SOCIAL WORKERS’ EXPERIENCES ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIAL WELFARE FROM A REMEDIAL APPROACH TO A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

BY

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When the new democratic government came into power, much legislation, policies and strategies were transformed, included was the welfare system that was imbalanced, unjust, discriminatory and inappropriate. It was replaced by a developmental approach that is more just, equitable and appropriate system contained in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997). Social workers were expected to reform their method of intervention. Consequently, this study will focus on the experiences of social workers as changes were brought into the approaches used in service delivery.

The goal of the study is to explore and describe social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach. The study was conducted using the qualitative research approach. The research study made use of an explorative, descriptive and contextual design. The researcher used purposive and theoretical non-probability sampling methods to draw the sample. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed using Tesch’s eight steps in Creswell (1994:155) and was verified against four criteria that Guba in (Krefting, 1991) developed for testing the trustworthiness of a qualitative study. Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, recommendations were made to the management of the department of social development on how to address the challenges facing social workers on the implementation of the developmental approach. The results will be disseminated by means of a written research report.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND THE PROBLEM
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1.1 Introduction

It has been 12 years since the dawn of the new democratic South Africa. Patel (2004) in her inaugural lecture given at the former Rand Afrikaans University in 2003 stated that “the ongoing renewal of social welfare is taking place in a new global and regional context marked by new risks and uncertainties which were not anticipated when the new welfare consensus was achieved. In line with the White paper for Social Welfare adopted in 1997 by the newly elected democratic government, the welfare system was fundamentally transformed. The apartheid welfare system was dismantled and a more just, equitable and appropriate system was developed and implemented” (Patel, 2004:6). The new government realized the need to transform the welfare system with the aim of ending racial discrimination in accessing services and benefits and creating an integrated social welfare system.

In order to understand this need to transform the welfare system it is necessary to explain briefly the historical background of the welfare system to be transformed and the disadvantages it had for the majority of South Africans.

1.1.1 The Welfarist model

According to Midgley (1995:3) social welfare refers “broadly to a state of social well-being, contentment and prosperity”. He indicates that the term welfare was used in the United States in a broad sense to connote social
and political well being of the nation. Midgley identifies three institutionalized approaches for promoting social welfare that have been widely adopted throughout the world.

- “Social philanthropy which relies on private donations, voluntary efforts and non-profit organizations to meet needs, solve problems and create opportunities.
- Social work which relies on professional personnel to foster welfare goals by working with individuals, groups and communities.
- Government intervention through a variety of statutory social services” (Midgley, 1995:3).

The traditional social welfare system was established in the distant past. In ancient China, it started as refugees for the aged, the sick, and the poor, free schools for poor children free eating-houses for weary labourers and associations of distributions of secondhand clothing. In India, it related to giving to beggars and emphasis was on almsgiving. In Greece, they had institutions for the unfortunate and the sick, religion placed emphasis on charity and helping those in need. In medieval time giving relief and helping distressed people was the responsibility the monks also had, of providing services to care for the indigent, and other unfortunate individuals. In Europe the roots of social welfare dates back to 1536 and a law was passed in England stating that alms collected by churches and local authority on Sundays were to be used to relieve the sick and poor. This saw the beginning of the English poor laws. In America, the pattern for assisting the poor followed the poor laws and activities of the mother country, they started charity organizations patterned after European innovations. Zastrow’s view (2004:41) is that in the past social welfare, programmes were influenced in the early history by the Protestant ethic, the laissez-faire economic view, Social Darwinism, Individualism, the Industrial Revolution and Humanitarian ideals. The needs of the poor were a core element in all these approaches and in the formulation of a wide
range of developmental policies and programmes. When the welfare system started, government was not involved. Volunteers took the responsibility for the care of the needy and the destitute as part of their human responsibility. Churches also rendered services to the needy as a religious obligation. In South Africa, religious charity organisations fostered the emergence of a highly organized approach for promoting people’s welfare. It also contributed to the emergence of professional social work and stimulated government involvement in social welfare (McKendrick, 1987:10-12).

The researcher will focus on the South African pre- and post-apartheid situations. The discussion will be based on the changing approaches to the rendering of social welfare services by the pre-1994 government prior to democracy, and the post-1994 new political dispensation.

1.1.2 PRE- 1994 IN SOUTH AFRICA

Patel (1992:34) confirms that the South African social welfare policy was shaped by colonialism and apartheid. With colonialism, the beginnings of organized social welfare services were established in the Cape Colony by religious organizations, especially the Dutch Reformed Church which began creating institutional welfare resources when it founded the first orphanage in 1814. Van Eeden, Ryke, and De Necker (2001:13) are of the view “that changing socio–economic tendencies such as industrialization and urbanization, followed by poverty and housing needs have, since the turn of the century, affected the social function of the South African government”. For the first five decades of the twentieth century, the predominant focus of government was to follow a residual welfare and institutional approaches. Zastrow (2004:10) indicates that residual approach holds the view that social welfare services should be provided only when individual’s needs are not properly met through other societal
institutions, like the family and the market economy, and it denotes that the source of individuals’ difficulties are rooted in their own malfunctioning. The institutional approach’s view is that social welfare programmes are to be accepted as a proper justifiable function of modern industrial world. Recipients of services are seen as being entitled to receive such help since causes for their difficulties are beyond their control.

In 1948 the new government known as the Re–united National Party established further services as well as the planning and development of diversified services on a racial basis. Welfare services of a better quality catered for whites. The government did little to promote the welfare of other population groups (Van Eeden et al., 2001:1). Welfare services to other racial groups were placed under the management of their own government departments, whilst policy development was left in the hands of the white central government. According to Gray (1998:10), welfare services had to be administered and delivered to persons by persons of the same ethnic group. This law led to the unjust, discriminatory and fragmented social welfare services endured for over 50 years.

1.1.3 POST-1994 IN SOUTH AFRICA

The ANC-led Government of National Unity came into power in 1994. The new government chose to follow a democratic socialist ideology of social welfare and did away with the traditional welfare system that was perpetuated during the apartheid regime. It drafted a programme called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Van Eeden, Ryke, and De Necker,( 2001:13) viewed “RDP as an integrated, socio-economic policy framework joining the South African communities and resources in the final dismantling of apartheid with regard to separate welfare services and the reconstruction of the country”. It was a programme that detailed how discrimination, disparities and unfair
distribution of assets and money would be done away with and programmes would be put in place to cater for all population groups equally. The RDP had certain objectives with regard to redressing the imbalance in welfare service rendering of the past, the empowerment of the individual, family and communities and the acknowledgement of the role that the voluntary welfare organizations and the other community based welfare organizations could play in the provision of welfare services. The RDP paved the way for an alternative way of thinking on how to mobilize as much human resource potential as possible towards a better life for all. Taylor (2004:12) indicates that the values and goals of developmental social welfare reverberate with the ideals and strategies of the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a national socio-economic policy framework that integrates economic growth with social development in promoting people’s welfare. This view ‘hatched’ by Midgley (1995:25) defines social development as a process of planned social change designed to promote people’s welfare in conjunction with a comprehensive process of economic development. This social development vision for social welfare was endorsed globally during the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 (Taylor, 2004:8). The Copenhagen declaration and the accompanying programme of Action provided a basic conceptual framework for social development. According to the declaration, social development aims to improve and enhance the quality of life of all people within a context of poverty eradication, full employment and social integration (Taylor, 2004:8).

The Department of Welfare started operating as a fully-fledged department on 1 July 1994. The challenge facing the welfare system was to formulate appropriate and integrated strategies to address the estrangement, the economic and social marginalization of vast sectors of the population who are living in poverty, are vulnerable and have special needs. In 1996, the first draft of the White Paper for Social Welfare was
made available to social workers and the final copy, in February 1997. The consultative process took two years to create a national consensus on transforming the welfare system of the country. South Africa adopted the White Paper on Social Welfare as an attempt to move towards a developmental approach that committed the department to a social development paradigm for welfare, supporting a people-centred approach to social and economic development. The approach focuses on the maximization of human potential and on fostering self-reliance and participation in decision-making. It also stresses services that are family-oriented, community-based and integrated (Integrated Service Delivery Model, 2005:14). In the White Paper Preamble (1997) “all South Africans are called upon to participate in the development of an equitable, people-centred, democratic and appropriate social welfare system. The goal of the developmental social welfare is a humane, peaceful, just and caring society, which will uphold welfare rights, facilitate the meeting of basic human needs, release peoples’ creative energies, help them achieve their capacity and self-reliance and participate fully in all spheres of social, economic and political life. South Africans will be afforded the opportunity to play an active role in promoting their own well-being and contributing to the growth and development of our nation.”

Social development as an approach focuses on poverty eradication through building people’s capabilities to achieve self-sufficiency. People whose lives are changed cannot do it on their own, they need assistance from professionals like social workers, community development workers (from both government and non-governmental organizations), and volunteers. Social workers are one of the many professionals and non-professionals rendering social welfare services and they are seen as the major role-players in addressing the developmental needs of South African society (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2005:14). Gray (1996:8) focused on the role of social workers in using the developmental
approach for the promotion of welfare. Her paper argues that for successful implementation of the developmental welfare model social workers need to empower themselves to reach their full potential, to lighten their statutory load and to unleash energy for developmental social work. Gutierrez et al. (1998:13) states that “the primary social work roles assumed in empowerment practice are teacher, trainer, resource consultant and sensitizer (awareness raiser), and other important roles include leading groups and helping clients develop group leadership skills”. The goal of intervention becomes twofold: (1) To achieve results relative to the immediate situation and (2) to teach clients the knowledge and skills necessary to perform these interventions for themselves and others” (Gutierrez et al., 1998:13). With these skills clients will stop being dependent on the social worker but become self-reliant and also help others. If this is done competently, it can be an effective chain that can unleash much of the social responsibilities from the government. McKendrick (2001:108) is in support of this statement by regarding social workers as distinctively qualified to make a valuable contribution to the developmental welfare. He refers to their skills and expertise, their emphasis on Strength Perspective, empowerment of others and facilitation of effective teamwork.

The National Department of Social Development has published an Integrated Service Delivery Model that incorporates the rationale and guidelines for the service delivery model. In the executive summary of the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005:5), it is indicated that “a developmental approach to service delivery is based on the strengths of the individual, group or community, and that it recognizes the capacity for growth and development. Recognizing the need to promote the goals of sustainable development and to redress past imbalances, the social services sector has adopted such an approach, integrating social
intervention with economic development”. It is proposing appropriate and integrated strategies that can address the development challenges.

The Department of Social Development in the Eastern Cape Province is one of the departments to develop the Provincial Service Delivery Model and implement it in 2004. The province is the poorest in the country. Its population is estimated at 6 302 000. According to the Statistics SA report, it is also the poorest in terms of the average on monthly expenditure (Development Strategy, 2006:1). It is characterized by high levels of underdevelopment with high rates of unemployment, low average household incomes, poor institutional density, poor availability of social infrastructure and huge service backlogs (Turnaround Strategy, 2003:3).

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW - CONTEXTUALIZATION

According to Maistry & Ncapai (2004:14) The United Nations declared the beginning of the 1960s as the Development Decade. This came about after the integration of the African, Caribbean and Pacific groups of countries into the United Nations. It was expected that the previously colonized or the so-called underdeveloped countries would immediately undergo a period of rapid economic growth and positive social transformation. Development programmes and aid agencies were established to assist these countries. Problems of underdevelopment and levels of impoverishment continued to increase and the countries that were affected were categorized as the third world. The experiences of the western countries in economics were used in an attempt to address the problems of underdevelopment within the Third World countries.

The researcher will explain the following theories of development briefly as the theoretical framework that underpins this study.
1.2.1 MODERNIZATION THEORY

Coetzee & Graaff (1996) refer to “modernization as a total transformation, which is when a traditional or pre-modern society changes to such an extent that new forms of an advanced society appear. This view assumes that a set of characteristics can be attributed to traditionalism on the one hand, and modernity on the other and that transition is possible from the one to the other. Martinussen (1997:38) defines modernization “as a structural change process whereby the traditional and backward third-world countries developed towards a greater similarity with the western, or rather the North-Western world.” Martinussen (1997:56) further states that modernization was primarily concerned with traditional values, attitudes, practices and social structures that break down and are replaced with ones that are more modern. To him modernity has been used as a term to describe particular forms of economy and society based on the experiences of Western Europe, and in economic terms modernity include industrialization, urbanization and increased use of technology within all sectors of the economy. Seers (1972) in Maistry & Ncapai (2004:15) mentions that the theory did not yield the expected results as the third world countries are still experiencing high levels of poverty, mass unemployment, income inequality and many countries experience growth without development.

1.2.2. DEPENDENCY THEORY

Dependency theory came about as a reaction against modernization theories and partly as the outcome of a long-standing debate concerning the impact of imperialism (Martinussen, 1997:85). It originated in the late 1960s through the work of a number of academics and development
economists concerned with the economic failure of Latin American
countries (Webster, 1990:84). These economists were opposed to
modernization. Webster (1990:85) states that the economics dismissed
the notions of modernization theory, that lack of development could be
attributed to a lack of appropriate modernizing values and that the third
world countries benefited positively from the relationship with the
advanced industrial countries. They gave an example of the increasing
levels of poverty in Latin American countries, which is blamed on the
exposure to the economic and political influences of the advanced
countries. According to Dos Santos (1971:226) in Ferraro (2006:2)
“dependency is a historical condition which shapes a certain structure of
the world economy such that it favours some countries to the detriment of
others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate
economies, a situation in which the economy of a certain group of
countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another
economy, to which their own is subjected.” According to Webster
(1990:85), Frank as one of the proponents of this theory, believes that the
persistent poverty of the Third World is a reflection of its dependency on
the First World. He argues that the periods of merchant capitalism and
colonialism forced a specialization of production on Third World countries
that was primarily export-oriented, of limited range and geared to the raw
material needs of the imperial powers. According to Maistry & Ncapai
(2004:16), Frank attempted to show that the world is dominated by a
single capitalist economy in such a way that countries are somehow
integrated to it. This economy is controlled by a few countries often
referred to as core countries or the Metropolis. They developed by
exploiting and impoverishing the Third World countries or satellites.

According to Ferraro (2006:01) Prebisch who was the Director of the
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, and his
colleagues were troubled that economic growth in the advanced
industrialized countries did not lead to growth in the poorer countries, instead it often led to serious economic problems. Ferraro (2006:01) and Haines (2005:11) endorses Prebisch’s explanation that “poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries, who then manufactured products out of those commodities and sell them back to the poorer countries.” The problem is that it becomes expensive for the poorer countries to buy the manufactured products. Not much money is made from the exported materials. For example, South Africa produces raw gold, export it to the First World then buy it back as manufactured products that the average person cannot afford. The money from sales is also not enough for the government to address most of its citizen’s needs. Prebisch’s solution was that Third World countries embark on industrialization and reduce their dependence on trade with the First World, and increase trade among themselves.

1.2.3 BASIC NEEDS APPROACH

According to Maistry & Ncapai (2004:18) The International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted the basic needs approach in 1976. “It was defined to include certain minimum requirements of a family for basic private consumption: adequate food, shelter, clothing and household equipment. The definition further includes essential services provided for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities”. The basic needs orientation, as “an approach was a significant shift from the idea that economic growth automatically leads towards development. The idea that became popular was that economic growth has failed to ‘trickle down’ to the masses and actually impoverished the masses, even though there has been an increase in the overall wealth of the country” (Maistry & Ncapai, 2004:18). The basic needs approach entailed a shift from a grand theory to more practical approaches aimed directly at the reduction of poverty through
social services such as education, health and welfare programmes (Haines, 2005:12). Maistry & Ncapai (2004:19) further state that dependency on external forces and misallocation of internal resources perpetuate underdevelopment. Dependency on external forces comes about because of unequal exchange, the manipulation of export prices by the multinationals and technological dependency upon advanced countries. The misallocation of internal resources occurs when a developing country embarks on a programme of import substitution or industrialization at the expense of rural areas leading to an inequitable distribution of income.

1.2.4 EMPOWERMENT THEORY

According to Zastrow (2004:78) empowerment is one of the key objectives of social work. He defines it as “the process of helping individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities increase their personal, interpersonal, socio-economic and political strength and influence through improving their circumstances.” Social workers as empowerers seek to develop the capacity of their clients to have an understanding of their environment, make choices and take responsibility of their choices. Gray (1998:104-105) mentions that empowerment and capacity building are the two most important components of social work intervention. Empowerment refers to a process whereby people are given power that enables them to be responsible and actively improve their living conditions. New Dictionary of Social Work, (1995:21) in Gray (1998:105). For people to be empowered people’s abilities, knowledge and skills must be expanded through capacity building. These two components, empowerment and capacity building, are the main characteristics of the developmental approach in that people’s potential are recognized then nurtured through empowerment and capacity building.
1.3 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The department of social development started transforming the social welfare system after South Africa attained democracy and the Government of National Unity took over from the apartheid government in 1994. It was realized that the traditional approach was inappropriate to address the increasing development problems, for example, high unemployment, poverty levels and drastic economic decline. The developmental approach was adopted with the aim of providing developmental social welfare services to all South Africans. The guidelines for the new approach are found in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997). Social workers who were educated on the remedial approach were expected to implement the new approach without the necessary training. Training was provided to professional social workers in a form of workshops, which was not adequate.

Patel (2004:6), (2003a:1 -10) mentions that the apartheid welfare system was discriminatory, fragmented and unjust, it disrupted traditional forms of social provision such as communalism, co-operation and mutual support by individuals and social groups that were developed. The delivery of welfare programmes was institutionally differentiated; the administration was created for different race groups. A more just, equitable and appropriate system, which is the developmental approach then replaced the old system. According to Starke (1996:25), “There has been widespread rejection of the residual, apartheid model and vigorous debate in social work circles for a number of decades concerning the need for a restructuring of welfare”. After much consideration and consultations the newly democratically elected government then instituted the restructuring of social welfare.
The transformation process caused a stir in the social work profession. Keet (2000: 288) conducted an investigative study on social development: the perceptions and attitudes of social workers. His opinion is that the misconceptions and misunderstandings amongst social welfare workers can create uncertainties and resistance among the very people who are responsible for the application of this new approach in practice. Mahomed (2005) also did a study on the experiences of social workers on the implementation of a developmental approach with social workers from non-governmental organizations in the Nelson Mandela Bay District. The researcher conducted a similar study with social workers employed by the Department of Social Development in the same district. The need to explore social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare was considered by the researcher to be necessary, after realizing that social workers were frustrated and becoming disillusioned instead of being on top of their ‘game’ when it came to provision of social welfare services implementing the new approach.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Creswell (1994:70) describes research questions as assuming two forms that is a grand tour question or a guiding hypothesis followed by sub-questions. The grand question is described as a statement being examined in the study in its most general form. It is generalized so as not to limit the inquiry.

The research question framed to guide this study is: what are the experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation from the traditional remedial social welfare to a developmental approach?
1.5 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher will explain briefly the goal and objectives of the study as follows:

1.5.1 GOAL

The goal of this research study is to establish social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach.

1.5.2 OBJECTIVES

- To explore and describe the experiences of social workers in the transformation from traditional remedial social welfare to a developmental approach.
- To draw conclusions and to make recommendations on the future implementation of the developmental approach based on the findings of the study.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The researcher briefly described the research design which is a plan or steps followed to collect, analyze and interpret data and research methodology which indicates where and how data will be collected.

1.6.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell (1994) defines design as including the approaches to data collection, analysis and report writing to be used. It is the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step. It is a programme to guide
the researcher in collecting, analyzing and interpreting the observed facts (Creswell, 1994:46). The approach that was followed in this research study is qualitative as the researcher was interested in how social workers make sense of their work experiences. The study follows an explorative, descriptive, contextual strategy of inquiry. A brief discussion on the approaches follows hereunder. The researcher will discuss in depth the research design and methodology in chapter two.

1.6.1.1 Qualitative research

According to Creswell, (1998:15) qualitative research is defined as “an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting”.

1.6.1.2 Explorative research

According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:92) exploratory research is appropriate when problems have been identified, but our understanding of them is quite unlimited. Exploratory designs are used to begin the process of knowledge building about a problem or question. In this study the researcher explored experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach.

1.6.1.3 Descriptive research

Creswell (1994:145) is of the opinion that qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in processes, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures. The researcher used
interviews as a method of collecting data in order to understand how social workers experienced the transformation of social welfare from an old approach to a new approach.

1.6.1.4 Contextual research

According to Bryman (2001:278) qualitative researchers are keen to provide considerable descriptive detail because they put emphasis on the importance of the contextual understanding of social behaviour, values or whatever must be understood in context. The proposed study is contextual in nature because it aims at exploring and describing social workers’ experiences of the change in the intervention strategy used to render service.

1.6.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population is a set of potential objects or events where the research participants will be drawn. Not everyone will be part of a study. A sample of subjects was drawn from the population to participate in this study. Hereunder follows a brief discussion on the population and sample for this study.

1.6.2.1 POPULATION

According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:114) a research population is described as “the entire collection of people or elements that share some defined characteristic(s)”. It is a set of objects and events or a group of people which are the object of research. In this research study, the population comprised registered social workers in the employ of the department of social development in Port Elizabeth who have been employed during the period 1992 - 2002.
1.6.2.2 SAMPLING

A sample is a subset of the whole population which is actually investigated by a researcher whose characteristics will be generalized to the entire population. De Vos (2002:199) states that a sample “can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested”. The sample is studied in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn. The sampling technique that was used in order to select the sample falls within the non-probability sampling method. Purposive and theoretical sampling was used to seek typical, divergent data and to obtain more on the developing theory (De Vos, 2002:334). The researcher approached one of the long serving managers in the department to provide her with a list of social workers who meet the criteria. The researcher then approached social workers on the list, explained about the research study and gave them consent forms, which she collected after few days.

Criteria used for inclusion in this study were as follows:

- The research participants had to be registered social workers in the employ of the department of social development in the Port Elizabeth area;
- They have to be employed by the Department of social development between 1992 and 2002;
- The participants had experienced the shift from traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach,
- Social workers in managerial positions and those doing operational work were eligible to participate; and
- The participants were all females, two Africans and two Coloureds.
1.6.2.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

It is important to construct the tools necessary to collect data and the way the collection should be recorded. In this research study, information was gathered directly from the participants by means of interviews. According to Tutty, Rothery & Grinnell (1996:52) “interviews provide you with an opportunity to learn about that which you are unable to directly observe in a person’s natural environment and this is particularly true when you are interested in learning about a person’s experiences, behaviours, thoughts and feelings.” To avoid researcher’s bias since she is an employee of the department of social development where the study was conducted, the services of an independent interviewer and transcriber were sought. Three types of interviews namely structured, semi-structured and unstructured are briefly discussed below:

- **Structured interviews**
  Tutty et al. (1996:53) state that “the structured interview is sometimes called a standardized interview, it uses a common interview schedule that contains specific questions, or items”.

- **Unstructured interviews**
  The second type is unstructured interviews. De Vos (2002:298) also refers to this type “as the in-depth interview, and it merely extends and formalizes conversation.”

- **Semi–structured interviews**
  The third type, the semi–structured interview, was the one that was used in this study. De Vos (2002:302) writes that the interviewer prepares predetermined questions on an interview schedule, which can be used as a guide. Few questions that were set led to a discussion of other issues and questions not on the interview guide. Tutty et al. (1996:56) state that
semi-structured interviews are appropriate because the researcher would like to compare information between and among social workers while at the same time wishes to more fully understand each social worker's experiences of the transformation on the method of intervention. It has the advantage of having the characteristics of both the structured and unstructured interviewing methods. The interviewer stopped when theoretical saturation was reached.

Questions that the interviewer asked the participants are as follows:

- What were your experiences relating to the implementation of the traditional approach?
- What were your thoughts and feelings when you were informed about the transformation of social welfare?
- What were your experiences relating to the implementation of the developmental approach?
- What are the biggest challenges faced by you and your colleagues in implementing this approach?
- What changes do you believe will be brought about in the lives of your clientele by applying your approach?
- What would you recommend or suggest in terms of future implementation of the developmental approach?

**Tape recording interviews**

A tape recorder was used to record the interviews needed for data analysis. The participants were told upfront what the researcher would be doing and their consent was sought before the study commenced. Participants were welcomed to use alias names and were told that the information would be treated as confidential as possible. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:103) are in support of this when they state that “respondents must be assured that data will only be used for the stated purpose of the research and no other purpose, and that no other person
will have access to interview data” (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). Assured of these matters, participants felt free to give honest and complete information.

1.6.2.4 THE PILOT STUDY

According to Royse (1995) in De Vos (2002), the purpose of conducting a pilot study is to determine whether the research data can be obtained from the participants. It is an opportunity for the researcher to fine-tune questions, methods of data collection. It also assists the researcher in estimating the time and costs that may be involved, as well as being ready for the problems that might arise during the actual interviews (de Vos, 2002:337). The interviewer piloted with the first participant and consulted with the researcher afterwards. The interviewer did not experience problems with the first interview. The report from the interviewer indicated that data could be collected from the participants.

1.6.2.5 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

It is important to sift, sort and organize the information collected. According to de Vos (2002:339) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Coding procedures were used to reduce the information to themes, sub-themes and categories.

The researcher used the following eight steps of Tesch (1990:142-145) found in Creswell (1994:154 – 155):

- “The researcher should get a sense of the whole by reading all of the transcripts carefully and jotting down along the margin ideas as they come to mind in connection with each topic.
• The researcher should select one transcript, read it through and ask herself what is it she is reading and what this is all about. This step involves thinking about the underlying meaning and thoughts that come to mind and are written in the margin.

• This process will be repeated until a list of all the topics is acquired. They should then be labelled as ‘major topics’, unique topics’ and others.

• The researcher then compares the lists of topics with the data. An abbreviation for each of the topics will be made in the form of a code, and the codes will be written next to the appropriate segments of the text. This preliminary organizing scheme is used to see if new categories and codes emerge.

• The researcher should then reduce the topics to categories. The correct words should be used to describe the topics in a specific category. Lines will be drawn between categories to show interrelationships.

• The researcher then makes a final decision about the topics, codes and categories.

• The data material belonging to each category will then be assembled, and a preliminary analysis will be performed.

• The researcher should recode existing data if necessary" (Creswell, 1994:154 – 155).

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1.6.2.6. METHOD OF VERIFICATION

The research study will respond and comply with the standards set to evaluate all research work. The trustworthiness of the research will be evaluated according to Guba’s model as quoted in Krefting (1991:214 – 222). He proposes four alternative constructs that more accurately reflect the assumptions of a qualitative paradigm. The four aspects are: truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

- **Truth-value**: This determines how confident the researcher is with the truth of the findings based on the research design, informants and the context in which the study was conducted. Truth-value is established by the strategy of establishing credibility; Lincoln and Guba (1985) in de Vos (2002: 351) are of the opinion that “the goal is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described”. For the purpose of this study, the researcher made use of **triangulation and peer examination**.

*Triangulation* is described by Krefting (1991:219) as “the comparison of multiple perspectives by using different methods of data collection”. The researcher ensured triangulation of data gathering by using, literature and interviewing.

The researcher used **peer examination** to seek input from experienced researchers such as an academic supervisor. They guided the researcher and made suggestions about the correct research processes to be followed. After transcribing the interviews, a copy was given to an independent coder who assisted with the identification of categories and themes. In this way, credibility was enhanced.
• **Applicability**: It refers to the degree to which findings can be applied to other contexts and settings. Triangulating multiple sources of data can be used to corroborate and elaborate the research study in question. (De Vos, 2002:352). Applicability is established through the strategy of transferability.

• **Consistency**: According to Guba (1985) in Krefting (1991:216), consistency of the data refers to ascertaining whether the findings would be consistent if they were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context. Dependability is the strategy used to ensure consistency. Dense description and peer examination were used to ensure consistency. According to Creswell (1998:203), through dense description the researcher will attempt to provide detailed descriptions so that readers are able to transfer information to other settings and to determine whether the findings can be transferred because of shared characteristics. The researcher consulted with an independent coder and the supervisor in auditing the findings.

• **Neutrality**: refers to “the degree to which the findings of the study are a function solely of the informants and the conditions of the research, and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives” (de Vos, 1998:350). Lincoln and Guba (1985) in de Vos (2002:352) stress the need to ask whether the findings of the study could be confirmed by another. The use of peer examination assisted the researcher in assuring that her biases and interpretations do not have an influence on the results and conclusions drawn from the data.
1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the research results to be acceptable the researcher has to follow ethical guidelines. De Vos (2002:63) defines ethics as “a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted, and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and participants, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students”. Informed consent, avoiding deception of participants and confidentiality are some of the principles that the researcher will maintain to comply with the professional ethics.

The researcher wrote a letter to the Department of Social Development in the Nelson Mandela District requesting permission to interview social workers for the purpose of this research study. The district coordinator was used as the gatekeeper to gain access to the participants. A copy of the letter is attached as annexure B.

Hereunder follows a brief discussion on the principles that the researcher used to comply with the professional ethics:

**Informed consent**

According to Tutty et al. (1996:40) informed consent means that each person fully understands what is going to happen, why it is going to happen and what its effect will be on him or her”. To satisfy the ethical principles the researcher provided all participants with written consent forms which clearly stipulated the purpose of the research study, the research methodology and their rights as participants. Each participant had to sign it as proof that she was not coerced but was participating of her free will. The researcher made the participants aware of any tool she was using to gather information, such as tape recorder. Consent forms
were made available to those participants who were willing to participate in the study. A copy of the consent form is attached as annexure C.

Avoiding Deception of subjects
Lowenberg and Dolgoff (1988) in De Vos (2002:66) describe “the deception of subjects as deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, violating the respect to which every person is entitled”. The researcher was honest with the participants and told them the truth about the study.

Confidentiality
Participants expected the researcher to treat the information they shared with her in a confidential manner. The researcher promised to observe the principle of confidentiality as far as the identity of participants is concerned. The tape-recorded information was kept in a private place and will be destroyed after the treatise has been accepted.

1.8 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

Traditional Social Welfare
This refers to the residual approach to welfare that the apartheid government followed. The rendering of service was remedial in nature and focused on addressing the shortcomings of an individual rather than eliminating shortcomings in the societal structure, for instance, economy. It provided short–term, palliative solutions to the symptoms of poverty and it created reliance on handouts and fostered dependency (Taylor, 2004:6 and Van Eeden et al. 2000/ 2002:22).

Developmental approach
This refers to inter-disciplinary, universal, inclusive and people-centred approaches that facilitate the development of human capacity and self-

A Social worker
For the purpose of this study a Social Worker is defined as a registered social worker or a community liaison officer who is implementing the developmental approach using all three methods of Social Work, which is casework, group work and community work, and is in the employ of the department of social development.

1.9 PROVISIONAL LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

An outline of the chapter to be included in the study is as follows:

Chapter 1 comprises the introduction and the problem formulation, literature review, the research question, goal and objectives. It briefly outlines the research design, methodology, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the research design and methodology, rationale for the study, how data was collected and verified, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 3 highlights the research findings and how they were categorized into themes, sub-themes and categories. It also demonstrates literature control.

Chapter 4 is the last chapter of the research study and it provides a summary of the research findings, and documents major findings of the study from which recommendations flow.
1.10 DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The research findings will be disseminated by means of writing a treatise and preparing an article for possible publication in a peer-reviewed journal.
CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one an overview of the research study was presented by discussing problem formulation and motivation for the study. The theoretical framework in which the problem was studied was presented. The rest of the proposed research process was also outlined. This chapter is divided into two parts. Part 1 focuses on the research design and part 2 on the research methodology.

This study aimed at exploring and describing social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach. The researcher made use of a qualitative, descriptive, explorative and contextual research strategy in order to meet the above aim. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed by using eight steps of Tesch (1990:142-145) in Creswell (1994:154 – 155).

2.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

According to Cournoyer and Klein (2000) “social work professionals continue to intervene in a myriad of severe and chronic social problems that are worsening. The current emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness throughout the helping professions means that social workers must choose interventions that have a high probability of producing measurable improvement in target problems or risk loss of public support”. The daily challenge facing the profession is the ability to demonstrate effectiveness.
at the level of individuals and small systems as well as the community and larger societal levels. There has been widespread rejection of the residual, apartheid model and vigorous debate in social work circles for a number of decades calling for restructuring of the welfare system. As indicated in chapter 1, Patel (2004:6) asserts that the apartheid welfare system was discriminatory, fragmented and unjust. It was replaced by a more just, equitable and appropriate method of intervention that employs the developmental approach to render effective services. The new national framework on welfare is contained in the White Paper for Social Welfare published in 1997. According to Starke (1996:25) the transformation of social welfare system was clouded by insecurities and questions. The researcher's aim was to explore and describe social workers' experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach, whether they experienced these uncertainties and insecurities expressed, the challenges they are faced with and to find out the impact that this approach is making in the lives of their clientele. The study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge base on transformation of social welfare in South Africa thus providing recommendations for successful implementation of the developmental approach to address current development challenges.

2.3 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The researcher will explain briefly the goal and objectives of the study as follows:

2.3.1 GOAL

The goal of this research study is to establish social workers' experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach.
2.3.2 OBJECTIVES

- To explore and describe the experiences of social workers in the transformation from traditional remedial social welfare to a developmental approach.
- To draw conclusions and to make recommendations on the future implementation of the developmental approach based on the findings of the study.

2.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Before commencing with data collection or analysis, social research needs a design or a structure. A research design can be equated to a work plan that details what has to be done to complete the project. According to de Vaus (2001:9) “the function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible”. Oman, Krugman, and Fink (2003:103) concur with the aforementioned author in their definition of a research design. They define it as “a plan for how the research will study and ultimately answer the question at hand” (Oman, Krugman, and Fink, 2003:103). They state that research design give information about:

- “What is studied?”
- Who the study participants are?
- When, how often and in what order will the researcher observe the variable?” (Oman et al. 2003:103).

For the purpose of this research study a qualitative, descriptive, explorative and contextual research designs were utilized to answer the research study’s question unambiguously. The researcher will present these concepts briefly.
2.4.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998:11), qualitative research refers to “a research about person’s lives, lived experiences, behaviour, emotions and feelings as well as about organizational functioning, social phenomena, and interactions between nations”. De Vos (2002:79) refers to qualitative research as “the research that elicits participant accounts of meaning, experiences or perceptions. It also produces descriptive data in the participant’s own written or spoken words”. Based on the two definitions above, qualitative research is therefore concerned with understanding naturalistic observation and subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider.

The researcher chose to utilize qualitative approach in this research study because:

- She attempted to explore and describe the meaning or nature of social workers’ experiences with regard to the transformation of social welfare from a remedial to a developmental approach;
- The approach was used to explore substantive areas about which much is known to gain novel understandings;
- It was also used to obtain details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through conventional research methods (Strauss and Corbin 1998:11). If the social workers did not get the opportunity to express how they felt about the changes that took place, it was hoped that this study would provide that opportunity.

Three major components of qualitative research according to Strauss and Corbin (1998) are:

- The data, which can come from various sources such as interviews, observations, documents, records and films. In this research study
data was collected through semi-structured interviews and documents.

- There are procedures used to interpret and organize the data (coding).
- The results of this study will be presented in the form of a written report (Strauss and Corbin 1998:11-12).

2.4.2 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH

According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:92), exploratory research design “is appropriate when problems have been identified but our understanding of them is quite limited. It is conducted to lay the groundwork for other knowledge-building that will follow”. In an exploratory design, selection of research participants is not a rigorous or exacting procedure. Selltiz et al. (1965) in Mouton and Marais (1990:43) emphasize four methods by means of which exploratory research may be conducted:

- A review of the related social science and other pertinent literature;
- A survey of people who have had practical experience of the problem to be studied;
- An analysis of “insight-stimulating” example;
- Exploratory studies use methods such as literature reviews, interviews, case studies and informants that may lead to insight and comprehension (Mouton and Marais, 1990:43).

For the purpose of this research study, the researcher explored social workers’ experiences with regard to the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach with the hope of gaining insight into understanding the social workers’ feelings, emotions and thoughts when they had to change or transform from a remedial approach to a developmental approach.
2.4.3 DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998:15) description is “the use of words to convey a mental image of an event, a piece of scenery, a scene, an experience, an emotion, or a sensation, the account related from the perspective of the person doing the depicting”. Mouton and Marais (1990:44) on the other hand are of the opinion that in descriptive studies it is important to collect accurate information or data on the domain phenomenon, which is under investigation.

De Vaus (2001:17-18) provides tools that can assist the researcher to narrow the focus of descriptive research. He suggests that it could be done by specifying the scope of what is to be described. The following guidelines can help narrow it down:

- What is the scope of the core concepts?
- What is the time frame for the description?
- What is the geographical location for the description?
- How general is the description to be?
- What aspect of the topic are you interested in?
- How abstract is your interest?
- What is the unit of analysis?

2.4.4 CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH

Contextual in simple terms means describing the form or nature of what exists. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:27) who state that contextual research “is concerned with identifying what exists in the social world and the way it manifests itself” support the above statement. One of the components of qualitative methods is their facility to describe, display phenomena as experienced by the study population in fine-tune detail, and in the study participants’ own terms. According to Bryman (2001:278) qualitative
researchers are keen to provide considerable descriptive detail because they put more emphasis on the importance of the contextual understanding of social behaviors, values or whatever must be understood in context. Mouton (1996:133) states that “in a contextual strategy, a phenomenon is studied because of its intrinsic and immediate contextual significance and involves far more than the physical environment”. In this research study, the researcher was expected to understand the social workers’ experiences with regard to the transformation of social welfare from remedial to a developmental approach in their work environment- the Department of Social Development, which is a government entity in Nelson Mandela Bay District.

2.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher will now focus on part two of this chapter, the research methodology. A brief discussion on this subject was presented in chapter one and the researcher will now expatiate on it and indicate how it was applied to this research study. A discussion on the following: population and sampling, data collection methods, methods of data analysis and methods of data verification, follows.

2.5.1 POPULATION

People, organizations, texts, settings, objects, events are some of the set categories that are commonly used as data sources in qualitative research. For the purpose of this research study people will be the researcher’s data source. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:98) refer to a population as “the entire set of objects or people which is the focus of the research study and about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics”. Seaberg (1988) in de Vos (2002:198) concurs with Bless et al. in the definition of a population as “the total set from which the
individuals or unit of study are chosen”. Oman et al. (2003:152) further state that the nature of the population points to the location where potential participants can be found. In this research study, the population was made up of registered social workers employed by the Department of Social Development in the Nelson Mandela Bay District. The social workers should have had the experience of implementing both remedial and developmental approaches, in order to qualify as participants for the study and they should have been with the Department of Social Development between the periods 1992 to 2002. Oman et al. (2003:175) are of the opinion that it is important that the researcher obtains approval to access participants from the appropriate authority. In this research study, the researcher wrote a letter to the district manager requesting permission which was granted to have access to intended participants. See attached letter of approval from the district manager as annexure B.

2.5.2 SAMPLING

It is impractical or even impossible to collect data from the whole population because of time, resources and financial constraints. It is more economical and efficient to gather data from a smaller subset called a sample (Oman et al., 2003:149). Arkava and Lane (1983) in de Vos (2002:199) define a sample as “a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested”. They further state that the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study are contained in a sample. Bless et al. (2006:99) hold that the main advantages of sampling are that, gathering data of a sample is less time consuming, less costly and it may be a practical way of collecting data when the population is extremely large or infinite. They further add that good sampling implies – a well-defined population, an adequately chosen sample and an estimate of how representative of the whole population the
sample is, that is how well in terms of probability the sample statistics conform to the unknown population parameters.

The researcher chose to use non-probability sampling method for selecting the sample. It is commonly used in qualitative research. (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:78) are of the opinion that in a non-probability sample, units are deliberately selected to reflect particular characteristics of individuals or groups within the sampled population. The sample was not intended to be statistically representative. Chances of selection for each element were unknown; the basis for selection was dependent on the characteristics of the population.

A purposive sampling criterion was used as the sample units were chosen because they had particular characteristics that enabled detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes that the researcher wished to study. Ritchie and Lewis further provided two principal aims of this method:

- "They ensured that all the key constituencies of relevance to the subject matter are covered;
- (2) They ensured that within each of the key criteria some diversity is included so that the impact of the characteristics concerned can be explored" (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:78).

To achieve this, the researcher chose social workers who had the opportunity of implementing both remedial and developmental approaches. They were in a better position to enable the researcher to understand all aspects of the research topic unlike choosing any registered social workers without looking at their experience.

The researcher used theoretical sampling when she noticed voids in the data whilst the refining of various categories was in progress. This process was only done with the aim of obtaining more information that would enlighten further. The aim was not to enlarge the original sample but to
refine ideas (de Vos, 2002:335). When there was a void in the data in this research study, the researcher went back to the participants to gather more information and she consulted documents like the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and other relevant literature.

In this research study, the researcher provided consent forms to social workers willing to participate in the research study. Selection of social workers was based on their personal knowledge or experience of the phenomenon of the research study.

2.5.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

According to Oman et al. (2003:171) “data collection is a step-by-step process of gathering information from a specified sample of subjects, about variables of interest in the research study”. The steps of the research process provided a clear guidance to what type of data needed to be collected. The researcher developed a research plan before data collection process began.

It was important to choose appropriate instruments or methods to collect data. According to Oman et al. (2003:181) in qualitative research interviews, participants observation, record or document review, focus groups, photography or combination of these approaches are commonly used to generate data. For the purpose of this research, the researcher used interviewing as the method of collecting or generating data specifically using semi-structured interviews. A tape recorder was used to enable the researcher to capture all the information used during data analysis. A brief explanation of the rationale for using semi-structured interviews was explained to the participants.
2.5.3.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

According to Bryman (2001:314) in a semi-structured interview, the researcher has a list of questions referred to as an interview guide or schedule. In this interview method, participants had a great deal of leeway in how to reply. The interviewer was able to ask questions not listed in the interview guide when she picked up things, needed clarity, or did not understand what the meaning of the participants’ responses were.

2.5.3.1.1 ADVANTAGES OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Advantages of semi-structured interviews as outlined by Adler and Clark (1999:267):
- It allows the interviewer to develop rapport with study participants.
- It has a good response rate.
- Questions are explained and modified for each participant.
- It is useful for discussing complex topics.
- It can be used for long interviews.
- It is useful when the topics to be discussed are known.

2.5.3.1.2 INTERVIEW GUIDE/ SCHEDULE

The interview guide or schedule is a questionnaire written to guide the interviewer. The researcher prepared questions beforehand, which addressed the issues in which the researcher was interested and were constructed in a logical sequence. (Greeff in de Vos 2002:302). The participants were asked the following predetermined open-ended questions:

- What were your experiences relating to the implementation of the traditional approach?
What were your thoughts and feelings when you were informed about the transformation of social welfare?

What were your experiences relating to the implementation of the developmental approach?

What are the biggest challenges faced by you and your colleagues in implementing this approach?

What changes do you believe will be brought about in the lives of your clientele by applying your approach?

What would you recommend or suggest in terms of future implementation of the developmental approach?

2.5.3.1.3 CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

As stated in chapter 1, the researcher made use of an independent interviewer for the purpose of this study.

The interviewer approached the interview with the mindset that she is trying to obtain the perspective of the participants. Kvale (1996) in Bryman (2001:318) present criteria of a successful interviewer:

- Knowledgeable - using pilot study can be helpful.
- Structuring – gives purpose for interview and allows participants to ask questions.
- Clear – ask simple, easy and short questions with less jargon.
- Gentle – the interviewer should give participants time to think, let them finish and she should tolerate pauses.
- Sensitive – the interviewer has to listen attentively to what is said and how it is said, she should be empathetic to the participants.
- Open – the interviewer should respond to what is important to the participants and be flexible.
- Steering – the interviewer should know what she wants to find out.
- Critical – the interviewer should be prepared to challenge what is said for example dealing with inconsistencies in participants replies.
• **Remembering** – the interviewer should be able to relate what is said to what has previously been said.

• **Interpreting** – the interviewer should clarify and extend meaning, paraphrase participants’ statement but without imposing her meaning and understanding on the participants.

• **Balancing** – the interviewer should not monopolize the interview or talk too little.

• **Ethically sensitive** - the interviewer should be sensitive to ethical dimensions of interviewing, ensuring that participants appreciate what the research is about, the research purpose and that their answers will be treated confidentially.

### 2.5.3.1.4 RECORDING THE INTERVIEW

A tape recorder was used to record all the interviews. The usage of a tape recorder was included in the consent form that the participants read and signed beforehand. All this was done to build trust of the participants in the researcher and the interviewer.

### 2.5.4 ROLE OF THE INTERVIEWER

It was important for the interviewer to be clear about her role and help the participants to understand what their roles are before beginning with questions. The interviewer had to manage the interview to ensure that the required subjects were covered without being bias. The interviewer was able to enable the participants to talk about their thoughts, feelings, views and experiences. It was the responsibility of the interviewer to help participants understand their role of giving complete answers, provide more depth, to reflect and to think, and to raise issues they see relevant but were not directly asked.
According to Wilson and Kniesi, (1979:101) communication is an “ongoing, dynamic and ever-changing series of events, each of which affects all the others. The essence of effective communication is responding with the meaning to the series”. The interviewer used the following communication skills to foster effective communication: responsive listening, reflecting, clarifying, probing and summarizing of the session. These skills are not separate and discrete entities, they overlap. For example, active listening, reflecting, and clarifying are interdependent as they are interpreting and diagnosing. These skills are briefly explained in the following paragraphs:

**Active listening**
According to Corey and Corey (1987:20) it is important to learn how to pay full attention to others as they communicate. The interviewer listened carefully to the participant by absorbing content, noted gestures and change in voice or expression and sensing underlying messages. In this way, the interviewer was able to ask follow-up questions and probe further. She knew when and how to respond and when to be silent.

• **Probing**
Ritchie and Lewis (2003:168) view probing as responsive questions to find out more about what has been raised. It is an open-ended attempt to obtain more clarity, detail, information or depth of understanding, for example, elicit description or an explanation of something. The researcher probed in a friendly, non-threatening and reassuring way. No value judgments were expressed.

• **Reflecting**
This skill has to do with expressing of a thought and related feelings. The researcher repeated the same statement as the participant and this gave the participant the opportunity to hear and think over what she has said.
The researcher used reflection feelings to verbalize what seems to be implied about feelings in the participant’s comments. Reflection communication is useful because it encourages the participants to make additional clarifying comments (Wilson, 1993:119).

- **Clarifying**
  It is a skill used to get clarity on unclear statements made by the participant. The interviewer focused on key underlying issues and sorted out confusing and conflicting feelings and statements. The interviewer followed up statements she did not understand after the participant had responded without interrupting her or him (de Vos, 2002:295).

- **Summarizing**
  It is a way of highlighting the main ideas that have been discussed and reviewing what the main themes of the conversation were. It is useful in focusing and aiding conscious learning. It gave the interviewer and the participant an opportunity to conclude the interview formally (Wilson, 1993:120).

### 2.5.5 PILOT STUDY

Piloting is a critical part of the research study. It helps the researcher determine whether, or not, the research instrument is generating clarity, scope or depth of data needed, if not then the instrument needs to be revised. Bless et al. (2006:60) state that pilot study involves testing of the actual study on a small sample from the population. For the purpose of this research study, the researcher piloted with the first participant. As recommended by Ritchie and Lewis (2003:135) data from the pilot study was included in the research study’s findings.
2.5.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a process of sifting, labeling and ordering qualitative data that has been collected. Kvale (1996) in Ritchie and Lewis (2003:201) identifies the following three different contexts of interpretation in qualitative analysis:

- “Self-understanding where the researcher attempts to formulate in condensed form what the participants themselves mean and understand;
- Critical common sense understanding where the researcher uses general knowledge about context of statements to place them in a wider arena, and
- Theoretical understanding where the interpretation is placed in a broader theoretical perspective” (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:201).

According to Bless et al. (2006) the process of data analysis itself “takes many different forms depending upon the nature of the research question and design, and the nature of the data itself”. The researcher did not listen to the tapes, she got the transcribed material from the transcriber and sorted it. Once the data was sorted and ordered, the researcher was able to make some interpretative sense of them and to build their explanation and arguments (Mason 2002:148).

Data analysis methods that the researcher used in this research study are Tesch’s (1980) proposed eight steps found in (Creswell 1994: 154-155):

- To get a sense of whole data was transcribed by an independent transcriber after each interview. She handed over the transcripts to the researcher for analysis.
- The researcher selected scripts randomly to get the underlying meaning and thoughts were written on the margin.
• After step 2 was completed, the researcher made a list of topics and labeled them into major topics, unique topics and leftovers, and then they were arranged in themes.
• The researcher made a list of topics linked to the data. This is done to see if new categories and codes can emerge.
• Related topics were grouped together then categorized.
• The researcher then made a final decision on the abbreviation code for each category and put it in alphabetical order.
• Data material belonging to each category was assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis was done.
• The existing data was recoded when it was necessary.

Copies of the transcripts were given to an independent coder to assist the researcher with theme categorizing. On completion of independent analysis, the independent coder and the researcher met to discuss and compare themes and categories. Where there were differences, a consensus was reached. Findings from this data analysis will be outlined in chapter 4.

2.6 DATA VERIFICATION

Marshall and Rossman (1995) in de Vos (2002:351) maintain that all research studies must respond to principles that stand as criteria against which its trustworthiness can be evaluated. Social science research must also respond to the following questions:
• “How credible are the particular findings of the study? What criteria can be used to judge them?
• How transferable and applicable are these findings to another setting or group of people?
How can we be reasonably sure that the findings would be replicated if the study were to be conducted with the same participants in the same context?

How can we be sure that the findings are reflective of the participants and the inquiry itself, and not of the researcher’s biases and prejudices?” (de Vos, 2002:351)

They mention that these questions establish the truth-value of the study that is, its applicability, consistency and neutrality. All systematic inquiry into human condition is expected to address these issues. These terms were matched to validity and reliability constructs that are appropriate in quantitative research. Based on this information Lincoln and Guba proposed four alternative constructs that can be used to evaluate trustworthiness of qualitative research.

Truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality are criteria that were used by the researcher to evaluate the research study’s trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) in (Krefting 1991:215). This process determines how confident the researcher is with the truth of the findings based on the research design, participants and the context in which the study is conducted. These terms are discussed in detail in 1.6 of chapter 1.

2.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the research results to be acceptable, the researcher followed ethical guidelines. De Vos (2002:63) defines ethics as “a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted, and offer rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and participants, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students”. Informed consent, avoiding deception of participants and confidentiality are some of the principles that the researcher maintained to comply with the professional ethics.
• **Informed consent**

According to Tutty et al. (1996:40) informed consent means that each person fully understands what is going to happen, why it is going to happen and what its effect will be on him or her”. To satisfy the ethical principle the researcher provided all participants with written consent forms which clearly stipulated the purpose of the research study, the research methodology and their rights as participants. They were asked to sign them as proof that they were not coerced but participated of their free will. The researcher made the participants aware that she will be using a tape recorder to gather information.

• **Avoiding Deception of subjects**

Lowenberg and Dolgoff (1988) in de Vos (2002:66) describe “the deception of subjects as deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, violating the respect to which every person is entitled”. The researcher was honest with the participants and told them the truth about the study.

• **Confidentiality**

Participants expected the researcher to treat the information they share with her about their work experiences in a confidential manner. The researcher kept the identity of participants’ secret. The tape-recorded information was kept in a private place and will be destroyed once the results are accepted.
2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the research designs and methodology that were employed in this research study. The researcher described qualitative approach, descriptive, exploratory and contextual designs. Semi-structured interviews and tape records were instruments used to collect data from the participants. Data was analyzed using the proposed eight steps by Tesch (1980) in (Creswell 1994:155) and data verification was done by applying the proposed four alternative constructs by Lincoln and Guba (1985) in (Krefting 1991:215).
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two, a full description of the research design and methodology to be utilized in the research study was provided. In this chapter, a discussion on the results emanating from the interviews with the participants will be presented.

Based on the recommendations from Mahomed’s research study that had the same goals but conducted with non-governmental social workers, the researcher undertook a qualitative research with the aim of exploring and describing the social workers’ experiences of the transformation of the social welfare system from the traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach. Explorative, descriptive and contextual research designs were used in the research study. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews. The sample was drawn from the population of social workers in the department of social development in the Nelson Mandela Bay District. A letter requesting permission to conduct research in the district was written to the district coordinator, who served as the gatekeeper. Follow-ups were made through personal and telephone enquiries. Permission was granted with no conditions attached. Intended participants were given consent forms to read and give consent to participate in the research study. As an employee of the department of social development, to avoid researcher’s bias, the researcher sought the services of an independent interviewer and transcriber.
The purpose of the study was to answer the grand tour question, which is:

**What are the experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation from the traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach?**

Preliminary questions that were asked participants to assist the researcher in data gathering were the following:

- What were your experiences relating to implementation of the traditional approach?
- What were your thoughts and feelings when you were informed about the transformation in the social welfare?
- What were your experiences relating to implementation of the developmental approach?
- What are the biggest challenges faced by you and your colleagues in implementing this approach?
- What changes do you believe will be brought about in the lives of your clientele by applying your approach?
- What would you recommend or suggest in terms of future implementation of the developmental approach?

Data was analyzed using the eight steps proposed by Tesch (1990:142-145) as discussed in the previous chapters. The data was reduced to themes, sub-themes and categories.

Included in this chapter is the demographic profile of the participants.

### 3.2 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The following demographic profile of the participants is provided to help the reader have an understanding of who the participants were:

- All participants were female social workers employed by the
department of social development,

- Work experience of participants ranged from 15 to 26 years and this was the main criteria for inclusion in the research study,
- Two of the participants were Africans and the other two Coloured, and
- Two of the participants are in managerial positions and the other two are doing operational work

3.3 DISCUSSION ON THEMES, SUB-THEMES AND CATEGORIES

According to Creswell (2003:190-195) “The process of data analysis involves making sense out of the transcripts data. It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data”. It assists in understanding and interpreting the meaning of data, supporting it with relevant sources of information.

Four major themes were identified together with sub-themes and categories. They are presented as follows:

**Theme 1: Experiences of social workers on the remedial approach**

Sub-theme: Nature of work

**Theme 2: Social workers’ experiences of the implementation of the developmental approach**

Sub-themes: The emotions and attitude experienced by social workers when the developmental approach was introduced,

Social workers’ positive experiences of implementing the developmental approach.

Categories: Focus of developmental approach is on empowerment and not dependency,
Developmental approach is about teamwork, involvement of stakeholders

Sub-theme: Social workers’ coping mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of the developmental approach

Sub-theme: Challenges facing the clients

Category: Clients still expecting material assistance

Theme 3: The challenges blocking the implementation of the developmental approach

Sub-theme: Lack of training when the developmental approach was introduced,
Lack of communication or feedback from the provincial office,
Lack of resources
Categories: Lack of financial resources,
Shortage of social workers,
Inappropriate office accommodation,
Frustration brought by shortage of transport.

Sub-theme: Lack of leadership, guidance and support
Social workers still doing casework
Categories: Statutory services,
High caseload

Theme 4: Suggestions for future implementation of the developmental approach

Sub-theme: Training of social workers on the developmental Approach,
Appointment of social workers
Adequate monitoring and evaluation of progress
Reduction of caseload
Education of the public about the developmental approach

3.3.1 Experiences of social workers on the remedial approach

Before 1994, the South African social welfare system was shaped by its unique historical and socio-political circumstances (Patel, 2003:1). It was remedial in nature. It was characterized by the residual and the institutional model. The former holds the view that social welfare services are provided only when an individual’s needs are not properly met be it by societal institutions including the family and the market economy. It is also termed a gap-filling model or first aid, on the other hand is the institutional model. It holds that individuals are entitled to get help until they achieve self-fulfillment, because their problems or difficulties are due to causes beyond their control. In that way focus is on improving the social institutions within which the individual functions. Social workers got used to providing temporary solutions to clients and created dependency along the way; services were rendered to children and families.

The following responses support the above statement:

“Remedial, we concentrated mainly on what we call casework; it was on an individual basis”;

“The remedial approach was merely that the state was always on guard to assist communities across the spectrum, with all kinds of problems that were coming up that were socially related starting with the families, children and the community at large.”

The political situation of that time perpetuated poverty on black people. They were provided with inferior education and housing, low paying jobs and separate development of different races was enforced. According to van Eeden, Ryke and de Necker (2000:9) government provided welfare services with the intension of helping individuals to help themselves. Its
schemes and services rendered to diverse population groups followed almost the same pattern and they were more of remediation and prevention than of upliftment. The approach was residual as indicated above government expected an individual to uplift himself or herself and will only take remedial action when the individual fails.

3.3.1.1 Nature of work

According to Skidmore, Thackeray and Farley (1991:8) social work may be defined “as an art, a science, a profession that helps people to solve personal, group, and community problems and to attain satisfying personal, group and community relationships through social work practice, including casework, group work community organizations, administration and research”. The main focus of the social worker is to help people to improve their social functioning and interrelationships. In early social work, the approach preferred was casework and it was practiced in both primary and secondary settings.

This view is supported by the following responses:

“Casework which happened to be predominantly the area which we all focused on and as such we sort of along the way missed out on grappling with the facts that affect the other areas in terms of the group intervention, and the community intervention”.

Social workers do know that they have to practice all methods in order to help people to improve their social functioning. Because of the approach implemented at the time, which was remedial in nature they ended up focusing more on one method, which is casework.
3.3.2 Social workers’ experiences of the implementation of the developmental approach

Post 1994 the then Department of Social Welfare started dismantling the social welfare system after realizing a need to transform it in order to redress past imbalances. Consultations were held with various stakeholders and the department ended up with the White Paper on Social Welfare in 1997. Social Welfare services were expected to be rendered in a developmental way. Social workers were expected to make a shift from a welfarist to a social development perspective that employs the developmental approach to ensure that all people have adequate economic and social protection and people have access to welfare programmes that will promote development and enhance social functioning. Focus should be on people being empowered and made self-reliant, (White Paper on Social Welfare, 1997:38). The developmental approach started to be the ‘buzz’ word at the time. It is the approach based on the strengths of the individual, groups or community and it promotes their capacity for growth and development.

South Africa had to change its welfare policies to include part of its population living in poverty under conditions of distorted development. This is done with the aim of raising the standard of living of the majority to be on par, to be balanced and equal to that of the minority (Rankin, 1997:186). Mabey and Mayon-White (1993:85) are of the opinion that it is a difficult task in practice to bring major changes in a large and complex organization. Policies, procedures and structures need to be altered. People are expected to continue to perform in major turbulence, in this regard social workers. The change in approach has affected their intervention strategies.
Participants were asked to tell the interviewer about their experiences of the new approach. The researcher needed to know how they felt about it, whether they were prepared for the change, any positive and negative experiences that go along with the implementation of the approach, challenges they met as implementers and perceptions of the new approach by their clients.

3.3. 2.1 The emotions and attitude experienced by social workers when the developmental approach was introduced

Emotion is defined as a strong mental or instinctive feeling such as love or fear. Change brings about different kinds of emotions, so were those of the participants. They felt they were not prepared enough to have an easy adjustment to the shift.

The following quotes support this statement:

“It always gives that uncertainty within the individual. And sometimes you tend to be suspicious of why is it that the department wants us to embark on a programme that has not been properly introduced”,

“For me personally it’s about insecurity, changes that were brought, we were not prepared for them”.

According to Mabey and Mayon-White (1993:93), it is important to firstly develop and communicate a clear image of the future with the staff. Resistance and confusion usually develop during an organizational change, as people would be unclear about the plans. The participants’ responses indicate that the Department of Social Development, under whose auspices social workers are, did little to communicate clearly their plans, as such social workers developed different attitudes toward the introduction of the new approach.

The following statements by participants support this view:

“Very frustrated, very frustrated”,

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“You were first skeptical to change”,

“Mhmm I was very unsure”.

Uncertainties about the way the introduction of the approach was done evoked different emotions in the social workers. They felt frustrated, confused, insecure, suspicious, uncertain, unsure, anxious, and skeptical about the shift. It is normal to experience the above stated emotions if there was no clear communication between the Department of Social Development that introduced the approach and the practicing social workers.

3.3.2.2 Social workers positive experience of implementing the developmental approach

According to the Integrated Service Delivery Model, (2004:05) developmental approach is based on the strengths of the individual, group or community. It recognizes their capacity to grow develop and be self-reliant. Taylor (2004:9) states that “developmental social welfare makes a shift from a residual conception of welfare to one that locates local welfare within the social development paradigm”.

Midgley (1995:25) defines social development as “a process of planned social change designed to promote people’s welfare in conjunction with a comprehensive process of economic development.” Based on the above definition the good or positive aspect about the developmental approach is the ability to recognize people’s potential, participating activity in their own growth and development unlike the remedial approach which does not take into cognizance peoples’ abilities; instead created dependency and it had no link to economic development. The White Paper for social welfare (1997) calls for an interventional response from the government and civil society to address welfare needs adequately. Participants pointed to the
following as positive aspects of implementing the developmental approach:

3.3.2.2.1: Focus on developmental approach is on empowerment and not dependency

Empowerment is a key word in the developmental approach in that it calls for people’s participation in their own growth and development. It is the responsibility of social workers to empower their clients with skills that will enhance their social functioning. Empowerment is defined by Zastrow (2004:59) as “the process of helping individuals, families, group and communities to increase their personal, interpersonal, socio-economic, political strength and to develop influence toward improving their circumstances.” It is imperative that for the developmental approach to yield positive outcomes, the community must be involved and participate actively in their own development.

Zastrow (2004:59) relates empowerment to Strength Perspective. He maintained that social workers include clients’ strengths in the assessment process. The focus is on strengths and resources of clients to help them resolve their own problems. In addition Gray and van Rooyen (2002:194) have the same opinion as Zastrow that strengths perspective view clients as active participants in all the levels of the helping process. It recognizes the clients’ abilities, strengths, skills, assets, resilience and resources. The social worker has to be conscious of the fact that is just there as a catalyst for change, he or she believes that the client has the potential to improve his or her circumstances. Strengths Perspective uses developmental terms that are empowering. Clients are seen as survivors not victims, and as participants in facilitating the helping process, and problems are seen as challenges.

The following quotes by participants support the above statement:
“It is the model that we are striving towards to be developmental, for the community to developed to such an extent that they can be self-reliant and let them function independently”,

“If you say we are talking about a child, you will make sure that you educate the child about life skills career guidance, HIV and Aids so many things”.

In Taylor’s Survey (2004:16), it is indicated that developmental social welfare put emphasis on processes that work to improve and empower the lives of people. It encompasses developing the capacity of both individuals and the community to establish their own needs, to identify their strengths and resources and to perform plans in collaboration with others to address their needs.

### 3.3.2.2 Developmental approach is all about teamwork, involvement of all role-players

Working with other disciplines is nothing new to social workers. According to Skidmore et al. (1991:12), “Social work is particularly effective in developing and using the team approach and in bringing about coordination of services and activities.” A social worker is regarded as a catalyst that has the ability to help the teamwork collectively. Stark (1996:26) is of the opinion that social workers have a pivotal and central role to play in the teams which are fundamental to the successful transformation of developmental social welfare. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:5) put emphasis on the promotion and strengthening of partnership between government, the community, civil society and private sector.

Participants responded as follow to support teamwork.

“Its linking with stakeholders, which is one of the areas that is mostly, you know, is important to service delivery”,

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“That we work with our stakeholders, we need to know how our community is composed, how they look like”,

“We link up with the schools, we work well together we involve education, we involve health, we work with agriculture for sustainable development”.

There is a shared view that service is rendered more effectively if all stakeholders do their bit and are in the team. Sometimes resources are wasted because stakeholders do not coordinate their services. To avoid that, stakeholders need to communicate with each other on a regular basis. The developmental approach encourages dialogue between role players (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:5).

3.3.2.3 Social workers coping strategies to facilitate the implementation of the developmental approach

In the mist of all challenges and constrains that participants have pointed out, they have developed coping strategies that enable them to make sense of all that is happening around them and continue working and render service as expected of them. Participants indicated the following to show their commitment:

“Actually but one thing I know I am happy with what I am doing. I look at my personality actually it developed me personally in another way but that I enjoy”,

“There is a mile stone that we are proud of”,

“But I’ve told myself agh get into the tune of accepting this status quo change where you can make a difference where you can, if you can’t then you can’t”,

“Because if… when…when…we talk developmental approach to people like when we sit in our meetings. I will say to them guys you are doing a splendid job, because for the mere fact that you are still here it means you have passion”,

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“Through the support of our supervisor and colleagues, we managed”,

“It takes team work”.

Murphy (1997) as quoted in Aldwin (1994:96-97) defines coping as “efforts to deal with environmental pressures that could not be handled by reflexes or organized skills involving struggles, persistent focus energy directed toward a goal.” Coping is said to have two components which are active efforts directed toward the environment and defense mechanism. Everyone develop certain management skills to help him or her deal with life. Aldwin (1994:104) informs us that individuals are flexible in their choice of coping strategies and modify them according to the demands of the particular problem. Participants seem to have chosen positive coping strategies that enable them to perform their tasks regardless of the challenges facing them. According to O’Connell and O’Connell (1992:293) the best to bring out the best in the working area is to lavish workers or colleagues with praise when they do something right. On the other hand, O’Connell and O’Connell (1992:399) mention that people can at least change their understanding of events they cannot change, and make of them opportunities for further growth. This will encourage progress and commitment of social workers.

3.3 2.4 Challenges facing the clients

All the changes in the social welfare programmes are aimed at better rendering of services to the clients. Without clients, there would not be social welfare programmes. The preamble of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) mentions that all South Africans are afforded the opportunity to play an active role in promoting their own well being and contributing to the growth and development of the nation. This is contrary to the circumstances prior 1994 where clients were passive recipients, as such, they got used to being dependant on professionals and other
development workers to do things for them and spoon-feed them. There was a need to inform and educate clients about the transformation and how it will benefit them. From the social workers point of view, clients were left behind as such they were still expecting the same programmes they are used to. They find it frustrating because they wanted to implement the new approach but they are still stuck with casework

3.3.2.4.1 Clients still expecting material assistance

Poverty is regarded as the single greatest burden of South Africa’s people. O’Brien and Mazibuko (1998:140) in (Gray:1998) are of the opinion that previously social workers established a reputation of specialized and centralized therapeutic services with no significant and visible contribution to long-term strategies and programme to alleviate poverty. Presently the government has introduced integrated social development strategies aimed at eradicating poverty and addressing the imbalances of the past. It is clear that clients or the community were not informed of the shift of the social welfare programmes. Excerpts from participants support the above statement.

“Is the developmental approach now synonymous with state grant”? The participants responded as stated in the following quote: “You can say that …that is the perception, that’s their perception”,

“You won’t believe how many people are coming asking for a food parcels, and as long as you can help them they are satisfied”,

“These people just want foster care certified when you call them in or you talk to them in any other direction they are not interested”,

“Is money too that they actually come for”,

“They want to eat”.

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Participants recognize the difficulties associated with giving hands outs. The needs addressed by welfare require strategies that reach beyond conventional welfare approaches and fall squarely in the realm of development. The White Paper for Social Welfare provides those strategies, but as long as social workers as implementers and change agents do not have an understanding of what is expected, they cannot facilitate the change process with their clients. If the climate or the environment is not conducive for change, clients will never know of the long-term strategies to fight poverty.

3.3.3 The challenges blocking the implementation of the developmental approach

Change is never easy; moving into the unknown brings about different emotions as indicated above. It is also expected that the unknown can be accompanied by successes and challenges. In this research study challenges that participants raised are ‘man-made’ like lack of training and proper communication rather than the approach itself.

3.3.3.1 Lack of proper training when the developmental approach was introduced

People react differently to change depending on their own circumstances and understanding of the process. All the participants agreed that the department failed in giving proper training to them on the new approach. The following responses support this statement:

“Beside the fact that our department merely came to introduce this in a form of a workshop”,

“I can really say I am not resistant to the approach as such but I am resistant to the department that’s not training”,

63
“Just a person that comes and inform you that this is the way it’s going to go, that’s not training as such”,

“We did not have the necessary training “.

Gray (1998:110) is of the opinion that people are a key to a planned process of change aimed at improving internal relationship, building moral, resolving conflict and responding to environmental need; people’s attitude, perceptions, behavior and expectation must be taken into consideration.

At all times staff, development is central to the implementation of the change, and it should include both the theoretical knowledge and competency-based skill training. Lewis, Lewis, Packard and Souffléé (2001:130) cite that human service workers require ongoing training to meet the changing needs of the community and clients.

From the participants responses it can be deduced that there was lack of consultation from the management side and training was not. Social workers were not content with the half-baked introduction of the developmental approach. The way it was introduced is not satisfactory, social workers attribute and perceptions were not considered, as follow-ups were not done. One is uncertain whether they are on or off track.

The responses from the participant confirmed the above:

“We are fumbling along the way”.

“We don’t get proper guidance”,

It is not only the departmental social workers who felt that the department failed in training them on the developmental approach. In a research, study conducted by Mahomed (2005:87) with social workers from the non-governmental organizations in Port Elizabeth the same feeling of lack of training by the department on the new approach was highlighted. Findings in Taylor’s survey conducted in 1997 and 2003 show that the developmental approach calls for trained development workers, but there
is a lack of specific resources for the re-orientation of existing social workers. (Taylor, 2004:37). It is very difficult for social workers to implement an approach in which they were not properly trained and it has a negative impact on clients, as they will not receive efficient service. Patel (2003b:231) found out that there was no comprehensive legislation to guide the implementation of the developmental approach. Mahomed (2005:62) also points to the fact that lack of practical guidelines hampers the implementation of the developmental approach.

One can also say that the training for social workers provided by the departments of social work in various institutions of higher education pre-1994 did not equip student social workers to respond appropriately to the most important social development needs in South African communities (White Paper 1997:19). There is a great need to re-orientate and retrain social workers on the social development perspective that make use of the developmental approach to address the needs of the people. There would not have been drastic changes or an overhaul of the whole system and social workers would not have experienced many problems with the transformation of social welfare if training was in line with the new national direction. It is however comforting to know that institutions of higher education have taken the challenge of preparing student social workers to practice generalist work within a developmental paradigm (Lombard 1999:99).

3.3.3.2: Lack of communication and feedback from provincial management

Communication is a two way process used to convey message from the sender to the receiver. Communication is important in that it lets people have information, make enquiries, ask for clarity and verification. Mabey and Mayon-White (1993:93) affirm that “it is important to communicate
information to those involved in the change, including what the future state will be like, how the transition will come about, why the change is being implemented, and how individuals will be affected by the change.”

Participants mentioned that they were not happy with the way the introduction of the new approach was communicated to them. A person came from the provincial office to tell them about the approach. To them it was not enough for a person to just come for one or two days to workshop them. They also felt that the provincial office failed to come back to for feedback of how the implementation was going whether or not they are coping and to check if there were any problems or challenges with the implementation. They were left to work it out themselves. Social workers had different understanding and interpretation of the approach that led to a lack of uniformity that confused both social workers and clients.

The following responses support the above statement:

“It never was followed up. We never really got any support”,

“We are still struggling whilst I have my own understanding of approach, somebody else has another understanding”,

“We used to hear it from the media”,

“You have to learn and grow on your own”,

“You heard about it no training was there but people were talking about it already”,

“No training at first, we got training later on- almost two years later”.

Because of lack of communication or feedback on the part of the provincial office, social workers put blame entirely on it. If only the provincial office had gone back for monitoring, and getting feedback they would have explained to the social workers that it was not only their province that was experiencing challenges with the implementation of the approach. Patel (2003b:219) wrote a paper “with a view of providing
preliminary review of the transformation of social welfare and the lessons learnt. The paper also stressed the importance of strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanism and research.”

Patel found out that:

- There are few research studies done to monitor and evaluate the transformation of social welfare to development;
- There is lack of data from national and provincial offices to accurately assess the progress made with policy implementation, which hindered the assessment of the impact of social policy.

Non-governmental organizations social workers who participated in the research study conducted by Mahomed (2005:94) uttered the following words that support what their counterparts in the department also stated:

“There has been no feedback from them, no direction or guidance, specifically to our organization. We have never have contact with the department with regard to the developmental approach”,

“We need the commitment from the department, we need to feel and enjoy their support since we are complementing their services”.

It is clear that where transformation is taking place, first priority should be given to proper and clear communication to enable implementation of the change, with fewer hiccups.

3.3.3.3: Lack of Resources

Provision and management of resources is crucial in any organization. According to Lewis et al. (2003:30) for the organization to be effective they must allocate resources and respond to expectations based on clear and comprehensive goal that are responding to the realities of the community. Certain basic infrastructure and equipment is crucial for social workers to
enable them to function effectively and because they are legally bound to render service in a particular manner. Participants raised serious concerns about lack of resources, mainly human and financial resources, transport and infrastructure with particular reference to office accommodation.

“The huge problem was lack of resources in the first place”.

“They do not bring resources for us; they want us to work developmentally”.

It is evident that for effective implementation resources should be provided. The resources are categorized as follows: lack of financial resources, shortage of social workers, inappropriate office accommodation, and frustrations brought by shortage of transport as presented below:

3.3.3.3.1 Lack of financial resources

This issue was raised as one of the challenges faced by social workers as it affects service delivery. Participants highlighted that lack of funding for programmes is a challenge and has a negative impact on service delivery. If there is no funding programmes will not be implemented. The following responses from participants support the above statement:

“We plan things we, write proposals for funding, still we don’t get any money”,

“There are no funds available and that’s another thing that put us off”,

“Give us those funds”.

Statements made by social workers give the impression that they are willing to work but it is management that creates blockages due to unavailability of funds.
According to Patel (2003b:229) provinces agreed to use 80% of the budget on social security and 20%, to welfare services. Some provinces are having an increase in social security services and it forces them to use the 90:10 or even 95:5. The 20% has to be shared between the administration, salaries and programmes. Sometimes one wonders if this 20% is enough it is just not being managed properly because in recent years treasury indicated that the department has been under spending. The national treasury has reported that the department of social development has used money for social security policy decisions as such there was pressure on the welfare budget as a whole and it also impacted negatively on the funding for social welfare services. She further warns that without financial resources the government will not be able to meet the legislation requirements.

3.3.3.3.2 Shortage of social workers

Social workers are one of the many role players of the developmental approach. In fact, they are the major role players if one has to put it in order of importance. They are multi-skilled, in that they become directly involved with clients and at the same time become indirectly involved by training paraprofessionals, community development and volunteers.

The major concern is the shortage of social workers. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:19) reveals that research done shows that there is a serious shortage of human resource capacity in the welfare field to address the social development needs of the country. It further states that “the number of social workers per capita is not high enough and the ratio of social workers to the population ranges among the provinces from 1:089 to 1:20 402.” Eastern Cape is among the four under-resourced provinces. This is in contrast to the department’s norm. In the Integrated
Social delivery Model (2005:38) it is proposed that: Gauteng (Urban) 1:5000, in combined 1:4500 Urban/ Rural (Kwazulu-Natal and Western Cape and in other provinces including the Eastern Cape, 1:3000. Something must be done to alleviate the problem. Overworked social workers will end-up being stressed and feeling burnt out.

The following verbatim quotations highlight the plight of social workers. All participants complained about shortage of social workers and when reading between the lines, social workers are prepared to work through but they can do with more social workers to ease the burden.

“Posts are to be filled according to the organogram. Give us those posts, give us our man power”,

“We can be one of the brilliant offices and provinces, provided our provincial offices give us our manpower”.

3.3.3.3 Inappropriate office accommodation

The issue of inappropriate offices was highlighted. In 2003 the provincial office came with a pilot project tried at Ibhayi service office. The office is an open-plan, whereby social workers do not have individual offices, but rather share the workstation; each is allocated working space, drawers/cabinets to put belongings, files and other documents, a computer, and a telephone. There is no privacy, basically whatever you do or say is seen and heard by others. There are cubicles where social workers interview their clients. The cubicles are prefabricated. The dividing halls do not reach the roof. This means that when one social worker is conducting an interview in cubicle1, the people in cubicle 2 can hear what they are saying and vice versa.

The following comments support the statement made with regard to the open-plan office:
“This office is the worst thing that could happen; I do not know where they got the idea from, to have an office like this for social workers”,

“Because we are fighting it in every staff meeting we are fighting about this office and we just do not know. The cubicles you can go inside, you sit with a client here, the client is talking a much interesting story next door, she’s not even listening to you because she is listening to the next door one and they all know each other, the community is not that big.”

This issue of the open plan office that is not conducive to work in was also raised in the research study conducted in the same department and district by Soji (2005:53). It was indicated that the participants highlighted their dissatisfaction about the open-plan office, where social workers shared office space. The participants indicated that the office was inconvenient; it lacked privacy and compromises their ethical responsibility of confidentiality. It leads to stress and tension.

The Integrated Delivery Model (2005:35) maintains that social workers are governed by a legislated code of conduct that covers all professional practice and includes the maintenance of confidentiality. If the code of conduct is contravened it can result in disciplinary measures being instituted against the social worker. Zastrow (2004:108) is of the opinion that the principle of confidentiality is important because clients share their secrets and personal problems with social workers, because they trust that they won’t share the information with other people. It is difficult for social workers because they may be sued for breach of confidentiality ‘rule’ even if it was not them. The client will not know that the client in the other cubicle is the one responsible for divulging her story. This office accommodation arrangement might cause problems for social workers if management does not listen to their concerns. It looks like the pilot project was not a success as this arrangement is not accepted and is highlighted as a challenge in two different studies, which are this study and Soji’s (2005:53). It would be in the best interests of social workers and clients not to replicate the open plan office.
3.3.3.4 Frustration brought by shortage of transport

Participants indicated that they are frustrated by the shortage of transport in the district, be it pool cars or subsidized vehicles. Not having transport to do home visits or run programme leads to delay in rendering effective and efficient service. Social workers are not able to respond promptly to reported cases, service delivery is being compromised. The department might face litigation for not meeting legislation and constitutional requirements (Patel, 2003b:229). Transport is one of the infrastructural requirements stated in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005:35) because it enables social workers to function effectively.

The participants stated the following to concur with the above statement:

“We are supposed to have certain incentives like having vehicles for social workers in the section which means people are still under the impression if at all ooh! I have a crisis the ‘makhulu’ is almost dying here, can you send a social worker immediately we can’t”,

“Oh no there is still one car for ten social workers that is it, you must wait till the car is back”.

It seems management has done little to alleviate this problem of transport. Soji (2005:52) also raised this challenge in her research study. Participants expressed frustration they were experiencing when they had to do home visits. The shortage of cars made it impossible for them to deliver services promptly and professionally.

3.3.3.4.4 Lack of leadership and guidance

Participants raised a serious concern of lack of stability due to constant change in leadership. Most people who are acting in senior positions include the area manager of the Nelson Mandela district. It is frustrating to employees having to go through leadership style change that each
manager applies. Employees turn to be despondent because of lack of guidance.

The following responses from participants confirm this:

“We do not have a manager who managing this District right. The manager who is presently here has been borrowed”,

“I do not know after how many years it’s close to five or six years that we are without a manager”,

“There is swap and change of management on a regular basis, we will just get somebody in and the person will just touch a piece of paper, that person is gone and there is a new person coming in”,

“There is no stability”,

“People are acting in positions and that is frustrating for us”.

Lewis et al. (2001:170) indicate that leadership is a process of influencing human behavior in order to achieve specific goals. It is the responsibility of the leader to know why employees are in a particular way and need to know how to influence them to act in the desired way. The manager as a leader in the district has the responsibility to take decisions; delegate work, monitor people, and lead in a way that will make it possible for the organization to achieve its goal. A leader is the force that holds and aligns everything together to enable the organization to work as an integrated system. When the leader is not around work should continue as if she or he is around. With the change of management Nelson Mandela district is unable to function in a proper way because each leader comes with her or his own leadership style, and it is frustrating for social workers to keep on changing and learning every time there is a new leader and this creates instability.
3.3.3.5 Social workers still doing more of casework

Zastrow (2004:50) defines casework as a method “aimed at helping individuals on a one to one basis to resolve personal and social problems, casework may be geared to helping clients adjust to their environment or to changing certain social and economic pressures that are adversely affecting them.” Casework encompasses a variety of activities like foster care placement, adoption, offering protective services to children and families, probation services, medical social work. Casework has been the main method applied during the pre-1994 system of governance with little emphasis on group work and community work. This led to casework being criticized for not involving other related interventions (McKendrick, 2001:106). The state has been concentrating on providing material assistance to those who are in need and creating dependency rather than empowering people to care and solve their own problems. Services were rendered differently across the races. Whites got first class service, coloureds and Indians were in the middle whereas black African received an inferior service. Although they were in the majority they could not have access to most services rendered. The new government inherited the imbalanced, discriminatory and unjust welfare system. The White Paper on Social Welfare was passed in 1997 and the developmental approach was introduced to promote social development. The new government introduced a developmental approach that was in favour of community development linked to economic development rather than casework. Casework was not totally done away with because there is still statutory work that needs to be performed and individuals still need counseling. Casework has to be developmental in nature through empowerment of individuals. It is unfortunate that because of economic pressures caused by poverty, people continue applying for state grants and turn them into an income for the household. As indicated social workers are faced with a situation, whereby they are in and out of court placing children in foster
care and rendering probation services. Casework is increasing instead of decreasing. There is no time for anything else as they are inundated with clients looking for material assistance. The sad part is that the developmental approach is not implemented as desired by government. Social workers are willing to try it but the high caseload is in the way. Participants voiced the following to support the above assertions:

“They didn’t say anything about caseloads, the cases that we had then, there was nothing that was done like adding more social workers so that this can be driven”,

“That’s why we only focus on casework which is not developmental approach. Due to high case load we are stuck in the office”.

The researcher is of the opinion that this continuation with casework was brought about by lack of proper preparation for the developmental approach. The issue of lessening casework was not addressed; more social workers were not employed to deal with the increasing demand for social services.

3.3.3.3.6.1 Statutory Services

Statutory services are those services enabled by the law, for example foster placement, adoption, probation and residential care. Most of the clients of the department are children. The following statement from the participants supports this point:

“We were strictly confined to statutory services, we worked with the court. We conducted investigation of all types of children”,

*The best interest of the child is what we are emphasizing*.

The Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005:19) states that at the level of statutory intervention an individual is already involved in the court system. He /she is no longer able to function well in the community and the state
has to intervene to support and strengthen the individual involved, she/he may have to be removed from normal place like home to alternative care. In the case of a child, it can be foster placement or residential facility.

When social workers reach this level it means preventative and any intervention (non-statutory) services have failed. In the case of foster placement financial circumstances in the family will determined whether the family would take care of the child with or without requesting state financial assistance.

3.3.3.5.2 High caseload

Participants raised complaints about high caseload. To support the above statement participants uttered the following statements:

“We have social workers who are supposed to have a certain norm when it comes to how many cases we must work with. This is unrealistic for someone to sit with 220 files”,

“The case load for instance is still high as it was”.

It is clear that social workers are overloaded with cases as such they are unable to apply the developmental approach. According to the norm in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005:39) the ratio is 1 social worker: 60 cases. In Nelson Mandela District, the caseload is higher than the norm.

In Soji’s study (2005:41) participants also raised this issue of high caseload as a concern. They indicated that the high caseload results in social workers not completing their entire workloads. The source of high caseload is statutory work; social workers are stuck with casework because of the influx of the clients who are applying for the foster care placements. As participants in this research study and in others have
indicated, the developmental approach was not properly introduced. Social workers have had no time to go out to educate the community and implement the developmental approach with the aim of empowering the community with skills to fight poverty by making means to put bread on the table rather than applying for state grant. For as long as the developmental approach is not implemented properly social workers will still be inundated with high caseloads of people seeking grants to maintain families. According to Gray (1996:9) social workers are left totally disempowered by high caseload at a time when the demand for social welfare services increases.

3.3.4 Suggestions for future implementation of the developmental approach

Participants cited some suggestions that management should consider carefully as they would help in the future implementation of the developmental approach. Suggestions by participants are provision of training to social workers on the developmental approach, appointment of additional social workers, adequate monitoring and evaluation of progress, reduction of caseload and education of the public about the new approach.

3.3.4.1 Training of social workers on the developmental approach

Participants felt strongly about the lack of training when the developmental approach was introduced. They felt it was not too late to re-orientate them to the developmental approach. They suggested the following:

“Suggestion number one is to get everybody on board through training or whatever they call it orientation or in-service training but I think it will be appreciated that everybody be brought on board through certain
approaches that have been modeled. If that’s how the province can do it, model things and make sure everybody grasp the essence of this thing”,

“Training should be an ongoing thing”,

‘They need to bring more training and development”.

The department is planning to provide an integrated and holistic education and training system and develop human resource cadre for effective service delivery through the education, training and development strategy. Partnerships with training providers will be cultivated to ensure that the curriculum developed is able to address the developmental needs of social services professionals in order to meet the demands for service. It is proposed in the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005:35) that it must occur at the following levels:

- Professional education,
- Continuous professional development,
- Skill training for the implementation of the service during model and
- Ongoing in-service training. (Integrated Service Delivery Model, 2005:35)

3.3.4.2 Appointment of additional social workers

Participants revealed that there is a huge shortage of social workers. They described a wide array of reasons for the shortage. For instance, they indicated that there are many social workers who are on long sick leave, some for more than two to three years. In this case, the department cannot replace them because they are still on the staff establishment and getting their salaries. Shortage came about because of social workers left the department for other job opportunities and others are on extended sick leave. Others have left for overseas jobs and other departments and their posts have not being filled. Participants voiced their feelings as follows:
“Many people resigned, many people fell off sick and they were ‘boarded off’ and only few that remained behind because we felt we cannot just abandon the department, because we are not only abandoning the department, but we are neglecting the very people that we are suppose to be helping”;

“But right now that I am talking to you a number of officials are off sick and some of them are even more than two years away from work. You can imagine what would be happening now with those who are left behind who have to carry the load”;

“That’s why lot of people goes on stress leave”,

Participants came out with the following suggestions to address the concerns they raised of shortage of manpower:

“Give us those vacant posts, give us our manpower”,

“Appoint new social workers so that we can move on with this community work or whatever they want from us, this developmental approach”.

Social workers already in the field are calling on government to employ more social workers. Government’s plan is to employ social development workers. Social workers are included in this category. Rankin (1997:188) indicate that social workers have always played a major role in the delivery of social welfare services, but with the focus on development, social workers’ role is no longer guaranteed. It is up to them to prove that they have a critical role to play in social development. On the other hand, Patel (2002:228) argues that social workers remain a key human resource for the implementation of developmental social welfare services even though there is a need for a range of other social service providers such as social auxiliary workers and community development workers. Her further advice on this issue is that it needs to be addressed urgently as the profession will face a crisis that will affect effective delivery of public services. Patel is also of the opinion that the human resource strategy should provide direction on the demand and supply of social workers to meet the need.
There is still a need to determine whether a shortage of qualified social workers on the overall may be, the reason why the department is not employing new social workers or replacing the ones that have left, or may be it is ‘man-made’ obstacles in the department.

3.3.4.3 Adequate monitoring and evaluation of progress.

The issue of lack of monitoring and evaluation of the departmental approach by the provincial office was highlighted. The participants felt it would be in everybody’s best interests if the provincial official can visit the district repeatedly to check on progress made. The following excerpts by the participants support the above statement.

“I think constant visits by our provincial office in terms of monitoring whether we are still on route or we are where we are suppose to be, whether those processes that have been envisaged to be processes leading to this developmental approach are still there, are we on track are we are we are going ‘off the tangent’, where do we need to be drawn in and be reminded that the route is”.

Lewis et al. (2001:243) are of the opinion that evaluation should at least provide basic information concerning programme processes and outcomes. This statement support the one above made by the participant. Patel (2003b:230) highlighted the following as some lessons learnt during the transformation process:

- Monitoring and evaluation system and empirical research are needed to assess implementation at all levels and to inform ongoing planning, policy and legislative review;
- There is no comprehensive legislation to guide the implementation of the developmental approach.
As a result of inputs from academics on the implementation of the developmental approach, the department produced the Integrated Service Delivery Model to provide a comprehensive national framework that clearly sets out the nature, scope, extent and level of social services which will contribute to a self-reliant society based on the principles of Batho Pele, the White Paper for Social Welfare and the obligations that inform the mandate of the Department of Social Development in the provision of service (Integrated Service Delivery Model, 2005:05).

3.3.4.4 Reduction of caseload

Participants indicated that they are still bogged down by high caseload to an extent that they have little time for group and community work. They have suggested the following.

“So if for instance, they thought of reducing the caseload”.

“They must employ more staff so that our caseloads can lessen so that we can work developmentally”.

Gray (1998:25) mentions that casework has been heavily criticized in many countries including South Africa. The reason being that it is unable to address major social problems that are structural in origin. She argues that there is a place for casework in social development and that there is no fault with the method itself but the problem lies with social workers as having a tendency of using casework to the exclusion of other equally important methods of intervention. They want to solve every problem using casework and disregard group work and community work. McKendrick (2001:106-107) is of the opinion that casework will always be a valuable approach and is required in order to meet statutory obligations. He mentions that until recently South African social work was focused on one to one and was therapeutic in nature, just like in Europe and North
America. It was expected that by changing focus to social development most people would be empowered and capacitated to deal with their own problems. Another expectation is that through it poverty would be alleviated. The essence of this point is that if more people were content with their socio-economic status then there would be less people seeking social workers’ intervention. Unfortunately, the high rate of poverty and unemployment forces people to apply for social assistance that would serve as an ‘income’ for the family. “It is estimated that 40% of South Africans live below a minimum living level, and along with poverty march all the related ills, such as poor health, malnutrition, lack of shelter, family breakdown and abuse, crime and joblessness (McKendrick, 2001:107).” He also states that social development is the answer to deal with mass poverty. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:7) outlines the aim of developmental social welfare that advocates for promotion of a better life, building of human capacity and involving people to actively participate in all spheres of their social, economic and political life. For as long as poverty and unemployment are still on the raise, social workers would still be confronted with high caseload.

On the other hand, casework can be rendered developmentally. Recognizing the strength of human beings would make it easy to facilitate the meeting of basic human needs. Mahomed (2005:75) in her research study found that social workers from the non-governmental organizations acknowledged that it makes it easy for them when clients and their support structures are part of the decision-making process. The credit goes to the introduction of the Independent Development Plan (IDP) and the care plan that calls for involvement of clients and their supporting structures from the planning phase to the termination phase.
3.3.4.5: Education of the public about developmental approach

Participants raised a concern that the community was not well prepared for the paradigm shift as such they are still expecting to be assisted in the same old approach. They suggested that it would be proper to educate or inform the community in an appropriate manner about the developmental approach. In that way, both implementers and recipients would have the same understanding of the changes taking place.

Participants raised the following as their suggestions:

“To inform the community on our new approach that we are going to use and it is so easy to get these people together it's not such a big task”,

“Changing the communities”,

“The awareness must start with the community”,

“We can’t just go and inform the clients on things that we are doing here, it’s a question of who is going to do it, who is equipped to do it, to go out to tell the community”.

The question would be how social workers are going to educate the community about the developmental approach. This is a mammoth task because a range of diverse cultures and traditions characterize the community.

Participants suggested the following:

“Orientate the leaders first about the developmental approach. Make them understand that the approach is encouraging the community to look at itself as having the resources at their disposal, look at their strengths. They must realize that they have the potential to develop themselves”,

“Poverty has been institutionalized in their heads more than anything the social workers need to inculcate the values system in them”,

“The community must be assisted to use the resources at their disposal for example there is land, families or streets can club together and start
backyard gardens, then involve stakeholders like agriculture to teach the community about technical issues”,

“Children should grow in the environment of listening if not the value system will disintegrate”,

“Link up with stakeholders first, like councilors, police forums, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations. Run awareness campaigns through all types of media, be visible. Tell them you want the community to be self-reliant and stop being dependent on state grant”,

“It starts with the principle of ubuntu instill the principle of ubuntu”,

“Unemployment is on the rife so the community can’t be self-reliant. A total shift from grants to income generating projects, or entrepreneurial projects has to be implemented”,

“Social workers need to be trained first so that they are able to empower the community”.

Briefly, participants agree that the developmental approach put emphasis on viewing clients as having the potential to develop themselves and having resources at their disposal to change their lives for the better. They have ‘touched’ on the following issues raised by Gray and van Rooyen (2002:194-199) on the Strengths Perspective: The client is not seen as a passive recipient. She/he has resources within herself/himself to deal with her/his challenges. The social worker needs to adopt the language of the Strengths Perspective, Saleebey, (1999:31) in (Gray and van Rooyen, 2002:194-199) is of the opinion that “words do have power” underscores the link between power relations and language and the need for practitioners to reflect and act upon the power imbedded in their interactions with clients and communities”. Tshabalala (1986) in Gray, (1998:36) is of the opinion that the kinship system is important. Participants also draw attention to the importance of inculcating the values system embraced in the principles of ‘ubuntu’ in the clients’ mind. Using the Strength Perspective language will slowly but surely help change the mind set of clients, they will stop seeing problems but challenges, they will
start saying ‘I can instead of I can’t’, and they say ‘I am resilient instead of I am not strong’. Participants also highlighted the importance of involving stakeholders, especially those who are in positions of power, notably, councillors. If they can make them understand the new direction that the department is taking and show how it is going to benefit the community, they will be able to influence the community in accepting the change. The above suggestion by participants is in line with comments made by Mabey and Mayon-White (1993:95) who suggest that for change to occur successfully, a mass of power groups has to be assembled and mobilized in support of key power groups especially councillors as they have influence on what the community must accept or not accept. It is also important to develop feedback mechanisms to provide the community with information on the effectiveness of the transition and provide data on areas, which require additional attention or action.

It will not be easy for social workers to reach the whole community but the few that they can reach out to it, can influence others and the language of development, Strengths Perspective, and empowerment will spill over to the rest of the people.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher gave a short profile of the participants and the analysis of the findings. Firstly, the data was coded then categorized into topics. The researcher came up with four main themes and from there sub-themes and categories were developed. They were substantiated with relevant literature and excerpts by the participants. The first two themes dealt with the social workers’ experiences of the implementation of the remedial approach and the developmental approach respectively. The third theme was the challenges blocking the implementation of the developmental approach and the fourth theme were suggestions that the
participants expressed on how the developmental approach can be implemented in future.

Chapter 4 is the last part of this research report and will concentrate on the research design and methodology, summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one provided the reader with an overview of the history and present status of the social welfare as it unfolded in South Africa and internationally, its transformation from the traditional remedial approach to the developmental approach. It also included the theoretical framework of theories of development, the proposed research plan, and the procedures to be followed. It stated that the goal of the research study was to explore and describe the experiences of social workers on the transformation of social welfare from the traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach.

The grand tour question of the research study is:
What are the experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation from the traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach?

Chapter two described the research design and methodology in depth. Qualitative research approach, descriptive approach, explorative approach and contextual approach were used because of their suitability for this research study. The approaches assisted the researcher to explore and describe the experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation of social welfare. This chapter further outlines that semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The various steps carried out during the research process were explained as they were implemented.
Chapter three dealt with the research study findings. A brief demographic profile of the participants was provided. The findings were reduced to themes, sub-themes and categories. Verbatim quotations of participants’ responses substantiated with relevant literature was used to compare and contrast the findings.

In this chapter a summary of the main findings will be presented. Focus will also be on drawing conclusions, demonstrating the extent to which the aims of the study were met and put forward recommendations based on the findings of the research study.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research design and methodology that formed the basis of this study were appropriate, and enabled the researcher to explore and gain insight into the lived experiences of social workers who implemented both the traditional remedial approach and the developmental approach. By employing the qualitative research approach and semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection, the researcher was able to gather more information about social workers’ experiences in their workplace. As a result it was possible to gain an overview of their work as well as of the challenges that they are faced with. The information gathered was particularly important since little was known about the experiences that social workers in the Nelson Mandela Bay District went through during the transformation of social welfare from the traditional remedial approach to the developmental approach. These insights will be valuable to the management of the Department of Social Development who oversee the department, develop policies and legislations and to other social development practitioners.
4.3 FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The developmental approach is the appropriate approach to social welfare to assist social workers in making an impact on the problems of mass poverty, unemployment and social deprivation. It recognizes the need for integrated and strength-based approaches to service delivery, it ensures and promotes the sustainability of intervention efforts, it emphasizes appropriate services to all and lastly it recognizes that social work plays a major role in addressing the developmental needs of South Africans (Integrated Service Delivery Model 2005:14). It also revealed that notwithstanding its appropriateness, its introduction was turbulent as it created confusion and uncertainties amongst social workers, as such social workers have find it difficult to implement it.

The following section of this chapter focuses on the summary of the main findings, which will be presented in the form of themes, sub-themes and categories.

4.3.1 Experiences of social workers on the remedial approach

Social workers are of the opinion that the remedial approach was individualistic and created dependency on state material assistance. Focus was more on casework as a method of intervention and neglected other intervention methods like group work, community work, administration, social policy and research. They were confined to statutory work with particular reference to child welfare. They felt that the community saw them as providers of material assistance in the form of grants. They disagreed with the perception of the community, as they would like to be perceived as empowerers and not as people who create dependency. The participants did not talk about the state of affairs they worked under during the apartheid government.
4.3.2 Social workers’ experiences on the implementation of the developmental approach

Social workers experienced a variety of emotions during the transition from the traditional remedial approach to developmental approach. They felt frustrated, confused, uncertain, insecure, skeptical and anxious. All these emotions came about because the introduction of the new approach was not done properly. There was poor communication, lack of training and guidelines on how to implement it on the part of the leadership of the Department of Social Development. In spite of the negative emotions social workers welcomed the developmental approach. They agree that developmental approach is appropriate to develop the lives of the people for the better and it promotes self-reliance. To show their commitment they developed coping strategies to adapt to the transition.

4.3.3 Challenges blocking the implementation of the developmental approach

These challenges dates back to when the developmental approach was introduced and they are still there to date. The social workers were not exultant about the manner in which the approach was introduced. They put blame on the provincial office for lack of communication about the shift and lack of training and proper guidelines to follow on how to implement the approach. They are of the opinion that the ever-changing leadership in the district is causing instability and it derails progress. They do not get enough support, guidance and feedback from the leadership. Lack of resources is the greatest challenge. Social workers are overwhelmed with work because of shortage of social workers to deal with the ever-increasing demand of social services. There is shortage of transport to use to render effective service. There are office accommodation issues that do not satisfy some social workers. Social workers are concerned with
the high caseload they have to deal with. It hinders them from implementing the developmental approach as expected. This means transformation is only on paper and in reality; they are still implementing the traditional remedial approach. The community is not well informed or educated about the developmental approach as such they are still expecting social workers to render services in the traditional way.

4.3.4 SUGGESTIONS PUT FORWARD BY PARTICIPANTS

Participants highlighted the following suggestions regarding future implementation of the developmental approach. A link was found between participants’ suggestions and the factors identified when exploring participants’ experiences and perceptions of the transformation of social welfare:

- Comprehensive training and re-orientation programme on the Developmental approach to be provided to social workers and other role-players;
- Resources (financial, personnel, transport and infrastructure) to be increased and given first priority to enable the social workers to render effective and efficient service;
- Monitoring and evaluation tools to be developed to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the developmental approach;
- The issue of lightening statutory work and reducing caseload should be attended to, so as to make it effortless for social workers to dedicate more time to developmental practices;
- The community should be educated on the developmental approach for successful implementation of the approach;
- There should be continuity in leadership that would provide the necessary support, guidance and feedback to the staff.
4.4 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

A summary of the overall findings was presented above and from those findings the researcher will now present major findings that is, the core of the findings. When analyzing the participants’ responses one gathers that lack of capacity on the part of social workers is the root cause of all the challenges highlighted in the findings. The lack of capacity is attributed to lack of training at:

- **University level**

Pre-1994 institutions of higher learning in South Africa were offering western social work curriculum; most textbooks were American. According to Gray (1998:19) “the literature of social work has, for the most part developed in Britain and America”. Student social workers were taught how to render services the American or European way. On completion of their training, they addressed South African problems the American or European way. Some of the reasons why South African social workers felt comfortable using casework method are the focus on casework training, its extensive use in statutory work and the sociopolitical climate that discouraged macro level intervention (Gray, 1998:26). Casework was aimed at assisting individuals, families and groups to address their own problems. Social workers became caseworkers and practiced less of the other intervention strategies. Because of the new political dispensation that came into existence in 1994, the government adopted the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) employing developmental approach to address the South African social welfare problems ‘created’ by apartheid. The current number one social problem in South Africa is poverty and the White Paper for Social Welfare proposes appropriate and integrated strategies to address the challenges brought about by poverty. Social workers were expected to transform their methods of intervention and render user-friendly services that address the social problems in the South
African context. The findings in this research study affirm those of other research studies conducted earlier (Mahomed, 2005; Patel, 2003, 1992; Lombard, 1999; McKendrick, 2001); and Gray, 1998), which found that social workers experienced problems with the implementation of the developmental approach. The training they received during the apartheid government did not capacitate them to deal with the current social problems and method of intervention, which is the developmental approach. Lombard (1999:97) endorses this fact by indicating that “courses did not equip graduates to respond appropriately to the most important social development needs in South Africa”. She does, however, point out that the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997:21) acknowledges that social work education succeeded in preparing practitioners for therapeutic and restorative social welfare system. It is just that the training is no longer relevant to render current social welfare services. It is on this basis that social workers raised so many challenges that hinder them from implementing the developmental approach.

• **Practice level**

The second point is the lack of training or reorientation of social workers on the developmental approach. Patel (2003b:230) mentions that one of the lessons learned from the transformation of social welfare was that progress was affected by human resource capacity constraints and lack of appropriately trained personnel. This was due to a lack of a comprehensive ‘legislation’ to guide the implementation of the developmental approach to social welfare delivery. Participants also raised this issue as a challenge. It is now that the department of social development made available the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005) to social development practitioners, which serves as a guideline for the implementation of the developmental approach. Patel (2003a:10) is of the opinion that the success of the restructuring of the welfare system depends on employing staff with the right levels of skills. There is also a
need to reorientate and retrain professional social workers because they were trained on the traditional approach only.

Government has committed itself to halve poverty and unemployment by 2014. Its investigations show that to meet its social objectives it will have to ensure that the environment and opportunities for more labour-absorbing economic activities is steadily improving and fruits of growth are shared in such a way that poverty is alleviated and inequalities are reduced. On the same note, one of the constraints that hinder government from achieving its objective is shortage of suitably skilled labour. Government has put in place systems and programmes to deal with the challenges identified. Two of the programmes are coordinated from the Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka’s office, the first one being the Accelerated and Shared Growth-South Africa (ASGISA). Key interventions, put in place, include development of employment service system, deployment of experienced professionals and managers to improve project development implementation and maintenance of capabilities. The second initiative, the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) will identify urgent needed skills and find quick and effective solutions (Media briefing ‘background document’ February 6, 2006).

- **Managerial level**

According to Lewis et al. (2001:154) “today’s human service supervisor must fulfill several roles and functions to ensure efficient and effective services to clients”. It is the responsibility of the manager to develop knowledge and skills in the areas of planning, budgeting, organizing, developing human resources, and evaluating programmes. The manager is responsible for her own performance and that of her subordinates. Most of the social work managers are from the old ‘school of thought’. Since
they were trained on the remedial approach, their training makes it difficult for them to guide and lead social workers on the developmental approach. They need training themselves to enable them to give proper direction on the new approach that government has adopted to address current social problems. There is a great need of managers who will be in authority positions to apply relevant skills to address South African social problems the South African way.

4.5 CONCLUSIONS

The researcher concluded that the aim of the study, which was to explore and describe social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach, was attained. It is on this basis that the researcher was able to deduce that lack of capacity and training on the part of social workers as well as inadequate resources hindered the implementation of the developmental approach.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings and conclusions, it is hereby recommended that:

As a matter of urgency, the department of social development should develop and implement a strategy to retrain and retain experienced social workers in the profession and in the country, attracting, and developing new talent to ensure continuity, flawless coordination of efforts and integrity of existing systems. Managers should undergo regular post training to ensure that they remain responsive to programme and job needs.
The department of social development must develop a ‘tailor-made’ post training programme for social workers who are currently on the job but are trained on the old approach. The programme must have economics for social workers as one of its core and compulsory modules, as it will enable social workers to appropriately address socio-economic problems facing their clients.

Further research study should be conducted on the social work education in institutions of higher learning. The aim would be to develop curricular, training, policies and strategies in the South African context that will be in a position to address the current needs of South Africans.

This study should be extended and a body of evidence put together to demonstrate both the fact and scope of transformation by providing information on exactly what social workers are doing and the extent to which their work is within the developmental approach.

Additionally, special attention must be paid to burdensome government approval processes to enhance efficiency, improvement of conditions of employment (facilities, resources etc), and provision of advanced training.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Soji, Z. Social Workers’ Perceptions and Experiences of Occupational Stress within a Local Regional Department of Social Development. Degree/Project Status: [2005] – Completed.


Attention: District Coordinator  
Nelson Mandela District

Re: REQUEST TO INTERVIEW SOCIAL WORKERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF A RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Boipuso Mashigo and I am employed as a Chief Community Liaison Officer in the department. I am currently doing my Masters degree in Social Development and Planning at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NNMU). As part of my course, I am conducting a research study into social workers’ experiences’ in the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach. I would like to ask your permission to allow me to interview social workers in the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage offices to enable me to gather data on the topic.

I strongly believe that the findings and recommendations of this research study would benefit everyone involved in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach.

Looking forward to your favourable consideration

Yours faithfully

B.S. Mashigo
Tel: 083 477 2124
(041) 406 5749
Mrs. B. S. Mashigo
P. O. Box 27130
Greenacres
6057

Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS IN THE DISTRICT

Kindly be informed that permission is granted to your request to conduct interviews with social workers in the Nelson Mandela Metropole towards your research study on experiences of social workers on the transformation of the social welfare from a remedial to a developmental approach.

Good luck with your studies

Yours faithfully

........................................
Mrs. V.N. TITUS
ACTING DISTRICT CO-ORDINATOR
NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE
REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am a Chief Community Liaison Officer currently studying at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University for the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Magister Artium in Social Development and Planning. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe Social Workers’ experiences in the transformation of social welfare from a traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach. I am requesting you to participate in an interview that will last between one- and- one and a half hours. You will be asked to discuss your experiences in the paradigm shift from the traditional remedial approach to a developmental approach.

With your permission the sessions will be tape-recorded in order to capture all details of the interview for data analysis. The tapes will be locked in a safe place. They will be destroyed on completion of the research study. Identifying information will be disguised in any publication of the research findings. You will be asked to review the notes and check whether the information has been interpreted correctly. The interviews will be held in a private place where you will feel most comfortable.

Your responses to the interview as well as your identity will be kept strictly secret and will only be shared with my research supervisor for guidance in the process.

You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time and this will not affect our relationship in any way. Should you be willing to participate in the study, please sign the attached consent form after reading it? For any queries you can contact me on my cell - 083 477 2124 or (041) 406 5749

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated and your shared knowledge will benefit other Social Workers and the findings and recommendations can assist in the betterment of service delivery.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT FORM
I agree to voluntarily participate in your research study on experiences of Social Workers with regard to the transformation of Social Welfare from a Traditional Remedial Approach to a Developmental Approach. I understand that all responses will be kept completely confidential and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

Signature……………………………

Date ……………………………

I certify that I have explained to the respondent the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participation in this research study. I have answered any questions that have been raised.

These elements of informed consent conform to the assurance given by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University to the department of Social Development Professions, to protect the rights of human subjects.

Signature of Researcher ……………………………………………

Date                                ……………………………………………..

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM
(Please delete any information not applicable to your project and complete/expand as deemed appropriate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the research project</th>
<th>Social workers’ experiences on the transformation of social welfare from a remedial approach to a developmental approach</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference number</td>
<td>204045223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal investigator</td>
<td>Boipuso Stephina Mashigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>42 Le morne Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT

(Person legally competent to give consent on behalf of the participant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I, the participant and the undersigned</th>
<th>(full names)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I, in my capacity as</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.D. number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address (of participant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A.1 I HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

1. I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project that is being undertaken by
   - Boipuso Stephina Mashigo
   - of the Department of Social Development Professions
   - in the Faculty of Health Sciences
   - of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

2. The following aspects have been explained to me, the participant:
   2.1 **Aim:** The investigators are studying: experiences of social workers on the transformation of social welfare from a remedial approach to a developmental approach

2.2 **Procedures:** I understand that I am being requested to participate in the study as a social worker employed by the department of social development in Nelson Mandela Bay District.

   **Risks:** N/A

2.3 **Possible benefits:** As a result of my participation in this study, there will be a better understanding of the experiences of social workers with regard to the transformation of social welfare, and what effect does it have service delivery. This information will assist social workers and policy makers developing effective and efficient programmes that will enhance service delivery.

   **Confidentiality:** My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the investigators.
2.6 **Access to findings:** Any new information/or benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared as follows: The findings of this study will be shared with social workers, development workers and policy makers who are responsible for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voluntary participation/refusal/discontinuation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My participation is voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect my present or future care/employment/lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The information above was explained to me/the participant by

- (name of relevant person) Boipuso Stephina Mashigo
- in Afrikaans, English, Xhosa, Other

and I am in command of this language/it was satisfactorily translated to me by

- (name of translator) N/A

I was given the opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.

4. No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participation and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage without enalization.

5. Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to myself.

A.2 **I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT**

Signed/confirmed at __________________________ on __________ 20____

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of witness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature or right thumb print of participant</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Full name of witness

B. **STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S)**
I, Boipuso Stephina Mashigo declare that:

- I have explained the information given in this document to
  (name of patient/participant) and/or his/her representative
  (name of representative)

- he/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions;

- this conversation was conducted in
  [ ] Afrikaans  [ ] English  [X] Xhosa  [ ] Other

  and no translator was used / this conversation was translated into
  (language) N/A by

- I have detached Section D and handed it to the
  participant

  Signed/confirmed at

  Signed/confirmed on 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of interviewer</th>
<th>Signature of witness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full name of witness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C. IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PATIENT/REPRESENTATIVE OF PARTICIPANT**

Dear participant/representative of the participant

Thank you for your/the participant’s participation in this study. Should, at any time during the study:

- an emergency arise as a result of the research, or
- you require any further information with regard to the study, or
- the following occur

   (indicate any circumstances which should be reported to the investigator)

Kindly contact

at telephone number

(it must be a number where help will be available on a 24 hour basis, if the research project warrants it)