for the ruling party. Politicians prescribe to social workers what to do in assisting the clients referred by them, even if it falls outside the core social work functions.

The political leaders determine the priorities in the department which means that the priorities change as the political leadership change. These priorities are not always based on researched needs, which place social workers in the position to attend to the political priorities at the cost of the felt social work needs of the community. The participants see themselves mostly involved in reactive work, carrying out assessments, with not many opportunities to exercise professional skills.

The participants further indicated that the political mandates often raise unrealistic expectations which are not executable by the social workers. Should the social worker however fail to deliver, the social worker is perceived as being ineffective. It was indicated that the social worker's pride in the profession was diminished as they had to give political mandates preference at the cost of the identified social work needs of clients. One of the challenges identified was that political mandates took precedence above the needs of the walk in clients. Some of the participants indicated that the political mandates allowed the opportunity to be involved in ensuring that transformation in communities is taking place. They further states that strategies are put in place to ensure delivery on political mandates, since the emphasis has moved from serving the clients to achieving the political mandates.

4.9. INDICATORS WHY SOCIAL WORKERS ARE LEAVING THE COUNTRY

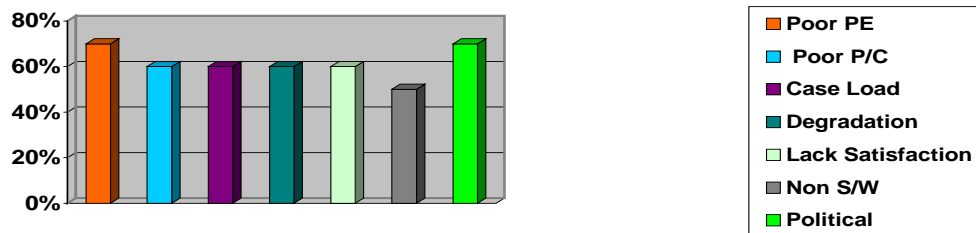


Figure 4.12: Indicators why social workers are leaving the country

The participants indicated that:

The Department of Social Development is further challenged with retaining social workers due to the status, remuneration and the absence of credible career paths for social workers, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave the country due to poor remuneration which concur with the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14) when it indicates that the Department find it difficult to retain social workers. Six (60%) of the participants indicated poor physical working conditions as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Six (60%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave because of high case loads which can be linked to Lesnik (1997:165) who alludes to the overwhelming high statutory case loads of social workers.

Six (60%) of the participants indicated that social workers are leaving because of the degradation of the social worker and the social work profession. Six (60%) indicated a lack of job satisfaction as a reason for social workers are leaving the country. Five (50%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave because they have to report to non social work managers. Five (50%) of the participants indicated that social workers also leave due the frustration of being managed by managers who lack understanding of social work as well as management skills.

Seven (70%) of the participants indicated the pressure to execute political mandates as apposed to addressing the identified needs of a client, as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Participants also alluded to imbalances between the government social workers and NGO social workers as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Preparation for transformation did not include preparation to achieve political mandates, according to some of the participants.

4.10. TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS TO IMPLEMENT TRANSFORMATIONAL POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The lack of training led to a sense of marginalization amongst social workers in the country (Patel 2007:210). The transformation policies and legislation moved social workers out of their comfort zones as described by Lesnik (1997:164). (Chapter 2.15).

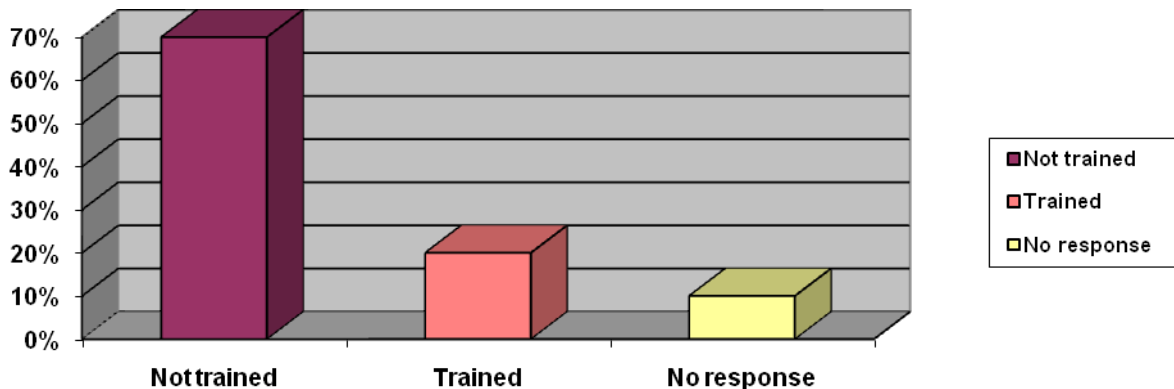


Figure 4.13: Training of social workers to implement transformational policies and legislation

Lombard (1999:98) alludes to the fact that training for the implementation of transformation legislation and policies were imperative. Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that they were not sufficiently trained to implement transformation legislation and policies. Two (20 %) of the participants indicated that they received training. One (10%) of the participants did not respond to the question.

The empowerment of social worker to implement the legislation does not just have relevance to the profession but it would also benefit the social worker as a person. Training and empowerment does provide job satisfaction to social workers. The participants indicated that:

Sufficient formal capacity building prior to transformation did not take place. Transformation task teams were establish but there is no known results. Social workers had to learn by trial and error as training only came later. This led to uncertainty on how to achieve what was expected from them in a transformed situation. Bursaries were not available for training of staff in the beginning of the process. It is however available now according to some of the participants.

4.11. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATION

Salmon and Salmon (1999:5) addresses the effects of stress on a person as well as on service delivery. The effects of stress as mentioned could very well be the stress symptoms of transformational challenges on social workers.

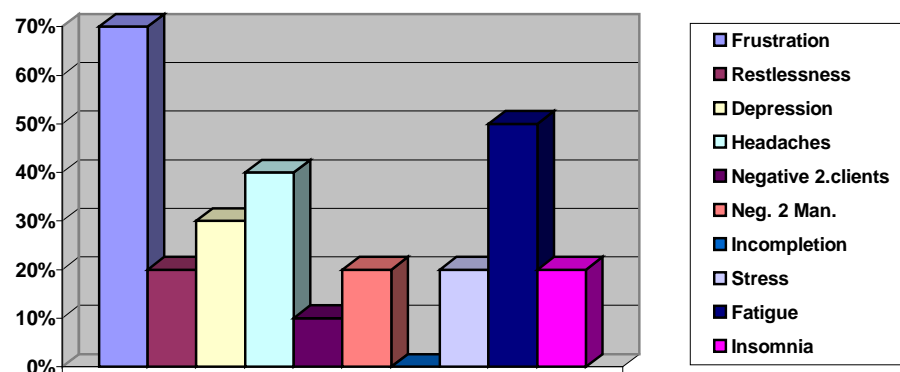


Figure 4.14: Physical and mental effects of transformation

The findings indicate that all the participants have one or more of the physical or mental effects caused by the work experience in a transformed environment. It is also clear that all the participants who availed themselves for the study, have a high regard for their work and are concerned about incomplete tasks that they cannot manage.

Ten (10%) of the participants portray negative attitudes towards clients due to their own frustrations. Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that they are frustrated in their work. Five (50%) indicate that they suffer from fatigue. Four (40%) indicate that they suffer from headaches. Three (30%) indicated that they are depressed. The mental and physical health of the participants based on the responses, needs urgent intervention. It is clear that transformational challenges affects social workers negatively.

4.12. MANAGEMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES ON SOCIAL WORKERS

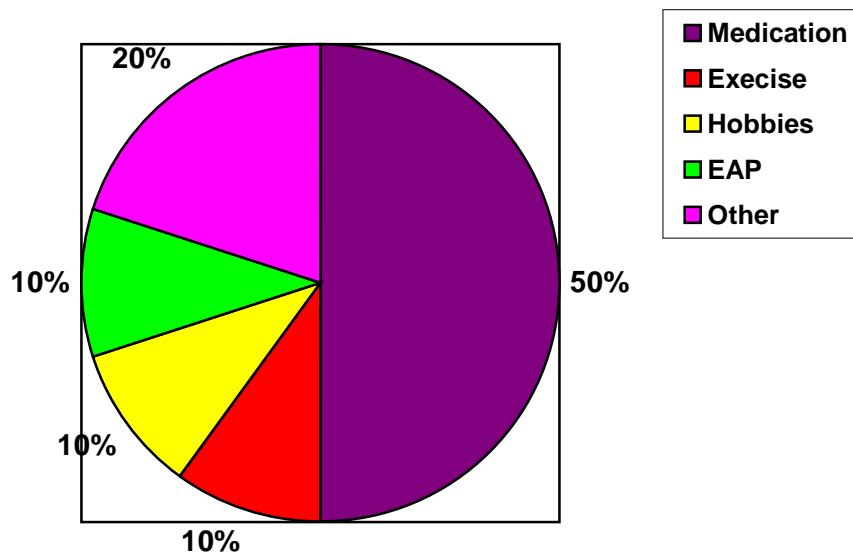


Figure 4.15: Effects of transformational challenges

Grobler et al., (2002:442) provide detailed interventions to be implemented by the employee as well as the employer to manage workplace stress through wellness and employee assistance programmes. Figure 4.15 indicates that five (50%) of the participants are on medication to manage their stress. One (10%) of the participants do exercises to cope with stress and another one (10%) engages in hobbies. One (10%) participant is attending the government's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Two (20%) of the participants indicated that they implement other ways of dealing with their stress.

It was determined that five (50) of the social workers who took part in the study were on medication to cope with transformational stress. Only one participant (10%) opted to use the available Employee Assistance Programme readily available to all departmental staff. Some of the participants are managing the transformational stress by utilizing two or more of the above mentioned options to help themselves.

Three (30%) of the participants practice hobbies to deal with the stress in a positive manner. The results indicate that social workers are attempting to seek help from medical practitioners while some take it on their own to manage their work and transformation related stresses.

4.13. ASSISTANCE REQUIRED FROM EMPLOYERS TO MANAGE TRANSFORMATIONAL STRESS

The participants indicated that:

Managers should listen to the needs of social workers and allow social workers to practice social work and not to execute political instructions. They further state that managers can improve the working condition and salaries of social workers. Affirmation instead of constant negative feedback is necessary. They suggest that the appointing non social work managers to manage social workers should not be allowed. They further indicated a need for regular debriefing sessions and stress management workshops for social workers. The need for clear norm and standards in terms of case loads to ensure fair distribution of increased workloads is required from managers. Transformational training for supervisors was highlighted as a need. The participants also identified the need for teambuilding sessions to build a positive organisational culture. The responses of the participants indicated the need for management intervention to assist them in dealing with work related stress.

The suggestions such as teambuilding, debriefing sessions and training according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) and Humphreys (2000:66) is a minimum expectation in the workplace.

4.14. TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES WITHIN TRANSFORMED SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

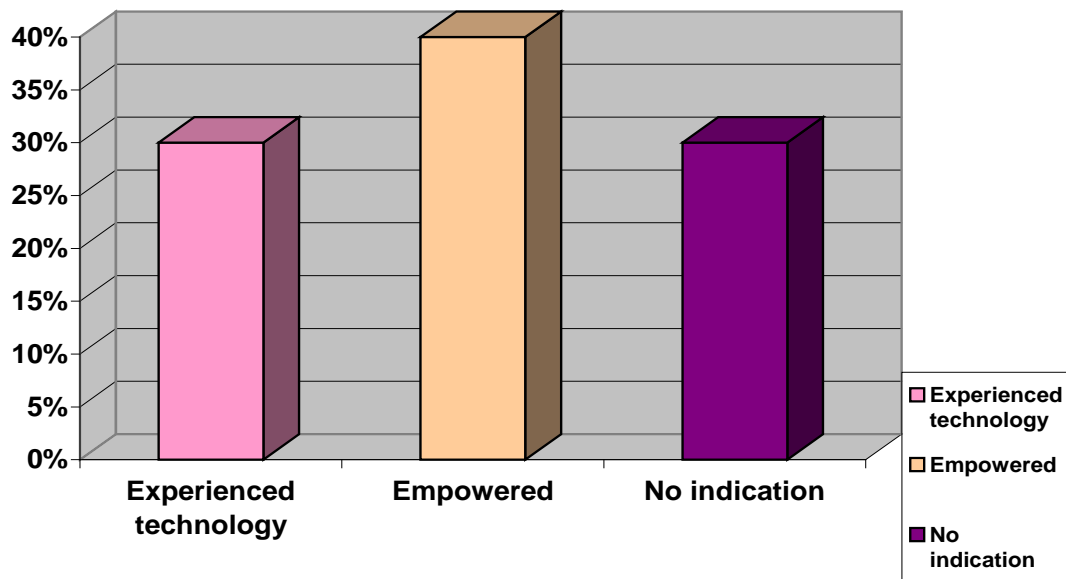


Figure 4.16: Technological challenges within transformed social service delivery

Figure 15 indicates that three (30%) of the participants indicated that they were experiencing technological challenges, as computer literacy was not part of their social work training. Four (40%) of the participants had no technological challenges because they empowered themselves. Three (30%) of the participants did not declare their position in terms of technology. Three (30%) of the participants are experienced in technology. Four (40%) of the participants indicated that they were empowered and trained by the Department of Social Development. Three (30%) of the participants did not indicate their capability in terms of managing technology. Some participants still keep their records manually. They indicated that access to information on laptops after hours, is problematic. Some participants indicated that resources are provided by government and training was arranged on technology. Not all social workers are computer literate. The participants mentioned that a lack of linkages with other departments exists. Technology has assisted to improve service delivery according to four (40%) of the participants.

4.15. CONCLUSION ON EMPIRICAL STUDY

From the above study it can be concluded that some of the effects from the beginning phase of transformation in the Department of Social Development is still challenging to the social work staff in the Johannesburg office.

The age distribution indicated that all the participants were part of the initial phase of transformation in 1994. The governmental targets around equity in terms of gender are achieved according to findings. All the participants in management positions were female, which was also in line with the RDP (1994) plans of 1994. The caseloads have increased, the number of social workers to caseloads have decreased, while services had to be rendered in terms of transformational models. The challenge to implement the transformational models still exists as Community Development is not implemented by any of the participants. There is however imbalances as the developmental model and other models are used by only 40% of the participants.

The process of integration and amalgamation was more challenging for participants from the black department than for those from other departments. Language also affects service delivery negatively from the experiences of the participants. The participants indicated continued challenges around political mandates, the challenges to service delivery as well as the image of the social work profession. It is also stated that the political mandates are some of the possible reasons for de-professionalisation and also why social workers leaving the profession. Training to implement transformation legislation is still a challenge. The stress factors experiences by the participants indicate that intervention for the social workers in question as well as the organisation is required to assist them and to improve the morale and functioning of the group in question.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The findings of the study were discussed in the previous chapter. The objectives of the research will be summarized and compared with the findings in order to conclude on whether the objectives were achieved as cited by Bless Higson-Smith (1999:146). In this chapter the researcher will therefore indicate to which extent the objectives were achieved by presenting the most important findings, making conclusions and indicate recommendations based on the findings as stated by the participants.

5.2. RESEARCH GOAL

A goal is a broad, abstract conception, of the end, towards which research efforts or ambitions are directed (De Vos, Schurink and Strydom, in De Vos et al., 1998:7). The aim of this study was to explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of practicing social workers and the impact it has on the social worker and the social work profession in the Johannesburg Office of the Department of Social Development in Gauteng. Hereafter conclusions and recommendations were formulated to serve as guidelines for social workers in contemporary social work practice, when dealing with transformational challenges.

5.2.1. Objectives that had to be Achieved in order to Realise the Goal of this Particular Study

5.2.1.1. Literature Study

Literature was explored by a comprehensive literature study to gain insight in the transformational challenges facing the practicing social workers in Johannesburg. Possible strategies or techniques to deal with the challenges in contemporary social work practice had to be formulated.

The context and theoretical framework of the challenges posed by transformational changes on social work were explored and discussed (Chapter 2). The position of social work in South Africa before transformation is explored and the process of transformation of social work services is unpacked based on the available literature. The limited number of social workers and the distribution of social workers before and after transformation are discussed (Chapter 2.3). The process of the amalgamation of the government departments (Chapter 2.4), workplace changes (Chapter 2.7.1) and challenges such as diversity, changed organisational culture (Chapter 2.7.2) and language, cultural awareness and competencies (Chapter 2.7.2) as well as legislative changes (Chapter 2.8). Transformed social work approaches and mandates were discussed with the preparation and training identified as implementation challenges as discussed in Chapter 2.12.

Chapter 3 consist of a literature review on the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker as a person and the effects thereof on social work service delivery. Transformed social work approaches and mandates (Chapter 3.5) were unpacked. The impact of the challenges on the status of social work (Chapter 3.3), integrated service delivery and partnerships is discussed (Chapter 3.5 and 3.6). The attitudes of social workers, their physical and mental wellness are explored (Chapter 3.9). Stress related conditions are identified and possible programmes to be initiated by the employer and the employee is explored (Chapter 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11).

The impact of transformation on social work is determined by questionnaires which covered the workplace challenges, implementation challenges as well as the effects of challenges on the social worker as a person. A theoretical framework is provided by focussing on the position of social work in the country before and after transformation as indicated in Chapter 2.3 in the study.

The findings and the literature is compared in terms of diversity and cultural challenges in the workplace, the knowledge and implementation of transformational legislation and policies, as well as the impact of the aforementioned on the social worker as a person.

5.2.1.2. Data Collection Method

To develop a semi-structured interview schedule which was be implemented during semi structured interviews for data collection. (Questionnaire - Annexure D). The interviews could not be scheduled due to the challenges in the region. The researcher delivered the questionnaires to the participants and collected it after completion.

5.2.1.3. Data Collection

To collect data on the experiences, perceptions or opinions regarding the transformation challenges. The fact that both a qualitative and a quantitative research design was implemented, afforded participants the opportunity to provide both experiential responses and quantitative responses.

5.2.1.4. Data Analysis

Data was analyzed according to Tesch in De Vos et al.,(1998:343) and is be presented by making use of figures and tables. The analysis took place as planned according to the steps set out by Tesch, in De Vos et al., (1998:343)

5.2.1 5. Output of the study

Conclusions and recommendations which may serve as recommendations for social workers dealing with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice are available. The recommendations will be provided in this chapter.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS BASED ON FINDINGS FROM DATA COLLECTED

The researcher identified the following findings as prominent and of high importance to the participants as discussed in Chapter 4. These findings (Chapter 4) are linked to the transformational challenges as highlighted by the participants in correlation with the literature study in Chapters 2 and 3.

5.3.1. The Case Loads of Social Workers before and after Transformation

According to Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005) there was an increase in caseloads of social workers since 1994. This fact was confirmed by the participants who clearly stated that the increase was due to the decreasing number of social workers at a time when there was an increase in services to the masses in South Africa. Transformation ensured the empowerment of clients who are now demanding services that they are entitled to. The increase in client expectations can directly be linked to the increased workloads of social workers. This situation led to overworked and de-motivated social workers who are not concerned about dissatisfaction of clients. The two detrimental effects of increased workloads in the midst of several transformational challenges, brings about increased criticism to the social workers as well as the social work profession. The negativity of the clients as well as the negative propaganda against social work cause increased stress which is expressed in a flight fight or freeze situation as cited by Humphreys (2000:51).

The following conclusions can be made:

Increased stress hampers reflective practice which is why social workers do not admit what they are going through transformational stress (Tshabalala 2001:170). More than 50% of the social workers who suffer from burnout are left with feelings of powerlessness and with no intention to even address the challenges. Both the social workers and the employee are responsible to intervene and attend to the challenges as well as the needs of the social workers as a person (Grobler et al., 2002:442)

5.3.2. Preparation of Social Workers to implement Transformation Policies and Legislation

Seventy percent (70%) of the social workers in the department were not trained to implement transformation policies and legislation according to the findings in Chapter 4.10. Social workers express their frustration with the transformed approaches of social workers in the institutions as they made it difficult to place children if there is no compliance to the transformation policies.

The following conclusions can be made:

Training of social workers can still be availed as it will prevent social workers from having to work on a basis of Trial and error. According to Lesnik (1997:162), social workers were introduced to policies and legislation at the point of implementation. Reorientation of social workers is thus needed to effect implementation. Training in tertiary institutions on transformation as agued by Dalton and Wright (1999:278) should have produced transformation orientated social workers. Even the younger social workers 31-40 years of age, did not reflect knowledge on transformation legislation and policies.

5.3.3. Transformation Models Implemented by the Departmental Social Workers

As presented in Chapter 4.4.2 (Figure 4.4), only two of the six transformation models are implemented by 40% of the participants. The findings illustrate the implementation of the Developmental Approach and the Empowering Approach. Statutory social work is rendered but no mention is made of Developmental Statutory Interventions. Lombard alluded to the fact that services are still render in the same manner as before transformation.

The following conclusions can be made:

Community Development and Integrated Service delivery is not implemented. Gray (2002:193) and Payne (1997:258), agues that the implementations of the transformational models takes more time which suggest that the high caseloads have to be dealt with before all the transformational models can be implemented. According to the literature study it is evident that high caseloads and transformational models cannot be reconciled with each other. Social Work Management intervention is imperative to create an environment that is conducive for social workers to do what is expected of them.

5.3.4. Political Awareness and more Involvement in Executing Political Mandates

The findings presented in Chapter 4.10.1 indicate that (70%) a large percentage of the participants are more aware of political mandates than before transformation. An even higher number (80%) of participants indicated that they are more involvement in the execution of political mandates. Although the knowledge of these mandates could be seen as empowering, the analysis of Chapter 4 8.1 indicates that political mandates posed challenges to social work practice. Social workers are frustrated as they feel used to obtain political votes for the ruling party. Politicians prescribe to social workers what to do in assisting the clients referred by them, even if request is not in line with the core social work functions. Unrealistic expectations are raised by politicians, which cannot be executed by the social workers. Social workers indicate that they are set up for failure which cause disappointment to clients and reflect social work services as inefficient. The result is that social worker lost their pride in the profession because political mandates take precedence above the needs of the clients.

The following conclusions can be made:

Salmon and Salmon (1999:2) as quoted in Chapter 3.10 suggest that the situation must be addressed in a manner that will change the status quo and improve the relation between the social work profession and the political leaders. Political awareness and mandates should benefit the social work services to the clients and not be a cause of friction as it is currently viewed by social workers. This is also one of the factors that increase stress in the social work field. This is not a situation that will disappear. Social workers and their managers will have to put strategies in place to address the situation in the interest of the profession, the social worker and the client Salmon and Salmon (1999:2).

5.3.5. Reasons why Social Workers are leaving the Country

The findings as stipulated in Chapter 4.11 are that 70% of the participants indicated that social workers leave the country mostly due to poor remuneration in South Africa and the pressure to execute political mandates. Other reasons were poor physical working conditions, high case loads in other words role overload as mentioned in Chapter 3.11.2 and substantiated by Venter (2003:53).

The following conclusions can be made:

Social workers feel that the profession is degraded and deprofessionalised (Patel 2007:210) in the process of transformation, which is also closely linked to the lack of job satisfaction. Social workers feel disempowered and therefore do not address their challenges. Instead, they opt to leave the country or the profession. The Draft Retention Strategy in developed by the Department of Social Development to ensure the retention of social workers in the profession and in the country.

5.3.6. The Physical and Mental Effects of Transformational Challenges on Social Workers

All the participants responded to this question in the study. It is evident that all the participants display one or more of the physical and mental challenges indicated in the questionnaire (Annexure D). The most important responses were: frustration, fatigue, restlessness, headaches, negativity towards clients and managers, depression, stress and insomnia.

The following conclusions can be made:

The responses indicate that the personnel are in need of wellness and some of employee assistance as provided in an employee assistance programme.

Half of the participants indicated that they are using medication to control or manage the effects on stress. A low percentage of participants indicated that they are utilizing the departmental employee assistance programme. It is concerning that the stress leads to negativity towards clients.

This is a response that further damages the image of the social work profession. It is therefore evident that the unattended, transformational stress does affect the image of the profession negatively. The well being of the social worker first need attention before the service and attitudes to clients will be effectively addressed.

5.3.7. How Social Workers Address Transformational Stress

The level and seriousness of stress indicated in Figure 13 does not correlate with the management thereof in figure 4.15. Frustration is indicated as the highest form of stress experienced by social workers in the department of social development. Fatigue headache and insomnia are the other important factors identified.

The following conclusions can be made:

Medication is the manner in which most of the social workers manage their stress symptoms. Only one of the participants used the EAP programme in the department of social development. The comparison between the two figures namely Figure 4.14 and Figure 4.15 indicates several conditions of stress that is left untreated. This is an explosive situation that needs urgent intervention to prevent increased burnout which could result in “rust out” (Humphreys 200:65).

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The following recommendations which may serve as guidelines for employees when managing transformational challenges are presented in Chapter 4:

5.4.1 Proposals on How to Deal with the Challenge of High Case Loads, versus Service Delivery as Mentioned in 5.3.1.

According to the Draft Retention Strategy (2006) challenges to service delivery can be managed by the implementation of an Integrated Service Delivery Model by both state and non- government organisation.

5.4.1.1. The development of norms and standards

The equal distribution of workloads between non- governmental- and government social workers will thus be ensured. The development of clear norms and standards for service delivery will indicate what a social work case load should be, and how production as well as output of services can be measured. Clear structure and norms would provide a sense of security and will lead to job-satisfaction.

5.4.1.2. Professional support to social workers

The provision of social work supervision as a management function must be executed to enhance professional functioning of social workers. Professional support will have a positive effect on service quality and keep social workers motivated as efforts will be acknowledged and affirmed. Performance could then also be linked to performance appraisals, incentives and affirmation.

5.4.2. Enabling of Social Workers to Implement Transformational Models in Service Delivery

Training is imperative to enable social workers to effectively implement transformational policies and legislation. It is established that social workers are not trained to implement the transformational mandates. They learned from their mistakes on a trial and error basis which compromised the effectiveness of services to clients (Chapter 4.12).

To enable social workers to implement transformational models, the following suggestions are proposed by the researcher:

5.4.2.1. Needs based capacity building

An assessment of the training needs should be done and plans to provide the identified training have to be put in place.

Individual needs, sectional needs as well as regional needs must be identified and addressed. Continued professional development is in line with the expectations of the South Africa Council for Social Service Professions.

5.4.2.2. Empowerment in terms of transformational models

Transformational models can not be separated from the transformational policies which prescribe the implementation of the said models. Training on the appropriate legislation and policies as well as the new models of service delivery has to be rolled out to all social workers in the region to ensure compliance. It is clear from the study that the social workers in institutions are implementing the transformed models in their service delivery. The training programmes that were presented to them could be replicated in the service offices as part of in-service training.

The training programmes should be included in the performance agreements of individual social workers, which will allow quarterly evaluation on training undergone as well as the integration of theory into practice.

5.4.2.3. Implementation Plan for transformational models

The implementation of the transformational models according to the findings in Chapter 4 is a challenge to practicing social workers as only two of the six models are used by social workers in the Department of Social Development. The reason for the non compliance to the implementation of the other transformational models will have to be unpacked. An implementation plan will then have to be developed which will include training as well as the management of increased workloads.

5.4.3. Proposed Management of Political Challenges in the Process of Transformation

Political awareness and the involvement of social workers in the execution of political mandates are identified as some of the most frustrating transformational challenges for social workers in the Department of Social Development.

The following suggestions are made by researcher for the management of the identified challenges:

5.4.3.1. Management of political expectations

It is clear that the conflict between the political expectation and the social workers experience, need to be addressed. The strategic objectives of the department could assist the social workers to understand where their professional functions are positioned. Political mandates were bound to increase, as the services are marketed by politicians to the people. It is imperative that clear procedures be put in place between the political officials and the service delivery arm of the department. Closer collaboration between the parties involved is needed to address the challenge in the interest of service delivery.

5.4.3.2. Alignment of service delivery and political mandates

It is the responsibility of the social work professionals to guide the political leaders as far as the needs of the communities are concerned, by doing research and indicate the felt needs of the communities, before strategic plans are signed of. Social work professionals should ensure that politicians are aware of the value that the profession can add to there political goals and objectives.

The apathy of the social workers will have to be replaced with the commitment to advocate for the needs of the community. The understanding is that the politicians want to raise their popularity and the social workers want to meet the needs of the community. Both parties can change the circumstances of those in need. It is therefore imperative that the parties involved complement each others efforts, in the best interest of the communities that we serve.

5.4.4. The Retention of Social Workers in Accordance with the Reasons why Social Workers Leave the Profession or the Country

Social workers must be retained to serve the needs of the country. This can only be achieved if the challenges experienced by the professionals are addressed and the morale of social workers is restored. Realistically none of this can be achieved overnight. Social workers will have to be reminded of the importance of the profession to change to lives of those in need.

The following suggestions are made by the researcher to assist in retaining social workers in the country:

5.4.4.1. The utilization of para-professionals to enhance service delivery

The purpose of the paraprofessional which is currently perceived as de-professionalizing to the profession has to be put in perspective.

Social workers also have to be brought to the realization that they cannot do everything. Non-core social work functions will have to be re-allocated to the paraprofessionals. This will allow social workers to do what they are trained for and enhance job satisfaction.

5.4.4.2. Recognition of Social workers

The suggestions of Grobler et al.; (2002:450) that the staff should be acknowledged and given recognition when it is due, could also assist with retaining staff. Social workers also have to be made aware of the fact that transformation in service delivery is mandatory, and needed in the country.

5.4.4.3. Improvement of the professional image of social work

Resistance to transform could just damage the profession more. Social work professionals have to realize that they are the only people that can restore the image of the profession. All social workers in the department will therefore have to take responsibility to improve the image of the profession in their environment and to orchestrate their own job-satisfaction.

5.4.4.4. Retention of Social workers

The retention strategy for social workers is one of the most important ways in which government attempt to retain social workers. Social workers in the department must acquaint themselves with the plans stipulated in the retention strategy.

The following paragraph will address the management of stress and improved morale for social workers.

5.4.5 Proposed Guideline to Manage the Physical and Mental Effects of Transformational Challenges on the Practicing Social Workers

The participants in this study were very clear on the high stress levels that they experience and could indicate how they are affected (Figure 4.14). It is clear that the social workers experience more than two serious stress symptoms which must be attended to as a matter of urgency.

The following suggestions are made by researcher to manage the physical and mental effects of transformation on practicing social workers:

5.4.5.1 Implementation of wellness programmes

Wellness programmes could be used as a point of departure, to enable social worker to gain personal knowledge about their physical and mental conditions (Grobler et al., 2002:450). Education and awareness can take the form of dissemination of information through brochures, luncheon lectures and elevator posters on conditions as identified in figure 4.14.

5.4.5.2 Encouragement to utilize the employee assistance programme

It is also crucial that the reasons for staff refraining from utilizing the existing employee assistance programme within the department be examined. This is a benefit to the exposure of all staff members and should be utilized by the social workers in the department. The department should considered ongoing programmes which are well advertised and allow the social worker to choose, programmes based on their interest. Regular debriefing sessions for social workers is much needed and should become a standard practice as it will prevent the built up of frustration and anxiety.

5.4.5.3 Restore physical and mental wellness

The physical and mental stress of social workers in the Department of Social Development should be addressed on a continuous basis. The supportive role of supervision must be executed to the benefit of the social workers as well as the clients. The supervisor has to identify and appropriately refer the supervisees for assistance, before physical or mental effects are detrimental. Social workers should also take responsibility for their physical and mental health and attend to situations which could affect them. The findings indicated that each social worker has his or her own way of dealing with stress.

5.4.5.4. Provision of support systems

It is imperative that support systems within the regional office be established so that social workers can feel safe to discuss their frustrations. The fact that social workers deal with their own experiences by themselves could be symptomatic of other workplace challenges which should be explored. As a point of departure the researcher would suggest that the supervisor supervisee relationship be utilized for this purpose. There might also be a need for teambuilding and team experiences to build trust relations in the workplace.

5.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is evident that the participants of this are experiencing transformational challenges due to the changes that they were exposed to over the last decade. The findings indicate that all the participants have one or more of the physical or mental symptoms of stress in the workplace. The recommendation would be that attention should be given to assess the stress of staff and ensure that it is attend to. EAP could be utilized to assist workers with stress management. Frustration of staff must be addressed and teambuilding and incentives could be used to affirm and appreciate staff, affected in the process.

The following areas need to be address concurrently due to the urgency thereof; stress management, the improvement of working conditions, political challenges; the capacity building on transformational challenges, the workload management, supervision and implementation of transformational models. Only when the aforementioned areas is addressed, will the image of the profession be on the road to restoration and, the well being of the social workers be attended to, service delivery improved and alternately social workers might be retained.

Social work is the implementation arm of government and it is therefore imperative that the recommendation discussed in this study be considered for implementation by the Johannesburg Regional Office of the Department of Social Development in Gauteng. It could also be utilized to guide more direct planning to address other transformational challenges which might not be covered in this study.

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ABSTRACT

The release of ex-president Nelson Mandela on 10 February 1990, introduced transformation in South Africa. The road to transformation, in a post apartheid era, placed pressure and demands on the social work profession and the professionals. Change was inevitable (Lesnik 1997:164) while the inequities and the disparities of the past had to be eliminated and replaced with transformed services.

This study explores the transformational challenges experienced in contemporary social work practice at The Department of Social Development, Johannesburg, South Africa.

A non-probability sample was selected (Babbie and Mouton 2004:166). A combination of the qualitative and the quantitative approaches, with more emphasis on the quantitative approach was utilized. Questionnaires were used for data collection and analysis was done according to the framework as described by Tesch in De Vos et al., (1998:343). The transformational challenges were identified and guidelines are drafted to assist in addressing the identified challenges.

Key terms:

Transformational challenges; Inequities; Disparity; Contemporary social work practice; Post apartheid; Transformed services; Guidelines; Pressure; Demands; Experiences; Change; Social work profession; Identified; Addressing

OPSOMMING

Die vrylating van die voormalige president Nelson Mandela op 10 Februarie 1990, het 'n periode van transformasie in Suid Afrika ingelei. Die weg na transformasie, in 'n era na apartheid, het druk en eise aan die professie en die vakkundiges gestel. Verandering was onafwendbaar (Lesnik 1997:164) terwyl die ongelykhede en dispariteite van die verlede geïlimineer moes word en vervang moes word met getransformeerde dienste.

Hierdie ondersoek sal die uitdagings wat verband hou met transformasie binne die maatskaplike werk beroep, in die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, Johannesburg, Suid Afrika, vas stel.

'n Nie-waarskynlikheidssteekproef in ooreenstemming met Babbie en Mouton (2004:166) is gebruik. Die kwalitatiewe en 'n kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetode is gekombineer hoewel groter klem geleë is op die kwantitatiewe metode, vanweë die aard van die data wat ingesamel moes word. Data is met behulp van vraelyste ingesamel en is geanaliseer na aanleiding van die raamwerk soos beskryf deur Tesch in De Vos et al., (1998:343). Die uitdagings van transformasie op die beroep is uitgelig en riglyne is ontwikkel om te help om die uitdagings te hanteer.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher deemed it necessary to first look at what social work is, before looking at what has happened to the profession in the process of transformation. Social work is a professional service, rendered by a registered social worker, to promote, enhance or restore the capacity and social functioning of individuals, groups and communities according to Payne (1997:40) and the Terminology Committee for Social Work (1995:60). Since 1999 it was expected that social work functions should be executed within an empowering and developmental paradigm as cited by Midgley (2001:245) as well as the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997:15). According to Lesnik (1997:34), social workers were not capacitated to implement the changed approaches, within a changed environment and in accordance to a changed legislative framework

Change is not new to the social work profession. Social work was exposed to challenges of change since its inception from the first charity organization in America in 1877 until professional status was reached as cited by Bernstein and Gray (1997:39-40) as well as Potgieter (1997:4-5). Although change is synonymous to the profession, the speed at which transformational changes took place, did not allow the profession to adapt to the new expectations such as fundamental policy changes, the challenges of attending to high case loads, the challenges of serving the vast needs of the previously disadvantaged communities and to manage increased development needs as cited by Gray (1998:1).

The rapid political transformation in the country, took place within short timeframes and placed pressure and challenges to social work in South Africa as supported by Lesnik (1997:164) as well as Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21).

The re-engineering of social work, in line with the new South Africa as cited by Lesnik (1997:164) and Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21) was however inevitable. The image of the social work profession in South Africa was affected, as the profession had to keep up with the speed of transformation according to Gray (1998:1).

Social work in the global society was also confronted with having to adapt to a developmental paradigm. The global view of social work is that the profession is effectively responding to the changing trends and needs of society as cited by Kirst-Ashman (2007:202) and Midgley (1995:34). The situation in South Africa is however different as the profession had to adapt to a new paradigm, and implement change, at the same time. Gray (1998:1) is of the opinion that the ground under social workers in South Africa, has literally shifted as the process of transformation in South Africa had a destabilizing effect on the social work profession. According to Gray (2000:100) the profession came under criticism, was sidelined and marginalized on the road to transformation. The experiences of social workers affected the services rendered by them as cited by Gray (1998:1) and Parton (1996:82). In order for the profession to respond to clients efficiently, the well being of both the client system and the professional social worker has to be in tact (Bisman 1994:12). The transformational challenges on social work in South Africa will be explored and will be measured against the literature. Recommendations that could assist the profession while still on the road of transformation will be proposed in Chapter 5.

The South African Government provided guiding documents to ensure that the process of transformation is rolled out smoothly as confirmed by Terreblanche (2003:45) and Lesnik (1997:159). The implementation of the guiding documents was hampered due to a lack of training and dissemination of information to operational staff by managers (Lesnik 1997:34). Lesnik (1997:34) further states that uninformed and unequipped staff could not be expected to know how to change their practice. This led to confusion, poor standards of practice and failure to meet developmental statutory requirements as cited by Lesnik (1997:34).

Social workers and managers were overwhelmed and overlooked the strengths of their professional training. They failed to link transformation to the basic principles and methods of the social work profession, such as community development as cited by Mckendrick (2001:108) and confirmed by Gray and Collett van Rooyen (2002:193).

Instead of drawing from their existing professional knowledge (Lesnik 1997:167), they perceived the lack of transformational training as problematic and as an implementation challenge (Lesnik 1997:167). The change that had to be effected on all levels of service delivery had to be managed and will be discussed in the next paragraph in accordance with the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006).

The manner in which change was managed, had a direct impact on staff as it raised pressure and increased harmful stress on the workers according to Joyce (1999:22), Lesnik (1997:35), Neil and Winslow (1993:34) as well as Parton (1996:139). Attention was given to the development and management of the change processes as cited by (Daniels 1999:210). The researcher is not convinced that social workers were empowered to manage the process of change. This view is supported by Gray (2000:9) when she mentions that social workers were left behind in the process of transformation, which led to the services as well as the social worker as a person, being affected. The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11), further states that social workers had to adopt a “make do” approach in order to cope with transformational changes. The transformation processes were rolled out while social workers were still confused about the difference between community development and developmental social work as cited by Lesnik (1997:167).

1.2. MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

The researcher has been driven by her concerns in the field of social work, to embark on researching this particular topic.

The exposure to all the transformation workshops offered by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape, transformed the manner in which the researcher practices social work.

Despite the advantages of transformation in service delivery, the researcher observed the frustration of social workers and clients, when confronted with transformed processes. The researcher observed situations where clients were referred from pillar to post, without being assisted, while the social workers were highly frustrated by transformation policies for example, Project Go (1996).

Project Go (1996), in line with the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:7) is a departmental policy document, outlining a process that was introduced to move youth and children out of institutions, back into the communities.

With the necessary training and resources, social workers would be empowered to implement policies such as Project Go (1996). Compliance to the transformational policy regarding children and youth at risk, as cited by the Inter-ministerial Committee on Youth at Risk (1996:76, 77-81) (hereafter referred to as the IMC) would thus be ensured. The policy is can assist social workers in transformed services delivery.

The researcher observed social workers with unmanageable caseloads going through experiences of burnout (Weinbach 2003:281) versus rust out, as cited in Humphreys (2000:65). The researcher also observed social workers having nervous break-downs on duty or using anti-depressants and other medication to cope with increasing pressure at work, as cited by Grobler, Warnick, Carrel, Elbert and Hatfield (2002:440-441). Although the researcher personally experienced the positive aspects around transformation, the researcher was overwhelmed by the negative observation and the impact it had on the social workers around her.

The experiences of social workers have a direct impact on service delivery.

The researcher was therefore prompted by her day to day interactions and activities in the work place to embark on researching this particular topic as cited by Fouché and De Vos, (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, Poggenpoel and Schurink, 1998:51). Transformational challenges facing contemporary social work practice were explored and recommendations which could assist in addressing the challenges will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this study.

1.3. PROBLEM FORMULATION

1.3.1. The Problem Statement

The research problem arose from the concrete problems that the researcher observed in reality (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:17).

The researcher was concerned about the degradation of the social work profession which she observed, as well as the negative attitude of practicing social workers. The topic was refined and narrowed to a problem or question as cited in Neuman (1997:119). The researcher opted to focus on transformational challenges from the practitioners' perspective. In the light of the literature study, it seems as if social workers in South Africa could not manage the challenges posed by transformation neither could they cope with the implementation of the prescribed transformational policies and procedures.

Joyce (1999:92) indicates that if change is not managed properly, it could lead to increased emotional tension on staff. Social workers find themselves in a situation which impacts negatively on themselves, the profession and service delivery, as they had to practice in a transforming environment, with a lack of specific guidelines and relevant training as cited by Midgley (1995:30-31).

The researcher explored the current position of social workers and how challenges such as the amalgamation of separate social work departments, implementation of transformation legislation, working from a transformed perspective within a developmental paradigm, with a mandate to meet the needs of the masses, without added resources, within a diverse and new democracy. The experiences of social workers is explored for the purpose of the research and measured against the contribution of existing literature.

1.4. GOAL FORMULATION

1.4.1. Goal of the Research

A goal is described as a broad and abstract idea towards which research efforts or ambitions are directed (De Vos et al., 1998:7).

The aim of this study was to explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of the social workers and the impact it has on the social work profession in Johannesburg. Hereafter conclusions and recommendations were formulated to assist social workers to move beyond the transformational challenges.

1.4.2. Objectives of the Research

The goal of the study, expressed and presented in concrete, measurable and attainable segments as cited by Fouche and De Vos, (in De Vos, Strydom Fouché & Delport, 2005:104) as well as Mouton (2005:240), forms the objectives of a study. This is why Mouton (1996:25) describes objectives as a route to a destination. In order to realise the goal of this particular study, the following objectives had to be realized.

- 1.4.2.1.** To contextualize the position of the social work professions before and after transformational changes took place.

- 1.4.2.2.** To explore the general and legislative transformational changes that was brought about, as well as the manner in which it was done.
- 1.4.2.3.** To explore the impact of transformational challenges on the social work profession and on the social worker as a person.
- 1.4.2.4.** To arrive at recommendations on the management of the transformational challenges in the profession, as well as recommendations on the management of the effects that the transformational challenges has on the social worker as a person.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1. The Research Approach

According to Dey (1998:147), De Vos et al., (2005:357) and Mouton and Marais (1996:169) qualitative and quantitative research reflects the interest of the researcher and what the researcher wants to make of it. The researcher found a combination of the qualitative and the quantitative approach more suitable for this study because it firstly granted the opportunity to gain insight into the perception of social workers regarding the impact of transformation.

Secondly, it enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the profile of social workers in contemporary social work practice. It also allowed the researcher to explore the quantities managed by social workers. The emphasis in the study is however more on the quantitative approach due to the nature of the study and to minimize subjectivity. The qualitative knowledge can be used in a quantitative study as cited by Campbell, (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport, 2002:369).

A combination of methods can assist with the utilization of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods according to De Vos et al., (2005:357). In line with the previous paragraph, qualitative research strives to obtain and understand the experiences of the participants on a particular topic, while the quantitative data will provide data regarding the challenges such as caseloads and training sessions. The phenomenon being investigated in this involved research was the experiences substantiated by statistics and perceptions of the social workers in contemporary social work practice.

The social workers' understanding and experiences of transformational challenges and their adaptability to deal with the transformational challenges as cited by Mouton and Marais (1996:169) is explored.

1.5.2. The Research Design

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:63) a research design could be seen as the planning to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed and collected data. Mouton and Marais (1996:43) describe the goal in exploratory studies as the exploration of an unknown research area. The researcher found that there was limited literature available around the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker and the social work profession. The researcher therefore had to explore the impact of transformational challenges from practicing social workers as cited in Weinbach (2003:114-121).

The aim of this particular study was to gain insight into the phenomenon and how to deal with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice. The limited literature available on the area indicated to the researcher that this is not a well researched topic. The researcher therefore opted for the exploratory design (Neuman 1997:20).

1.5.3. Population and Sampling

1.5.3.1. Population

Neuman (1997:203) refers to the term, “target population” as a specific pool of cases that a researcher wants to study. The population for this study can be defined as registered social workers in the Department of Social Development in Gauteng.

1.5.3.2. Sampling

Sampling, according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:86), is the study of the relationship between a population and samples drawn from it. The sample taken from the population should be representative of the population from which it was drawn. Researchers however sometimes need to draw a sample from a small population to deal with an exceptional phenomenon as cited by Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:193). The researcher therefore resigned herself to using 10 (ten) cases as a sample for this particular study. The topic for the research is specifically aimed at social workers in contemporary social work practice, who had first hand experience in the transformational process in the Department of Social Development.

A non-probability sampling method namely the purposive sampling technique was used for the purpose of this research (Strydom, in De Vos et al., 2005:202). This sampling method was suitable as the researcher was able to gain specialized insight from selected people, based on her own judgement as described in Neuman (1997:206).

The researcher collected data, sufficient to the purpose of the study (Babbie and Mouton 2004:166). The researcher is familiar with the knowledge and experience levels of the members of the sample and knew that they could provide the required information from their experiences (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:95).

1.5.4. Method of Data Collection

Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:107) states that there are different ways of getting information from participants, one of these ways are through questionnaires. This method is useful in an exploratory research according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:107). To formalize the interview between researcher and participant as suggested by Greef (in De Vos et al., 2002:302) researcher planned a semi structured, in-depth interview. Greef, (in De Vos et al., 2002:302-303) also states that an interview is built up of three kinds of questions prior to talking to the participant.

The researcher planned to implement the aforementioned with understanding and respect for the participants, in line with the prescribed manner in which the interviews must be conducted according to Greef, (in De Vos et al., 2002:301-303). It was however very difficult to get the individual interview scheduled due to unplanned political mandates and high workloads. The researcher then had to opt for only utilizing the questionnaires.

The questionnaires were delivered by hand to each participant for completion in their own time. The questionnaires consisted of open and close ended questions which could assist in revealing the participants reasoning as cited by Neuman (1997:241).

1.5.5. Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is defined by Neuman (1997:426) as a search for patterns in recurrent behaviour, objects or a body of knowledge. Once patterns were established according to the experiences of participants, the researcher was able to interpret the information.

The process of data collection and data analysis can be seen as inseparable according to De Vos et al., (2002:341).

Colour codes for certain responses simplify the collation in the final report as cited by Poggenpoel, (in De Vos et al., 1998:336). The researcher read through all the transcripts and analysed all the questionnaires to determine the meaning of the information. Topics were identified and clustered into categories. The material was assembled according to the categories for preliminary analysis and the researcher collated the existing data (Tesch, in De Vos et al., 1998:343).

1.5.6. Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to improve the effectiveness and success of the study and the questionnaires (De Vos et al., 1998:182). A pilot study can be described as a small study conducted prior to the larger research, to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate according to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:50). The pilot study involved the literature study, consultation with experts, feasibility of the study and the pilot testing of the measuring instrument. The Pilot Testing will be dealt with later in this chapter (Refer to 1.5.10.)

1.5.7. Literature Study

The study of literature was essential as it assisted the researcher to familiarize herself with the latest developments on the research topic and to identify gaps and weaknesses in previous studies (Bless and Higson-Smith 1999:23). The sources of literature for this study were books, personal interviews, journals, dissertations, departmental memos, legislation and documentation.

1.5.8. Consultation with Experts

According to De Vos et al., (1998:180) it is important to consult with specialists in the field who can add value to the study.

Due to the lack of literature on some aspects of the study, the researcher had consultation sessions with a number of experts as cited in Strydom and Delport, (in De Vos et al., 2002:337). Personal interviews were conducted with experts on areas that were not sufficiently covered in literature such as the amalgamation of the different government departments and the substantial knowledge of how transformation was initially rolled out in the department (Strydom and Delport, (in De Vos et al., 2002:337). Some experts could provide information around the legislative and policy changes within the department due to their location at the time. Knowledge on the process of transformation of social work services, as well as training and capacity building of social workers, was gathered from experts and presented with the literature that was available.

1.5.9. Feasibility of the Study

The researcher is a manager in the Johannesburg Regional office of the Department of Social Development and could gain easy access to the target group. Due to the value that the study could have for the department, the researcher was allowed to distribute and explain the questionnaires in working hours to the participants.

The region is however very big and the participants were not all in the same Cluster. The researcher experienced difficulty to collect all the questionnaires from the different Clusters. More questionnaires were distributed to ensure that the required number will be covered, despite the possibility that all questionnaires might not be returned.

1.5.10. Pilot Testing of the Measuring Instrument

Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:50) cites that the pilot testing of the study provides an opportunity to determine and uncover any difficulties that might be experienced by the final participants.

The researcher pilot tested the questionnaire with two social workers in the department who were not included in the final study. The questions were clear and provided the information needed to address the research question. The approved questionnaire was therefore used as the final instrument to collect the data for the final study.

1.5. 11. Ethical Considerations

De Vos et al., (1998:25) and Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005: 56) indicates that ethics can be described as a set of moral principles, which offers rules and behavioural expectations, about the most correct conduct towards participants in research.

The researcher adhered to the following ethical principles:

1.5.11.1. Informed Consent

Informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which the participants may be exposed, be discussed according to Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:59). The consent of the participants was obtained before the commencement of the research. The participants were provided with all the information around the research and after an indication that they would avail themselves to participate, they were served with the consent forms to be completed by them (Annexure B).

1.5.11.2. Confidentiality

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1999:103) it is imperative that participants are assured of confidentiality despite anonymity and that data will only be used for the purpose of the research.

The researcher utilized a form signed by her, committing to confidentiality. The confidentiality forms were signed as it is the researcher's responsibility to protect the participants and to ensure that the information gathered or the findings reached, are not used at the cost of the participants. (Annexure C)

1.5.11.3. Violation of Privacy

Privacy, according to Strydom, (in De Vos et al., 2005:61), is defined as aspects which is not normally intended to be observed or analysed by others. It is the duty of the researcher to ensure that the rights of the participants are protected and that their privacy and anonymity is paramount. As a co-employee of the participants, the researcher has an even greater responsibility to respect the privacy of the participants. The participants were assured of anonymity and the protection of their privacy in the signed covering letter to them.

1.5.11.4. Debriefing

The Department of Social Development has an Employee Assistance Programme, with outsourced psychologist's, which is available to all staff members, at no cost. The participants thus have access to this service should they need to work through their experience and it's aftermath as cited in by Judd et al., in De Vos et al. (2005:66). The researcher encouraged the participants to utilize the opportunity for debriefing, should the need arise.

1.6. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts for the study can be defined as follows:

1.6.1. Transformation

Transformation occurs as people are empowered through raising consciousness to see alternatives, a vision of social change and throwing off oppression in one's life as cited by Lee (1994:14).

1.6.2. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership refers to a leader who is able to take his or her followers to a destination that they are too afraid to approach on their own as cited by Smit and Cronje (2002:294).

1.6.3. Empowerment

The concept of empowerment is central to the ethos of generalist services in that it does not focus on the individual pathology and inadequacies but draws on peoples strengths, also referred to as assets. Empowerment also addresses the social and economic inequalities as cited by Patel (2007:160).

1.6.4. Developmental Statutory Social Work Services

Developmental statutory social services are protection services to children, families and communities, provided in an integrated manner. All the core social welfare services including formal protection services, such as the administrative procedures prescribed by legislation, as well as those services required to address the needs and concerns which created and initiated the statutory process in the first place, to improve their social functioning in relation to the demands created in their interaction with their environment as cited by Lombard (2006) and Mashego (2002:202).

1.6.5. Ubuntu

Ubuntu is an African metaphor that describes the significance of group solidarity, on survival issues central to the survival of African communities which as a result of poverty deprivation, have to survive through brotherly group care and not individual self reliance (Mbigi and Maree 2005:5). Ubuntu can also be described as a spirit of humanity which encompasses a principle of people caring for each other's well-being with an attitude of mutual support (White Paper for Social Welfare 1997:6).

1.6.6. Developmental Approach

A developmental approach refers to a focus on strengths rather than on pathology, to built competencies rather than attempting to cure, and to belief in the potential of people and to move them towards healthy functioning as cited by Gray (1998:58).

1.7. CHAPTER OUTLINE IN THE RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter 1

This chapter consists of a general introduction and orientation to the research report under the following headings: Introduction and motivation for the study, problem formulation, goal formulation, research methodology, research method, research design, population, sample and sampling, data collection, data analyzing, ethical considerations; clarification of key concepts; the content plan of the research report and the budget.

Chapter 2

This chapter consists of a theoretical orientation to the study discussing the following: The historical background of transformational challenges to social work in South Africa. Due to the magnitude of information covered in this chapter it is divided into two sections. Chapter 2, Part One, consists of the general background of transformational changes and challenges posed to the profession. Chapter 2 Part Two consists of the legislative and policy changes and challenges posed to the profession.

Chapter 3

The nature and impact of transformational challenges experienced by social workers and its impact on the social worker, the service delivery as well as on the image of the profession.

Chapter 4

In this chapter the empirical study and findings are presented. A summary of the fieldwork/data collection as well as the results gathered, are provided in this chapter.

Chapter 5

This chapter consists of the conclusions and recommendations which may serve as guidelines in addressing the current challenges in social work practice. It includes a summary of the aims of the research and the way in which the objectives were reached.

1. 8. SUMMARY

The social work profession is constantly exposed to change. In South Africa the profession was challenged to adapt to the rapid changes, brought about by transformation in the country. This chapter provides a background and outline the goals and objectives of the study. The objectives are outlined in accordance with the research question. The content of this chapter provides a basis for the formulating of the said research goal which is namely: To explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of the social workers and the impact it has on the social work profession in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGES THAT POSES CHALLENGES TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1. OVERVIEW

This chapter consists of a theoretical orientation to the study discussing the historical background of transformational challenges to social work in South Africa. The chapter is divided into two sections due to the magnitude of the information and to differentiate between the focus areas of transformational changes and challenges. Part One of this chapter covers the general background of transformational changes and challenges posed to the profession. Part Two consists of the legislative and policy changes and challenges posed to the profession.

PART ONE

2.2. INTRODUCTION

This section covers the background of social work in South Africa; the distribution of trained social workers before and after 1994 well as the impact of a leaner public sector on the social work profession. The amalgamation of the following own affairs departments is discussed and the challenges with specific reference to the manner in which it was done. The challenges of a diverse workplace with a new organisational culture are explored and unpacked in this section of Chapter 2.

2.3. THE BACKGROUND AND POSITION OF SOCIAL WORK IN SOCIAL WELFARE

Social work in South Africa started in 1929 as an outcome of the Carnegie Commission of enquiry into the poverty of white people in South Africa according to Gray (1998:7) and Pieterse (1976:39). This process also supported the profession to reach professional status.

According to Drower (2002:8) the Dutch Reformed Church started with the training of white social workers in 1938. The first government to lead social service delivery was established in 1937 and focused on the needs of the minority of the population of the country as cited by Pieterse (1976:46).

Separate government departments were responsible for the welfare functions of their own population groups, inline with the apartheid legislation of that era, according to Gray (1998:10), Lesnik (1997:157), as well as the Social Welfare Circular (No. 29 of 1996). The government and business resources, in compliance to the apartheids-system, were mostly directed to the white communities, despite the needs of the other population groups, as mentioned by McKendrick (1998:99-101). When transformation had to be introduced in social work service delivery, the profession was confronted with the history of social work in South Africa. The unequal distribution of services and resources to disadvantaged communities was one of the mayor challenges as the majority of the disadvantaged communities were under-resourced and poor as cited by McKendrick (1998:99-101) and Terreblanche (2003:444). The researcher is of the opinion that the impact of transformational challenges cannot be measured without looking at the history of where social work in the country is coming from.

The government had to put strategies in place to start the process of transformation in social work services and formulated a Ministry for Social Welfare in 1994, aimed at assisting the process of transformation to (Patel 2007:94).

Patel (2007:95) indicates that the National Government established the Restructuring and Transformation Committees to ensure that the amalgamation of the fourteen (14) racially based social welfare administrations, into nine (9) Provincial Departments with one National Department. A shift from an apartheid and remedial welfare model also required changes in policies and practise to enable social workers to serve a democratic society (Terreblanche 2003:45). Patel (2007:95) states that the social work profession was challenged with the implementation of the new policies. The distribution of social work practitioners in the country will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.4.

2.4. THE DISTRIBUTION OF TRAINED SOCIAL WORKERS BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

As mentioned earlier in the study, social work services were rendered based on the principle of each population group serving its own community (Loffell in Du Toit, Beeld 31 January 2005). The distribution of social workers was, however, not in line with the needs of the respective communities. The biggest percentage of social workers was located in the former Vaal-triangle (37.5% of the total number of social workers in the country). There were also differences in the number of trained social workers available for the different race groups. The majority, namely, 66% of social workers were White, 12% were Coloured, 6% were Indian and 16% were African (The Council for Social Work 1994). The minority group in the country had the largest number of trained social workers. A report brought out by the Pretoria Witwatersrand and Vereeniging (hereafter referred to as PWV) Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994), indicates that there were two thousand one hundred and seventy five (2175) social workers employed in government departments in 1991.

The Distribution of Trained Social Workers before Transformation (PWV Health Services Transitional planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994)

Government Departments according to the different Race Groups	Trained Social workers	Distribution of Social workers	Involvement in/or from other Departments
Provincial Administration (Black Department)	16%	28%	12% from other Dept.
House of Representatives (Coloured Department)	12%	17%	5% from other Dept.
House of Delegates (Indian Department)	6%	4%	2% in other Dept.
House of Assemblies (White Department)	66%	20%	46% in other Dept.
Self Governing Territories (Homelands)	Covered by the 6% of the provincial Administration	31%	

Table 2.1. The distribution of trained Social workers before transformation

The table above indicates that the Coloured and Black Departments had to use trained social workers from the Indian and White Departments to augment the shortages in the particular groups. The White and Indian Departments had a surplus of trained social workers who were afforded the opportunity to work across the racial barriers, in the Black and Coloured Departments. According to Jacobs (2006), the white social workers who were rendering services to other population groups, were compensated with danger allowances and insurance policies for their willingness to work across the racial barriers. In an post apartheid era all of the above was about to change as social workers of all race groups would be rendering services to all South Africans.

The government attempted to consult with communities by the establishment of technical committees, to conduct consultative processes and research, to assist the process of transformation as cited by Patel (2007:96). While government was consulting with the communities, (Van Wyk: 2006) the social workers were concerned about their own future in the Department of Social Development.

According to Van Wyk (2006) there was tension amongst staff around senior posts, as most of the senior posts in the “Own” Affairs Departments were filled by white social workers, while the senior post in the “Homelands” were filled by black social workers. It was also highlighted by Van Wyk (2006) that men occupied a misappropriate number of posts at senior levels, regardless of race and despite the fact that women are dominant in the social work profession. There were thus a large number of staff related issue that needed to be dealt with, which led to delays in the process of transformation in the profession. Smith and Cronje (2002:246) cite that the female component of the workforce diversity rose by 33% every year from 1996 to 2001. The situation cited by Van Wyk (2006) indicates tension experienced by social workers around their future in the “New” South Africa.

The Restructuring and Development Programme (hereafter referred to as the RDP: 1994) expected that the public sector would transform within two years from 1994, to reflect the South African society in terms of race, class and gender, and to effect service excellence to all.

Transformation would therefore facilitate equity in the field of social work in South Africa. The reality was however that the inequities had to be addressed and that people would be affected in the process (Gutto 2001:27). The PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March 1994) highlighted the need for an Affirmative Action Policy to be developed in consultation with staff (Grobler et al., 2002:54). This policy would ensure employment equity in relation to race, gender and disability, to rectify the availing situation.

Transformation also required a general review of all old policies and legislation within the field of social work as cited by Cloete and Wissink (2000:11) and Patel (1992:33). In order to unpack transformational challenges experienced in the social work profession, the relevant legislation which guide and inform social work practice will be discussed later in this study (Chapter 2 Part Two). The following paragraph will address the amalgamation process of the different Welfare Departments.

2.5. AMALGAMATION OF FOUR SOCIAL WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

A Departmental Circular No. 13 of 1994, issued by the Chief Director of Social Services, House of Assembly on 18 March 1994, refers to the President's announcement that the own affairs departments had to be phased out by 31 March 1994. The amalgamation of social work departments in all provinces therefore had to take place in March 1994 according to the RDP (1994:54). Van Wyk (2007) acknowledged that the amalgamation of the four departments posed great challenges to all those involved in social welfare services. According to Circular (13 of 1994) the amalgamation took place on 1 April 1994, less than 15 days after the circular was issued.

The amalgamation has been done in great haste which did not allow enough consultation and preparation of staff as cited by the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994), Hoffmann (2006) and Jacobs (2006). The much needed amalgamation set the ground for challenges due to the hasty manner in which it had to take place.

The sincere political innovation to transform social services was hampered by the challenges it posed to staff, which also led to them resisting the change that was brought about by transformation (Mbigi and Maree 2005:3). Challenges identified during the initial phase of transformation and captured from internal departmental communication documents (1994) which was circulated after a meeting in Johannesburg, were the following:

- Lack of representation in terms of race, gender and disability.
- Lack of popular legislation.
- Poor and discriminatory service delivery, especially for the black majority, referring to African, Indian and Coloured communities.
- Centralized control and top-down management.

- Lack of public accountability and transparency.
- Absence of effective management systems, essential for successful planning; Low productivity and wasteful duplication.
- Low pay and morale; poor professional service ethos and work ethic.
- Fear and anxiety about change, leading to low morale and the danger of a brain drain.
- Resistance to change.
- Popular impatience at the pace of change.

The above mentioned challenges were highlighted and expressed by staff within the Department of Social Development, during the initial stage of transformation. The comparison between the above mentioned challenges and the findings that will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this study will influence the recommendations and guidelines in Chapter 5 on how to deal with identified transformational challenges.

2.6. THE IMPACT OF A LEANER PUBLIC SECTOR ON SOCIAL WORK

The RDP (1994:80) indicated government's plans to reduce the Public sector in certain areas, but also highlighted the need for an increase of social workers in the new paradigm (RDP 1994:56).

According to the Annual Performance Plan of the Department of Social Development (2006:13) the ratio of social worker to the population in need, was one social worker to two thousand nine hundred and forty seven people in Gauteng. The impression was thus that the human resources in the province were insufficient to address the needs of all communities from an empowering and developmental perspective. The optimal utilization of the profession had to be ensured by differentiating between core and non-core services (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14).

The idea was to only allocate core social work functions to registered social workers and to recruit para-professionals to deal with non-core services, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). A time frame of two years was given for the transformation of the public sector to reflect the South African society in terms of race, class and gender, to effect service excellence as cited by Lesnik (1997:164) and Parton and O'Byrne (2000:21).

The government's agreement with trade unions to a leaner public sector, either through voluntary retrenchments or by doing away with vacant posts, affected the social work profession negatively (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14). According to Grobler et al., (2002:21-22), retrenchment packages could result in a loss of enthusiasm, commitment, loyalty and trust. The rationalization and reorganization process of the public sector focused mainly on reducing the size of the public sector and not to retain social workers (Annual Performance Plan Gauteng 2006:14). When people leave, it has an effect of increased stress on the remaining staff due to increased workloads. They also tend to feel guilty that they are still in their jobs (Gobbler et al., 2002:21-22). Although the process of reducing the public sector might have been necessary for a great part of the sector, the decrease was detrimental for the social work profession, which was already not meeting the demand.

Resolution 7 (2000), was a departmental mandate which placed a moratorium on all appointments from 2000. The fact that no vacant posts could be filled for a specific period, further depleted the social work cadre in government. The number of practicing social workers decreased, while the needs for services increased according to a Department of Social Development's Regional Model (2004).

The limited human resources forced social workers to only do what they could manage. Although this was a coping skill, it left them frustrated as the needs of the clients could not always be met (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006: 8).

The aforementioned situations could result in a lack of job satisfaction for social workers. It also contributed to the profession being criticized for not meeting the community's developmental needs as described by Gray (2000:100) and Lesnik (1997:166). The lack of job-satisfaction is enough reason for a person to leave a job. The exodus of social workers out of the profession and out of the country according to the researcher's view might be related to the aforementioned transformational challenges.

2.7. THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT ON SOCIAL WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

With the acceptance of South Africa back into the international arena, there was a high percentage of social workers who have left South Africa on short term contracts, to provide services particularly in the present Common Wealth Countries, as cited in the Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy (2006). The Department of Social Development is further challenged with retaining social workers due to the status, remuneration and the absence of credible career paths for social workers, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). The international recruitment is also responsible for the decreased number of social workers available to address the social work needs of the people of South Africa (Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy 2006). Increased work loads were inevitable and had to be managed by the remaining social workers, in the midst of other workplace challenges which now will be discussed.

2.8. WORKPLACE CHALLENGES FACING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

2.8.1 Diversity in the Workplace

The amalgamation as discussed earlier in this Chapter was announced and the date was set for the different departments to move into the one building (Circular 13 of 1994).

The amalgamation brought a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs to one organization according to (Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia 2001:65). Diversity can be experienced by staff as a melting pot as cited by to Smith and Cronje (2002:243), which refers to people losing their identity and culture in an attempt to become one organisation. It could also be seen as a mosaic where differences are respected and embraced (Haessly 2001:160).

Many South Africans found it difficult to adapt to working with people, whom they perceived to be different from themselves, as confirmed by Smith and Cronje (2002:243). When the different departments amalgamated, each person brought with themselves their own uniqueness as well as the uniqueness of their organisation. The reaction of staff depended on their willingness to understand and value the uniqueness of others as cited in Smith and Cronje (2002:250). The study attempted to determine whether an "us or them" mentality was created or whether the emphasis was on the commonalities that existed as cited by Smith and Cronje (2002:235), as well as Hughes and Pengelly (1997:156).

One of the challenges around diversity was the language issue, as South Africa has eleven official languages and clients should be allowed to express themselves in their own language (Smith and Cronje 2002:245). English has become the official language despite the fact that large numbers of the population are not English speaking as cited by Rissik (2001:86-87). According to Raath (2006), social workers find it difficult to express themselves in reports as they are expected to communicate in English. For many people in the English-speaking environment, English is not their first language and is thus a disadvantage to them (Rissik: 2001:86). The quality of psycho-social reports submitted to the Department of Justice and other stakeholders are compromised, which further affects the image of the profession (Raath 2006). Social workers had to learn to understand the value as well as the challenges of diversity and approach it appropriately (Smith and Cronje 2002:251).

Specific languages used by social workers could reinforce discrimination or undermine the continuance of a discriminatory discourse as cited by (Rissik 2001:86). The researcher explored the impact of language on the service.

According to Patel (1992:48) the voluntary welfare sector changed faster than the government sector, which is evident in the following report after a consultative conference with social workers in 1991:

- Meetings were held with staff to discuss racism in the organisation.
- Attempts were made to desegregate management structures of agencies from being dominated by white middle-class altruists and experts.
- Agencies which have traditionally served only black clients, were reaching out to white communities.
- Racial inequalities in service delivery were being addressed in some agencies through strategic planning of future services.

It is however still important that staff and organisations accept and respect differences, continue to monitor behaviour and attitudes, pay attention to dynamics, and strive to adapt to the demands of a diverse clientele. Culturally competent organisations would welcome and celebrate diversity while holding all other cultures in high esteem as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:39) as well as Haessly (2001:160). The study explored the experiences of the social workers around cultural diversity in a transforming government department.

2.8.2. Changing Organisational Culture

Organisational transformation indicates a step by step process of restructuring an existing organisation by removing what does not work, reinforcing what works and implementing new systems or cultural values, according to the need (Head 1997:5).

In order for any changes to be sustainable, it has to be clearly communicated and understood by everybody who has to implement the changes as cited by Tossell and Webb (1997:305). Culture may sometimes be confused with race, colour, or ethnicity. The concept is however much broader and has to be unpacked to explore all aspects thereof as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:31). This could be achieved in cultural diversity workshops which could assist to create a new identity, to regulate relationships and to regulate cultural dynamics as cited in a Strategic Competency Document (2006). Gray (1998:34) cites the importance of respecting individual, cultural and social differences, to ensure that techniques used in interventions is cross-culturally acceptable. Radical and cultural changes in an organisation could result in greater resistance than incremental change (Smith and Cronje 2002:231). Transformational change in the public sector had a negative side to both services to the public and to the quality of the work. The impact of cultural diversity is explored and will be revealed in the findings and recommendations will be discussed.

Culture becomes a liability when important beliefs and values interfere with the strategy and structure of an organisation according to Grobler et al., (2002:50). The researcher is of the opinion that clashing of beliefs and values could be found in government organisations with the ideology of the new regime and vice versa. Cultural difference could be a significant liability as personal ideological beliefs cannot always match the dominant ideology of an organisation's culture (Smith and Cronje 2002:223). It is also time consuming to realign an organisational ideology to personal cultures of all employees in this unique situation.

The employees came from different organisations, each with a unique culture, which composes of a set of assumptions that directs activities within the organisations as cited by Brevis, Ngambi, Naicker and Vrba (2002:227).

It was therefore imperative for staff in the department to have been orientated and assisted to develop the necessary competencies to work with different cultures, considering the past of separate development in the South African communities as suggested in Grobler et al., (2002:50).

Social workers had to strive to become culturally competent by increased cultural awareness. Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) states that a person should be vigilant in monitoring one's own behaviours and attitudes in the process of cultural sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity is a deliberate action and should be practiced by all employees in the new situation (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). Staff could invite feedback from others about their engagements to encourage sensitivity towards others. This reflection would assist the employee to discover his or her cultural contribution in the organisation (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway, 1998:40-41).

The following implementation steps as suggested by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) can assist staff in a culturally diverse workplace:

2.8.2.1. Cultural Awareness

The first step to cultural awareness is simply to develop an awareness of culture and an understanding that not all persons and cultures are alike. The organisation could use opportunities of festivals and religious gatherings in the communities, to learn about other cultures. It is important to examine and pay attention to the limitations and difficulties in your own culture and how it impacts on your life and on others (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). Whether sufficient time was allowed to instil cultural awareness amongst staff, is one of the questions that will be unpacked in the findings of the study.

2.8.2.2. Cultural Competence

A cultural competent social worker demonstrates a willingness and ability to bridge differences between the agency and the person seeking help, within the helping relationship (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41). The focus will then be on the needs of the client rather than the needs of the social worker.

The social worker will be able to assess the strengths of the person, family, community and culture as well as identify resources that already exist in the environment, irrespective of the culture of the client (Piondexter, Valentine and Conway 1998:40-41).

A culturally competent social worker is able to advocate for the rights of the client despite cultural differences as cited by Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40-41) and well as Payne (1997:7). Cultural competency can only be acquired over a reasonable period of time. Whether the process of transformation allowed sufficient time for social workers to become culturally competent, is a question which was explored through this study. The study will determine whether a new organisational culture was formed as well as the level of awareness and competency of social workers to cope with the cultural diversity. The next paragraph will highlight the changes in legislation to affect transformed services.

PART TWO

2.9. INTRODUCTION

This section of Chapter 2 focuses on the transformational challenges around legislation and policy changes, transformational approaches to service delivery such as developmental-, integrated and intersectoral models, as well as the impact thereof on service delivery. In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the transformed service delivery framework, the challenges posed by it and the impact thereof on social work in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development.

2.10 CHANGES IN LEGISLATION TO INFORM TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

A new interim Constitution, with a built-in Bill of Rights was accepted in 1994 and nine provinces with new borders and their own legislatures came into effect (Lesnik 1997:155). The RDP (1994) was also accepted as a policy framework for a comprehensive approach to harness resources in order to reverse the crisis created by apartheid (ANC 1994:3). According to Lesnik (1997:156), Patel (2007:155) and the RDP (1994:53), a comprehensive review of all the policies and legislation, regulating Social Welfare and Social Security in South Africa, had to be done almost overnight. A new legislative umbrella was developed to provide the framework for development orientated social welfare, based on the principles of equity, access, user involvement and empowerment. The RDP (1994:53) proposed amendments to all existing legislation and policies to include services to the previously disadvantaged groups in the country. The welfare services prior to 1994 were inequitable and discriminatory, with more emphasis on statutory interventions (Patel 2007:155). It was inevitable for the human service organisations to be open to change after the first democratic elections in 1994. Change was inevitable whether it was environmental change or change in addressing the clients needs (Brevis et.al. 2002:101) and (Frigenti 1993:1).

The profession was criticized for not developing people to be self-reliant as cited by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23), Patel (2007:155) and Lesnik (1997:164). In order for the profession to meet the needs of the majority within a changed and transformed framework, legislation had to be amended (Patel 1992:33). The changed legislation was meant to provide guidance to the profession in the process of transformation.

According to the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) the following needs were identified with regards to legislative reform after a survey, conducted in 1994:

- Duplication of Legislation which directed different racial groups had to be replaced: The National Welfare Act 100 of 1978; The National Welfare Act (House of Representatives) 18 of 1986 and the Community Welfare Act (House of Representatives) 104 of 1987. These Acts prescribed the way in which welfare services had to be rendered to all the relevant population groups.
- Changed in marriage and divorce that were guided by multiple laws such as the Divorce Act 70 of 1979, The Black Administration Act 38 of 1927, The Matrimonial Property Act 88 of 1984, The Matrimonial Affairs Act 37 of 1953, The Marriage Act of 1961, The Maintenance Act 23 of 1963 and Mediation in certain Divorce Matters Act of 1987 had to be effected.

It was suggested that the views of social workers in the public sector as well as those in welfare organisations, subsidised by government, be taken into account when legislation are reviewed. The rationale was that social workers are directly involved in implementing certain provisions of the acts, according to the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) and a Strategic Competency Document (2006:5).

Some Women's organisations and research institutes contributed by developing proposals for reform in relation to the legal status of women and children. The proposals had to be included in the drafting of the new legislation and policies as cited in the PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994). Various professional groups also developed proposals for the reform of the juvenile justice system to be brought in line with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

The PWV Health Services Transitional Planning team of the African National Congress (March: 1994) further suggested that the policy development should be done in phases and should not be short circuited by the pressure to produce legislation. Patel (2007:97), Lesnik (1997:164) and a Strategic Competency Document (2006:5) states that the principles of participation and transparency could not be fully achieved, due to tight timeframes. According to Gilbert and Tossell (2002: 2) policies provide an explicit course of action for a definite process. It was necessary for staff to be properly trained on policies and legislation to do justice to the implementation thereof.

The following policies and legislation were developed to arrange and order services and resources to meet specific needs of society and to inform service delivery in a transformed manner (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:23):

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No. 108 of 1996).
- The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997).
- The Interim Policy Recommendations of the Inter- ministerial Committee for Youth at risk (1996).
- Minimum Standards for institutional care (1996).
- The Batho Pele Principles (1999).
- The Public Finance Management Act (1999).
- The Social Services Professions Act, 1998 (Act No. 110 of 1998).

- Child Care Act, 1983 (Act No. 74 of 1983).
- The Aged Persons Act 1967 (Act No.81 of 1967).
- The Probation service Act, 1991 (Act No. 116 of 1991) and the Probation Amendment Bill (2002).
- Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act, 1992 (Act No. 20 of 1992).
- Social Assistance Act, 1992 (Act No. 59 of 1992).
- Non-profit Organisations Act, 1997 (Act No.71 of 1997).
- National Development Agency Act, 1998 (Act No. 108 of 1998).
- Advisory Board on Social Development Act, 2001 (Act No. 3 of 2001).
- Mental Health Act, 2002 (Act No. 17 of 2002).
- Prevention of Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act No. 116 of 1998).
- Divorce and Mediation Act, 1979 (Act No. 70 of 1979).
- Maintenance Act, 1998 (Act No. 99 of 1998).
- Criminal Procedures Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).

According to the Strategic Competency Document (2006:4) the human capacity in the public sector was not brought in line with the service delivery demands required for the implementation of the aforementioned Acts and Policies (The Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:8 and Venter 2003:64). The following selected policies and legislation guide and enhance social work service delivery in a transforming South African context:

2.10.1. The new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) formed the basis of transformation and required the public sector to demonstrate the following principles:

- Efficient, economic and effective use of resources.
- Provision of developmental services.

- Impartiality, fairness and equitability of services without any bias.
- Consultation with citizens.
- Accountability of the public service to the citizens.
- Representative public service based on ability, objectivity, fairness and redress of past imbalances.

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) places emphasis on equality in all spheres of life, human dignity, and the right to social security, respect and security of children's rights. The constitution is therefore the overarching document providing guiding principles for all the legislation and policies developed thereafter.

2.10.2. The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006)

The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23) and Venter (2003:37) alludes to the rights of children, youth, woman and older persons as stated in various international conventions and established in the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). The expectation is that intensive services to these focus groups have to be rendered by social workers. According to Lesnik (1997:166) integrated and development services have been promoted from the beginning of the transformation process, but with limited success. Integration was however proven to be easier to establish in some of the deprived under serviced communities as cited by Lesnik (1997:166).

Cooperation between different Departments is geared at minimizing cost, as very often clients of the one agency become the workload of the other according to Holzer and Callahan (1998:95). Integrated service delivery, in line with The Public Finance Management Act (1999), hereafter referred to as the PFMA (1999), is imperative and should be excised by all social workers. If the skill to work integrated is not imparted as yet, this might be experienced as a transformational challenge in contemporary social work practice, from the researcher's perspective.

2.10.3 The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997)

As a primary policy document the White Paper (1997) serves as the foundation for social welfare in a post apartheid era (Patel 2007:163). It sets out the principles, guidelines, proposed policies and programmes for developmental social welfare in South Africa (Patel 2007:163).

The White Paper on Social Welfare (1997:3) states that despite the fact that social workers are also trained in community development, their approach to service delivery is largely rehabilitative instead of developmental and preventative, as cited in Patel (2007:154). According to Lombard (1999:98) social workers are not clear on how to integrate the theory of developmental social work into practise. They were however still responsible to adhere to the following restructuring priorities outlined in the White Paper (1997:3):

- The phasing out of all disparities in social welfare programmes.
- The restructuring and the rationalization of the social welfare delivery system to be embraced (White Paper on Social Welfare 1997).
- The actual performance of social workers had to be monitored and measured within particular reporting timeframes to ensure that deviations are identified and rectified according to Brevis et.al., (2002:395).
- Improving service delivery was therefore according to the Strategic Competency Document (2006: 10) the ultimate goal of the transformation programme in the public service.

The challenge posed by the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) is the implementation of sustainable development which involves active participation by clients in making decisions for their own development. This process suggests that people have to take part in policy development and implementation.

The result is that clients have to be involved in the process of meeting their needs, addressing their problems and exercising their potential to become self-reliant as confirmed by in the Public Finance Management Act (1999:9). The challenge to social workers is that they are expected to comply with the White Paper (1997) despite their limitations such as the lack of knowledge, training and resources for the integration of theory into practise (Venter 2003:64).

2.10.4. The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) 1999

The PFMA (1999) promotes objectives of good financial management to ensure effective and efficient service delivery despite limited resources. The PFMA (1999) indicates why and what should change in social service delivery towards a developmental approach. It does not provide clear guidelines with regards to how the shift should be made. Due to the gaps identified in the PFMA (1999) the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004) was formulated.

The Department of Social Development identified thirteen challenges posed by the PFMA (1999) which had to be managed by social workers in contemporary social work practice, such as:

- Accessibility.
- Equitable distribution of services and resources between rural and urban areas.
- Development of more community based services.
- Management boards and structures which reflect the demographic profile of the region and province it serves.
- Ensure the sustainability of emerging and disadvantaged non profit organisations.
- Building the management and financial capacity of emerging organisations, ensuring a transfer of skills from established organisations to emerging organisations.

- Development of affordable costing models.
- Improving the infrastructure and resource base of historically marginalized non profit organizations and communities.
- Halt the process of continued fragmentation of social services.
- Moving away from a competitive individualistic service to cooperative and collective approaches that facilitate skills transfer and service integration.
- Provision of an integrated service that appropriately responds to the needs of the community, recognising their strength and capacity for empowerment.

Despite the above mentioned challenges, social workers in the department had to try and make sense of the PFMA (1999) from 1999, as implementation could not be delayed until the development of the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004), (De Jager 2007). The social work profession was in the middle of this dilemma and had to perform with, or without clear guidance as confirmed by de Jager (2007). Despite the challenges, the philosophy behind the PFMA (1999) according to Booyens (2004:24) allows freedom to manage resources while holding managers accountable to decide how they should manage the resources. The PFMA (1999) advocates greater devolution of decision-making and empowering according to Booyens (2004:24). The PFMA (1999) thus sought to transform welfare services to promote universal access to services that are differentiated and integrated as cited by Patel (2007:163). The PFMA (1999), the IMC (1996:20), and the Integrated Social Development Model (2006: 20). The results of this study (Chapter 5) indicate the social workers knowledge, understanding and compliance to this policy.

2.10.5 The Interim Policy Recommendation (Inter Ministerial Committee : 1996)

The Interim Policy Recommendation (1996) is an output of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), formed in May 1995, to manage the process of transformation of the Child and Youth Care System. The then Deputy Minister of Welfare took the leadership to have this policy developed (IMC 1995:8). The IMC document (1996:76) outlines several social work functions and responsibilities.

Concern was however raised according to Gray (2000:100), that social workers and social educationalist were not widely enough consulted in the drafting of the interim policy. The IMC (1996) requested that each sector integrate the relevant recommendations into their broader transformation processes where appropriate (IMC 1995:8). The recommendations proposed by the IMC are filtered into the new Children's Act as well as in the Child Justice Bill.

Social Workers were identified as the key role players on Prevention, Early Intervention, Statutory and Continuum of Care levels of service delivery to children, youth and families at risk (IMC 1996:76). It is evident that the policies brought out by the IMC (1996) are in line with the expectations indicated in the PFMA (1999) and the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997). The recommendation by the IMC (1996) clearly addresses the rights of the individual as unpacked in the next policy document to be discussed.

2.10.6. The Batho Pele Principles (1999)

Batho Pele is the Sotho translation for "People First". The Batho Pele Principles (1999) advocates for the rights of the citizens to be consulted about the services rendered to them. Provision is also made for the public to be given choices where possible. According to the Batho Pele Principles (1999) citizens is entitled to receive services of acceptable standards. Information about the service and what to expect must be available. The Batho Pele Principles (1999) clearly state that services should be accessible to the person who needs the service. Accurate information must be communicated to the citizens. The services should reflect value for money as cited by Koehler and Pankowski (1996:62). Retraining of service providers in government to implement new policies and legislation is strongly suggested in the principles. The redressing of the imbalances of the past, in line with the White Paper (1997) and the Regional Model (2004:3) is also underlined by the Batho Pele Principles (1999).

The public is educated on what they should expect from services in line with the Batho Pele Principles (1999). Expectations are thus raised while resources are limited as confirmed by de Jager (2007). The result is that Social workers often fail to satisfy the high expectations of the client due to limited resources as cited in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006: 8). This could be perceived as a transformational challenge as it leads to the profession being criticized for not meeting the community's needs as described by Gray (2000:100) and Lesnik (1997:166).

2.10.7 The Probation Service Act (No 116 of 1991)

The Probation Services Act (No 116 of 1991) provides for the establishment and implementation of programmes aimed at combating crime and for the rendering of assistance and treatment of persons involved in crime (Patel 2007:164).

Patel (2007:164) also alludes to the Child Justice Bill that has been introduced to parliament and that makes provision for the institutionalisation of restorative justice to youth in conflict with the law (Patel 2007:164). The Probation Service Act (No 116 of 1991) and the Probation Amendment Bill of (2002) guide probation officers, who are currently, social workers in a highly specialized field. It describes the role and functions of the probation officers towards the court and the youth in conflict with the law. Probation officers do investigations, compile reports and recommend to the court suitable sentences for youth in conflict with the law (Shabangu 2004:23). Probation services are also currently rendered according to amendments to the Act in 2002, in accordance with the interim recommendation of the IMC (1996) which underpin restorative justice, diversion and developmental interventions. These recommendations are also embodied in the Child Justice Bill as mentioned by Patel (2007:165).

The challenge currently posed by the Probation Services Act (1991) according to Shabangu (2004:5) is the fact that probation services are performed by social workers who are not adequately trained on transformation of the Child and Youth Care System.

Shabangu (2004:50) also mention that probation services are overloaded and understaffed, which compromises the quality of services to the courts. The implementation of transformation policies and legislation is therefore hampered according to Shabangu (2004:5) as confirmed in Chapter 1.2.

All the transformation policies and legislation derives from the constitution of South Africa and is linked to each other.

It provides a framework that clearly states the expectation from social workers as well as the rights of the communities. The value and intentions of the policies and legislation can thus not be questioned. The challenges that were experienced to translate and integrate the theories into practice will now be discussed.

2.11. THE CHALLENGE TO TRANSLATE TRANSFORMATIONAL POLICIES INTO PRACTICE

Social workers were expected to take responsibility to acquaint themselves with the departmental policies and legislation as well as the transformation legislation administered by other government departments such as the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, Correctional Services, and the South African Police Services (Patel 2007:163). Without formal orientation to legislation, the risk was that the legislation could be interpreted differently by different practitioners.

Despite the above mentioned challenge social workers had to implement the prescribed policies before 2004 (IMC 1996). Service delivery had to reflect transformation on different levels within set time frames (IMC 1996). According to a Strategic Competency Document (2006) the biggest challenge for social workers in implementing policies and legislation was the fact that it was not clear from the onset and by the time it became clear, constant changes had to be accommodated.

The following discussion will provide a description of the nine levels of service delivery in accordance with The Public Finance Management Act (PFMA:1999), the IMC (1996:20), and the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006: 20) as well as Patel (2007:163).

2.11.1. Prevention

The aim of prevention services is to ensure that identification of vulnerable communities, families, groups and youth takes place and intervention is affected before crisis status is reached (Integrated Social Development Plan 2006: 20). Prevention services further aims at strengthening existing capacity and developing new capacity to promote resilience and increase ability to benefit from developmental opportunities (IMC 1996:20). Funding for prevention services is a high priority in terms of the PFMA (1999). Instead of appointing more social workers, a moratorium was placed on the filling of posts in terms of Resolution 7 (2000).

The number of social workers was decreasing while the expectation was that prevention services had to be prioritized (Integrated Social Development Plan 2006: 20).

Social work services is however still reactive according to Lombard (2006:24) and therefore not in compliance to the PFMA (1999) in this regard. Crisis intervention related to poverty, unemployment and violence, has to be prioritized and allows little or no time for the social workers to get to prevention services (Terreblanche 2003:25). This poses a direct transformational challenge on practicing social workers as some of the poor communities needs still remain unmet, which leave social workers feeling powerless (Terreblanche 2003:35) in terms of rendering prevention services.

2.11.2. Early Intervention

Early intervention is a level of intervention after assessment, which includes intensive support, capacity building, social relief; home based developmental support and therapeutic programmes (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). These services need to be widely developed and rendered by multi-disciplinary teams, across a variety of stakeholders (Integrated service Delivery Model 2006:20).

Services on this level is imperative, to ensure that there is no further deterioration in social circumstances of clients and that reunification or restoration is acquired where possible (Integrated service Delivery Model 2006:20). The success of early intervention is dependent on the client's cooperation as cited by Mbambo (2004b:39) and Patel (2005:23). The high statutory caseloads are currently prioritized above early intervention due to backlogs and the lack of human resources (Lombard 2006: 24).

2.11.3. Statutory Services

The fact that cases mostly enter the department at the level when statutory intervention is inevitable. This is the stage where court proceedings are embarked on, as cited in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:23).

Multi-disciplinary involvement is crucial at this level of service delivery as statutory processes for interim or final statutory placement of children or youth are already in process (IMC 1996:22).

The greatest challenge for social workers is the shift from deficiency-based approaches and interventions to strength and empowerment approaches and strategies as cited by Sturgeon (1998:26) and Landman (2004:79) in Lombard (2006:11). The process should be child friendly and child-centred with the involvement of the child, the family and significant others (IMC 1996:22).

The crisis intervention does however not always allow enough time to involve all stakeholders and significant others at the initial stage, which again open social workers up for criticism in terms of transformation according to (Lombard (2006) and Terreblanche (2003:25).

2.11.4. Continuum of Care

The IMC (1996:22) indicated that regardless of the re-prioritisation of resources and greater emphasis on prevention and early intervention, 30 000 children were already within the child and youth care system in 1996. It is thus evident that the implementation of the full framework for transformation of the child and youth care system would take time (IMC 1996:22). The notion however exist that there will always be a need for children to go deeper into the statutory system, due to the increase and the impact of HIV and Aids (Lombard 2006). Social workers who where not properly trained to implement the transformation policies of the child and youth care systems were not able to do so (Cloete and Wissink 2000:303).

2.11.5. Promotion and Prevention Services

Promotion and prevention services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20) are those services which would lead to the upliftment of people and communities by the promotion of their wellbeing. Guidance and support in choices and sound decision making is part of prevention services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

According to the Annual Departmental Operational Plan 2006/07, the celebration of calendar events and awareness campaigns are ways in which promotion and prevention services are executed. According to Lombard (2006) social workers find it difficult to balance statutory social work services with the proposed promotional and preventative services.

2.11.6 Rehabilitative Services

The services, according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:20) are rehabilitative and aim at improving and maintaining the social functioning of clients.

The impaired functioning could be due to disability or chronic conditions (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). Departmental social workers rely on organisations registered and funded by government, to render rehabilitative services on behalf of the department (Lombard 2006:23). The departmental social workers are however still responsible to monitor, evaluate and quality assure the services rendered by organisations, which could be seen as adding to the already heavy loads as cited in Lombard (2006:23).

2.11.7 Protection Services

A protective service (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20) is rendered by social workers within a legislative or policy framework, and therefore includes statutory services. It is aimed at safeguarding the well-being of individuals and families. These services could be rendered in terms of The Domestic Violence Act, 1998 (Act No. 116 of 1998) as well as the Child Care Act (Act 74 of 1983), as amended in 1999. Protection services were always high on the social work agenda. The intensity had to increase due to the impact of HIV and Aids on the communities (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

2.11.8 Continuing Care Services

The continuing care services are aimed at maintaining or improving the physical, social and psychological functioning of individuals, who for various reasons are not able to care for themselves fully (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20). The goal of continuing care is to improve independence and quality of life. Access to all services is available due to progressive and flexible systems, according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:20).

2.11.9 Mental Health and Addictive Services

These services encompass the area of mental health, addiction and family violence through prevention, treatment and aftercare in an integrated manner (Integrated Social Development Model 2006:20). This service is managed in the same manner as rehabilitative services (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:20).

2.12. THE DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

According to Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:79-80) as well as Midgley (1996:3) the developmental approach was a key instrument to implement transformational policies. The writers summarise the developmental approach as follows:

- Focusing on strengths rather than on pathology.
- Building competency rather than attempting to cure.
- Encouragement of trial- and- error learning.
- Always taking the context into account.
- Understanding and responding appropriately to developmental tasks and needs.
- Working with the total person not the so called pathology or problem.
- Work aimed at maximising potential rather than minimising the problem.
- A multi-disciplinary team approach involving the child and the family.

A changed approach according to Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:80), to the problems of clients was needed. Social workers had to assess the situations reported by clients differently than before. The problems now have to be viewed as challenges and strengths in stead of emphasising pathologies. This new approach necessitated a reorientation of thinking for social workers as cited by Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia (2001:80) and mentioned in the Batho Pele Principles (1999), the RDP (1994:57) and the White Paper on Social welfare (1997).

Social workers had to enter into partnerships (Payne 1997:259 and Venter 2003:30) with clients in order to implement the developmental and strength-based approach as cited by Gray (2002:193). This changed approach posed a challenge to social workers who were used to historically being responsible to complete the work according to their plan of action (Gray 2002:193). Since social workers are assessed on the completion of their work, it was much easier to just do it themselves than to rely on the strengths of the client as stated by Gray (2002:193).

Social work practice did not only have to adapt to the developmental approach, the practice was also affected by the focus over the last decade on Social Security, to the detriment of social work services (Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng 2006:34). The move of Social Security to the separate agency separated the high number of grant recipients from the clients receiving social work services as cited in the "Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:8). During the Gauteng Provincial Government Budget Lekgotla (2005) appropriate budgeting, post social security had to be refined to ensure that the allocation of funds is according to the need for social work services in the communities (Annual Performance Plan 2006:34). If money was only allocated post 2005 for developmental social services, the opinion is that financial resources were not sufficient to enable social workers to implement the developmental approach prior to 2005. The study will discuss the implementation or challenges around the developmental approach as a transformed model for social service delivery.

2.13. THE INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

According to Lombard and Van Rensburg (2001:325) partnerships is meant to enable social service organisations to make a shift from fragmented, specialized services to developmental integrated services. Different professions therefore have to integrate in the best interest of their client (IMC 1996:58). Integration will alternately ensure a holistic approach and assistance to clients (IMC 1996:58).

Lack of integration between core services in the department was highlighted in the Regional Model for Gauteng (2004:50). According to Lombard (2005) the guidelines for integration in statutory social services are not so clear and still need more development. These guidelines should incorporate clear directions with regard to the levels of service delivery, the core social services as well as how implementation will be monitored and evaluated (Lombard 2005). The following guidelines for integration as suggested by Lombard (2005) would be valuable to assist social workers in the process of integration:

- The protection of human rights, for example, the rights of the child, the family and community with regard to participation in protection decisions and processes.
- Participation strategies for engaging families and communities in decisions and activities.
- Addressing the fundamental causes of family disintegration.
- Respect for social and culture contexts of children and families when placement out of home is considered.
- The fostering of self-reliance, capacity-building and empowerment of at risk families and communities due to causes of children and families being at risk such as poverty and unemployment.
- Partnerships between government and NGOs, service providers and relevant role players within the community, including business and community structures such as schools and religious organisations.
- Integration of core services within the social service delivery framework of statutory intervention and prevention and early intervention within the context of reconstruction and aftercare.

Integral to an integrated plan for social service delivery, is to clarifying the respective roles of service providers with regard to core service delivery areas and levels (IMC 1996:58).

This includes the general, versus specialised services and more specifically, what one social worker can manage when involved in developmental statutory social service delivery (IMC 1996:58). The social worker is also identified to lead the process of integrating the multi-disciplinary team to ensure compliance (IMC 1996:58).

Social workers were expected to fulfil conflicting roles, such as to be a community developer as well as the statutory worker in the process of integration according to Landman (2004:98). Community development can however not be integrated with social service interventions by the same social worker, due to the distinctive nature of the two interventions (Landman (2004:98). The trust relationship of a community development worker will be affected if that same worker has to remove an abused child. Wexler (2003:45 - 47) states that the same caution is needed with regard to early intervention and statutory services due to possible conflicting roles. It seems to be advisable for different practitioners to take on specific functions on specific levels for the reason identified above (Wexler 2003:45 - 47). How the social worker engages depends on the design of the integrated plan as cited by Wexler (2003:47). The underlying challenge to an effective integrated plan for social service delivery is partnerships and inter-sectoral collaboration, led by the social worker (IMC 1996:58). Integration, involving a multi disciplinary team, could result in each team member having specific roles within the integration process (IMC 1996:58).

2.14. PARTNERSHIPS AND INTERSECTORAL COLLABORATION

Integrated plans with visionary leadership are needed to built partnerships and coordinate service delivery according to Lombard (2005). Lombard and Du Preez (2004:233) cite the various categories of 'partnership' and highlights trust as an underlying fundamental value for partnership. Government and Non Governmental Organisation's (hereafter referred to as NGO"s), need to work very hard on building such trust in order to jointly take developmental social services forward in South Africa (Lombard 2005).

There are still unanswered questions and a great deal of mistrust emanating from 1994, which impacts seriously on social service delivery and sound partnerships according to Loffell and Du Toit, Beeld, 31 January: 2005:11). As early as 2005 people were still asking questions such as “what is understood by transformation?” According to Lombard (2005) it is significant for the way forward to remember that there has never been clarification on what exactly the government, the business and private sector’s roles, are in respect of transformation.

The lack of consensus and common understanding has a huge impact on the services that are funded by government (Lombard 2005). According to a Developmental Quality Assurance report (2005:3) of the Johannesburg Child welfare Society, NGO’s lose social workers to the government due to the disparity in salaries between government and non-governmental posts. The report states that NGO’s are constantly training new social workers just to lose them to the department. NGO management is therefore highly challenged to find ways of retaining inexperienced staff due to the fact they are competing with government which can offer better salary packages (Weinbach 2003:280-281). The disparities between government and NGO’s are also affecting the partnership. Partnership according to the researcher’s view should benefit both parties and not be at the cost of the other stakeholder.

2.15. THE CHALLENGE BETWEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND LEGISLATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF

There is a challenge between the development of legislation, having it passed and the ultimate implementation thereof. Change in legislation takes people out of their comfort zones and can be traumatic as cited by Lesnik (1997:164). Apart from the resistance to change, a number of factors could go wrong according (Lesnik 1997:164) in the implementation phase which could jeopardise the successful implementation of legislation, such as:

- Insufficient financial resources (Terreblanche 2003:45).
- The lack of skills by personnel who must implement the legislation (Terreblanche 2003:447).
- Communication challenges between policy makers and implementers which leads to ineffective implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Inadequate time devoted to a programme as to much mat be expected within unrealistic time frames (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Policy goals being vague, conflicting and multiple, which leads to ineffective implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Implementation which acquires intersectoral cooperation is a challenge as input from others is not easy to manage, but it determines the successful implementation of the legislation or policy (Lesnik 1997:164).
- Legislation is often framed in a broad fashion which allows implementers to influence the content of the policy when it comes to implementation (Lesnik 1997:164).
- External circumstances can provide crippling constrains to the implementation process (Lesnik 1997:164).

From the literature study, it can be concluded that the above mentioned experiences provide firsthand transformational challenges cited by social workers during the development and implementation phases of the transformation legislation in Johannesburg.

The development and implementation of some of the transformational policies had far reaching implications on the social work profession (Gray 2000:99) as well as Streak and Poggenpoel (2005:4). The social work profession was marginalized when government support was withdrawn from the profession and other occupational groups were elevated (Gray (2000:102). The fact that the profession was associated with the apartheid Government, led to the profession being criticised according to Gray (2000:101).

Mckendrick (1998: xii) states that social work models and practices were transplanted from the Northern Hemisphere countries to address the “poor white problem”. The impression was therefore that social work in South Africa is not geared to meet the development and economic needs of the communities in accordance with the South African Constitution and the Intergrated service Delivery Model (2006:18).

The policy changes have presented the profession with a crisis of confidence, arising from the need to learn new ways of doing things and of functioning in a new policy environment (Patel 2007:210). This led to a sense of marginalisation to the social worker as professional (Patel 2007:210). Approaches to service delivery had to change. The researcher was not able to establish how the changing of approaches was managed, through the literature study. The above mentioned levels of service delivery was dependant on the implementation and change management plans as indicated in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:41). The effective implementation of the legislation and policies had to be done in accordance with the service delivery model (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006:41).

The transformational challenges experienced by practising social workers from the explored literature thus far in the study, can be summarized as follows:

The lack of skills to implement integration, developmental social work, the gaps in the PFMA (1999) as well as the lack of skills to implement the transformation of the Child and Youth Care System and other policies. The expectations of clients were raised while a lack of resources prevailed in the social work profession (Lesnik 1997:159).

Social workers also found it difficult to implement the strength based approach, to focus on strengths in stead of emphasising pathologies and to make a shift to empowerment interventions as cited by Sturgeon (1998:26) and Landman (2004:79) in Lombard (2006).

Recommendations have been drafted in Chapter 5 to manage the identified transformational challenges to contemporary social work practice.

2.16. CONCLUSION

According to the literature, social work is a profession geared at helping people to help themselves under constant changing circumstances. The profession is globally influenced and directed by political changes due to its position in the welfare sector. Social workers in South Africa were distributed unequally and served the needs of the minority in the country, to the detriment of the majority. Transformational challenges led to a leaner public sector which was further affected by international recruitment of social workers. The process of amalgamation of the different own departments to one democratic department, posed challenges which included working in a diverse workplace, practicing in a prescribed national language and adapting to a new organisational culture.

The readiness of social workers to implement the said legislation and policies was challenging to the profession. The paradigm shift of social workers from rendering purely statutory social work services to developmental social work services was a challenge (White Paper on Social Welfare, the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001: 245). Social workers were also confused about the differences between community development and the developmental approach at the point of implementation. Lesnik (1997:162) further states that an introduction were given to social workers but reorientation as it relates to implementation, still had to be done.

Developmental statutory social services are an integral part of developmental social welfare services, which can be implemented on the various levels of social service delivery. The integrated model as well as intersectoral collaboration was new concepts that had to be led by social workers.

These changes went hand in hand with organisational changes, change in organisational culture, diversity in the work place and the implications of different languages on service delivery. It becomes evident that it is not only unclear policy directives, but also the inability to control and address the variables in the practice environment, that hold social workers captured in a residual policy framework for statutory social service delivery. It is therefore not only social policy, but also the attitudes and abilities to implement these policies which are determining factors for the successful shift to developmental statutory social services.

The next chapter will elaborate on the impact of the transformational challenges on the social worker as a person.

CHAPTER 3

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES POSED TO THE SOCIAL WORKER AS A PERSON

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the impact of the transformational changes on the social worker, the image of the profession, the preparedness of social workers to implement transformation policies and legislation, the attitude of social workers towards the transformational paradigm shift, high caseloads, motivation and support, stressors, and employee assistance programmes. Special reference is made to the challenges imbedded in the transformational approaches, the inability of social workers to meet expectations and their attitudes which emanate from transformational stressors.

3.2. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES POSED BY ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

According to and Tshabalala (2001:170) transformational changes is bound to have an emotional impact on employees and can cause physical fatigue, de-motivation frustration and an undermined ability to cope. Fear and anxiety is common when people have to move out of their comfort zones (Tshabalala (2001:170). The researcher managed to obtain an internal document in which the impact of amalgamation on staff is discussed. Fear and anxiety as described by Tshabalala (2001:170) were present, but not dealt with, which cause social workers to develop burnout. As much as the impact of the amalgamation process is documented, no evidence could be found by the researcher that indicated how the identified effects were dealt with.

The study will reflect the impact of the change in organisational culture as discussed in Chapter 2, on the social worker as a person, against the possibilities as stated in the literature.

Social workers found themselves in the dilemma of reorganisation and reorientation to unfair and extended functions (Hughes and Pengelly 1997:6). In this situation a new sense of belonging had to be created in the midst of upheavals and disorientation (Hughes and Pengelly 1997:6). Social workers were expected to take on more work without increased resources which clearly indicated that the work were given priority over emotional and psychological needs of the social worker as a person as confirmed by Hughes and Pengelly (1997:6). The threat of a decreasing public sector was real and forced people who needed to practice, to comply with the unfair expectations (RDP 1994:80). An internal departmental document indicates that social workers complied with whatever was expected from them due to the uncertainty they found themselves in. Based on the absence of literature in this regard it is possible that the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker has not been unpacked.

3.3. TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGE TO THE STATUS OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

The transformation of the welfare sector has raised critical questions about the role and status of the profession (Patel 2007:210). It was suggested that social work is not relevant to the developmental needs of the communities after transformation (McKendrick 2001:106). According to Lombard (2002:30) it is imperative that the profession remain relevant, within the socio-economic changes and that the profession should maintain high standards of ethical conduct and accountability. The government questioned the value of the social work profession in a transforming South Africa (Gray 2002:100). According to McKendrick (2001:106) social workers did not defend the profession or the relevance of their training.

In the researchers consultation with experts, Stevens (2004) indicated that it would be better to rather leave the profession than to try and convince others of the wealth of knowledge in the profession. This is an indication of a low morale illustrated by a practicing social worker.

According to Patel (2007:210) social workers have expressed the concern that the new policy directions which include paraprofessionals, could lead to the de-professionalization and consequent loss of status for the social work profession.

Patel (2007:210) as well as the Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng (2006:14) states that the new policy directions was motivated by the need to manage the vast backlogs in services post apartheid.

The idea was to increase human resource capacity, in a cost effective manner, by appointing other professionals to complement social work (Annual Performance Plan for Gauteng (2006:14). The efforts of government to assist in addressing the communities' needs were not perceived positively by social workers (Patel 2007:210). Instead, social workers experienced it as interference with there work and felt unpreciation (Patel 2007:210). The apathy of social workers to defend the profession when they felt it was threatened (McKendrick 2001:106), is symptomatic of the loss of professional status, experienced by social workers. The researcher is of the view that all of the aforementioned issues influence the attitudes of social workers towards the transformational changes and the challenges it posed on the profession.

3.4. PREPARATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS TO IMPLEMENT AND EXECUTE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

The ANC congress (RDP 1994), suggested that resources be availed for the training of staff, on the following four different levels to fast tract the process of transformation:

- Lateral entry for progressive academics, activists;
- Organisers and NGO workers;
- Top level management development;
- Promotion within the public service.

The retraining of present incumbents of posts was mandated according to the RDP (1994). Patel (2007:275) however stated that there was a number of risk factors that needed to be addressed before implementing the mandated changes and strategies. She stated that social work staff and managers could have been threatened and undermined by the processes of change (Patel 2007:275). According to Patel (2007:275) additional projects were identified to address the need for staff development and to build management capacity.

This would assist staff on all levels to cope with transformational challenges. The training, retraining and orientation of social workers to implement the transformational legislation were imperative as cited in the Batho Pele Principles (1999).

The paradigm shift from purely statutory social work services to developmental social work services, in line with the need for empowerment of the client-system, was suggested by a number of policies such as the White Paper on Social Welfare, the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001:245). The researcher could not obtain any literature as evidence that to ensure a paradigm shift, was initiated from a social work perspective. Lesnik (1997:156), however stated that there were high expectations that the new dispensation would deliver radical change in service delivery.

The challenge for social welfare organisations post 1994 was to improve service delivery and make services more accessible and responsive to the needs of the vast majority of the population (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers, 2004:5). Streak and Poggenpoel,(in Lombard 2005:4) indicate that, one of the most difficult, yet urgent, tasks which faced the first democratic government was to transform and extend the social welfare system.

Social work services was however also challenged by the fact that there was virtually no funds available for any new services and that funding would instead be decreased as cited by Lesnik (1997:159).

The needs and expectations of communities in Gauteng have increased and had to be addressed with no increase in the budget after the constitutional change (Lesnik 1997:159). According to Raath (2006), social workers were not trained properly to implement the transformation policies (Cloete and Wissink 2000:303). This was more due to budgetary constraints while the need for training existed. A study conducted by Mashego and Lombard (2002:207) in Gauteng however indicated that 36% of probation officers had no experience in probation work, 83% had training in Developmental Social Welfare. Despite the high number of trained social workers according to Mashego and Lombard (2002:207), only 27% of the respondents implemented the Developmental Social Welfare Model.

The resistance of social workers to implement the training indicated a negative attitude towards transformation as cited by Mashego and Lombard (2002:212). The researcher explored the attitudes as well as the exposure of staff at the Johannesburg Regional office to transformational training.

Lesnik (1997:162) makes reference to the process of consultation to realign services with fewer resources, but does not make any reference to training. According to Lesnik (1997: 162) it was however evident that social workers were confused about the differences between community development and the developmental approach at the point of implementation. Lesnik (1997:162) further states that transformation policies were introduced to social workers, but reorientation as it relates to implementation, was not done.

In line with the RDP (1994), training had to be rolled out to fast track the process of transformation. Training on policies was rolled out to managers according to Hoffmann (2006), but the social work incumbents were not trained to be more effective in their service delivery. According to Dalton and Wright (1999:278) social work training institutions had to lead in education for service delivery in a changed environment. The need for training cannot be over emphasized as it would have allowed staff to express concerns and reinforce learned skills as cited by Koehler and Pankowshi (1996:65).

3.5. ATTITUDE OF SOCIAL WORKERS TOWARDS THE REQUIRED PARADIGM SHIFT

The effects of transformation on the social work profession influenced the attitude of social workers towards the transformation process (Mashego and Lombard 2002:212). The negative attitudes towards the developmental paradigm, which is directly linked to the transformational legislation and policies as published in several articles locally and internationally, is evident according to Brown and Portab (2001:138-151), Drower (2002:7-20), Lombard (1997:11-23) and Pozzuto (2001:154-163).

A paradigm shift which is in essence a mind shift that would require a change of attitude amongst social workers to transformed services delivery (Mbambo, 2004b:40) and Terreblanche 2003:443). Negative attitudes could promote resistance to change. According to Lechuti (2004), social workers resisted change, as it interfered with their stability. She also stated that changes were not communicated to grass root social workers, which further hamper compliance and influenced the attitudes of social workers.

The negativity of social workers towards developmental social work according to Mashego and Lombard (2002:212) is the reason why social workers are currently still performing their statutory work in exactly the same way as before 1997. It is important for social workers to adopt a more positive attitude to be able to make a shift to transformed social services (Terreblanche 2003:443). Lombard (2005) suggests that developmental social work will simply be discarded as impossible, without the right attitude. De Jager (2007), however stated in a paper delivered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, that the younger social workers were more open to the implementation of the developmental approach than their seniors, who were exposed to the old paradigm. The results of this study do reflect the implementation of the developmental approach by social workers in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development.

3.6. HIGH CASELOADS VERSUS TRANSFORMATION

High case loads are symptomatic of a lack of resources, discrepancies in salaries between NGO's and government social workers, and an exodus from the profession to further careers either in another country or outside of the social welfare sector (Lombard, 2005). Although these factors have been prominent in the media over the past years, resulting in government recognising social work as a scarce skill in South Africa, the devastating impact has reached crisis proportions for social services in South Africa as cited in the Draft Retention Strategy (2006).

A very high percentage of social workers' caseloads entail statutory work and therefore focus on children and families (Lombard 2005) and Venter (2003:53).

According to Lesnik (1997:165) high statutory case loads can be overwhelming and, time consuming. The high caseloads makes the shift to transformational approaches difficult (Lombard 2006). Within the context of developmental social welfare services, the focus needs to shift from the individual to the masses as cited in the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004:5) as well as Streak and Poggenpoel (2005:4). The researcher will explore how the social workers in the department cope with the challenge of high case loads versus developmental social welfare services. There is an increase in statutory cases due to the shortage of social workers in the field (Jacobs 2006).

According to Jacobs (2006) social workers in the Department of Social Development have to attend to all cases allocated to them, while NGO's can refuse to take a case if they have a vacancy and would not be able to attend to the case. This places social workers in the department at risk of being charged with misconduct (Lombard 2005). There is evidence of social workers who are formally being charged with unprofessional conduct when they cannot cope with the demands arising from unmanageable work loads (Lombard 2005).

The Gauteng Social Service and Welfare Development Forum's Crisis Committee, the National Coalition for Social Services (NACOSS) and the protest marches in 2005 by social workers, students, academics and clients demonstrated the frustrations of social workers. Du Toit: (2006) stated that social services in Gauteng are on the brink of collapsing. A survey by the Gauteng Welfare Forum Crisis Committee highlighted that a quarter of the NGO's experience a staff turn over of 50% in six months (Du Toit: 2006). The turnover could be as a the result of frustration, lack of job satisfaction or a low salaries.

Government and society still expect overburdened social workers and welfare organisations to take on more statutory work and register as many as 300 - 500 cases at a time (Du Toit 2006). The Department of Social Development's policy indicates that a social worker who works with a variety of welfare cases should not have more than 60 files at a given time as cited by Du Toit (2006) as quoted by Lombard (2005) and substantiated by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006:39).

The recommendation of Loffell is that 20 cases should be the norm for social workers dealing with abused cases (Du Toit, 2006). An example of the heavy case loads is the foster care backlog of 26 000 in the Gauteng province, according to a backlog report to the Minister of the Executive Committee hereafter referred to as the (MEC) in July (2006). The MEC for the Department of Social Development, Mr Lekgora, committed to have the foster care backlog eliminated before the end of the financial year 2006/2007 according to the Backlog Report (July:2006).

Intensive monitoring and evaluation of this process was done by the Gauteng Provincial Office of the Department of Social Development. The political commitment of the MEC placed increased pressure on contemporary social work to prioritise children's court investigations in order to attend to the foster care backlog and have children placed in foster care with the receipt of a foster parent grant (Koutoulogeni : 2006).

This crisis work approach implies that social workers are unlikely to have the time or energy to apply a human rights approach and to explore available community protection options (Terreblanche 2003:25). The decision to remove a child is, in many instances made under pressure.

The social worker with the best intentions to provide the most appropriate services simply does not have the time to formulate a well developed, integrated plan of action Lombard 2006 and Terreblanche 2003:5). The collaboration with clients and other relevant role players in accordance with transformation policies cannot thus not be considered (IMC 1996:58). This scenario reflects the old residual social welfare paradigm for statutory services and reinforces the perception that it is not possible to provide statutory social services from a developmentally focused approach (IMC 1996:58).

3.7. MOTIVATION FROM SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS TO COPE WITH TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING THE SOCIAL WORKER

A framework for balancing challenges and support can be seen as a helpful way of creating a positive atmosphere in which reflection and learning are both supported and encouraged Tshabalala (2001:170).

Social workers, who were part of the process when transformation was introduced, need support to manage in the continuously challenging environment. The balancing of challenge and support according to Tshabalala (2001:170) as follows:

- Low support plus low challenge is likely to contribute to low morale and possibly a lack of commitment.
- Low support plus high challenge can easily produce an atmosphere of fear and thus encourage defensiveness.
- High support and low challenge runs the risk of leading to a too cosy atmosphere and complacency.

- High support plus high challenge is clearly the most effective combination as it encourages learning through challenges while providing the supportive atmosphere which gives confidence to take risks.

Motivation is one of the most important managerial functions. Social workers are a unique and complex group of professionals as cited by Werner (2004:310). Motivation and support is important to enable social workers render services to the of their ability. The following factors could serve as motivation for social workers according to Weinbach (2003:138-144):

3.7.1. Professional Values and Ethics

Staff would be more motivated if what is expected by managers is in line with their own values and ethics. Mutual reinforcement will be enhanced and according to Weinbach (2003:138-144) staff in this situation is often willing to go the extra mile in delivering services. If the transformational expectations are inline with the ethics and values of the profession, the implementation would be enhanced (Weinbach 2003:138-144):

3.7.2. Influence of Work Groups

The influence of the group often becomes a powerful motivator (Brevis et.al., (2002:344) as well as De Cenzo and Robbins (1999:15).

Supervisors should therefore create norms with the group to foster desirable behaviour in the interest of the organisation (Tshabalala 2001:170). Complying with the norms of the group will provide a sense of belonging and serve as a motivator for the social worker (Weinbach 2003:138-144).

3.7.3. Competition and Conflict

Competition amongst different sections is inevitable and could be utilised positively. Social work is however placed in a competitive position to para-professions without the acknowledgement of what the profession has to offer (Mckendrick 2001:108). This situation could encourage conflict between the social worker and the para-professional (Weinbach 2003:138-144).

3.7.4. Group Cohesiveness

Employees tend to be more satisfied and motivated to do their work when inspired by being part of a cohesive work group Tshabalala (2001:170). The amalgamation process however brought changes to the group cohesion. This affected the level of commitment to achieving objectives as reflected by Weinbach (2003:141).

3.7.5. Supervising Growth

Supervision and continuing education are important components of supportive growth (Weinbach 2003:138-144). It provides knowledge to improve work performance and to set a climate of reasonable certainty. If supportive growth was the practice from the beginning of transformation, informed and intelligent decisions around the changes could be made by empowered social workers as cited by Weinbach (2003:141).

Motivation according to Brevis et al., (2002:344) as well as De Cenzo and Robbins (1999:15) is one of the factors which directly influences employee performance, as motivation emanates from within a person to satisfy an unsatisfied need. It is proven by research that people do what is in their best interest (Weinbach 2003:141).

Employees, who can align themselves with the organisational goals, will be motivated to achieve those goals as it will bring about fulfilment for them (Weinbach 2003:141). The literature did not give an indication that an atmosphere of fulfilment to social workers has been created as they aligned themselves to the transformational goals.

Gray (1998:111) describes an empowerment management model as a facilitative management style which goes hand in hand with staff development and empowerment. This model was effectively implemented in an established municipality in the Cape Peninsula in 1994 and can be seen as an exiting challenge to social work agencies, in the process of transformation (Gray 1998:113-116).

3.8. TRANSFORMATIONAL RELATED STRESS EXPERIENCED BY SOCIAL WORKERS

Stress can be defined as an individual's reaction to too much pressure (Grobler et al., 2002:441). It is when the situation creating the pressure does not seem to be avoidable (Grobler et al., 2002:441). The reaction could be negative, professionally and personally. The central challenge for empowering social care is how anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice can be implemented in agency context where statutory duties and regulations are predominating, such as at the Department of Social Development as cited by the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11). The expectation is that social workers have to cope with this challenge in compliance, not only to transformation but also to social work ethics according to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2006), and the Annual Performance Plan of Gauteng (2006:11). In a transforming South Africa, the normal deliverables became stressful due to the deliberate focus on anti-discrimination and anti oppression (White Paper on Social Welfare: 1997).

Everybody will have experienced stress at some time in their lives. It should not be confused with pressure, although, to some, the terms are interchangeable (Grobler et al., 2002:441). Work pressure becomes stress when it causes negative emotions such as worry, frustration and anger, according to Grobler et al., 2002:440). There are certain typical stress factors such as time pressure, poor communication or pressure from the boss as cited by Grobler et al., 2002:440).

The researcher aims at focussing on the stress factors posed by transformational challenges on contemporary social work. A social worker who is confronted with a heavy and complex caseload, in a situation of systemic conflict and change could be de-motivated, have a lack of confidence and may present with emotional or health problems (Grobler et al., 2002:441). Increased stress could thus hamper reflective practice (Humphreys 2000:65).

As the level of stress increase, the level of reflection on one self will decrease as cited by Tshabalala (2001:170). Grobler et al., 2002:444) provides clear guidance to manage work overload under normal circumstances and within the control of the person. This could also be applicable to a transforming work environment. The need for social work in the country is however bigger than the supply, which allows very little, if any, control by social workers or managers (Draft Retention and Recruitment Strategy 2005). Social workers should still be cared for during supervision sessions, where reflection and prioritizing should take place (Tshabalala 2001:170)

Challenges in the work situation can result in, what Humphreys (2000:65) refers to, as rust out and work avoidance. The writer explains rust out as the opposite of burnout but with equally devastating results. When social workers attempt to cope with increasing, multiple internal and external demands at the cost of their health and private lives, they end up being burned out according to Humphreys (2000:50).

Burnout can be identified by the following symptoms:

- Absenteeism.
- Physical exhaustion.
- Appetite problems (eating disorders).
- Insomnia.
- Psychosomatic complaints (headaches, back pains chest pains, stomach problems, bowel problems).
- Irritability.

- Reliance on drugs such as alcohol, tranquillisers, antidepressants and nicotine.
- Pessimism and fatalism.
- Increasing discouragement.
- Defensive attitudes to work.
- Poor relationships with colleagues.
- Loss of self-esteem.
- Loss of motivation for self development.
- Reduced involvement in life.
- Loss of creativity.

Burnout is a result of a combination of the enmeshment of self, with work and work pressures as cited by Humphreys (2000:51). Social workers who suffer from burnout are left with feelings of powerlessness and with no intention to even address the challenges (Humphreys 2000:51). Should burnout continue untreated or unattended to, it could result in "rust-out" (Humphreys 2000:51). The researcher witnessed a social worker having a nervous breakdown on duty, but cannot with certainty say that the challenges in the profession caused her stress. "Rust out" can be identified by the following symptoms according to Humphreys (2000:51):

- High job dissatisfaction.
- Learned helplessness.
- Apathy.
- Hopelessness.
- Frequent absenteeism.
- Non-caring attitude and sometimes cynical about work.
- Avoidance of responsibility and new challenges.
- Isolation from other members of staff.
- Non-involvement in or non-attendance of staff meetings.

- Psychosomatic complaints. (low energy, low blood pressure, poor appetite)
- Depression.
- High protective self-esteem.

Similar to the people who suffer from burnout, a person who suffer from rust-out, would do the minimum and do not see the possibility of any positive changes taking place (Humphreys 2000:66). They do not constructively confront challenges but they do condemn employees who do not comply (Humphreys 2000:66).

According to Humphreys (2000:66) rust-out is the tail-end of a stressful sequence and early identification of stress with appropriate actions could prevent rust-out. It is important for both employee and employers to attend to the stress factors in the work place (Humphreys 2000:66). The stress imposed by transformational challenges should therefore be identified and appropriately addressed. Work, should not be allowed to become a source of threat to a person's emotional, social, intellectual, physical, sexual or creative life as cited by Humphreys (2000:66). Transformational stressors, if not attended to, could thus cause rust out.

3.9. POLITICAL STRESS FACTORS

Politicians are playing a decisive role in the public sector (Joyce 1998:168), which leads to the complex relation between elected officials and appointed workers. Instead of following professional procedures, the elected officials are concerned with immediate intervention and often blame the appointed officials of bureaucracy (Joyce 1998:168). According to Salmon and Salmon (1999:2) we have to learn that despite political and social upheavals, blaming would not help to change the status quo. Political understanding however needs to inform practice in observing both constraints and opportunities as cited in Payne (1997:286). This means that politicians should be realistic when making commitments to communities to ensure that social workers can deliver and are not challenged with constraints (Payne 1997:286).

When political goals are experienced as oppressive and against the purpose of social work service delivery, it can lead to frustration for social workers (Payne 1997:286). If this situation continues, it leads to job frustration and disappointment which leaves employees with one of three options namely, to fight flight or freeze according to in Salmon and Salmon (1999:5). These options are reactive rather than proactive and could be prevented by addressing the challenges as they occur before it ends in career-ending choices (Salmon and Salmon 1999: 5).

This kind of frustration could encourage social workers to leave the profession. Changes in social work organisations are often instigated on political grounds and in an attempt to manage growing demands, which increase anxiety (Dominelli 2002:43). These imposed changes place social work in uncertainty as social work practice has to be adjusted to adapt to undue change on a continuous basis (Dominelli 2002:43). The political leaders determine the priorities in the department, which means that the priorities change as the political leadership changes (Dominelli 2002:43). These priorities are not always based on researched needs which place social workers in the position to attend to the political priorities and not necessary to address the community's needs (Dominelli 2002:43). .

According to (Payne 1997:286) social workers at all levels see themselves as "slaves" to bureaucracy, with little power and little autonomy. They see themselves mostly involved in reactive work, carrying out assessments, with not many opportunities to exercise skills learnt (Payne 1997:286). A research study in Kwa-Zulu Natal indicated that the government was compared with Santa Claus and citizens sat waiting to be assisted, instead of playing an active role in the countries endeavours towards restructuring and development (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183). It was concluded that the so-called culture of entitlement which currently exist, is hampering development and empowerment (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183). The above mentioned scenarios are directly caused by political involvement and poses challenges to the social workers as they have to fulfil the 'Santa Claus' role (Travis, Mcfarlin, van Rooyen and Gray 1999:183).

3.10. ORGANISATIONAL STRESSORS

The following organisational stressors from the perspective of Fineman (2004:143-144) will be compared to transformational challenges at organisational levels:

3.10.1. Organisational Structure

Organisational structures either very rigid or very flexible, can affect feelings and emotions (Fineman 2004:143-144). The one leads to too much psychological space and to few markers, while the other leaves no room for self expression (Fineman (2004:143-144). The social worker's experiences of changes in organisational structures post transformation, is explored in this study and captured in Chapter 5. Different social workers would experience these changes differently. Superior stress-provoking bosses tend to give inconsistent or inadequate instructions, fail to provide emotional support, over emphasize productivity and only give feedback on poor performance (Fineman 2004:143-144). Neurotic leaders in turn create neurotic organizations.

Transformational leadership is needed to provide adequate empowering leadership (Head 1997:18) in a transforming organisation. With the right leadership, social workers would be able to cope even when being confronted with clients having unrealistic expectations or cultural differences between client and social worker as cited by Trotter (1999:56). Transformational leadership would thus prevent burnout or rust out as mentioned earlier and provide adequate empowering.

3.10.2. Role Overload

Role overload is when the number or frequency of demands exceeds the jobholder's expectations of what is reasonable and manageable (Venter 2003:53). The persistence of the overload can be stressful.

Work overload occur when vacancies exist and clients from the vacant post need to be attended to despite the social workers own work load as highlighted by Jacobs (2006) and Venter (2003:53). Transformed social work services to the masses inevitably led to work overload of social workers in the department (Jacobs 2006).

3.10.3. Qualitative Role Overload

When the job is beyond the worker's capacity, training and experience can alleviate the stress. It is more stressful in a climate where there is little tolerance for inexperience. Jacobs (2006) cited that inexperienced staff was appointed as acting supervisors in vacant posts, despite their levels of experience which caused role overload. The researcher is of the opinion that this situation was not just conducive to work overload, it can also explain the job frustration that staff might have experienced as they are supervised by inexperienced supervisors.

3.10.4. Role Ambiguity

Social workers experience role ambiguity when uncertainty exists about how they have to perform their jobs (Lesnik 1997:13). Mixed or vague demands from significant people who compromise the roles set, such as supervisor's colleagues and other team members. Social workers who do not understand their role in terms of transformation legislation and policies are exposed to role ambiguities which would affect effective service delivery and increased stress (Lesnik 1997:13).

3.10.5. Role Conflict

Stress occurs when a person has conflicting expectations within their work role or between separate competing roles. The feeling of "I can barely keep up with the demand" is experienced by social workers who are given duties that they are not responsible for (Wexler 2003:45 - 47).

This could also be applicable to the role of the social worker when working integrated or working within a multi disciplinary team. Statutory social work is guided by prescripts in legislation for example what to do when a child is found to be in need of care and have to comply with legislation according to Lombard(2006). It seems as if, statutory social workers were clear about their roles prior to the legislative changes. According to de Jager (2007) social workers were not sufficiently capacitated for the transformed roles.

3.10.6. Social Workers and Technology

Social workers need to overcome their aversion to computers as technology can enhance their practice (Lesnik 1997:29). The development of new technology has brought a range of changes in the work practice of social workers according to Lesnik (1997:29).

These changes went hand in hand with anxiety and forms of resistance. The new technology could also bring new challenges to the profession such as the discouragement of creativity, intuition and experience (Lesnik 1997:29).

Social workers are expected to produce outputs in a more accountable manner with tangible proof in their recordkeeping, computerizing data and filling of forms (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers 2004). Administrative responsibility has increased and a higher priority is placed on records management than on face to face social work due to political accountability and changes (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (2004). Social work practice has moved away from preventative and therapeutic services, to more time spend on budgeting and procurement with limited resources, which leads to less job satisfaction, and stress (Lesnik1997:13). It is therefore imperative for social workers to master technology.

3.10.7. Quality of Service Delivery

A Shift was made in the last years from an inward approach in the public sector to quality and improved service delivery (Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers 2004). The public have the expectation to receive improved services within a client-orientated service delivery system, where the client's interest is put first according to the Batho Pele Principles (1999). In terms of the regional model in the Gauteng Province, management authority is devolved to allow more decision making discretion to meet the needs of communities in the province (Regional Model 2004).

The focus in service delivery has shifted from pure production to client satisfaction which in essence means directing services to meet or exceed the customer expectation instead of just concentrating on the process (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2006). It does not mean that every customer would be satisfied or pleased with the service as social workers often have to intervene against the preference of the client (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). Previously it was good enough for the social worker to meet the objectives and quotas.

Within the empowerment system however, the impact of the service must be experienced and communicated by the client themselves (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). Social workers therefore cannot only focus on doing the right thing without ensuring customer satisfaction (Koehler and Pankowski 1997:30). The researcher's view is that keeping the client happy might not always be possible as the right action very often disturbs the clients.

The empowering of clients raised expectations (Batho Pele Principles 1999) without equivalent increase in resources, which leads to conflict and add to the social worker's stress. The clients have become more aware of their rights and are making more demands for quality services (Batho Pele Principles 1999).

They become more hostile and aggressive if their demands are not met and raise their frustration to the media or to ministerial levels (Jacobs 2006). More and more is expected from the social workers according to the aforementioned view.

3.11. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME VERSUS WELLNESS PROGRAMMES IN THE TRANSFORMING WORKPLACE

According to Tshabalala (2001:17) an Employee Assistant Programme could be used to address the emotions of fear, anxiety and other emotions that emerge as a result of change. Change and transition are situational and psychological in that people are forced to move to new sites, adapt to new bosses, work in new teams and implement new policies as cited in Tshabalala (2001:18).

Wellness Programmes according to Grobler et al., (2002:450) is geared at change in behaviour by awareness and helping employees to gain knowledge to prevent a potential early death. Employee assistance programmes and wellness programmes can be offered through education, incentives, programmes, self action and follow up support (Grobler et al., 2002:450). It could be beneficial in dealing with the effects of transformational challenges on social workers (Grobler et al., (2002:450). If the workplace needs of the employees are met, they will be able to deliver in accordance with expectation or they could even over perform. Where wellness programmes concentrate on prevention, it is clear that employee assistance programmes are treatment orientated according to Grobler et al., (2002:451). Wellness programmes should therefore be a standard practice in the Department of Social Development as it can be seen as a preventative programme.

Employee assistance programmes could be used to identify troubled employees, refer appropriately, solve problems and measure the success by continued service delivery (Grobler et al., 2002:450). It is clear that social workers who were affected by the process of transformation, can benefit from both the employee assistance programmes and the wellness programmes as cited by Grobler et al., (2002:440).

The writers indicate that before any intervention can be initiated; the causes of stress must be identified (Grobler et al., (2002:440). Stress could be caused by different aspects such as: pressure at work, too many commitments generated, an uncomfortable working environment, the inability to organise or manage time (Grobler et al., (2002:440).

The measurement of employee stress will enable employers to ensure appropriate organisational and environmental change in order to lower levels of stress in the organisation (Grobler et al., 2002:441). The controlling of stress also depends on the efforts of the employee (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Employee fitness facilities according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) are increasingly provided by organisations in South Africa to improve employee's health and morale as well as to reduce stress.

The Department of Social Development also has an Employee Assistance Programme to assist social workers in this regard as cited by Jacobs (2006). It is thus not just the employer's responsibility to take care of the staff. Each staff member should take responsibility of self-care.

Personal strategies to manage stress according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) is also explored in this study and can take different forms. It could be managed through medication which can reduce anxiety, improve work performance and job satisfaction (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Mental health as well as physical health can be managed by exercises, by removing the causes of the stress if possible, by becoming a mentor if you mastered your own stress, by seeking counselling to obtain stress relieving techniques (Grobler et al., 2002:442). Staff could also apply for extended leave if needed to deal with stress.

3.12. CONCLUSION

Based on the literature it seems as if transformational challenges affected social work as a profession as well as the social worker as a person. The threat of a decreasing public sector was real and forced social workers who needed their work to comply with the unfair expectations (ANC 1994:80). Social workers found themselves in the dilemma of reorganisation and reorientation to unfair and extended functions. This includes the implementation of transformation policies and legislation and models without proper preparation or training which led to implementation challenges. This places social workers in the department at risk of being charged with misconduct. Trying to cope with increased workloads, political pressure, organisational stressors, the move from productivity to client satisfaction and the challenge of technology, was at the cost of the private lives and health of social workers in the Department.

According to Patel (2007:210) social workers were also concerned that the profession would lose its professional status as little appreciation was shown to the profession (Patel 2007:210). The aforementioned could lead to increased stress on the social worker as a person. Without changed attitudes transformational challenges will remain and not be addressed with success. It is imperative that the individual stresses of social workers be identified and addressed. Social workers can therefore benefit from both employee assistance programmes and the wellness programmes. Personal strategies could also be implemented to manage stress and improve job satisfaction within a transforming environment.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL STUDY AND FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapters the researcher discussed the different stages of transformation which impacted on the social work profession as well as the social worker as a person. The challenges which derived from transformation was unpacked as well as it's impact on both the profession and the social workers in the Johannesburg Regional office of the Department of Social Development.

An empirical investigation was conducted and this chapter reflects the results of the study and the analysis of the data collected. The purpose of the analysis was to reduce the data to an intelligible interpretable form and test the relation of the research problem and arrive at conclusions as cited by De Vos (1998:203). Where possible the researcher will integrated the applicable literature with the relevant findings.

4.2. THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 consists of a detailed discussion on the research methodology for this particular study, from a theoretical perspective. The researcher also provides a broad overview of the research methodology, as applied to this study.

4.2.1. The Research Approach

The phenomenon investigated in this involved research, is transformational challenges facing contemporary social work practice by exploring the social worker's experiences and adaptability to deal with the transformational challenges as cited by Mouton and Marais (1996:169).

A combination of approaches assisted the researcher to implement both qualitative and quantitative methods as cited by De Vos et al., (2005:357). Due to nature of the study, more emphasis was placed on the quantitative approach. The qualitative approach was thus used to obtain and understand the experiences of the participants while the quantitative approach provided data regarding the challenges such as caseloads and training sessions (De Vos et al., 2005:357). The research findings were interpreted according to perspectives experiences and numbers provided in completed questionnaires. An appropriate design was selected for this study.

4.2.2. The Research Design

Mouton and Marais (1996:43) describe the goal in exploratory studies as the exploration of an unknown research area (Neuman 1997:20). Due to the fact that this was also an unknown research area from the researcher's perspective, the researcher opted for the exploratory design (Neuman 1997:20). During the literature study it was found that there was limited literature available on the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker and the social work profession. The researcher decided to implement an exploratory study to gain knowledge of the impact of transformational challenges, from practicing social workers as cited in Weinbach (2003: 114-121). The study enabled the researcher to arrive at guidelines on how to deal with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice.

4.2.3. The Research Procedure

A non-probability sampling method, namely the purposive sampling technique was used for the purpose of this study (Strydom, in De Vos et al., 2005:202). Questionnaires were utilized to collect the data by delivering the questionnaires to participants who were practicing during the initial stages of transformation in social work services within the Department of Social Development.

The participants were informed of the purpose of the study and were served with the consent forms to indicate their willingness to participate in the study (Strydom in De Vos et al., (2005:59). Several attempts were made to schedule appointments with participants to complete the questionnaires.

The researcher obtained permission to conduct the study during working hours but the participants found it difficult to avail themselves during office hours or after hours, due to work demands. It was then agreed that participants would complete the questionnaires as they have time available and contact the researcher should need clarity on any question.

The collected data was analyzed according to the process as stated by Tesch, in De Vos et al., (1998:343) and is presented by figures and tables.

4.3. BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

4.3.1. Age Distribution of Participants

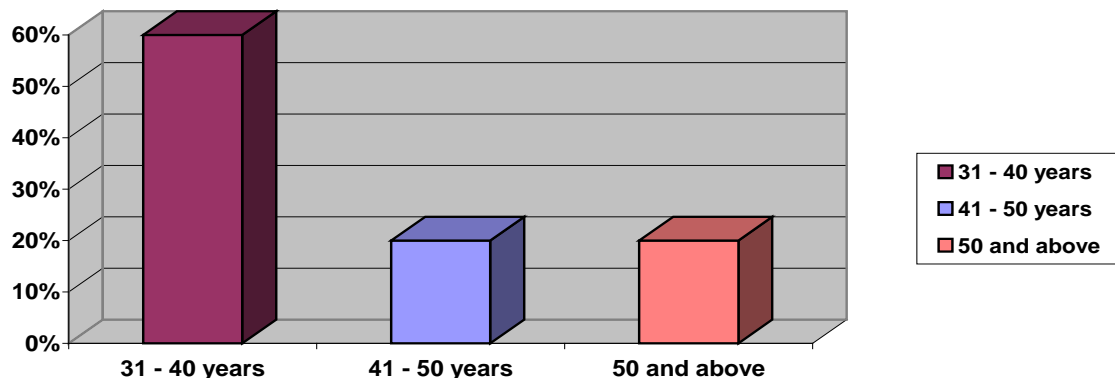


Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Participants

The above figure provides an analysis of the age distribution of the participants. It is clear that six (60% of the participants are between the ages of 31 years to 40 years of age. There were two (20%) participants between 41 years and 50 and two (20%) above 50 years of age.

This is an indication of the years of experience in the field of social work as well of their exposure to the process of transformation in government and in the profession. Figure 4.1 reflects a richness of years of social work experience amongst the participants.

4.3.2. Gender and Race of Participants

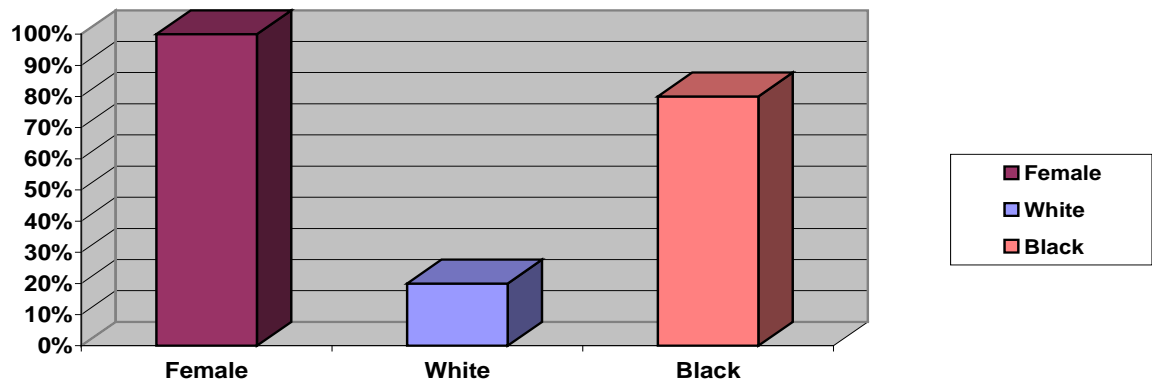


Figure 4.2: Gender and Race of participants

Figure 4.2 indicates that all the participants were female. The absence of males who served in the department during the initial process of transformation is evident. This finding can be linked to the statement of Smith and Cronje (2002:246) that the female component of the workforce diversity raised by 33% every year from 1996 to 2001.

The race distribution according to figure 4.2 reflects that the participants represented two race groups. There were eight (80%) Black participants and two (20%) White participants involved in the study. There was a total absence of Coloured and Indian social workers amongst the participants. This finding indicates a turn around in comparison to the statistics presented in Chapter 2.4, where the researcher quoted that in 1989, 66% of the social workers in the country were White. The expectations of the RDP (1994) that the officials should represent the people were reached in this small sample.

4.3.3 Positions Held by Participants in the Organisation

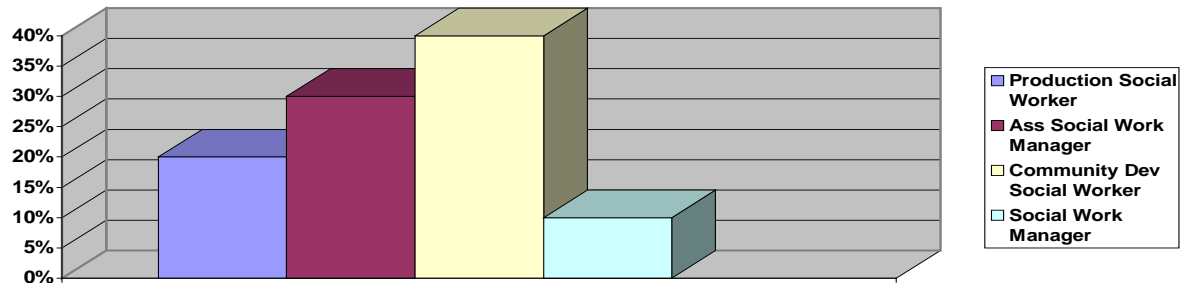


Figure 4.3: Positions held by participants in the organisation

It was found that two (20%) of participants were generic production social workers, responsible for social work interventions in frontline services to clients. Three (30%) of the participants are working as Assistant Social Work Managers, which can be further unpacked as two (20%) Black managers and one (10%) White managers. This is an indication of transformation in the management of social work services within the sample. Four (40%) of the participants are working in the Community Planning and Development section, responsible for the development aspects of social work in the particular office. One (10%) of the participants is a Social Work Managers also known as Assistant Director Statutory Social Work, who is responsible to oversee and manage the work of the other categories of workers.

The above findings indicate that four (40%) of the participants are in managerial positions within the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg. The other six (60%) are production workers from the beginning of the transformation process. The presence of the different levels amongst the participants allowed the researcher to obtain the views of both production workers and managers around transformational challenges.

4.4 THE DISCUSSION OF THE DIFFERENT THEMES IN ACCORDANS WITH RESPONSES FROM PARTICIPANTS

4.4.1. The Case Loads of Social Workers before and after Transformation (1994)

According to Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005) there was an increase in caseloads of social workers since 1994. This is confirmed by five (50%), of the participants who indicated that their case loads have increased since 1994, two (20%) of the participants indicated a decrease in their caseloads after transformation and explained that the caseloads differ from area to area. The participants indicated that previously disadvantaged areas have higher caseloads than the more advantaged areas. Three (30%) of the participants are managers and does not have case files allocated to them. They did not indicate the number of social workers that they were responsible for.

The indication is however that more than half of the production workers, who participated in the study, had increased caseloads after 1994 as cited by Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005). They indicated that the quality of service delivery was compromised due to high caseloads and high numbers of clients reporting for services unannounced.

4.4.2. Transformation Models Implemented by the Departmental Social Workers

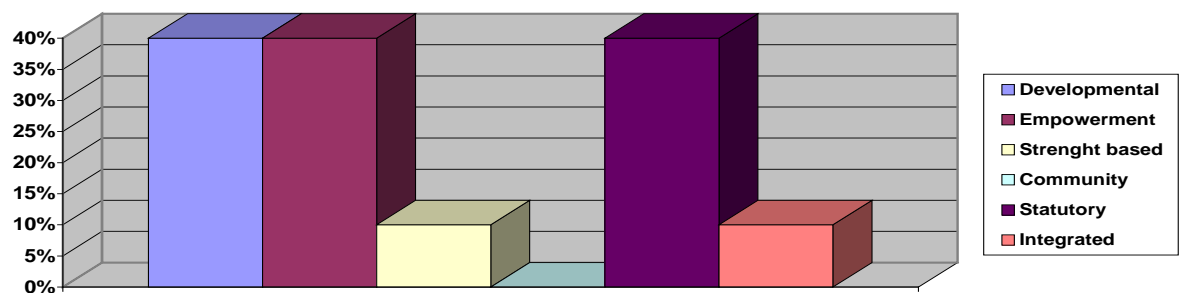


Figure 4.4: Transformational Models Implemented by the Departmental social Workers

Figure 4.4 illustrates the extend to which the participants are implementing the transformed models of service delivery as required by the transformational policies.

4.4.2.1 Developmental Approach

The Developmental Approach is required since 1996 as the first model to transform service delivery (IMC: 1996) and is implemented by four (40%) of the participants. The indication is thus that it is not only the new graduates that implement the developmental approach (de Jager 2007). According to figure 4.1, all the participants are over the age of 30 and four (40%) made the shift to implementing the Developmental Approach. The remaining six (60%) of the participants indicated that they are not implementing the Developmental Approach in their service delivery. The literature study highlighted different reasons that could prevent social workers from implementing this model. The high case loads as indicated in Chapter 4.4.1 can be linked to the six (60%) of the participants who are not implementing this particular model.

4.4.2.2 Empowerment Approach

The same four (40%) of the participants who indicated that they are implementing the Developmental Approach is also implementing the Empowerment Approach. To be able to implementation this approach, social workers needed a paradigm shift in terms of the transformation legislation such as the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999). The Developmental Approach and the Empowerment Approach are closely related. The remaining six (60%) of the participants are thus not implementing the Empowerment Approach. The policies clearly states that without empowerment, clients can not be brought to self reliance as expected by the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997).

4.4.2.3 Strength Based Approach

The responses indicates that ten (10%) of the participants use the Strength Based Approach in service delivery. As mentioned in Chapter 2 of the study, Midgley (1995:30-31) states that the lack of training could result in poor implementation of transformational models. The finding confirms the statement of Lombard (2002:212) in Chapter 3 that social workers are currently still performing their statutory work in the same way as before transformation.

4.4.2.4. Community Development

None of the participants indicated that they are using the Community Development approach. It is a challenge if even the four (40%) participants (figure 4.3) who are attached to the community and development section are also not implementing the Community Development Approach in their services. Community Development as cited by Mckendrick (2001:108) is imperative as a method of social work in the new paradigm. Community Development seems to still be a challenge to the participants who were involved in the study. This is one of the eras on which service delivery is measures while it is not part of the models currently implemented by social workers in the department.

The statement by Gray (2000:100) that social workers are under criticism for not meeting the needs of the community could be because of the absence of Community Development in service delivery.

4.4.2.5. Developmental Statutory Interventions

The responses indicated that four (40%) of the participants are implementing Developmental Statutory Interventions. All the participants by virtue of their appointment in the department are involved in statutory work.

The researcher could not find any evidence that social workers were trained to integrate developmental work into their statutory interventions (Lesnik 1997:156). The four (40%) of the participants, in line with a number of policies, the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997), the RDP (1994), and Midgley (2001:245), have started to implement Developmental Statutory Interventions. It was also found that it is the same four (40%) of the participants who indicated the implementation of the Strength Based Approach and the Developmental Approach (figure 4.4). The remaining six (60%) does not implement any of the transformational models as indicated by the transformation policies (White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999).

4.4.2.6. Integrated Service Delivery

Only one (10 %) of the participants indicated that they are using the Integrated Service Delivery as a model for intervention. The high percentage of nine (90%) of the participants are not working from an integrated perspective. This indicates that each social worker takes sole responsibility for the clients allocated to them in contrast with all the transformational expectations as indicated in the White Paper on Social Welfare (1997) and the PFMA (1999).

The findings further indicate (Gray 2002:192), that not all the social workers that were part of the study, implements the transformational models in service delivery. None of the participants implements Community Development as a model of service delivery.

There is therefore an indication that some of the social workers in the Johannesburg office of the Department of Social Development are in the process of managing this particular transformational challenge as cited by O'Melia, Miley, and Du Bios (2001:80) as well as the White Paper on Social Development (1997). The six (60%) of the participants who are not implementing any of the transformational models are working outside of the prescribed transformational framework as cited by (Lombard (2002:212).

4.5. HOW AMALGAMATION WAS EXPERIENCED BY SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers in the Department of Social Development were informed by a circular (13 of 1994) that they were to amalgamate within one month from the time that the notice was received (Refer to Chapter 2). The participants in the study were requested to share their experiences in this regard.

4.5.1 Preparation of Social Workers for a Multi Cultural Environment

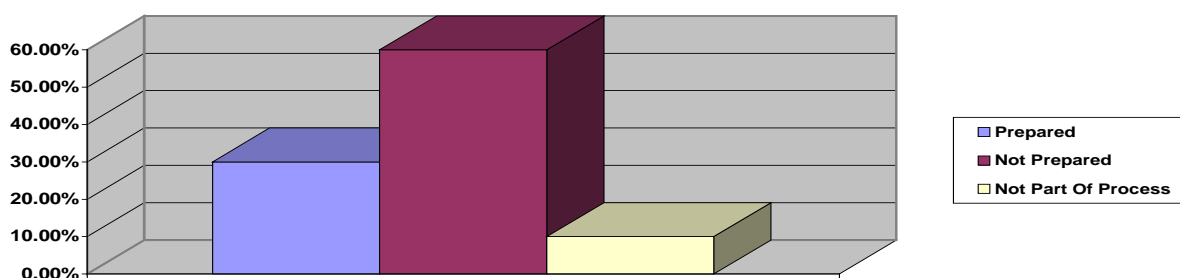


Figure 4.5: Preparation of social workers for a multi cultural environment

Figure 4.5 indicates that three (30%) of the participants were sufficiently prepared for a multi cultural working environment, six (60%) of the participants were not prepared prior to the amalgamation process to work in a multi cultural environment. (Refer to Chapter 2.8.2.1. and 2.8.2.2.) They stated that they were just told that they had to amalgamate without any preparation. The remaining one (10%) indicated that she was not part of the process because she was not practicing social work in the Department of Social Development when transformation was rolled out.

The participant was working in the NGO sector that was already working across the racial boundaries and within a multi cultural environment. More than half of the participants responded in accordance with Piondexter, Valentine and Conway (1998:40) who indicated that preparation for the change to one department needed to take place over a period of time to ensure involvement of staff.

They indicated that the amalgamation of the four departments held great challenges for all those involved in social welfare services. According to circular (13 of 1994), the amalgamation took place shortly after the notice was given (Chapter 2.5).

4.5.2. The Integration of Administrative Documentation of the Different Departments

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) places emphasis on equality in all spheres of life, human dignity, and the right to social security, respect and security rights. This very important overarching document was only available in 1996 (Chapter 2.10.1). The amalgamation of the different Departments however took place in 1994 when most of the apartheid legislation and policies were not in place. The amalgamated departments had to have an agreement or interim policy to guide the day to day service delivery. The participants were given the opportunity to indicate how the administrative documentation and processes were aligned in the new amalgamated department.

The participants indicated that the documentation from the Transvaal Provincial Administration was not considered for use in the new department. The experience of the participants, previously from the Transvaal Provincial Administration, was that their department was absorbed by the House of Assemblies. All forms of the House of Assemblies and the House of Representatives were adopted. The exclusion of documents from the Transvaal Provincial Administration was mentioned as a challenge by eight (80%) of the participants who originated from the Transvaal Provincial Administration. They stated that almost everything they brought to the table was discarded and only the escort claim forms were acknowledged and used.

Other challenges were that forms were mostly in Afrikaans and English and that the other languages were not accommodated. The participants, originally from the House of Assemblies, confirmed that all the forms and administrative documents from their department of origin were used.

They did not have to adapt to new documentation, as those of their department was adopted. Reports on files allocated to social workers contained Afrikaans information, which made it difficult for non-Afrikaans speaking social workers to continue working on existing files. New files had to be opened to accommodate all the groups in the new department.

The above responses indicate that the participants who were originally from the Transvaal Provincial Administration were more challenged than other participants to adapt to change. The participants had first hand experience of the challenges of change as set out by Brevis et al., (2002:227) and Grobler et al., (2002:50).

4.5.3. Changes in the Procedures of Service Delivery

Participants were requested to indicate any changes in procedures after amalgamation and had to elaborate on their responses. Only four (40% of the participants responded to the question. The remaining six (60%) of the participants left the question unanswered. Some participants mentioned that the best practise models in departments were retained. Others experienced the work as being unstructured and with no clear procedures. The changes were frustrating according to some responses, as it was different from practices used to in their previous departments.

Some participants indicated that there was a lack of planning in their daily work, as appointments were not made with clients. Clients would just flock to the office for services. They indicated that clients had to be educated on procedures and processes that had to be followed in a structured environment. It was mentioned that social work administration had to be aligned to that of other departments. The focus of the statistics changed but the national format was retained. Later in the transformed department, administrative functions had to be done electronically instead of manually which posed challenges to some participants.

4.6. EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN ADAPTING TO A CHANGED ENVIRONMENT

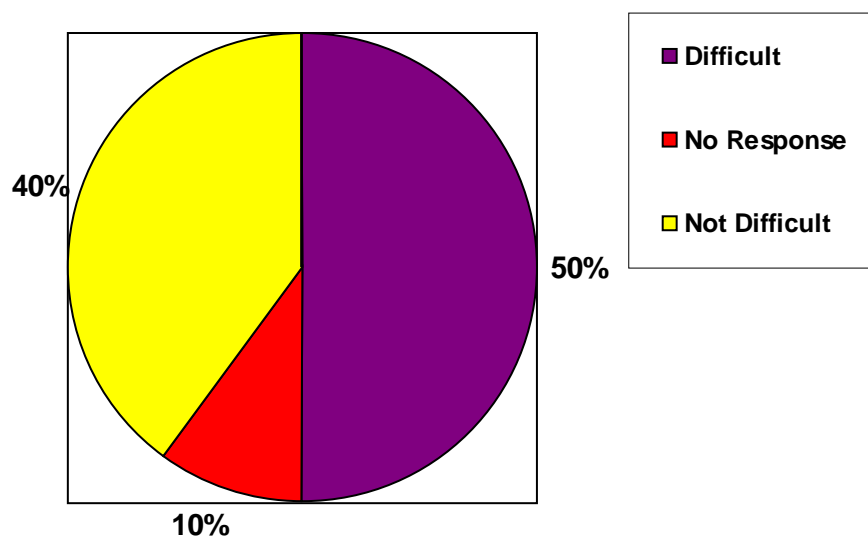


Figure 4.6: Experiences of social workers adapting to a changed environment

According to Smith and Cronje (2002:231) change could be resisted but four (40%) of the participants in this study indicated that they did not have difficulty to adapt to a changed environment while five (50%) indicated that they experienced difficulty to adapt to the changed environment. The remaining one (10%) disregarded the question and left it with no response. The responses of the participants will now be discussed as follows:

4.6.1. The Participants who Experienced Difficulty to Adapt

The participants elaborated on why they experienced difficulty to adapt to the changed environment and mentioned the following-.

“We had to comply and execute whatever was prescribed by senior managers”.
 “Change was not effected in a consultative manner but was forced upon us with no regard for the implementation difficulties” (Chapter 3.10.4). Some indicated that the standards for service delivery were not the same across the previous departments.

The different standards maintained by the different departments had to be integrated and made it difficult for some to adapt. Some participants indicated that transformed attitudes of social workers in Places of Safety, made it difficult to place children in facilities. The variety of cases that social workers had to address was broad and necessitated the implementation of generic work, which they found difficult. They indicated that adapting to the drafting of treatment-plans were challenging. Resources were fewer for the larger clientele. Decentralisation were not planned well and resulted in a lack of resources at decentralized points, which hampered service delivery. The distribution of work in sections was not equal. This can be linked to the difference in case loads indicated in Chapter 4.4.1.

The challenges mentioned by five (50%) of the participants were ranging from organisation to procedural and work expectations. It confirms a variety of challenges highlighted in the literature, as captured in Chapter 2 and 3 of the study.

4.6.2. Participants who did not Experience Difficulty to Adapt

The four (40%) participants, who indicated that they did not experience any difficulty to adapt to a changed working environment, mentioned that the process of change was gradually to them and allowed time to adjust (Chapter 2.8.2.2). Some participants indicated that they were ready to work with clients from different race groups due to their experiences in the NGO sector. Some participants were able to assist their peers to understand the different race groups better. The responses of the participants indicate that different people respond differently to change. Participants, previously from the House of Assemblies were allowed to work in other departments prior to amalgamation and had less difficulty to adapt.

4.7. OTHER CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATION CULTURE AFTER AMALGAMATION OF THE DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS

The responses of the participants will be unpacked according to the different themes:

4.7.1. Changes in Management Approaches

It was found that the four (40%) of the participants in management positions, indicated that they experienced changes in management approaches (Chapter 3.10.1). The six (60%) of the participants who are production social workers, did not respond to the question at all, which might indicate that it was not of importance to them. The participants who responded indicated that non-social work managers were appointed to manage social work services, which directed the focus of service delivery away from social work. They also indicated that an opportunity for integration was created within the organisation as well as with other departments. Formal working relations disappeared as work engagements became more informal. This informal environment was a challenge to the participants who preferred the formal setup that they were used to before. Interaction and communication with supervisors changed to informal discussions. Management processes changed drastically and managers found it difficult to adapt to consultative decision making. Gray (1998:111) describes an empowerment management model as a facilitative management style which goes hand in hand with staff development and empowerment. Transformational management would have assisted the process as it is empowering and it also provide guidance as cited by as cited by Lee (1994:14). The participants who responded were challenged by the managers appointed in the new department.

The responses can be summarised as a need for structured management and supervision sessions. The challenges of working under none social work managers was also raised as a challenge to participants.

4.7.2. The Impact of English as the Official Language in the Workplace

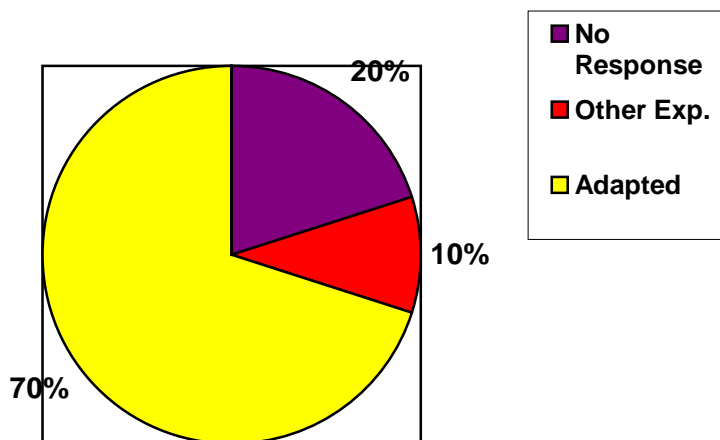


Figure 4.7: The impact of English as an official language in the workplace

The participants mentioned in paragraph 4.5.2. of the study that language was a challenge to them as they were frustrated with both Afrikaans and English in the workplace. About English as the official Language, seven (70 %) of the participants stated that they adapted well to English as the official language in the workplace, two (20%) of the participants did not respond to the question and one (10%) indicated other experiences.

Some of the participants indicated that it was not difficult to adapt to English in the workplace, it was however challenging when supervisors and other staff members communicated in Afrikaans, which was difficult to follow. Participants indicated that the fact that all social work literature was available in English, made the language as a medium of communicating in the workplace, easy. The fact that English was accepted as the official language, left staff with no choice but to adapt.

The presence of Afrikaans was more of a challenge, as it was still prevalent amongst staff from certain departments. The languages used in the workplace could be interpreted by the participants as reinforcing discrimination or undermining the continuance of a discriminatory discourse as cited by Tshabalala (2001:170).

One of the challenges around diversity was the language issue, as South Africa has eleven official languages and clients should be allowed to express themselves in their own languages (Smith and Cronje 2002:245).

4.7.3. The Attitudes of a Diverse Clientele towards Social Workers in the Transforming Environment

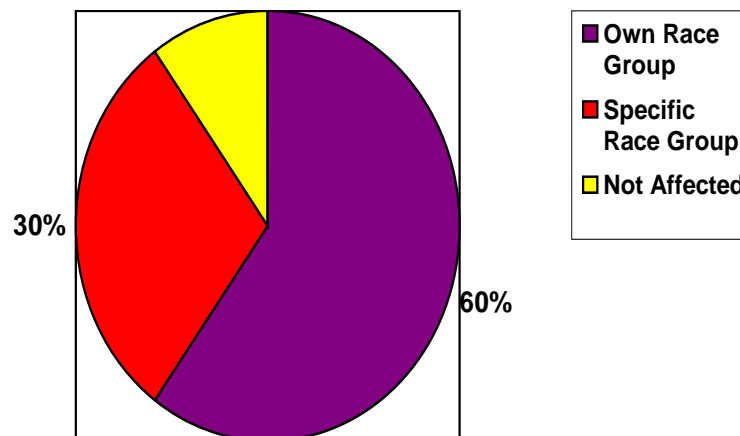


Figure 4.8: The attitudes of a diverse clientele towards social workers in the transforming environment

The participants responded to this section from their observations and experiences after 1994. Six (60%) of the participants indicated that clients insisted to see social workers of their own race group.

Three (30%) of the participants indicated that clients requested to see social workers of a specific race group. One (10%) indicated that clients were not affected at all in the transforming environment. According to the participants, clients preferred a social worker who understood them, irrespective of race and culture. Some indicated that clients responded in accordance with how they were received by social workers. Both clients and social workers were challenged with understanding people from different groups. Clients from certain race groups had to deal with the termination of certain rights previously granted to them and social workers had to manage angry clients.

According to some participants black clients presented themselves in a timid manner while clients from other groups were assertive. Some clients demanded to be assisted by white social workers. Resentment from clients was experienced by some of the participants due to the fact that they had to communicate in English in order to be understood. It is thus evident that clients from all race groups posed challenges to social workers. It is also clear that black clients needed to be empowered and had to learn what their rights were. This explains the significance of the Batho Pele Principles (1999), which encourages the “people first” concept (Chapter 2.10.6).

4.7.4. The Effects of the Different Languages on the Engagement and Representation of Clients

According to the participants social workers find it difficult to express themselves in reports as they are expected to communicate in English. For many people in the English-speaking environment, English is not their first language and is therefore a disadvantage to them (Tshabalala (2001:170)). The quality of psycho-social reports submitted to the Department of Justice and other stakeholders in English is a challenge for five (50%) of the participants.

The participants indicated that they had to get assistance from interpreters in the interviewing processes, in reports and representation at court. Raath (2006) highlighted the difficulty that social workers experience when having to write their reports in English.

One (10%) mentioned that the clients and social worker relationship is affected in the process as stated by one (10%) of the participants, while two (20%) mentioned that they found it difficult to present the circumstances of diverse cultures verbally as well as written, because of the different values attached to different circumstances. Interviews and assessment was more time consuming when you work with clients who express themselves in different languages as indicated by two (20%) of the participants.

Some black social workers indicated that they found it challenging to express themselves in Sotho or Zulu as many of the words had different meaning in these languages. The remaining one (10%) of the participants indicated that the language differences poses as a barrier to service delivery. It is evident that practicing social workers are still challenge with the effects of the different languages.

4.7.5. Changes in the Organisational Culture post 1994 in the Department of Social Development

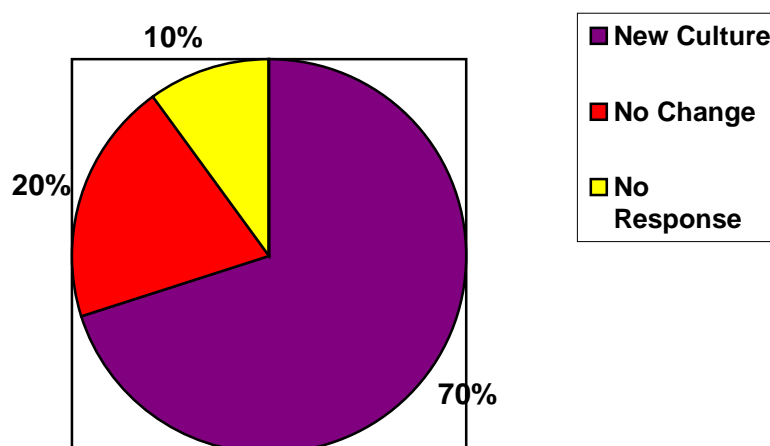


Figure 4.9: Changes in the organisational culture post 1994 in the Department of Social Services

A new organisational culture was formed according to the responses of seven (70% of the participants, two (20%) indicated no changes and one (10%) did not respond to the question in this regard. The amalgamation brought a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values and beliefs to the organization according to (Du Bois, Miley and O'Melia 2001:65). They were challenged with the different perspectives of diversity as cited by Smith and Cronje (2002:243). Social workers had to learn to understand the value of diversity (Smith and Cronje 2002:251 and Chapter 2.8.2). The fact that every decision had to be negotiated by managers, were experienced as problematic by some participants who are managers. Democracy and integrated work, was challenging as staff first had to integrate internally.

Differences in commitment and priorities from the different staff that came from different departments were also identified as challenging as reaching common agreement was difficult and time consuming.

It took time for the different departments to unite and form a new culture as people stayed in their comfort zones and related to the groups that they were used to. There was tension to obtain representation of all racial and cultural groups at all management levels, as the management from the old department were absorbed in their managerial roles. Many white social workers left the department as the process of transformation was rolled out. New vision and mission statements were developed for the new department (Chapter 2.8.2.)

4.8. CHALLENGING EXPERIENCES POSED TO THE PROFESSION IN THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION

Social work was marginalized when government support was withdrawn from the profession and other occupational groups were elevated (Gray (2000:102). Clients were empowered while social work was disempowered (Chapter 2.8.6). Empowered clients were more demanding, dependant and expected first preference. The responses in Chapter 4.7.3 however implies that empowerment took place over a period of time as black clients were experienced as timid during 1994. Client's expectations increased with increased workloads of social workers (Chapter 3.10.7). This led to overworked and de-motivated social workers who were not concerned about dissatisfaction of clients.

4.8.1. Awareness of Political Mandates before and after Transformation

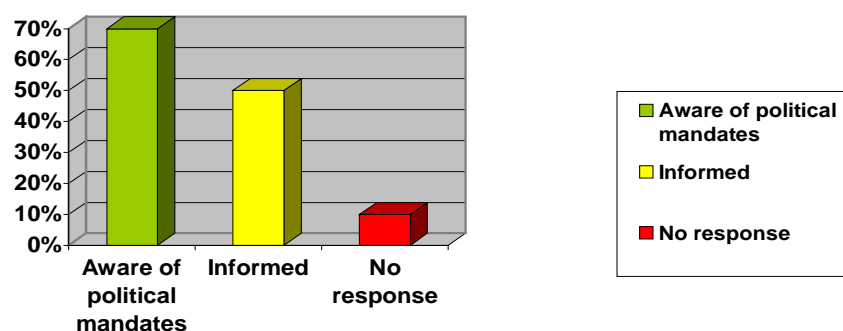


Figure 4.10: Awareness of political mandates before and after transformation

Seven (70%) of the ten of the participants indicated that they are more aware of political mandates than before transformation (Chapter 3.10). Two (20%) of the participants indicated that they are not more informed than before. One participant one (10%) did not respond to the question. The participants confirmed that politician are more involved in social service delivery than before and communicate political mandates in a transparent manner. According to Joyce (1998:168) the politicians are determining what should be delivered by social workers.

4.8.2. Involvement of Social Workers in the Execution of Political Mandates as Compared to Pre - Transformation

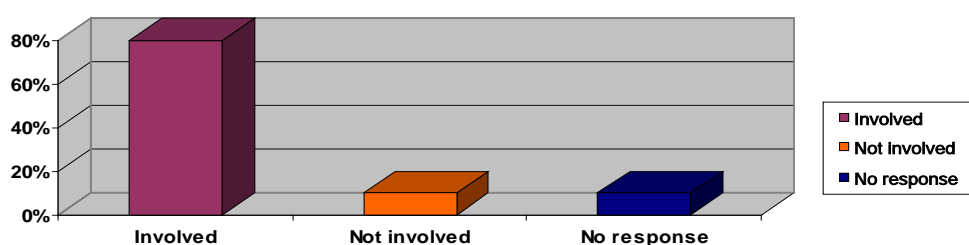


Figure 4. 11: Involvement of social workers in the execution of political mandates as compared to pre-transformation

Eight (80%) of the participants indicated that they are more involved in executing political mandates.

One (10%) indicated that there is no difference in involvement and in the execution of political mandates than before. One (10%) participant did not respond to the question.

The participants indicated that:

Political mandates are now included in the strategic plan and in the operational plans of the department. In this way service delivery has to be aligned to political mandates. Social workers have no control over the mandates created for them as cited by Joyce (1998:168). They also have no input prior to the mandates being communicated. The participants indicated that social worker services are used to obtain political votes for the ruling party. Politicians prescribe to social workers what to do in assisting the clients referred by them, even if it falls outside the core social work functions.

The political leaders determine the priorities in the department which means that the priorities change as the political leadership change. These priorities are not always based on researched needs, which place social workers in the position to attend to the political priorities at the cost of the felt social work needs of the community. The participants see themselves mostly involved in reactive work, carrying out assessments, with not many opportunities to exercise professional skills.

The participants further indicated that the political mandates often raise unrealistic expectations which are not executable by the social workers. Should the social worker however fail to deliver, the social worker is perceived as being ineffective. It was indicated that the social worker's pride in the profession was diminished as they had to give political mandates preference at the cost of the identified social work needs of clients. One of the challenges identified was that political mandates took precedence above the needs of the walk in clients. Some of the participants indicated that the political mandates allowed the opportunity to be involved in ensuring that transformation in communities is taking place. They further states that strategies are put in place to ensure delivery on political mandates, since the emphasis has moved from serving the clients to achieving the political mandates.

4.9. INDICATORS WHY SOCIAL WORKERS ARE LEAVING THE COUNTRY

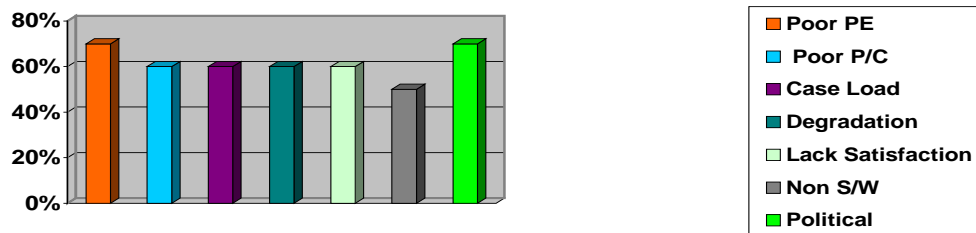


Figure 4.12: Indicators why social workers are leaving the country

The participants indicated that:

The Department of Social Development is further challenged with retaining social workers due to the status, remuneration and the absence of credible career paths for social workers, as indicated in the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14). Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave the country due to poor remuneration which concur with the Annual Performance Plan Gauteng (2006:14) when it indicates that the Department find it difficult to retain social workers. Six (60%) of the participants indicated poor physical working conditions as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Six (60%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave because of high case loads which can be linked to Lesnik (1997:165) who alludes to the overwhelming high statutory case loads of social workers.

Six (60%) of the participants indicated that social workers are leaving because of the degradation of the social worker and the social work profession. Six (60%) indicated a lack of job satisfaction as a reason for social workers are leaving the country. Five (50%) of the participants indicated that social workers leave because they have to report to non social work managers. Five (50%) of the participants indicated that social workers also leave due the frustration of being managed by managers who lack understanding of social work as well as management skills.

Seven (70%) of the participants indicated the pressure to execute political mandates as apposed to addressing the identified needs of a client, as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Participants also alluded to imbalances between the government social workers and NGO social workers as a reason for social workers leaving the country. Preparation for transformation did not include preparation to achieve political mandates, according to some of the participants.

4.10. TRAINING OF SOCIAL WORKERS TO IMPLEMENT TRANSFORMATIONAL POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The lack of training led to a sense of marginalization amongst social workers in the country (Patel 2007:210). The transformation policies and legislation moved social workers out of their comfort zones as described by Lesnik (1997:164). (Chapter 2.15).

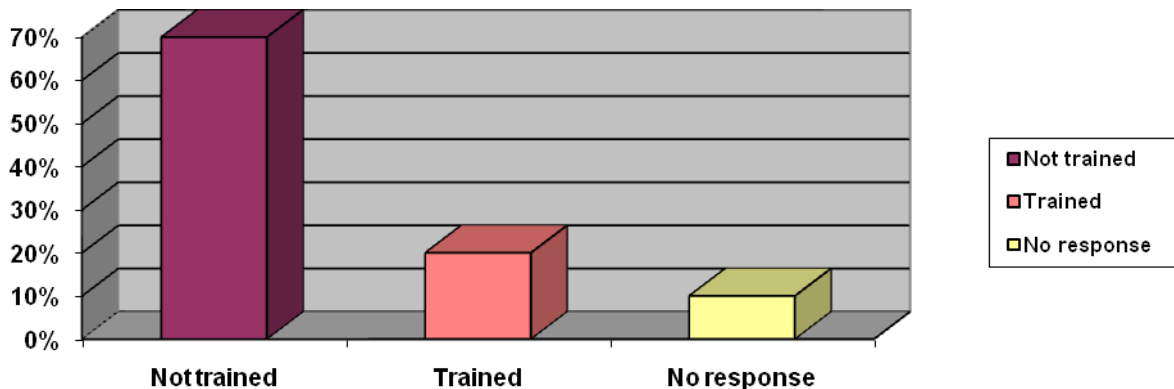


Figure 4.13: Training of social workers to implement transformational policies and legislation

Lombard (1999:98) alludes to the fact that training for the implementation of transformation legislation and policies were imperative. Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that they were not sufficiently trained to implement transformation legislation and policies. Two (20 %) of the participants indicated that they received training. One (10%) of the participants did not respond to the question.

The empowerment of social worker to implement the legislation does not just have relevance to the profession but it would also benefit the social worker as a person. Training and empowerment does provide job satisfaction to social workers. The participants indicated that:

Sufficient formal capacity building prior to transformation did not take place. Transformation task teams were establish but there is no known results. Social workers had to learn by trial and error as training only came later. This led to uncertainty on how to achieve what was expected from them in a transformed situation. Bursaries were not available for training of staff in the beginning of the process. It is however available now according to some of the participants.

4.11. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATION

Salmon and Salmon (1999:5) addresses the effects of stress on a person as well as on service delivery. The effects of stress as mentioned could very well be the stress symptoms of transformational challenges on social workers.

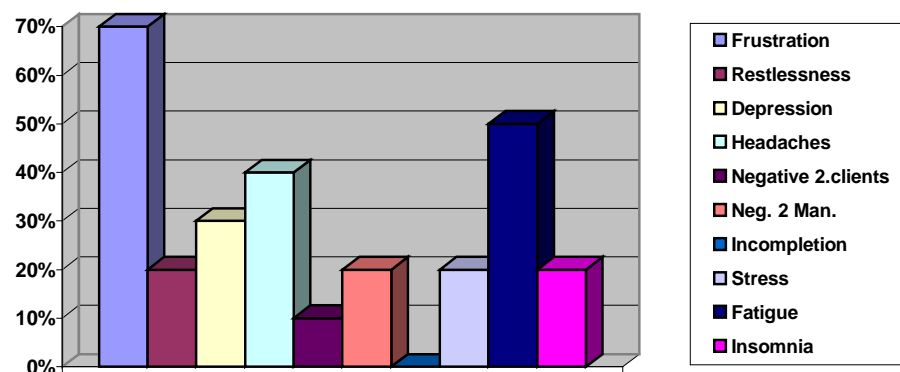


Figure 4.14: Physical and mental effects of transformation

The findings indicate that all the participants have one or more of the physical or mental effects caused by the work experience in a transformed environment. It is also clear that all the participants who availed themselves for the study, have a high regard for their work and are concerned about incomplete tasks that they cannot manage.

Ten (10%) of the participants portray negative attitudes towards clients due to their own frustrations. Seven (70%) of the participants indicated that they are frustrated in their work. Five (50%) indicate that they suffer from fatigue. Four (40%) indicate that they suffer from headaches. Three (30%) indicated that they are depressed. The mental and physical health of the participants based on the responses, needs urgent intervention. It is clear that transformational challenges affects social workers negatively.

4.12. MANAGEMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES ON SOCIAL WORKERS

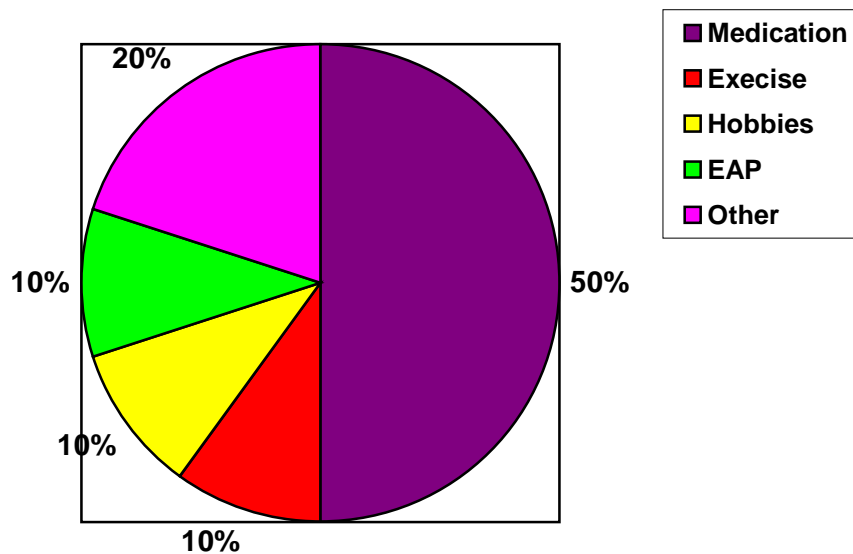


Figure 4.15: Effects of transformational challenges

Grobler et al., (2002:442) provide detailed interventions to be implemented by the employee as well as the employer to manage workplace stress through wellness and employee assistance programmes. Figure 4.15 indicates that five (50%) of the participants are on medication to manage their stress. One (10%) of the participants do exercises to cope with stress and another one (10%) engages in hobbies. One (10%) participant is attending the government's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Two (20%) of the participants indicated that they implement other ways of dealing with their stress.

It was determined that five (50) of the social workers who took part in the study were on medication to cope with transformational stress. Only one participant (10%) opted to use the available Employee Assistance Programme readily available to all departmental staff. Some of the participants are managing the transformational stress by utilizing two or more of the above mentioned options to help themselves.

Three (30%) of the participants practice hobbies to deal with the stress in a positive manner. The results indicate that social workers are attempting to seek help from medical practitioners while some take it on their own to manage their work and transformation related stresses.

4.13. ASSISTANCE REQUIRED FROM EMPLOYERS TO MANAGE TRANSFORMATIONAL STRESS

The participants indicated that:

Managers should listen to the needs of social workers and allow social workers to practice social work and not to execute political instructions. They further state that managers can improve the working condition and salaries of social workers. Affirmation instead of constant negative feedback is necessary. They suggest that the appointing non social work managers to manage social workers should not be allowed. They further indicated a need for regular debriefing sessions and stress management workshops for social workers. The need for clear norm and standards in terms of case loads to ensure fair distribution of increased workloads is required from managers. Transformational training for supervisors was highlighted as a need. The participants also identified the need for teambuilding sessions to build a positive organisational culture. The responses of the participants indicated the need for management intervention to assist them in dealing with work related stress.

The suggestions such as teambuilding, debriefing sessions and training according to Grobler et al., (2002:442) and Humphreys (2000:66) is a minimum expectation in the workplace.

4.14. TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES WITHIN TRANSFORMED SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

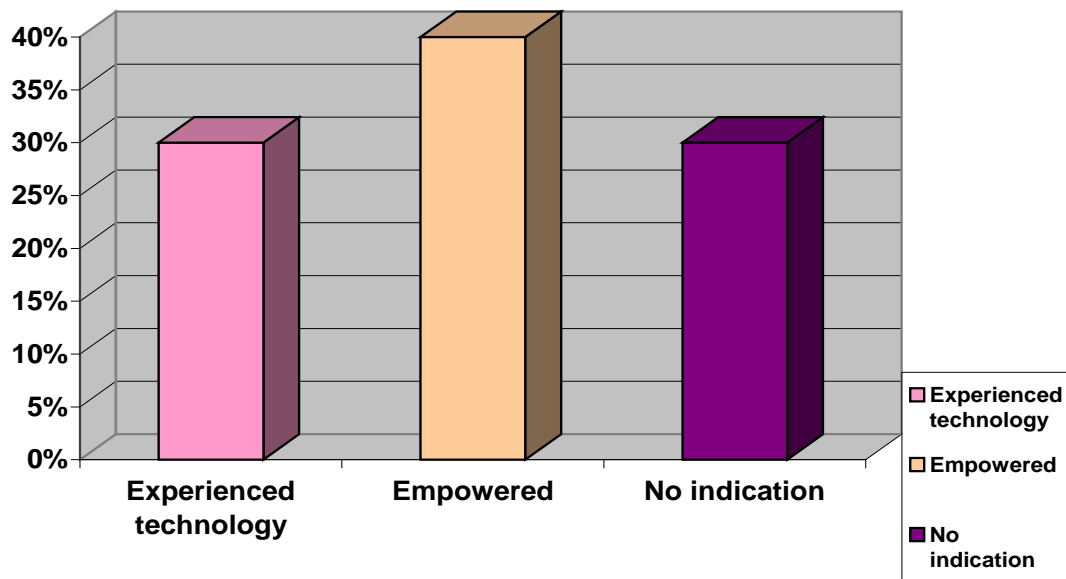


Figure 4.16: Technological challenges within transformed social service delivery

Figure 15 indicates that three (30%) of the participants indicated that they were experiencing technological challenges, as computer literacy was not part of their social work training. Four (40%) of the participants had no technological challenges because they empowered themselves. Three (30%) of the participants did not declare their position in terms of technology. Three (30%) of the participants are experienced in technology. Four (40%) of the participants indicated that they were empowered and trained by the Department of Social Development. Three (30%) of the participants did not indicate their capability in terms of managing technology. Some participants still keep their records manually. They indicated that access to information on laptops after hours, is problematic. Some participants indicated that resources are provided by government and training was arranged on technology. Not all social workers are computer literate. The participants mentioned that a lack of linkages with other departments exists. Technology has assisted to improve service delivery according to four (40%) of the participants.

4.15. CONCLUSION ON EMPIRICAL STUDY

From the above study it can be concluded that some of the effects from the beginning phase of transformation in the Department of Social Development is still challenging to the social work staff in the Johannesburg office.

The age distribution indicated that all the participants were part of the initial phase of transformation in 1994. The governmental targets around equity in terms of gender are achieved according to findings. All the participants in management positions were female, which was also in line with the RDP (1994) plans of 1994. The caseloads have increased, the number of social workers to caseloads have decreased, while services had to be rendered in terms of transformational models. The challenge to implement the transformational models still exists as Community Development is not implemented by any of the participants. There is however imbalances as the developmental model and other models are used by only 40% of the participants.

The process of integration and amalgamation was more challenging for participants from the black department than for those from other departments. Language also affects service delivery negatively from the experiences of the participants. The participants indicated continued challenges around political mandates, the challenges to service delivery as well as the image of the social work profession. It is also stated that the political mandates are some of the possible reasons for de-professionalisation and also why social workers leaving the profession. Training to implement transformation legislation is still a challenge. The stress factors experiences by the participants indicate that intervention for the social workers in question as well as the organisation is required to assist them and to improve the morale and functioning of the group in question.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The findings of the study were discussed in the previous chapter. The objectives of the research will be summarized and compared with the findings in order to conclude on whether the objectives were achieved as cited by Bless Higson-Smith (1999:146). In this chapter the researcher will therefore indicate to which extent the objectives were achieved by presenting the most important findings, making conclusions and indicate recommendations based on the findings as stated by the participants.

5.2. RESEARCH GOAL

A goal is a broad, abstract conception, of the end, towards which research efforts or ambitions are directed (De Vos, Schurink and Strydom, in De Vos et al., 1998:7). The aim of this study was to explore the transformational challenges from the perspective of practicing social workers and the impact it has on the social worker and the social work profession in the Johannesburg Office of the Department of Social Development in Gauteng. Hereafter conclusions and recommendations were formulated to serve as guidelines for social workers in contemporary social work practice, when dealing with transformational challenges.

5.2.1. Objectives that had to be Achieved in order to Realise the Goal of this Particular Study

5.2.1.1. Literature Study

Literature was explored by a comprehensive literature study to gain insight in the transformational challenges facing the practicing social workers in Johannesburg. Possible strategies or techniques to deal with the challenges in contemporary social work practice had to be formulated.

The context and theoretical framework of the challenges posed by transformational changes on social work were explored and discussed (Chapter 2). The position of social work in South Africa before transformation is explored and the process of transformation of social work services is unpacked based on the available literature. The limited number of social workers and the distribution of social workers before and after transformation are discussed (Chapter 2.3). The process of the amalgamation of the government departments (Chapter 2.4), workplace changes (Chapter 2.7.1) and challenges such as diversity, changed organisational culture (Chapter 2.7.2) and language, cultural awareness and competencies (Chapter 2.7.2) as well as legislative changes (Chapter 2.8). Transformed social work approaches and mandates were discussed with the preparation and training identified as implementation challenges as discussed in Chapter 2.12.

Chapter 3 consist of a literature review on the impact of transformational challenges on the social worker as a person and the effects thereof on social work service delivery. Transformed social work approaches and mandates (Chapter 3.5) were unpacked. The impact of the challenges on the status of social work (Chapter 3.3), integrated service delivery and partnerships is discussed (Chapter 3.5 and 3.6). The attitudes of social workers, their physical and mental wellness are explored (Chapter 3.9). Stress related conditions are identified and possible programmes to be initiated by the employer and the employee is explored (Chapter 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11).

The impact of transformation on social work is determined by questionnaires which covered the workplace challenges, implementation challenges as well as the effects of challenges on the social worker as a person. A theoretical framework is provided by focussing on the position of social work in the country before and after transformation as indicated in Chapter 2.3 in the study.

The findings and the literature is compared in terms of diversity and cultural challenges in the workplace, the knowledge and implementation of transformational legislation and policies, as well as the impact of the aforementioned on the social worker as a person.

5.2.1.2. Data Collection Method

To develop a semi-structured interview schedule which was be implemented during semi structured interviews for data collection. (Questionnaire - Annexure D). The interviews could not be scheduled due to the challenges in the region. The researcher delivered the questionnaires to the participants and collected it after completion.

5.2.1.3. Data Collection

To collect data on the experiences, perceptions or opinions regarding the transformation challenges. The fact that both a qualitative and a quantitative research design was implemented, afforded participants the opportunity to provide both experiential responses and quantitative responses.

5.2.1.4. Data Analysis

Data was analyzed according to Tesch in De Vos et al.,(1998:343) and is be presented by making use of figures and tables. The analysis took place as planned according to the steps set out by Tesch, in De Vos et al., (1998:343)

5.2.1 5. Output of the study

Conclusions and recommendations which may serve as recommendations for social workers dealing with transformational challenges in contemporary social work practice are available. The recommendations will be provided in this chapter.

5.3. CONCLUSIONS BASED ON FINDINGS FROM DATA COLLECTED

The researcher identified the following findings as prominent and of high importance to the participants as discussed in Chapter 4. These findings (Chapter 4) are linked to the transformational challenges as highlighted by the participants in correlation with the literature study in Chapters 2 and 3.

5.3.1. The Case Loads of Social Workers before and after Transformation

According to Lesnik (1997:165) as well as Lombard (2005) there was an increase in caseloads of social workers since 1994. This fact was confirmed by the participants who clearly stated that the increase was due to the decreasing number of social workers at a time when there was an increase in services to the masses in South Africa. Transformation ensured the empowerment of clients who are now demanding services that they are entitled to. The increase in client expectations can directly be linked to the increased workloads of social workers. This situation led to overworked and de-motivated social workers who are not concerned about dissatisfaction of clients. The two detrimental effects of increased workloads in the midst of several transformational challenges, brings about increased criticism to the social workers as well as the social work profession. The negativity of the clients as well as the negative propaganda against social work cause increased stress which is expressed in a flight fight or freeze situation as cited by Humphreys (2000:51).

The following conclusions can be made:

Increased stress hampers reflective practice which is why social workers do not admit what they are going through transformational stress (Tshabalala 2001:170). More than 50% of the social workers who suffer from burnout are left with feelings of powerlessness and with no intention to even address the challenges. Both the social workers and the employee are responsible to intervene and attend to the challenges as well as the needs of the social workers as a person (Grobler et al., 2002:442)

5.3.2. Preparation of Social Workers to implement Transformation Policies and Legislation

Seventy percent (70%) of the social workers in the department were not trained to implement transformation policies and legislation according to the findings in Chapter 4.10. Social workers express their frustration with the transformed approaches of social workers in the institutions as they made it difficult to place children if there is no compliance to the transformation policies.

The following conclusions can be made:

Training of social workers can still be availed as it will prevent social workers from having to work on a basis of Trial and error. According to Lesnik (1997:162), social workers were introduced to policies and legislation at the point of implementation. Reorientation of social workers is thus needed to effect implementation. Training in tertiary institutions on transformation as agued by Dalton and Wright (1999:278) should have produced transformation orientated social workers. Even the younger social workers 31-40 years of age, did not reflect knowledge on transformation legislation and policies.

5.3.3. Transformation Models Implemented by the Departmental Social Workers

As presented in Chapter 4.4.2 (Figure 4.4), only two of the six transformation models are implemented by 40% of the participants. The findings illustrate the implementation of the Developmental Approach and the Empowering Approach. Statutory social work is rendered but no mention is made of Developmental Statutory Interventions. Lombard alluded to the fact that services are still render in the same manner as before transformation.

The following conclusions can be made:

Community Development and Integrated Service delivery is not implemented. Gray (2002:193) and Payne (1997:258), agues that the implementations of the transformational models takes more time which suggest that the high caseloads have to be dealt with before all the transformational models can be implemented. According to the literature study it is evident that high caseloads and transformational models cannot be reconciled with each other. Social Work Management intervention is imperative to create an environment that is conducive for social workers to do what is expected of them.

5.3.4. Political Awareness and more Involvement in Executing Political Mandates

The findings presented in Chapter 4.10.1 indicate that (70%) a large percentage of the participants are more aware of political mandates than before transformation. An even higher number (80%) of participants indicated that they are more involvement in the execution of political mandates. Although the knowledge of these mandates could be seen as empowering, the analysis of Chapter 4 8.1 indicates that political mandates posed challenges to social work practice. Social workers are frustrated as they feel used to obtain political votes for the ruling party. Politicians prescribe to social workers what to do in assisting the clients referred by them, even if request is not in line with the core social work functions. Unrealistic expectations are raised by politicians, which cannot be executed by the social workers. Social workers indicate that they are set up for failure which cause disappointment to clients and reflect social work services as inefficient. The result is that social worker lost their pride in the profession because political mandates take precedence above the needs of the clients.

The following conclusions can be made:

Salmon and Salmon (1999:2) as quoted in Chapter 3.10 suggest that the situation must be addressed in a manner that will change the status quo and improve the relation between the social work profession and the political leaders. Political awareness and mandates should benefit the social work services to the clients and not be a cause of friction as it is currently viewed by social workers. This is also one of the factors that increase stress in the social work field. This is not a situation that will disappear. Social workers and their managers will have to put strategies in place to address the situation in the interest of the profession, the social worker and the client Salmon and Salmon (1999:2).

5.3.5. Reasons why Social Workers are leaving the Country

The findings as stipulated in Chapter 4.11 are that 70% of the participants indicated that social workers leave the country mostly due to poor remuneration in South Africa and the pressure to execute political mandates. Other reasons were poor physical working conditions, high case loads in other words role overload as mentioned in Chapter 3.11.2 and substantiated by Venter (2003:53).

The following conclusions can be made:

Social workers feel that the profession is degraded and deprofessionalised (Patel 2007:210) in the process of transformation, which is also closely linked to the lack of job satisfaction. Social workers feel disempowered and therefore do not address their challenges. Instead, they opt to leave the country or the profession. The Draft Retention Strategy in developed by the Department of Social Development to ensure the retention of social workers in the profession and in the country.

5.3.6. The Physical and Mental Effects of Transformational Challenges on Social Workers

All the participants responded to this question in the study. It is evident that all the participants display one or more of the physical and mental challenges indicated in the questionnaire (Annexure D). The most important responses were: frustration, fatigue, restlessness, headaches, negativity towards clients and managers, depression, stress and insomnia.

The following conclusions can be made:

The responses indicate that the personnel are in need of wellness and some of employee assistance as provided in an employee assistance programme.

Half of the participants indicated that they are using medication to control or manage the effects on stress. A low percentage of participants indicated that they are utilizing the departmental employee assistance programme. It is concerning that the stress leads to negativity towards clients.

This is a response that further damages the image of the social work profession. It is therefore evident that the unattended, transformational stress does affect the image of the profession negatively. The well being of the social worker first need attention before the service and attitudes to clients will be effectively addressed.

5.3.7. How Social Workers Address Transformational Stress

The level and seriousness of stress indicated in Figure 13 does not correlate with the management thereof in figure 4.15. Frustration is indicated as the highest form of stress experienced by social workers in the department of social development. Fatigue headache and insomnia are the other important factors identified.

The following conclusions can be made:

Medication is the manner in which most of the social workers manage their stress symptoms. Only one of the participants used the EAP programme in the department of social development. The comparison between the two figures namely Figure 4.14 and Figure 4.15 indicates several conditions of stress that is left untreated. This is an explosive situation that needs urgent intervention to prevent increased burnout which could result in “rust out” (Humphreys 200:65).

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE MANAGEMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The following recommendations which may serve as guidelines for employees when managing transformational challenges are presented in Chapter 4:

5.4.1 Proposals on How to Deal with the Challenge of High Case Loads, versus Service Delivery as Mentioned in 5.3.1.

According to the Draft Retention Strategy (2006) challenges to service delivery can be managed by the implementation of an Integrated Service Delivery Model by both state and non- government organisation.

5.4.1.1. The development of norms and standards

The equal distribution of workloads between non- governmental- and government social workers will thus be ensured. The development of clear norms and standards for service delivery will indicate what a social work case load should be, and how production as well as output of services can be measured. Clear structure and norms would provide a sense of security and will lead to job-satisfaction.

5.4.1.2. Professional support to social workers

The provision of social work supervision as a management function must be executed to enhance professional functioning of social workers. Professional support will have a positive effect on service quality and keep social workers motivated as efforts will be acknowledged and affirmed. Performance could then also be linked to performance appraisals, incentives and affirmation.

5.4.2. Enabling of Social Workers to Implement Transformational Models in Service Delivery

Training is imperative to enable social workers to effectively implement transformational policies and legislation. It is established that social workers are not trained to implement the transformational mandates. They learned from their mistakes on a trial and error basis which compromised the effectiveness of services to clients (Chapter 4.12).

To enable social workers to implement transformational models, the following suggestions are proposed by the researcher:

5.4.2.1. Needs based capacity building

An assessment of the training needs should be done and plans to provide the identified training have to be put in place.

Individual needs, sectional needs as well as regional needs must be identified and addressed. Continued professional development is in line with the expectations of the South Africa Council for Social Service Professions.

5.4.2.2. Empowerment in terms of transformational models

Transformational models can not be separated from the transformational policies which prescribe the implementation of the said models. Training on the appropriate legislation and policies as well as the new models of service delivery has to be rolled out to all social workers in the region to ensure compliance. It is clear from the study that the social workers in institutions are implementing the transformed models in their service delivery. The training programmes that were presented to them could be replicated in the service offices as part of in-service training.

The training programmes should be included in the performance agreements of individual social workers, which will allow quarterly evaluation on training undergone as well as the integration of theory into practice.

5.4.2.3. Implementation Plan for transformational models

The implementation of the transformational models according to the findings in Chapter 4 is a challenge to practicing social workers as only two of the six models are used by social workers in the Department of Social Development. The reason for the non compliance to the implementation of the other transformational models will have to be unpacked. An implementation plan will then have to be developed which will include training as well as the management of increased workloads.

5.4.3. Proposed Management of Political Challenges in the Process of Transformation

Political awareness and the involvement of social workers in the execution of political mandates are identified as some of the most frustrating transformational challenges for social workers in the Department of Social Development.

The following suggestions are made by researcher for the management of the identified challenges:

5.4.3.1. Management of political expectations

It is clear that the conflict between the political expectation and the social workers experience, need to be addressed. The strategic objectives of the department could assist the social workers to understand where their professional functions are positioned. Political mandates were bound to increase, as the services are marketed by politicians to the people. It is imperative that clear procedures be put in place between the political officials and the service delivery arm of the department. Closer collaboration between the parties involved is needed to address the challenge in the interest of service delivery.

5.4.3.2. Alignment of service delivery and political mandates

It is the responsibility of the social work professionals to guide the political leaders as far as the needs of the communities are concerned, by doing research and indicate the felt needs of the communities, before strategic plans are signed of. Social work professionals should ensure that politicians are aware of the value that the profession can add to there political goals and objectives.

The apathy of the social workers will have to be replaced with the commitment to advocate for the needs of the community. The understanding is that the politicians want to raise their popularity and the social workers want to meet the needs of the community. Both parties can change the circumstances of those in need. It is therefore imperative that the parties involved complement each others efforts, in the best interest of the communities that we serve.

5.4.4. The Retention of Social Workers in Accordance with the Reasons why Social Workers Leave the Profession or the Country

Social workers must be retained to serve the needs of the country. This can only be achieved if the challenges experienced by the professionals are addressed and the morale of social workers is restored. Realistically none of this can be achieved overnight. Social workers will have to be reminded of the importance of the profession to change to lives of those in need.

The following suggestions are made by the researcher to assist in retaining social workers in the country:

5.4.4.1. The utilization of para-professionals to enhance service delivery

The purpose of the paraprofessional which is currently perceived as de-professionalizing to the profession has to be put in perspective.

Social workers also have to be brought to the realization that they cannot do everything. Non-core social work functions will have to be re-allocated to the paraprofessionals. This will allow social workers to do what they are trained for and enhance job satisfaction.

5.4.4.2. Recognition of Social workers

The suggestions of Grobler et al.; (2002:450) that the staff should be acknowledged and given recognition when it is due, could also assist with retaining staff. Social workers also have to be made aware of the fact that transformation in service delivery is mandatory, and needed in the country.

5.4.4.3. Improvement of the professional image of social work

Resistance to transform could just damage the profession more. Social work professionals have to realize that they are the only people that can restore the image of the profession. All social workers in the department will therefore have to take responsibility to improve the image of the profession in their environment and to orchestrate their own job-satisfaction.

5.4.4.4. Retention of Social workers

The retention strategy for social workers is one of the most important ways in which government attempt to retain social workers. Social workers in the department must acquaint themselves with the plans stipulated in the retention strategy.

The following paragraph will address the management of stress and improved morale for social workers.

5.4.5 Proposed Guideline to Manage the Physical and Mental Effects of Transformational Challenges on the Practicing Social Workers

The participants in this study were very clear on the high stress levels that they experience and could indicate how they are affected (Figure 4.14). It is clear that the social workers experience more than two serious stress symptoms which must be attended to as a matter of urgency.

The following suggestions are made by researcher to manage the physical and mental effects of transformation on practicing social workers:

5.4.5.1 Implementation of wellness programmes

Wellness programmes could be used as a point of departure, to enable social worker to gain personal knowledge about their physical and mental conditions (Grobler et al., 2002:450). Education and awareness can take the form of dissemination of information through brochures, luncheon lectures and elevator posters on conditions as identified in figure 4.14.

5.4.5.2 Encouragement to utilize the employee assistance programme

It is also crucial that the reasons for staff refraining from utilizing the existing employee assistance programme within the department be examined. This is a benefit to the exposure of all staff members and should be utilized by the social workers in the department. The department should consider ongoing programmes which are well advertised and allow the social worker to choose, programmes based on their interest. Regular debriefing sessions for social workers is much needed and should become a standard practice as it will prevent the built up of frustration and anxiety.

5.4.5.3 Restore physical and mental wellness

The physical and mental stress of social workers in the Department of Social Development should be addressed on a continuous basis. The supportive role of supervision must be executed to the benefit of the social workers as well as the clients. The supervisor has to identify and appropriately refer the supervisees for assistance, before physical or mental effects are detrimental. Social workers should also take responsibility for their physical and mental health and attend to situations which could affect them. The findings indicated that each social worker has his or her own way of dealing with stress.

5.4.5.4. Provision of support systems

It is imperative that support systems within the regional office be established so that social workers can feel safe to discuss their frustrations. The fact that social workers deal with their own experiences by themselves could be symptomatic of other workplace challenges which should be explored. As a point of departure the researcher would suggest that the supervisor supervisee relationship be utilized for this purpose. There might also be a need for teambuilding and team experiences to build trust relations in the workplace.

5.5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is evident that the participants of this are experiencing transformational challenges due to the changes that they were exposed to over the last decade. The findings indicate that all the participants have one or more of the physical or mental symptoms of stress in the workplace. The recommendation would be that attention should be given to assess the stress of staff and ensure that it is attend to. EAP could be utilized to assist workers with stress management. Frustration of staff must be addressed and teambuilding and incentives could be used to affirm and appreciate staff, affected in the process.

The following areas need to be address concurrently due to the urgency thereof; stress management, the improvement of working conditions, political challenges; the capacity building on transformational challenges, the workload management, supervision and implementation of transformational models. Only when the aforementioned areas is addressed, will the image of the profession be on the road to restoration and, the well being of the social workers be attended to, service delivery improved and alternately social workers might be retained.

Social work is the implementation arm of government and it is therefore imperative that the recommendation discussed in this study be considered for implementation by the Johannesburg Regional Office of the Department of Social Development in Gauteng. It could also be utilized to guide more direct planning to address other transformational challenges which might not be covered in this study.

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ANNEXURE 1

Enquiries: Mrs L Cock
Cell: 082 5676 719

9 July 2007

The Regional Director: Department of Social Development
Johannesburg Metro Region
Private Bag 26
Johannesburg
2000

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT THE JOHANNESBURG METRO REGIONAL OFFICE

I have been granted a government bursary to complete my Masters Degree in Social Work at the Huguenot College Wellington, an affiliate of UNISA. A requirement for qualification of the studies is a research project. I therefore request permission to conduct my research study at the above mentioned regional office.

The topic for my research is: *"Transformational Challenges Facing Contemporary Social Work: An Exploratory Study."*

The aim of the study is to explore the transformational challenges from a qualitative and a quantitative approach and to devise guidelines to effectively address the identified challenges. This particular study may assist the Department in the ongoing process of transformation of the social work sector.

Your favourable consideration of my request will be appreciated.

Yours respectfully

Lorraine Cock
Deputy Director Statutory Social Work

ANNEXURE 2

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Colleagues

I am a Masters student registered at the Huguenot College affiliate of UNISA. As part of the requirements for the degree I am conducting a research study titled: *“Transformational Challenges Facing Contemporary Social work: An Exploratory Study.”*

The aim of the study is to explore the challenges from the practicing social worker's perspective and to devise guidelines to address the identified challenges. I therefore wish to encourage you to participate in this study voluntarily by sharing your experiences in this regard. Without your valuable input I will not be able to conduct this research.

Interviews will be arranged at a time and place that will be convenient to you. The interview will last approximately thirty minutes. You may at any time withdraw from the study and you may also refuse to answer questions that would make you feel uncomfortable.

Please be assured that identifying particulars are kept confidential and will not be disclosed at any stage or be included in the final research report. As a professional colleague I give you the assurance that I will adhere to the ethical code and will uphold it at all times.

If the interview in any way causes emotional stress supportive counselling will be arranged through the Employees Assistance Programme of the Department. These arrangements will be made by me to ensure that it stays confidential. The information will be audio taped to ensure accurate capturing of the social work experience. Afterwards the tapes will be destroyed.

Please feel free to contact me at cell 0825676719 if you have any queries.

I sincerely hope that you will consider participating in this study.

Yours sincerely

Lorraine Cock

Researcher

9 July 2007

Ms. H. von Schlicht

Study Leader

9 July 2007

ANNEXURE 3

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTION IN RESEARCH STUDY.

I hereby consent to participate in this research study. The purpose of the study was explained to me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to answer any particular question or withdraw from the study if I so wish without any negative consequences. I expect that my responses to be kept confidential.

Name of the Participant:

Date:

Signature:

As researcher I am bound by the aforementioned and agree to the conditions mentioned on the consent form. I undertake to adhere to the conditions.

Name of researcher: Lorraine Cock

Date:

Signature:

ANNEXURE 4

HUGUENOT COLLEGE MASTERS PROGRAMME - SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Biographic Information

Section One:

Please answer the following questions by marking your answer with an **X** in the relevant block.

1. Age in years

21-30	
31-40	
41-50	
50+	

2. Gender

Male	
Female	

3. Racial group

African	
White	
Coloured	
Indian	

4. What is the nature of your current caseload?

Probation Officer	
Field Social Worker	
Supervisor	
Other	

If other, please specify: _____

5. List employers and periods served as a Social Worker.

Employers	Period served

Section Two: Professional Service Rendering

6. Do you work in an integrated manner?

Yes	
No	

7. If yes, describe your focus area.

8. What was your average caseload before transformation?

Number of cases	Before Transformation	After Transformation
60-80		
90-120		
130-150		
160-200		

9. Which of the following transformation models are you currently implementing?

Developmental approach	
Empowerment approach	
Strength based approach	
Community development approach	
Developmental statutory interventions	

10. Indicate your experience of the amalgamation process:

- 10.1 Were you sufficiently prepared to work in a multi cultural environment?

Yes	
No	

Motive: _____ _____ _____ _____
--

- 10.2 Which previous Departmental documentation, forms and procedures were implemented?

Yes	
No	

Motive: _____ _____ _____ _____
--

10.3 Did you have to change the way you were doing your social work administrative e.g. Stats, process notes, psycho-social reports?

Yes	
No	

Motivate: _____

10.4 Did you experience difficulty in adapting to the changed environment?

Yes	
No	

Motivate: _____

10.5 Other

Yes	
No	

Motivate: _____

11. How did amalgamation influence the organizational culture in your office?

Were there changes in management approaches?	
Did you experience conflict due to cultural and ethnical differences?	
Other	

Motivate your answer: _____

12. How have you adapted to working in one official language? (Select one option)

No difficulty	
Very difficult	
With ease	
Other	

Motivate your answer: _____

13. How do the different languages affect the way in which you interact with clients and represent them in Courts?

Had to obtain interpreters	
The client/social worker trust relationship was negatively affected	
Difficulty to express the circumstances of diverse cultures, verbally and written	
More time was spend on reports/interviews/assessment to do justice to the client	
Other	

If other, please specify: _____

14. Was a new post - 1994 organisational culture formed?

Yes	
No	

Motivate your response:

Answer: _____

15. What did you find the most difficult as a professional person in the process of transformation?

Specify: _____

16. How would you describe the attitudes of a diverse clientele towards the social worker in the transformed environment?

No difference	
Clients wanted to see social worker of their own race group	
Clients wanted to see social worker of specific race group	
Clients were reluctant to share their problems	
They were not affected at all by the transformational changes	
Other	

If other, please specify: _____

17. Are you more informed regarding political mandates compared to before transformation?

Yes	
No	

Specify: _____

18. Are you more directly involved in execution of political mandates as compared to pre-transformation?

Yes	
No	

Specify: _____

19. Social work is declared a scarce skill in South Africa. Why are social workers leaving the profession?

Poor remuneration	
Poor physical working conditions	
High caseloads	
Degradation of the social work profession	
Lack of job satisfaction	
Reporting to non-social working managers	
Pressure to execute political mandates as opposed to addressing identified social work needs	
Other	

20. Would you say that you were sufficiently trained, capacitated and Prepared for implementing transformation policies and legislation?

Yes	
No	

Specify: _____

21. How does social work in a transforming environment affect you as a professional person, physically and mentally?

Fatigue	
Insomnia	
Frustration	
Restlessness	
Depression	
Headaches	
Negative attitude towards clients	
Negative attitude towards management	
Not concerned by incomplete tasks and services	
Are you on stress/depression medication	
Other	

Specify: _____

22. How do you manage the effects of the above?

Medication	
Exercise/Sport	
Hobbies	
Professional services (EAP)	
Other	

Specify: _____

23. What, in your opinion, could be done by the employer to assist social workers with stress management?

Specify: _____

24. Are there any technological challenges which you experience within transformed social service delivery?

Yes	
No	

Motivate: _____

Thank you for your time

L. Cock