

**THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION OF SOCIAL WORK  
SUPERVISION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND  
WELFARE IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT OF THE LIMPOPO  
PROVINCE**

**BY**

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## **DEDICATION**

These achievements are dedicated to my family members. My lovely wife Dobsy and our two sons (twins), Boitumelo and Tumelo, my mother Masakona, my father John, my three brothers Reuben, Oriel and Rendani and my three sisters Florah, Merriam and Shonisani.

Thank you for your support and I will always love you.

MF Mbau

## **SUMMARY**

### **The educational function of social work supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province**

by

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The main purpose of this study is to explore and gain insight into the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision as implemented in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Objectives of the study were to conceptualise social work supervision with a specific focus on the educational function; to investigate the nature, extent, and characteristics of the educational function of supervision in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province and finally to make recommendations regarding educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

The study was guided by a research question which was formulated as follows: What is the nature, extent and characteristics of the educational function of supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province? Therefore, this study was conducted to provide answers to this research question.

Quantitative research approach was used in this study, since the researcher explored and described the nature, extent and characteristics of the educational function of supervision statistically. This research is applied in nature because it focuses on a practical problem (educational supervision) in the social work practice (Department of Health and Welfare in Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province) and the findings will be utilized to solve social work supervision problems in the particular District. A randomised cross-sectional quantitative research design was used, because the researcher investigated social work educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province using a group administered questionnaire as data collection method.

The population for this study was composed of social workers from the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Forty- two social workers (senior and junior social workers) completed a questionnaire during a Vhembe District social workers staff meeting. Those completed questionnaires were collected immediately. Data were analysed statistically through Microsoft excel programme. Tables and Figures were used to illustrate some of the answers.

From a literature study it was concluded that the educational function of supervision is the most important function of social work supervision. It plays a vital role in providing social workers with social work knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for delivering qualitative, effective and efficient social work services. Educational supervision gives social workers autonomy to function independently.

The study revealed that there are problems regarding the implementation of the educational function of social work supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. The findings proved that some of the social workers do not receive educational supervision and there is no uniformity in implementing this function of supervision. The findings also revealed a obvious knowledge gap regarding social work supervision among social workers in the District.

**KEY TERMS**

Social work profession

Social worker

Social work supervision

Educational supervision

Supervisor

Supervisee

District management team

Department of Health and Welfare

Social agency

Client

## **OPSOMMING**

**Die opvoedkundige funksie van maatskaplike werk supervisie in die  
Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District van die  
Limpopo Provinsie**

**deur**

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**Graad :MSD (Maatskaplike Werk Bestuur)**

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Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie is om die aard, omvang en eienskaap van opvoedkundige supervisie soos dit in die Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District, Limpopo Provinsie geïmplementeer word, te eksploreer. Die doelwitte van die studie was om maatskaplikewerksupervisie met kleun op die opvoedkundige funksie te konseptualiseer; om die aard, omvang en eienskappe van die opvoedkundige funksie van supervisie in die Vhembe District van die Limpopo Provinsie empiries te ondersoek en om in die final instansie aanbevelings ten opsigte van opvoedkundige supervisie in die Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District, Limpopo Provinsie te maak.

Die studie is gerig deur die volgende navorsingsvraag :Wat is die aard,omvang en eienskappe van die opvoedkundige funksie van supervisie in die Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District, Limpopo Provinsie? Die doel van hierdie studie was dus om 'n antwoord op hierdie navorsingvraag te kry.

‘n Kwantitatiewe benadering is in die uitvoering van die studie gevolg. Voorts is die aard van die studie toegepaste navorsing aangesien die ondersoek fokus op ‘n praktiese maatskaplike werk probleem (opvoedkundige supervisie) en die bevindinge benut gaan word om ‘n oplossing vir die probleem te kry. Die navorsingsontwerp vir die studie was ‘n ewekansige kwantitatiewe navorsingsondersoek (survey) en ‘n groepgeadministreerde vraelys is as data-insamelings metode gebruik.

Die populasie vir die ondersoek het bestaan uit al die maatskaplike werkers werksaam by die Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District van die Limpopo Provinsie. Twee-en-veertig maatskaplike werkers (senior en junior maatskaplike werkers) het die vraelys gedurende ‘n personeelbyeenkoms voltooi. Die voltooide vraelys is onmiddellik na die byeenkoms deur die navorser ingesamel. Data is statisties ontleed deur van die Microsoft excel program gebruik te maak. Tabelle en Figure is benut om data te vertoon.

Vanuit die literatuurstudie is tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat die opvoedkundige funksie van supervisie die belangrikste funksie van maatskaplike werk supervisie is. Dit speel ‘n kardinale rol in die bevordering van maatskaplike werkers se kennis, vaardighede en houding ten einde kwaliteitgerigte, effektiewe en doeltreffende maatskaplikewerkdienste te lewer. Opvoedkundige supervisie stel maatskaplike werkers in staat om onafhanklik te funksioneer.

Die studie het getoon dat daar bepaalde probleme ten opsigte van die implementering van die opvoedkundige funksie van supervisie in die Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn in die Vhembe District van die Limpopo Provinsie bestaan. Die bevindinge het bevestig dat ‘n groot aantal maatskaplike werkers glad nie opvoedkundige supervisie ontvang nie en dat daar ook geen uniformiteit ten opsigte van die implementering van opvoedkundige supervisie bestaan nie. Die bevindinge toon ook ‘n gebrek aan kennis ten opsigte van maatskaplikewerksupervisie by maatskaplike werkers in die Vhembe Distrik.



## **SLEUTEL TERME**

Maatskaplike werk profesie

Maatskaplike werker

Maatskaplike werk supervisie

Opvoedkundige supervisie

Supervisor

Supervisee

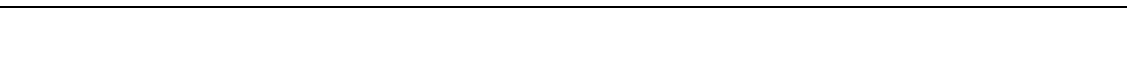
Distrik bestuurspan

Departement van Gesondheid en Welsyn

Maatskaplike agentskap

Kliënt

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Supervision in social work practice is geared towards ensuring that qualitative, efficient and effective welfare services are rendered to individuals, groups and communities. Corey, Corey and Callanan (1993:94) define supervision as an integral part of training to help the social workers to acquire the competency needed to fulfil their professional responsibilities. According to Hoffmann (1990:206) social work supervision is an indirect practice, contrary to direct social work practice with individuals, families, small groups and communities where the social worker is in direct practice, active participation with consumers within the context of human service organization.

Social work supervision plays a major role in the work performance of social workers and enhances their professional growth and development. Supervision is a teaching situation of a very specific kind. The ultimate goal of supervision is to ensure that efficient and effective social work services are rendered to the clients. Supervision also aims to ensure that social workers are acting in accordance with the legal ethics and professional standards when helping the clients. This in return promotes professional and personal growth on the side of the worker (Kadushin, 1992:20).

Kadushin (1992:3) states that supervision has several functions, which include three major functions namely administration, education and support. There are also other functions such as motivation, personality enrichment and modelling. Each function of supervision serves a unique purpose though collectively they all aim at enhancing professional growth. According to Shulman (1993:19) the description of the general supervisory tasks of administration, education and support are helpful in clarifying the responsibilities of the supervisor.

This study focuses on the educational function of supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Henceforth the researcher will also talk about educational supervision meaning the educational function of supervision.

The main aim of the educational function of supervision is to provide the social worker (supervisee) with social work knowledge and skills through the interaction process between the supervisor and supervisee. The knowledge and skills needed by the supervisee to render effective welfare services is centred around five P's namely; person, problem, place, social work process and personnel. It is the duty of the supervisor to see to it that the social worker develops insight into professional skills and knowledge so that he can be an effective worker (Hoffmann,1990:212). The five Ps are discussed in detail in chapter two.

The educational function of supervision is a significant dimension of a supervisor's activities and responsibilities. It is a source of satisfaction for both the supervisor and supervisee. The supervisor is satisfied that he is helping the supervisee to grow and develop professionally. The supervisee on the other hand, is satisfied that his supervisor is helping him in dealing with client's problems and in helping him develop as a professional social worker (Kadushin, 1992:138).

Education generally is known as an art of teaching or training of the human mind and character while supervision is simply understood as an art of guiding, through careful watching of a worker's job performance. This implies that educational supervision is meant to benefit the worker through transmission of skills and knowledge so that he/she could be an effective worker. In simple terms, the educational function of supervision is concerned with developing the skills, knowledge and abilities of the supervisee. The supervisor should do this through reflection when monitoring the work of the supervisee and establish real loopholes on the worker's performance.

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989:42) educational supervision serves the needs of the profession in developing a competent professionally orientated practitioner. As a result of this function of educational supervision, the worker is capacitated to evaluate his own performance. He/she learns the difference between good and poor practice and establishes some criteria by which he/she can be self-critical.

The research conducted by Shulman as cited by Kadushin (1992:138) shows that educational supervision is a very important function of supervision. The research findings indicated that groups, that participated in the research pointed out that a considerable amount of the supervisor's time was spent in teaching and consultation, teaching practice skills. It also showed that educational supervision plays a very important part in the social work profession.



Hawkins and Shohet (1989:43) also add that social work educational supervision is significant in social work because it:

- ✓ Provides regular space for the supervisees to reflect upon the content and process of their work.
- ✓ Develops understanding and skills within the work setting.
- ✓ Helps the supervisee to receive information and other perspective concerning one's work and skills to evaluate his own practice.
- ✓ Allows the supervisee to receive both content and process feedback.
- ✓ Helps the supervisee to cope with stressful situations.

Kadushin (1992:135) further rationalises that the educational function of supervision is concerned with teaching the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the performance of clinical social work tasks through the detailed analysis of the worker's interaction with the client. As far as educational supervision is concerned the supervisor plays the following principal roles: teacher, facilitator of learning, trainer, sharer of experience and knowledge, informer, guider and helper. By playing these roles the supervisor will help the workers to find solutions to enhance their professional growth.

This study is important because it is based on the researcher's perception that it seems as if there is no effective and structured educational supervision taking place in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

The findings of the study will serve as guidelines for the district welfare management team to evaluate the extent to which educational supervision is conducted in the district, as well as to enhance the professional growth of social workers and effective service rendering.

The study, therefore, aims at benefiting the district welfare management team, the social workers as well as the researcher who also receives supervision. The guidelines for educational supervision will be presented in the form of recommendations based on the explored nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the specific district.

## 1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

Mouton (1996:101) states that there are two factors that co-determine decisions about the research problem and these are the researcher's background knowledge of the particular topic and his cognitive interest on the problem.

In this study the problem is based on the researcher's practical observation and professional experience in the social work field which led him to conclude that there is serious lack of educational supervision amongst social workers in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

The researcher was employed and placed at Tshitale Magistrate welfare office, under the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District in 1996, doing generic social work. As an inexperienced social worker, the researcher never received any form of supervision. The researcher learned a lot about proper social work supervision for the first time when he registered for a master's programme at the University of Pretoria.

In the year 2001 the researcher supervised a final year (4<sup>th</sup> year) student from University of Venda. In her third year the student was supervised by a senior worker at a different organisation in the Vhembe District. The researcher observed that the student did not receive proper educational supervision because she had glaring knowledge gaps regarding basic social work skills and knowledge though already in her final year of study.

The researcher also carried out a thorough professional assessment of a newly employed social worker under his supervision. The assessment was done to assess the knowledge level of the worker and the kind of previous educational supervision she received. The assessment indicated that there was no previous educational supervision received.

Based on the above information it seems as if there are shortcomings in supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. This is also confirmed by Mudau (1996:65) who conducted a study in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province focusing on general supervision.

The study discovered that there was no formal supervision. Therefore, he recommended that formal supervision must be applied to social workers in the district.

Supervision in general forms the integral part of social work practice, because it empowers every social worker with the knowledge and skills necessary for rendering effective and efficient welfare services. The absence of supervision including educational supervision limits workers competency and contributes to considerable turnover and lateral job movement from agency to agency. The knowledge and skills, which the social worker receives through educational supervision, gives the worker confidence and a sense of assurance on job performance. Empowered social workers are able to make decisions without fear of being criticised. Lack of educational supervision contributes to social workers deterioration of work morale, which results in poor job performance. It also prevents social workers from getting proper social work skills and knowledge.

Therefore, the researcher conducted an in-depth research investigation with the aim of establishing the real situation regarding the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the Vhembe District in order to make recommendations to enhance effective professional service delivery.

### **1.3 PURPOSE, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

#### **1.3.1 Research purpose**

Fouché (2002:108) explains that any research endeavour should have a purpose either to explore, describe or to explain. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:44) describes the aim of exploratory research as research done to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual.

The purpose of this research is to explore and gain insight into the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision as implemented in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. This implies exploring social work supervision in practice with specific emphasis on the educational function of supervision in order to assess whether it occurs or not and if it does to explore the quality thereof. Directed by an exploratory research purpose, the goal and objectives of the study will be briefly discussed.

### **1.3.2 Goal of the study**

Fouché (2002:107) defines the difference between a goal and objective. A goal can be seen as a broad, abstract effort to attain an end while an objective is a more concrete, measurable and more speedy attainment of the end.

The main goal of this study is to determine the nature, extent and characteristics of the educational function of social work supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

### **1.3.3 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

- To conceptualise social work supervision with specific focus on the educational function.
- To investigate the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.
- To make recommendations regarding educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province in order to enhance effective social work services delivery.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

Neuman (1997:119) says that social researchers do not conduct research on a topic, although a topic is an essential starting point. The researcher should refine and narrow down a topic into research questions. The research questions refer to the relationship among a small number of variables. De Vos (1998:115) adds that research always commences with one or two questions or hypotheses. Questions are posed about the nature of real situations while hypotheses are statements about how things can be done. A good research question is one that can be answered by collecting data and whose answer cannot be foreseen prior to the collection of data.

In the light of the above, this study was guided by a research question. Therefore, the researcher collected data to answer the following research question: **What is the nature, extent and characteristics of the educational function of supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province?**

## **1.5 RESEARCH APPROACH**

According to Fouché and Delport (2002:79) there are two well-known and recognized approaches to research, which are the quantitative paradigm and qualitative paradigm. The quantitative paradigm is based on positivism which takes scientific explanation to be nomothetic. Its main aims are to measure the social world objectively, to test hypothesis and control human behaviour. It is an inquiry into a social and human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedure in order to determine whether the predictive generalisation of the theory holds true.

The qualitative research paradigm stems from an anti-positivistic, interpretative approach, is idiographic and thus holistic in nature and aims mainly to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life. The qualitative research produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words. It thus involves identifying the participant's beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena (Fouché & Delport, 2002:79).

Van der Merwe (1996:282) states that quantitative research is aimed at testing theories, determining facts, statistical analysis demonstrating relationship between variables while Nachmias (1992:272) indicated that quantitative study may be defined as an inquiry into a social human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables.

This study is quantitative in nature. The researcher intended to explore and describe the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision statistically in order to determine whether educational supervision forms an integral part of social work services in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

## **1.6 TYPE OF THE RESEARCH**

According to Fouché and De Vos (1998:73), Neuman (2000:24) and Bailey (1994:24) there are two categories of research namely applied and pure research. Pure research is also referred to as basic research. This type of research relies on the observations of the researcher for the collection of data in order to facilitate the development or refining of theories. This type of research does not concentrate on solving problems in practice.

The goal of applied research is to perform research that has real applicability in social practice. Applied research involves developing and testing theories (assumptions), hypothesis and questions that have application to social problems in the practice. In most cases applied research is conducted by companies, government agencies, social service agencies, health organisations and educational institutions to use the findings to solve specific policy problems and to help practitioners to accomplish their tasks or goals. According to Prinsloo, Prinsloo and Marais (1996:181) applied research is conducted with a view of applying the results to some or other practical problematic situation.

Therefore, applied research is the most appropriate type of research for this study, because it focuses on a practical problem (educational supervision) in the social work professional context and its findings could be applied to address problems at work and as a way of promoting effectiveness of social work services rendered to the clientele by the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:63) and Terreblanche and Durkheim (1999:29) point out that a research design has two meanings. A research design could be understood as planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step or as a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed facts. The research design specifies clearly how the research is going to be executed to answer the research questions to reach sound conclusions.

Fouché and De Vos (2002:142) talk about a quantitative –descriptive (survey) design. They state that survey designs are classified together because logically they also belong together. They are often of a more quantitative nature, using questionnaires, as a data collection method. There are two designs that are used with a survey as data collection method namely the randomised cross-sectional survey and replicate cross sectional survey.

The research design used in this study is a randomised cross-sectional quantitative survey design, because the researcher would like to investigate social work educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province through a questionnaire as data collection method.

## **1.8 RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

The researcher implemented survey research by using a group-administered questionnaire. According to Babbie (1998:256) survey research may be used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. Survey research is probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data and it is good in studies that have individuals or people as units of analysis.

Forty -two social workers in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province participated in the study. The social workers were in both junior and senior positions. The respondents were allocated to various supervisors who were expected to supervise them. A group-administered questionnaire was used to collect data.

According to Fouché (1998:155) a group administered questionnaire is a questionnaire which is completed by the respondents in group form. Preferably each respondent should receive the same stimulus and complete his own questionnaire without discussion with the other members of the group.

The questionnaire was delivered to the respondents during a Vhembe district social workers staff meeting held on 27 August 2004 at Tshilidzini Nursing College. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately after the meeting. The research data were analysed statistically by computer using Microsoft excel programme.

## **1.9 PILOT STUDY**

According to Strydom (2002:210) pilot study forms an integral part of the research process and it can be viewed as the dress rehearsal of the main investigation. The researcher tested out the research instrument on a small number of people having characteristics similar to those of the target group of respondents.

### **1.9.1 Feasibility of the study**

According to Rubin and Babbie (1993:101) feasibility is a very important aspect of the research process. Rubin and Babbie (1993:102) identified common issues in determining the feasibility of a study, such as its scope, the time it will require, its fiscal costs, ethical considerations and the co-operation it will require from others. The larger the scope of the study, the more it will cost in time, money and co-operation from the respondents.

Trochim (2001:26) says that when the researcher determines the research feasibility he almost always needs to bear in mind several practical considerations, which are: period of the research, ethical considerations, co-operation from respondents and how much will the study cost.

The researcher did not encounter any problems when conducting this study. The researcher was granted departmental permission to use social workers in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. The respondents co-operated very well since the researcher is also employed by the Department of Health and Welfare in the area of the study and there is a positive relationship with the social workers. The researcher had adequate time for the study since he received permission to further his studies. The researcher distributed and collected completed questionnaires during a staff meeting, which reduced travelling costs and time. The researcher had access to a computer set for processing data.



### **1.9.2 Pilot testing of questionnaire**

According to Strydom (2002:210) the purpose of a pilot study is to improve the success and effectiveness of the investigation. Pilot testing of questionnaire can indicate effectively whether a certain question or total questionnaire is correctly worded. The physical appearance of a questionnaire, which includes length, type and colour, is also very important.

In order to conduct a preliminary investigation the researcher handed two questionnaires to two social workers from the Department of Correctional Services. Those two social workers were not part of the main study. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the validity and reliability of the questions asked in the questionnaire and to bring out mistakes and omissions for rectification. There were no issues raised and mistakes and omissions and as a result no adaptation was necessary.

### **1.10 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION.**

Rubin and Babbie (1993:225) state that a study population is that aggregation elements from which the sample is actually selected. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:87) define population as a set of elements that the research focuses upon and to which the results obtained by testing the sample should be generalized.

The target population in this study was 50 social workers (junior and senior social workers) employed by the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province, but only 42 social workers participated because the other eight social workers did not attend the meeting. The research participants were both males and females, with the age ranging between 26 and 40. Their working experience ranged from 5 months to 12 years.

### **1.11 ETHICAL ISSUES**

Strydom (2002:63) defined ethics as a set of moral principles which are suggested by an individual or group, which are subsequently widely accepted and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers and students. The ethical guidelines also serve as standards and basis upon which each researcher ought to evaluate his own conduct.

The Webster's New World Dictionary ( in Rubin & Babbie,1993:57) defines ethical issues as conforming to standards of conduct of a given profession or group. Social work researchers should always abide by clearly defined ethical principles in both their practice and research activities.

The reason behind this is that social work practice and research focus on actual people, real problems and identifiable agency settings. Strydom (2002:63) and Rubin and Babbie (1993:57) talk about the following research ethical issues which should be taken into consideration: Harm to experimental respondents, informed consent, deception of subjects, violation of privacy, actions and competence of researchers, release or publication of the findings and restoration of subjects or respondents.

Grinnell and Williams (1990:7) recommend that researchers should take precautions when doing any research study. They talk about three steps including obtaining the participants informed consent, designing the study in an ethical manner and properly informing others about the findings.

In this study the researcher took the following research ethical issues into consideration:

### **1.11.1 Harm to experimental subjects or respondents**

According to Strydom (2002:64) subjects can be harmed physically or emotionally during the study. It is the responsibility of the researcher to protect the respondents against any harm. To avoid any harm the respondents need to be informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation to give respondents an opportunity to withdraw from the investigation if they wish to do so.

Bailey (1994:472) holds that a research project may even have positive effects on the respondents and similarly it may take years before any beneficial effects are seen. Possible harm to subjects should however not be rationalized by saying that the study might benefit them in some other way.

The researcher did not expose the respondents to any harm, emotional or physical by asking sensitive questions, which could affect the personal life of the respondents. The researcher avoided by all means any questions which reminded the respondents about their personal problems with their supervisors. The researcher informed the respondents about the implications of the study beforehand.

### **1.11.2 Informed consent**

This ethical aspect implies that all possible or adequate information about the goal of the investigation, the procedures which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages and disadvantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed must be communicated to them. The emphasis must be placed on accurate and complete information so that the respondents will fully make a voluntary decision about their participation (Strydom,2002:65).

In order to honour this research ethical issue the researcher formulated a letter of consent. The letter was attached to each and every questionnaire with a covering letter explaining the goal of the study and background of the study. The respondents read and signed it before completing the questionnaire. The letter also advised the respondents that they have a right to withdraw from the research if they wish to do so.

### **1.11.3 Deception of the subjects or respondents**

According to Neuman (2000:229) deception occurs when the researcher intentionally misleads subjects by way of written or verbal instructions. It includes lying about the research purpose. Strydom (2002:67) advises the researcher not to deceive the respondents and suggested that when unforeseen development occurs, it must be discussed with the respondents immediately after or during the debriefing interview.

To avoid violation of this research ethical issue, the researcher explained the academic purpose of the study. The research subjects were also told about what the researcher expected from them.

### **1.11.4 Violation of the privacy**

According to Strydom (2002:67) privacy implies the element of personal privacy while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner. The privacy of the subjects can also be ensured when proper, scientific sampling is used. It ensures that no subject is excluded or involved in the investigation merely because the researcher knows or does not know the person.

In this study information provided by the respondents was treated and handled in a confidential manner. The study is for academic purposes and the findings will be used at the University of Pretoria and the Vhembe District. The researcher also increased the confidentiality level by not asking the respondents to provide their identification particulars.

### **1.11.5 Release or publication of the findings**

The findings of the study must be introduced to reading public in written form, otherwise even a highly scientific investigation will mean very little and not viewed as research. The information provided must be clear and unambiguous to the reading public. The subjects must be informed about the findings in an objective manner without offering too many details, which might affect the issue of confidentiality (Strydom, 2002:72).

Release or publications of the findings should not be deceitful to any reader. The findings should also be clear and unambiguous, meaning that the results were published as they are. The respondents will also be informed about the findings during the staff meetings as a way of thanking them for their participation.

#### **1.11.6 Restoration of subjects or respondents**

Strydom (2002:73) recommends debriefing sessions during which subjects get the opportunity after the study to work through their experience and its aftermath as a way of assisting the subjects and minimise harm. The researcher has to rectify any misperception, which may have arisen in the minds of participants. A research project must always be a learning experience for both participants and researchers. Debriefing sessions are the ideal way in which to complete the learning experience that began with agreeing to participate.

The researcher conducted debriefing sessions with the respondents after completion of the questionnaire. The respondents were also given a chance to express their views and experiences about the study. None of the respondents experienced emotional problems caused emanating from the study, as a result none of the respondents was referred for counselling.

### **1.12 DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS**

#### **1.12.1 Supervisor**

Kadushin (1992:22) defines social work supervisor as an agency administrative staff member to whom authority is delegated to direct, co-ordinate, enhance and evaluate the on the job performance of the work he is held accountable. For the supervisor ultimate objective is to deliver the agency clients the best possible service.

According to Farley et al (2003:124) social work supervisor is an individual in the agency who assumes the responsibility of overseeing, controlling and monitoring the work of the supervisee with the aim of improving effective service delivery.

According to the researcher a social work supervisor is an agency figure with the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring the job performance of the sub-ordinate helping him or her to use social work knowledge and skills efficiently and effectively in order to give agency clients maximum assistance.

### **1.12.2 Social work Supervision**

Hoffmann (1990:206) defined social work supervision as indirect practice, contrary to direct social work practice with individuals, families, small group and communities, where the social worker is in direct, active participation with consumers, within the context of a human service organization.

According to Botha (2000:11) supervision is a process whereby the supervisor performs educational, supportive and administrative functions in order to promote efficient and professional rendering of service.

In this study the researcher defines social work supervision as monitoring the work performance of subordinates (social workers) with an aim of improving and motivating them to do their work effectively and efficiently for the benefit of the client and the agency or organization.

### **1.12.3 Educational supervision**

According to Shulman (1993:155) educational supervision is specific staff development in which training is directed to the needs of a particular worker carrying a particular caseload, encountering problems in job performance.

Skidmore (1995:246) emphasises that educational supervision is aimed at helping workers to increase their knowledge and understanding to deepen their professional attitudes.

Kadushin (1992:135) states that educational supervision has to do with the supervisor in his position instructing workers in acceptable social work techniques, develop staff competence through individual and group conference, train and instruct staff in job performance.

In this study the researcher defines educational supervision as a teaching process carried out by the supervisor to assist social workers to improve their social work skills and knowledge as a way of motivating them to do their work effectively and efficiently with confidence for the benefit of the clients.

### **1.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The researcher has encountered some limitations in this study. The first limitation has to do with participants. The target population was 50 social workers and the number of the participants decreased to 42 social workers because 8 social workers did not attend the district social worker's meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2004.

Secondly this study was conducted in the Limpopo Province which has six districts but the study was conducted in the Vhembe district only. Five districts did not take part in the study. And since only 42 social workers in the Limpopo Province participated in the study generalizing the findings to the entire province is not feasible. There is still a need for another study which will include more districts in the Limpopo Province.

### **1.14 CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT**

The research report consists of four chapters and is arranged as follows:

#### **Chapter 1. Introduction and general orientation of the study**

This chapter provides a general introduction and orientation to the research report and focuses on aspects such as the rationale of the study, research problem, goals and objectives of the study, research question, research approach, research methodology, ethical issues and definitions of key concepts.

#### **Chapter 2. Literature review on educational supervision**

The chapter presents the literature reviewed on the functions of supervision and specifically on the dynamics of social work educational supervision.

### **Chapter 3. Empirical findings**

In chapter three the research methodology and empirical findings are presented, analysed and interpreted.

### **Chapter 4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter of the report presents the conclusions and recommendations regarding the study.

#### **1.15 CONCLUSION**

This chapter serves as a framework of reference on what can be anticipated from the entire study and it provides a general orientation of the study. It reveals the rationale of the study, research problem, goals and objectives of the study. It also informs the reader about the research question, research approach and methodology. The aspects described play a very important role in revealing to the reader what steps of research process were followed. In order to achieve one of the objectives of the study namely to conceptualise social work supervision with specific focus on the educational function, the following chapter focuses on the literature reviewed in this regard.



## CHAPTER 2

### SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION AND THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION OF SUPERVISION

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION.

Supervision is one of the most challenging managerial responsibilities to senior and chief social workers. Supervision ensures that the clients get quality services and the supervisees give the best in their job performance. According to Daresh (1989:21) supervision is the process of overseeing the ability of social workers to meet the goals of the organization in which they work.

Hawkins and Shoet (1989:55) state that there are many levels of operating in social work supervision and all supervision situations involve at least the following elements: a supervisor, a supervisee, a client and a work context. Kadushin (1992:142) describes these elements as the Five P's referring to them as person, problem, place, process and personnel.

The researcher agrees with the above named authors that supervision involves two persons namely a supervisor and supervisee. Effective social work supervision is based on the ability of the supervisor to establish a constructive and meaningful relationship with his/her subordinates. The supervisor should be adequately competent and knowledgeable in social work practice, policies and the procedures of his/ her agency.

According to Garrett and Herman (1995:97) supervision is concerned with enhancing the quality of work performance standard. Social work supervision helps staff members to do their job effectively. It takes place within goals identified by both the supervisor and supervisee.

This chapter gives a detailed overview of social work supervision with specific focus on the following aspects: conceptualisation of the concept social work supervision, rationale of social work supervision, nature of social work supervision, roles of the supervisor, methods of social work supervision, different functions of social work supervision with specific emphasis on educational function of social work supervision.

## **2.2. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

Ford and Jones (1987: 63) define social work supervision as planned, regular periods of time that supervisee and supervisor spend together discussing the supervisee's work in the placement of receiving the learning process.

According to Barker (2003:230) social work supervision is an administrative and educational process used to help social workers further develop and refine their skills, enhance staff morale and provide quality assurance for the clients.

Hoffmann (1990:206) defines supervision as indirect practice, contrary to direct social work practice with individuals, families, small groups and communities where the social worker is in direct, active participation with consumers, within the context of a human service organization.

According to Hess as cited by Hawkins and Shohet (1989:41) social work supervision is an interpersonal interaction with the general goal that one person, the supervisor, meet with another, the supervisee, in an effort to make the latter, more effective in helping people.

Therefore, in simple terms social work supervision has to do with monitoring the work performance of social workers with the aim of improving and motivating them to render effective and efficient services to meet the agency or organizational client's needs. It implies a professional relationship between the supervisor and supervisee.

## **2.3 RATIONALE OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

The main reason behind social work supervision is directed towards benefiting the social worker, the agency clients and the agency in which the particular social worker is employed. From the researcher's point of view supervision is needed to promote a social worker's opportunity for professional and personal growth, it gives him/her support to integrate theory and practice, and it improves his practice skills through relevant field guidance.

Hoffmann (1990:208) added that social workers are often in contact with highly charged emotional situations of living which place emotional demands on the worker and which may interfere with empathic objectivity. Supervision provides the medium through which self-awareness is fostered and honed.

Supervision also enables the social worker to meet client's expectations of providing an effective and efficient service. Furthermore, supervision benefits the clients because social workers are able to build a positive professional relationship with the clients. Social work supervision is also conducted to benefit the agency because it provides a well-structured context for the client as it curbs misuse of agency resources by the social worker. In doing this organisation's existence is justified through ensuring a high standard of social work practice (Harmse, 1999:22).

According to Farley, Smith and Boyle (2003:125) supervision in social work is needed to respond to the needs of the clients and the mandate of the community to relieve suffering and restore people to greater usefulness. The researcher agrees with these authors in the sense that supervision allows the supervisor to point out knowledge gaps and deficiencies in the supervisee's skills and assist workers to control their misconduct.

From the researcher's point of view the rationale of social work supervision is to promote professional growth of the supervisee, allowing him/her to provide quality services to the clients.

Supervision allows the social worker to be able to objectively review work, plan office activities and set goals independently. In order to understand the content of social work supervision better it is important to describe the nature of social work supervision in the next section.

## **2.4 NATURE OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

### **2.4.1. Goals of Supervision**

Supervision is a teaching situation of a very specific kind. The ultimate goal of supervision is to ensure that efficient and effective social work services are rendered to clients in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures.

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989: 41) the primary purpose of supervision is to protect the best interests of the client, since it develops the skills, understanding and ability of the supervisee. During the supervision, social workers are empowered to render effective and efficient services. Supervision also aims to ensure that the social worker is acting in accordance with the legal ethics and professional standards when helping the clients which in return promote professional and personal growth on the side of the worker.

Corey, Corey and Callanan (1993:197) view supervisory systems as where one does not only look at the volume of work that trainees bring to supervisory sessions, but one should also focus on the inter personal and intra-personal variables. This means that supervision should also look at how the supervisee relate with the clients, other social workers and the supervisor. The supervisor should also take into consideration supervisee's attitudes towards the supervisor and other social workers. Intra-personal variables has to do with social workers personality, personal preferences and ability to relate professionally. In this regard the supervisor should focus on the worker's personal growth and professional development.

According to Kadushin (1992:20) the objectives of social work supervision are both short and long range. Short-term objectives are the means for achieving the long-range objectives of supervision. The long -term objective of supervision is to effectively and efficiently provide clients with the particular service the particular agency is mandated to offer.

The short term objectives of social work supervision is to improve the worker's capacity to do his/her job more effectively, helping him to grow and develop professionally, to provide the worker with a work context that permits him to do his job effectively and to help the worker feel good about doing his job.

In order to obtain the objectives of social work supervision the supervisor must have certain qualities as discussed in the next section.

#### **2.4.2. Characteristics of a good supervisor**

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989:35) qualities of an ideal supervisor include empathy, understanding, unconditional positive regard, congruence, genuineness, warmth and self-disclosure, flexibility and openness. They also indicate that good counselling skills are a prerequisite for being a competent supervisor.

Social work supervision requires what we can call the “helicopter ability”. This is the ability to switch perspectives, to be able to focus on the client that the supervisee is describing, to focus on the supervisee and his process, to be able to focus on his own process and the here and now relationship with the supervisee, to be able to see the client within his wider context and to help the supervisee do like wise.

Adding to this Corey, Corey and Callanan (1993:45) state that a good supervisor must show the following qualities:

- Supervisors should demonstrate personal characteristics that enable them to deliver a professional service to their subordinates. Such skills include encouragement, optimism, and sensitivity to individual differences, ability to share information with others.
- Supervisors should be knowledgeable about ethical, legal and regulatory aspects of the social work profession and methods of intervention with clients and workers.
- Demonstration of knowledge of individual differences with respect to gender, race, ethnicity, culture and age.
- Supervisor must possess appropriate levels of empathy, respect, genuineness, correctness and self-disclosure.
- Supervisor must be able to set clear goals and should use them as guides in the utilisation of various techniques, they should clearly state the purposes of the supervisory relationship and explain the procedures to be followed or used.

Skidmore (1995:251) stresses that effective supervisors are open-minded. They admit that they do not have all the answers to every question and their mistakes. Brody (1993:14) holds that effective supervisors or managers are able to articulate concepts, ideas and philosophies in such a way that staff understand. The researcher agrees with Skidmore and Brody based on the fact that the supervisor and supervisee should understand one another clearly. The supervisor and supervisee should agree on the language to be used, because language could be a barrier to effective supervision.

According to Mokoena (1997:16) a supervisor should have qualities to create a conducive supervision environment which is characterised by the following supervision conditions:

- ✓ A healthy interpersonal relationship
- ✓ Clear communication
- ✓ Shared decision making
- ✓ Sense of trust
- ✓ Mutual respect
- ✓ Ability to confront and negotiate
- ✓ Loyalty
- ✓ Performance appraisal
- ✓ Group feeling

It must always be remembered that trust and honesty is a backbone of every relationship. Mokoena (1997:17) adds that words of trust should be supported by actions. It is important that both parties display the signs of trust during the supervisory relationship. Showing appreciation and giving commendation is vital in a supervisory relationship. New workers in particular are said to be hunger for commendation and appreciation. Such positive reinforcement increases motivation and professional development.

Supervisors who fail to show appreciation limit their effectiveness and slow down professional development and decrease the competency of the supervisee (Skidmore, 1995:251). The supervisor has the principal responsibility and sanction to conduct formal education (supervision) to improve supervisee's effective service rendering and in order to make supervision effective the supervisor should take into consideration factors discussed in the next section.

### **2.4.3 How to make supervision an effective tool**

According to Mudau (1996:14) in order for supervision to be effective, the supervisee must participate actively in his or her learning situation. The supervisee must be involved in the planning of his or her function in the agency which will promote the mutual trust and sharing of information.

Mokoena (1997:16) holds that a healthy relationship between the supervisor and supervisee should be developed from the beginning and should be maintained and should prevail throughout the process of supervision. A healthy supervisory relationship stimulates positive attitudes and confidence, trust and openness from both sides. In order to stimulate such a positive relationship Watkins (1997:535) says that effective supervision should be characterised by well-developed communication skills and a thorough assessment of the supervisee's knowledge base and prior working experience. The danger is that unexplored assumptions about supervisee's background knowledge could negatively affect the supervision process.

From the very beginning of their encounter, both supervisor and supervisee will have to discuss their expectations with regard to supervision, its frequency, duration, the content, sessions and the priority it should be afforded (Mudau, 1996:15). Ford and Jones (1989:67) hold that during planning for supervision sessions, the supervisee will expect a planned regular time schedule and the availability of the supervisor.

The researcher agrees with Ford and Jones based on the fact that planning of supervision sessions helps the supervisee to plan his or her work. The supervisor must be able to motivate supervisee to take into consideration that they will learn best when they are taking responsibility for their own learning.

The supervisor must also resist the temptation to impose personal standards, values and beliefs during supervision sessions. The supervisor must have a good understanding of the worker, in terms of his or her strengths and weaknesses. This could be done through a thorough needs assessment during contracting. The knowledge about supervisee's personal experiences can be utilized by the supervisor to assist him to develop and increase his knowledge.

Mudau (1996:16) identifies the following aspects, which can guide social work supervision:

- ✓ Supervision operates through a relationship between supervisor and supervisee in which social workers are individualized as persons as they are helped to perform their particular jobs
- ✓ The supervisor operates as a specialized worker rather than a superior and his or her qualification is based on skill and experience rather than on hierarchical position;
- ✓ The ultimate objective of the supervisory sessions is achievement of the agency's most important purpose;
- ✓ Supervision is essential to administration but not identical to it in particular because it has an educational as well as an administrative function; and the art of supervision is one of building creative human relations.

We have seen in the previous section that social work supervision is geared towards promotion of efficient and effective social work services. The supervisor should have qualities such as empathy, understanding, congruence, genuineness, warmth, self-disclosure and openness in order to make a difference in the working experience of the supervisee. The supervisor should also engage the supervisee in every step of supervision including planning sessions. A healthy relationship between the supervisor and supervisee also stimulates positive attitudes, working team spirit, trust and openness.

It is therefore important for the supervisor to know and understand the supervisor's roles in the process of supervision as discussed in the next section.

## **2.5 ROLES OF THE SUPERVISOR**

According to Farley et al. (2003:125) the supervisor's role is one of support, encouragement, the imparting of information and of listening to the worker, particularly to the new and inexperienced staff. Supervisors point out knowledge gaps and deficiencies in skill and assist workers to control their biases. They give psychological support by allaying anxiety and by their interest and understanding.



Adding to this Coulshed (1990:131) identified the role of the supervisor as providing appropriate climate in which the supervisor must do direct teaching but at the same time also helping the supervisee to discover knowledge and skills for themselves.

Supervisors give psychological support by alleviating anxiety through their interest and understanding. They are professional models for new workers and a bridge to the agency for the experienced worker new to the particular job or agency. Supervisors should be able to spot the short coming of the supervisee and to create a conducive environment for learning and improvement.

Skidmore (1995:246) holds that supervision encompasses three main functions namely teaching, handling administration and enabling. According to Weinbach (1998:153) during the administration function the supervisor plays the role of the manager which include planner, organizer, leader and controller. It also involves such important functions as work assignment and review, overseeing and serving as a buffer between higher level administration and workers and matching of workers to tasks.

The supervisor's role of a planner has to do with developing and planning a course of action needed to accomplish a service objective. The supervisor assigning activities to the social workers and stipulating when, where and how that activity/task should be carried out. The role of organizer involves determining what activities need to be carried out to get a job done, assigning these activities to workers and giving them the necessary authority and resources to carry out these activities. The leading role comprises guiding, influencing, activating social work supervisees in their work activities. The controlling role constitutes monitoring worker's performance and taking corrective action. It also includes assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of programme of the organisation as well as the performance of the workers in direct service delivery (Hoffmann, 1990:210).

During supportive supervision the supervisor assumes the role of comforter and psychological support provider. With this support workers can continue to function on the job without being overwhelmed by stress that exists within their work.

Lastly during educational supervision the supervisor performs the role of a teacher and mentor. The supervisor is also expected to take on the role of the educator, partly by facilitating continuing education/ learning for a supervisee.

In order to carry out the supervisor's roles properly the supervisor should be familiar with the different methods of social work supervision as discussed in the next section.

## **2.6 METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

There is a variety of supervision methods or types of supervision, which the supervisor could choose depending on the needs of the supervisee and the nature of the organisation. Hoffmann (1990:216) identifies four methods of social work supervision namely individual supervision, group supervision, peer supervision and live supervision. Skidmore (1995:260) has added four new methods of social work supervision to the list namely supervision by objectives, supervision on wheels, task supervision and adaptive supervision which is briefly discussed below.

Supervision by objectives is explained as the social work supervisor's contribution to accountability and the legitimation of achievement in the delivery of social services. This kind of supervision focuses on two social agency objectives namely performance objectives and personal development objectives. Performance objectives are formulated to maintain a desired level of unit productivity in agency services while personal development objectives addresses the individual's skill development or professional interest. Supervision by objectives provides the social worker with an opportunity to participate in goal setting, it contributes to the quality of interaction between supervisor and workers and provides a mechanism for the definition of measurable outcome criteria for job tasks (Skidmore, 1995:258).

According to Skidmore (1995:260) supervision on wheels has to do with taking the supervisory process to sparsely populated areas where there is a minimum of supervision or none at all. This type of social work supervision attempts to reach social workers who had been previously neglected in the supervisory process. After a needs survey is made supervisors from another district provide supervision to the area social workers.

According to Skidmore (1995:260) task supervision constitute supervision of social workers or students who work in the fields placement performing tasks such as writing a grant application, aiding in social work problems, needs analysis, developing a management information system, designing and implementing a program and acting and assisting staff development and training.

These also include social workers who are assisting the agency with budget analysis, participating in program evaluation, developing personal management policies and procedures, helping staff committee, serving as a staff member for a community group. This type of supervision has to do with providing the supervisee with information in relation with the kind of task assigned to him/her.

Adaptive supervision is another social work supervision method which is derived on the underlying premise/ assumption that supervision is most effective if the supervisor's leadership is based on the worker's level of professional development while at the same maintaining a concern for both service delivery and developmental needs of the worker. The goal of adaptive supervision is to enable the worker to function independently as soon as possible (Skidmore, 1995:261).

For the purpose of this study more in-depth attention will be given to the four more well-known methods of supervision namely individual supervision, group supervision, peer group supervision and live supervision.

### **2.6.1 Individual supervision**

This type of supervision is based on an one to one relationship and is a purposeful, planned interview between the supervisor and the social worker. This model is useful and helpful, as it attends to immediate personal needs, but it requires preparation for both supervisor and supervisee. Kadushin (1992:149) describes individual supervision as individual conferencing and is a dyadic interview to fulfil administrative, educational and supportive functions of supervision.

The supervisor assists the supervisee by assessing his work records, tape records, log forms, work schedules, reports and work plan. The supervisor will review the materials /work records, identify teaching-learning points and develop a teaching programme for the supervision session. During the process of supervision the worker is engaged by the supervisor in a systematic, explicit and critical analysis of the work done and planned (Hoffmann, 1990:217).

According to Kadushin (1992: 149) the advantage of individual supervision is that it promotes personal growth on the side of the supervisee because it gives an opportunity for addressing individual needs of the social worker. The limitation of the individual supervision method is that it does not promote communication and interpersonal relationships among social workers and it do not give the social worker an opportunity to learn from other social workers. The researcher is of the opinion that the individual supervision method is time consuming for the supervisor who has more than one supervisee.

### **2.6.2 Group supervision**

This method of supervision involves the supervisor as a group leader and a structured, task-oriented group of social workers. The group setting is used as a means to achieve the aims and objectives of supervision and to implement its functions. According to Skidmore (1995:259) in group supervision the major supervisory tasks are carried out in and with the group members. Supportive teaching opportunities such as individual evaluations, staff meetings and individual conferences are essential. The responsibilities for teaching and content become those of all the group members and not only the formal supervisor.

From the researcher's point of view this method of supervision is especially useful if supervisees are at the same level of professional development and if they have the same educational needs. The advantage of group supervision is that the method provides the opportunity for social workers to learn from each other and from the supervisor.

In group supervision social workers can share relevant learning experiences and knowledge in a way that provides access to more knowledge than the supervisor alone could provide. Group supervision saves supervisor's time and effort that would be required to conduct the same instruction individually for each employee.

Group supervision is more effective in educational supervision than for supportive and administrative supervision. The worker encountering the stresses of the job can receive assistance from the group members having similar problems (Weinbach, 1998:155).

### **2.6.3 Peer supervision**

During peer group supervision there is no designated supervisor and all group members participate as equals. Peer supervision setting does not differ with that of group supervision. The difference is seen when it comes to the amount of power and authority that the supervisor has within the setting. In group supervision, the supervisor is viewed as a group leader, while in peer supervision there is no designated supervisor and all group members participate as equals. According to Skidmore (1995:257) the social workers assume the basic responsibility of their own cases and are free to consult and interact with other staff members. It is the responsibility of the group to monitor the context of the supervision session, and to help participants to integrate the varied contributions by group members. The group also ensures mutual help and support, so as to improve the individual worker's insight and practice performance.

There are advantages and disadvantages to peer group supervision. The advantage of peer group supervision is that workers who are helping one another are sensitive to the problems, decisions and uncertainties inherent in their position. It is also easy for social workers to identify with other social workers of about the same age and experience (Weinbach,1998:155; Skidmore, 1995:258)). The main disadvantage of peer group supervision is that inexperienced workers may not have the knowledge and skills necessary to answer some of the questions, solve some of their problems or make decisions (Skidmore, 1995:258).

### **2.6.4 Live supervision**

According to Skidmore (1995:261) live supervision employs a one way mirror and a telephone to give immediate supervision to the trainee. During the live supervision the supervisor has three alternatives for directing a social worker: telephoning, convening a brief conference outside the training interview or entering the training interview. Before and after the training interview, there are brief teaching and planning sessions.

Bernard and Goodyear (1992:87) state that live supervision represents a paradigmatic shift from either individual supervision or group supervision. It tends to combine direct observation of the therapy and session with some methods that enable the supervisor to communicate with the supervisee and influence his/her work. Live supervision allows the supervisor and colleagues to witness the actual content and process of a session without relying on the therapist memory. One of the major advantages of this method of supervision is that it allows the social worker to receive immediate personal help at the time of the interview.

The supervisor can participate personally in the interview and can request a short interval to confer with the supervisee outside the interview situation. The client also benefit from live supervision because the supervisor will call the social worker into order immediately if he is not rendering effective services or performing up to standard. The disadvantage of live supervision is that the social worker could feel threatened by the presence of the supervisor (Skidmore, 1995:261).

The researcher would like to add that the client might lose trust in the social worker if the social worker receives advice during an interview session. Live supervision is also time consuming, since the social worker will have to stop an interview to receive comments from the supervisor.

As the title of this chapter is to discuss social work supervision in general with specific focus on educational supervision, it is also important to give a brief description of the different functions of social work supervision.

## **2.7 FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION**

Kadushin (1992:3) states that supervision has several functions, and the three major functions are an administration, educational, and supportive function. There are also other functions such as motivation, personality enrichment and modelling (Vester in Mudau, 1996:16). Each function of supervision serves a unique purpose but collectively, they all aim at enhancing professional growth. The researcher will briefly discuss each function.

### **2.7.1. Administrative function**

Kadushin (1992:19) defines the administrative function of social work supervision as a process for getting the work done and maintaining organisational control and accountability. Adding to this Skidmore (1995:247) indicates that the administration function of supervision focuses on provision of effective social work services to the clients. In administration the supervisor directs and guides and helps with management matters such as salaries, promotions, and assignment of cases and appointments of committees. The supervisor ensures some uniformity of quality and quantity in the work of the staff.

Harmse (1999:40) holds that in implementing the administrative function of supervision, the supervisor organises the work place and the organisational and human resources to achieve the administrative objectives in accordance with organisational policies and procedures. This function of social work supervision enables the social worker by means of management and administration to do his work effectively and sufficiently within the framework of the organisational structure, policy, procedures and objectives.

Some of the tasks, which are performed by the supervisor during administrative social work supervision, include staff recruitment, selection, orientation and placing social workers and work planning (Kadushin, 1992:46).

### **2.7.2 Supportive function**

Supportive supervision according to Hoffman (1990:220) is the major function of social work supervision. The goal of supportive supervision is to promote the psychological well being of the worker by preventing the development of stress and tension and to help the worker to cope with emotional demanding situations.

Kadushin (1992:227) states that supportive supervision provides the psychological and interpersonal context that enables the worker to mobilize the emotional energy needed for effective job performance. According to him the primary goal of supportive supervision is to increase effectiveness of the worker through decreasing stress that interferes with performance and increasing motivation and intensifying commitment that enhance performance.

Clare (1990:502) refers supportive supervision to maintenance supervision, because supervisors in social work supervision are not seen as authority figures but rather as people who understand the needs of their subordinates by listening to them, lead and motivate them.

The point here is through support, the supervisee retains his/her self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence. As new service provider in the agency the supervisee feels welcome and starts to love his/her work and through consultation with his/her supervisor he/she gains new skills and knowledge, his/her ego is strengthened and emotional energy is also boosted. The supervisor provides the psychological and interpersonal support to enable the worker to mobilize his emotional energy needed for effective job performance.

### **2.7.3 Motivation function**

Motivation forms an integral part of social work supervision since job motivation is linked to the objectives of social work supervision. Weiner (1991:302) defines motivation as an internal motivating force that lead a person to act in a certain way.

It is the duty and responsibility of the supervisor to motivate and activate social workers to provide effective and efficient services to the clients. According to Plunkett and Greer (2000:221) motivation is the drive within a person to achieve a desired goal. It is an internal process that takes place in all human beings influenced by their perceptions and experiences as well as external variables like the supervisor's actions during supervision sessions.

According to Harmse (1999:55) motivation depends on the needs of the social worker as well as the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards he receives. The supervisor cannot change a social worker but he can change the behaviour of the social worker. The focus of supervision is to determine the meaning of reinforcement and work circumstances for the social worker and to link his perceptions with the achievement of organisational goals.

In order for the supervisor to carry out the motivational function of social work supervision effectively he needs to understand and be able to implement the correct motivational theories to the right person at the right time and at the right place in this regard.



Harmse (1999:56) classifies motivational theories according to physiological theories, cognitive theories and social/behaviourist theories. Physiological theories identify a basic motivational influence in every individual-their natural and most basic needs. Behaviour of all human beings is influenced by the presence of these basic needs, because they are motivated to satisfy or fulfil these natural or physiological needs. Some of the physiological theories, which could be used to motivate social workers, are Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg's two factor theories and Schein's theory of complex man (Harmse, 1996:56).

Cognitive theories state that conscious and rational decision making is the key factor in influencing human behaviour. Before individuals act in a certain manner, they make a conscious decision regarding the outcome and perceived value of such behaviour. It is only after such a rational process that the individual will behave in a certain manner. Examples of cognitive theories are McClelland's power-affiliation-achievement model, McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, Vroom's expectancy theories and reinforcement theory (Rue and Byars, 1996:274; Harmse, 1999:57).

According to Harmse (1999:58) social/ behaviourist theories recognise the influence of societal and environmental factors upon behaviour. Some of the examples of social theories are Mayo's theory of social needs and Lewin's field theory. Individuals can be influenced or motivated either by societal pressure or by the manipulation of each person's environment. Learning, reinforcement and conformity are aspects central to these theories. The point here is that the working condition of the social worker, including the provision of rewards and punishment can have a significant effect on job performance.

The researcher would like to conclude by saying that motivational theories have been conceptualised and if applied effectively by the supervisor, they can help motivating social workers, but they do not represent the final answer on how to encourage social workers to provide maximum services.

These theories can only be used as guidelines for motivation because it is still the responsibility of the supervisor to provide motivational conditions for social workers. By encouraging and even requiring the social workers continually to upgrade their professional abilities and by providing them with the means for professional development, the supervisor can upgrade motivation and work performance.

#### **2.7.4 Personality enrichment**

Although personality enrichment could be found in all the major functions of supervision it is specifically related to the supportive function of supervision. This function of supervision is aimed at improving social worker's self image, both professional and personal behaviour patterns, as well as psychological and emotional needs.

Social work supervisors have a challenging responsibility to give social workers psychological and interpersonal support to enable them to grow professionally and believe in themselves. Personality enrichment as one of the functions of social work supervision guides the social workers until they reach a stage where they could be independent in social work services delivery. This function equips the supervisee with knowledge and skills to cope with work and personal problems.

The personality enrichment function of supervision restores social worker's ego and strengthen their capacity to deal with stresses and tension. This function of supervision enables the social worker to retain self-confidence, faith and perspective within difficult work and personal circumstances.

According to Harmse (1999:60) a social worker enters the social work profession and an organisation where other social workers and personnel are already established in work responsibilities and relationships. The newly employed social worker has to establish relationships with colleagues, his supervisor and his clients.

The personality of the social worker plays an important role in the establishment and the maintenance of these relationships. Since the social work profession is a highly people centred profession and services are rendered under highly emotional and stress related circumstances, the personality of the social worker is his/her best aid in being effective and efficient in the rendering of social work services. Good supervisory practice enables the social worker to extend his/her knowledge, enrich his/her personality, develop his creativity and enhance productivity (Harmse, 1999:60).

### **2.7.5 Modelling function**

The modelling function of social work supervision can be defined as “ a process in which a skilled co-worker or supervisor demonstrates the performance of key job skills and simultaneously explains steps involved and the reasons for doing them (Bittel & Newstrom, 1990:236).

In simple terms modelling has to do with learning by watching/observing an experienced worker doing the task. Social work supervisors are faced with a task of examining their work habits and try to become what he/she wants these social workers to be. It should be noted that a good relationship between the supervisor and supervisee is very important in the modelling function of social work supervision. The supervisory relationship must be positive from both sides. The relationship provides the supervisor with a power base for influence. The stronger the relationship the stronger the power of the supervisor to influence the behaviour and attitude of the supervisee.

According to Harmse (1999:64) modelling implies that the supervisor provides an example that is worth following in terms of being a professional social worker and a professional person. Modelling professional social work behaviour results in providing the social worker with a model of desirable skills, techniques and attitudes for effective and efficient social work services.

Kadushin (1992:156) holds that some significant part of social work supervision content cannot be taught didactically, through discussion or experimentally. Such content can only be taught through modelling.

Modelling involves deliberately selected displays of behaviour by the supervisor for didactic purposes. Modelling involves observing desirable worker behaviour available from a wide variety of sources, reading typescripts of interviews, listening to audiotapes, watching movies and videotapes, watching interviews through a one way screen or sitting in on an interview. All these procedures provide the supervisee with a model of how a worker should behave when in contact with a client (Kadushin, 1992: 156).

Based on the fact that the sixth function namely educational supervision is the focus of this study, the next section looks at an in-depth discussion of the educational function of social work supervision.

## **2.8 EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

Education generally is well known as an art of teaching or training of the human mind and character while supervision is simply understood as an art of guidance, through careful watching of a worker's job performance. Educational supervision as the function of social work supervision is concerned with teaching the worker what he needs to know to do his job and helping him learn it. In the South African context it means that the educational function will especially focus on knowledge and teaching regarding the developmental social work paradigm as indicated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997).

Educational supervision is thus concerned with imparting the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for performance of social work tasks through the detailed analysis of worker's interaction with the client. In this regard the knowledge, skills and attitudes of social workers refers to their knowledge, skills and attitudes about developmental social work. Every job description of the supervisor includes a list of this function: instruct workers in acceptable social work techniques, develop staff competence through individual and group conferences, train and instruct staff in job performance.

The educational activities include teaching, facilitating learning, training, sharing experiences and knowledge, informing, clarifying and guiding (Kadushin, 1992:135).

Adding to this Weinbach (1994:123) describes the educational function of social work supervision as one of the traditional roles of the social work supervisor. He further indicates that the supervisor is expected to take on the role of educator, partly by facilitating continuing education for social work supervisee.

As the educational function of social work supervision is the main focus in this study this section will therefore focus on the definition of educational supervision, significance of educational supervision, focus areas of educational supervision, the educational supervision contract, as well as the components and process of educational supervision.

### **2.8.1 Definition of educational supervision**

Shulman (1993:155) defines educational supervision as specific staff development in which training is directed at the needs of a particular social worker carrying a particular case load, encountering particular problems and needing some individualized program of education.

According to Skidmore (1995:246) educational supervision is a teaching process aimed at helping workers increase their knowledge and understanding to deepen their professional attitudes. It also involves assisting workers to increase and improve social work practice skills.

Kadushin (1992:135) holds that educational supervision is concerned with imparting the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the performance of clinical social work tasks through the detailed analysis of the worker's interaction with the clients.

Harmse (1999:33) holds that educational function of social work supervision can be described as the process through which the social worker is trained to execute his/her responsibilities as social worker correctly. Through the educational process of supervision the social worker is trained in the skills and knowledge that he/she needs to be able to accomplish effective interaction with clients.

In a nutshell, educational supervision is concerned with developing the professional skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities of the supervisees in order to do their work effectively for the benefit of their clients. The supervisor should accomplish this through reflection on monitoring the work of the supervisee and establishes the loopholes on the worker's performance.

The next section examines the significance of social work educational supervision in order to underscore the importance of educational supervision in social work practice.

### **2.8.2 Significance of educational supervision**

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989:42) educational supervision is very important because it helps the supervisee to understand clients better, become more aware of his/her own reactions and responses to the clients and understand the dynamics of how the client was interacting, look closely at how he/she intervened and the consequences of his/her interventions and to explore other ways of working with this and other similar client situations.

The researcher agrees with the two authors because educational supervision offers the supervisor a golden opportunity for setting learning goals with each and every social worker. Educational supervision capacitates every worker with the knowledge and skills necessary for rendering quality, effective and efficient services and it gives the supervisee autonomy /independence to function independently since he/she receives skills and knowledge to function alone during the supervision process.

Kadushin (1992:138) holds that educational supervision is a significant dimension of the supervisor's activities and responsibilities. It is a source of satisfaction for both the supervisor and supervisee. The supervisor is satisfied in helping the supervisee grow and develop as a professional and in sharing the knowledge and skills with supervisees. Supervisees on the other hand are satisfied that their supervisors helped them in dealing with problems in working with clients and in helping them develop as professional social workers. Kadushin further says that when supervision fails, failures are most keenly felt in the area of educational supervision.

The research conducted by Shulman as cited by Kadushin (1992:138) shows that educational supervision is the most important function of supervision. The research indicated that groups, that participated in the research, pointed out that a considerable amount of the supervisor's time was spent in teaching and consultation regarding practice skills.

Since educational supervision is aimed at teaching and improving social work services delivery, focus areas of educational supervision will be discussed in the next session.

### **2.8.3 Focus areas of educational supervision**

Educational supervision is aimed at the provision of knowledge and skills to the supervisee through the interactional process between the supervisee and the supervisor. The kind of knowledge and skills needed by the supervisee to render effective welfare services in a developmental context is centred or concerned around the following areas: person, problem, place, process and personnel.

Hoffmann (1990:215) and Kadushin (1992:142) describe briefly the five P's as follows:

**The person-** This refers to the client who might be an individual, family, group, community or an organization. It is the duty of the supervisor to teach the supervisee about the kind of clients that are served by the particular agency to enable him/her to provide effective services.

**The problem-**The problem has to do with causal factor of discomfort to the client. The supervisor will have to teach the supervisee something about the causes of the problem, the psychosocial nature of a particular problem and its impact on the community members or different people.

**The place-**This is about the social agency where the particular social worker is employed. The supervisor will have to teach the supervisee about how the agency is organized and administered, how it relates to other agencies and fits into the total network of the community social services.

**The process-** The supervisor should teach the supervisee about what the worker is expected to do professionally and how he/she has to act during the helping process meaning that the worker needs to understand social work methods such as casework, group-work, community work and social work research.

**The personnel-** The personnel in this case will be the service provider who is the social worker. The supervisor has to teach the supervisee something about himself/herself in developing a greater sense of self-awareness. Educational supervision is concerned with the purposeful, consciously directed use of the professional self, which requires self-awareness as a necessary prerequisite.

To enhance the work performance of the supervisee the supervisor and supervisee must identify and discuss the focus areas of the educational supervision. In order to accomplish their desired goal they need to compile a supervision contract to guide the supervision process. Therefore, the supervision contract will receive attention in the next section as part of the educational supervision process.

#### **2.8.4 Educational supervision contract**

It should be noted with caution that the supervision contract is an important and applicable element of all the functions of supervision and it forms part of the whole process of social work supervision. In this study the researcher focuses only on elements of educational supervision as part of the supervision contract.

Shulman (1993:164) states that supervision contracting forms part of the initial stage of the supervision process. Like in all supervisory relationships, educational supervision requires certain formalities, structure and different role assignments. During supervision contracting the supervisor and supervisee must therefore focus on the clarification of purpose, clarification of role, feedback regarding purpose and dealing with the authority theme.

Clarification of purpose and role has to do with informing the supervisee as to why there is a need for educational supervision focussing on the necessity and relevance of this function of social work supervision to his work performance. The supervisor should also explain his role and role expectations as teacher and enabler as well as the role of the supervisee as student during the initial stage of the educational supervision process. These roles should be clarified to the supervisee during the contracting stage to avoid conflicts. The supervision contract should also cover feedback including when to give feedback and how (method) the feedback will be given.



The supervision contract should include a description of the professional relationship and an agreement on the type of the supervision to be carried out. Types of supervision include tutorial supervision, training supervision, individual supervision, group supervision, peer group supervision and consultative supervision (Botha, 2000:125).

The contract should also focus on the duration of the supervision sessions, time, venue relationship (focusing on the behaviour towards one another), termination period and method of feedback giving. Educational supervision should be conducted in a place that ensures privacy and protection from interruption, it must be physically comfortable and conducive to good and audible communication.

### **2.8.5 Components of educational supervision.**

According to Middleman and Rhodes (1985:242) educational supervision entails four components namely educational assessment, determining the learning needs, determining learning objectives and formulation of educational programme.

#### **2.8.5.1 Educational assessment**

Many social workers start working without experience and others change agencies after gaining some experience which might not be but not related to the job at hand e.g. a social worker from Department of Social Services taking a new job at the Department of Correctional Services.

Such a worker has different educational training needs and different practical experience. Supervisors should do an educational assessment to start where the worker is, filling the gaps and to enrich the knowledge already obtained. Munson (1983:17) asserts that educational diagnosis or assessment measures what the person knows and has experienced. The most relevant questions that go into educational assessment are:

- What do the supervisees know?
- What do they know about theory?
- What kind of practice setting have they worked in?
- How many in depth cases have they treated?

- What kind of outcomes have they produced?
- What type of cases have they treated?
- What do they know about diagnosis and assessment?
- What do they see as their practice strengths and weaknesses?
- What is their style of practice?
- How much supervision and what kind of supervision have they experienced?
- What do they hope to accomplish from supervision?

Hoffmann (1990:214) and Middleman and Rhodes (1985: 244) add that the level of motivation, attitudes towards supervision, ability to develop worker autonomy, personal reference and interest, adaptability, ability to relate professionally and internalisation of knowledge, skills and values, must also be assessed.

The researcher is of opinion that the above cited assessment areas could help to set the tone for the supervisor-supervisee relationship. A questionnaire focusing on these aspects will help the supervisor to get to know the supervisee instead of guessing or taking for granted what the supervisee knows or does not know. Assessment thus makes educational supervision to be factual, purposeful and meaningful.

Educational assessment also clarifies uncertainties, alleviates anxieties as the supervisee will feel that the supervisor understands him/her. It is important that the supervisor should not be influenced by previous experience in supervision in choosing an educational supervision style. An educational style of supervision should be developed from the educational assessment of a specific social worker.

#### **2.8.5.2 Determination of learning needs**

The second component of educational supervision is the determination of learning needs. As indicated earlier under discussion of social work supervision, supervision is a goal directed process aimed at meeting the needs of the client, the organization and that of the individual worker. Therefore, it is the duty of the supervisor and supervisee to determine together, based on the assessment, the learning needs of the supervisee.

Weinbach (1994:128) says that staff members have a variety of learning needs. Those learning needs range from technical skills to theoretical knowledge to instruction in appropriate values. It is also obvious that certain educational methods are appropriate for some needs but inappropriate for others. Therefore it is very important to determine the learning needs and decide on the most useful methods that should be used.

From the above explanation it is quite evident that the supervisor, in determining the learning needs, should individualize each social worker and accept him/her as unique, as staff members have a wide variety of learning needs. It is the supervisor's responsibility to determine what the supervisee already knows and it is also his/her responsibility to keep abreast with new information and learning methods, theories as well as new developments in the profession. The supervisor needs to be skillful in order to enhance the skills of the supervisees.

### **2.8.5.3 Determining the learning objectives**

Based on the identified needs, specific learning objectives must be formulated. Determining learning objectives is essential before conducting educational supervision. The learning objectives must correlate with the assessed needs of the supervisee. Educational objectives assist in channelling educational supervision towards its specific purpose.

The objectives also serve as bases for evaluating effectiveness. Each objective should specify what learning should occur to help correct the deficient areas identified through the educational diagnosis (Hoffmann,1990:214).

Botha (2000:95) states that it is possible to and even valuable for learners to obtain the learning objectives in distinctly different ways. The main learning objectives of the supervisee must be linked to theory, practical knowledge and insight of the supervisee.

Botes (1994:131) gives the following as some of the objectives of any learning situation:

- ❑ To enhance the efficiency of a new comer and to improve work performance
- ❑ To prepare workers for greater responsibility and for possible promotion.
- ❑ To make workers more versatile, so that they can perform a variety of tasks.
- ❑ To ensure the skilful application of new procedures, methods and equipment.
- ❑ To keep workers informed about the latest developments in their particular fields.

#### **2.8.5.4. The formulation of an educational programme.**

After determination of the learning objectives the supervisor and supervisee should formulate an educational programme geared towards achievement of those objectives. For an educational programme to be successful it is important that the supervisee /social worker should be intensively involved in its compilation.

According to Botha (2000:144) educational model components with which the social worker has to comply with is the basic point of departure and the formulation of the educational programme indicating which learning areas should receive first priority.

Furthermore, when planning the educational supervision programme, it is essential that the supervisor takes into consideration the principle of adult education because of the fact that adults submit themselves to the learning process with a high degree of independence and wide experience in his work situation, their own family lives and recreation. For the education programme to be successful it is of vital importance that the social worker be intensively involved in its compilation. It is also important that the formulation of an educational supervision programme be around the work of Perlman's four Ps namely person, problems, place and process and a fifth one added by Kadushin (1992:142) which is personnel since the knowledge which is required by the supervisee is centred around these Five Ps.

In order to understand the applicability of the social work educational function of supervision and the implementation of the educational supervision programme, it is important to discuss the process of educational supervision in the next section.

### **2.8.6 The process of educational supervision**

In this section the researcher discusses the processes of educational supervision focusing on the individual supervision method since this method is still the principal locus of supervision although the other methods such as group supervision and peer supervision are also important.. In most cases these methods are used as alternative methods to individual supervision.

Kadushin (1992:149) talks about the individual conference meaning an individual supervision session. The author identifies four phases in the whole educational individual supervision process namely the preparation phase, middle phase, feedback phase and termination phase. However it should be noted that more than one session of educational supervision can be conducted in each phase depending on the level of supervision and working experience on the side of the supervisor and supervisee.

#### **2.8.6.1 The beginning phase/Preparation phase**

The individual supervision or conference begins with the preparation for the conference by both supervisee and supervisor. In this phase the supervisee submits some record of his work-written recordings (files), tape recordings, log forms, work schedule, reports completed and work plan. The supervisee's formal preparation of this material requires some self-review of his work (Kadushin, 1992:152).

During this phase the supervisor reviews the above-mentioned material with the responsibility of educational supervision in mind. The supervisor develops the teaching syllabus for the next conference. In preparation the supervisor should also review his notes and relevant literature on the material he plans to teach.

It is the duty of the supervisor to review the educational diagnosis of the supervisee and where he/she is now in his/her learning situation at any given time. In addition to the teaching syllabus it is important that the supervisor also reviews his/her knowledge about the learner's (social worker) working and personal experience (Kadushin, 1992:152).

The supervisor has the responsibility to ensure that the instrumental materials to be used during the conference teaching are available. For instance if the use of certain agency forms is to be discussed copies should be at hand and the agency manuals should be accessible if agency policies need to be discussed. The advance planning and preparation provide the supervisor with a focus and a structure which she holds lightly and flexibly ready to discard or change in response to a supervisee's learning needs as they are actually manifested in the conference. Selectivity in choosing what to teach is a significant aspect of preparation (Kadushin, 1992:153).

#### **2.8.6.2. The Middle phase**

Kadushin (1992:153) holds that in this phase the supervisor engages the worker in a systematic, explicit, critical analysis of the work he did and the work he is planning to do with an individual client, a family, a group and community. By doing this the supervisor will be providing the worker with a structured learning situation which facilitates maximum growth through a process which frees potentialities.

The supervisor helps the supervisee impose some order and meaning on experience and identify the principles that can guide him in understanding what he needs to do. The supervisor does this by asking questions, requesting clarifications and freeing, supporting, stimulating, directing, challenging and supplementing the worker's thinking.

The supervisor calls attention to errors in the worker's performance, missed opportunities and gaps. The supervisor introduces new ideas, shares relevant knowledge and experience and explains and illustrates similarities and differences between this and other situations, enlarging the worker's perspective. Through probing questions and responses, the supervisee experiences the opportunity to think more perceptually about the client's situation (Kadushin, 1992:154).

According to Kadushin (1992:155) the intention in educational supervision is to transform information into knowledge, knowledge into understanding and understanding into changed behaviour. Theory is reformulated as practice principles, which are then adapted to the situational requirements of the tasks the supervisee is asked to perform. It holds that in this phase the supervisor offers a short lecture, engage the supervisee in a give and take discussion and offer a demonstration, role play and materials for reading.

### **2.8.6.3 Feedback phase**

From the researcher's point of view the feedback phase is very important for the supervisor and supervisee, because the supervisee should know from the supervisor on how he is doing. The supervisee would like to hear about his job performance improvement and relationship with the clients. On the other hand the supervisor needs to find out whether his teaching method /style used benefited the supervisee. It should be noted that supervision is concerned with the development of supervisee 's self understanding, self awareness and emotional growth. Positive feedback will encourage the supervisee to strive for improvement of his performance. The supervisor should make sure that he does not give feedback, which will damage the supervisory relationship with the supervisee. The feedback should focus on the supervisee's job performance and not the supervisee as person.

In this phase Kadushin (1992:158) states that feedback is very important during educational supervision because the supervisor teaches and the supervisee learns through feedback. Feedback reinforces learning that works and helps correct faulty learning. Supervisees learn from their mistakes if they find out what their mistakes are and if they are given the opportunity to analyse them.

Supervisors should give critical feedback focusing on positive and negative aspects because supervisees need this as part of growth from their supervisors. During the supervision session the supervisor should also take negative feedback into consideration because when she/her only provides positive feedback the trainees will question what is not being said and subsequently it influences the trustworthiness of the supervisor.

Kadushin (1992:165) mentions that during feedback time the following guidelines should be taken into account: feedback should be given as soon as possible after the performance because it increases motivation and interest in learning; it should be specific; should be objective; should be descriptive rather than judgmental; highlight the effects of good performance; focus on behaviour of the supervisee not the supervisee as a person; good feedback involves sharing ideas rather than giving advice; and feedback needs to be selective in terms of the amount that a person can absorb. The principle is to keep the amount to what the supervisee can use, not all of the feedback the supervisor has available to give (Kadushin, 1992:165)

#### **2.8.6.4. Termination phase**

The supervisor and supervisee should plan and discuss the termination of social work supervision at the beginning during the contracting phase. This allows both parties to complete the selected agenda within the allocated period of time. Termination of the supervision involves a summarization of the supervision session, a capitulation of points covered and content taught (Kadushin, 1992:167).

Towards the end of the scheduled time, the supervisor should be looking for a convenient time of termination. The worker should be given some prior opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues that were of vital importance to her/him. Termination stage focuses on consolidation and addresses autonomy needs by pushing the supervisee to arrive at his/her own conclusions.

According to Kadushin (1992:167) it is good to finish a supervision session with some questions for the social worker to think about, because questions could serve as a transition to the next educational supervision session. The researcher is of the opinion that questions raised during this phase of educational supervision give both the supervisor and supervisee an opportunity to prepare for the next supervision session.



## 2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter illustrated why supervision is important in social work practice. Supervision is an essential method in helping social workers to reach their maximum job performance. Social workers who do not receive supervision are normally unable to render quality, effective and efficient welfare services. Supervision assists workers to grow personally and professionally and allowing them to be competent workers.

Different authors have indicated three major functions of supervision namely the administrative, educational and supportive functions, although motivation, modelling and personality enrichment are also mentioned as additional functions of supervision. Although this study mainly focuses on the educational function, all functions are however geared towards the promotion or protection of the client's rights. All in all supervision is geared towards the enhancement of the quality of job performance by helping social workers to increase their knowledge and skills. There are different methods or types of supervision which include individual supervision, group supervision, live supervision and peer supervision. Different methods can be used depending on the identified needs of the social workers.

Based on the fact that the main purpose of this study is to explore and gain insight into the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision as implemented in the department of Health and welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province, the next chapter will focus on the presentation of the empirical findings.

## CHAPTER 3

### EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret the research findings and to communicate the information that has been accumulated from the empirical findings. This study was conducted in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. The main purpose of this study was to explore and gain insight into the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision as implemented in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

A group- administered questionnaire was used to collect data. Fouché (1998:155) states that a group- administered questionnaire is a questionnaire which is completed by the respondents in a group form. The questionnaire was distributed during a Vhembe District social workers staff meeting on 27 August 2004. Eleven senior social workers and thirty- one social workers participated in the study. This means that 42 social workers completed the questionnaire instead of the 50 social workers that were expected. Eight social workers did not attend the specific district social worker's staff meeting and did not therefore complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections namely:

- Personal information
- Training and professional experience
- Social work supervision in general
- Educational supervision

#### 3.2.PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS.

Data will be analysed according to the above mentioned 4 sections and data presentation and discussions will be done according to the individual questions in the questionnaire.

(See Appendix 1)

### 3.2.1 PERSONAL INFORMATION

#### 3.2.1.1 Gender of respondents (Question 1.1.)

The majority of the respondents (55 %) who participated in this study were female social workers while 45% were males, as indicated in Table 1 below.

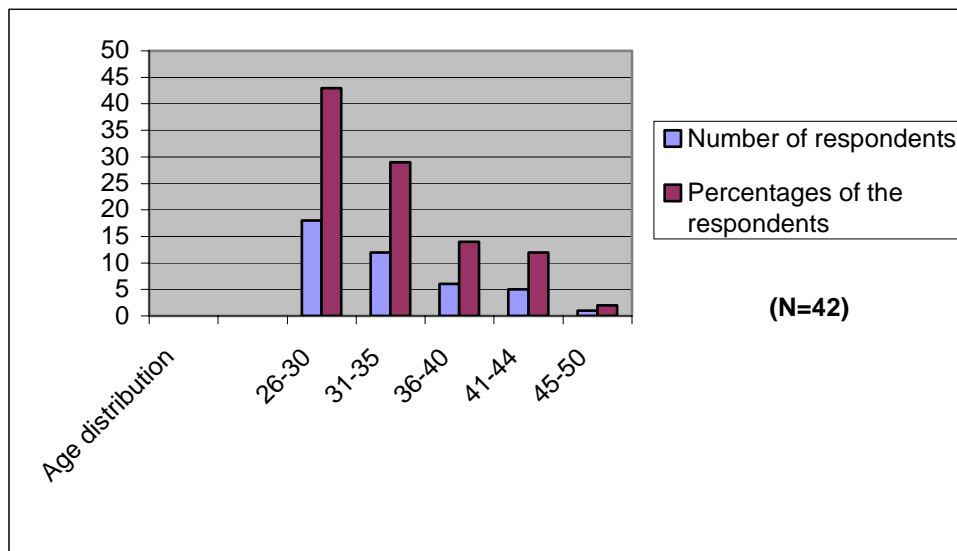
**Table 1. Gender of the respondents who participated in the study**

Gender	Numbers	%
Female	23	55%
Male	19	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Discussion

This study reveals that the majority of the respondents (55%) who participated in the study are female social workers. This is not surprising because the social work profession is dominated by females.

#### 3.2.1.2 Age Distribution of the respondents (Question 1.2.)



**Figure 1. Age distribution of respondents**

## Discussion

It is worth noting that these findings revealed that the majority of the social workers in the Vhembe District are still very young. 69% are under the age of 35 years. All in all the study also revealed that eighty-six percent (86%) of them are still below forty years of age which is a clear indication that these social workers will need constant training and regular supervision.

### 3.2.1.3 Respondents home languages (Question 1.3)

**Table 2. Respondent's home language**

<b>Languages</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
English	0	0%
Venda	26	62%
Tsonga	13	31%
N.Sotho	2	5%
Afrikaans	1	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

## Discussion

The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents (62%) are Venda speaking, followed by Tsonga speaking social workers (31%). Venda and Tsonga speaking people are dominating because of the historical make up of the Vhembe District. It has been from a combination of former Venda area and Malamulele area. This study suggests that the lack of educational supervision in the Vhembe District cannot be attributed to a language problem since most of the social work offices are occupied by supervisors and supervisees who speak the same language.

### 3.2.2 TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### 3.2.2.1 Respondents highest social work qualifications (Question 2.1.)

The majority of the respondents (83%) hold BA (SW) of 4 years duration as their highest social work qualification, 12 % hold BA (SW) of three years while only 5% have a masters degree.

#### Discussion.

These findings suggest that by far the majority of social workers (supervisees) (95%) do not have post- graduate degrees. This means that social workers need training and support of some sort to enable them to render effective and efficient social work services. From the researcher’s point of view post- graduate education allows social workers to gain new or more insight and knowledge about new development in the social work profession. However, the researcher is not ignoring or undermining the training acquired during their undergraduate training. The researcher suggests that post-graduate studies stimulate or reinforce any education or knowledge gained previously for effective social work services rendering.

#### 3.2.2.2 Respondents present social work ranks (Question 2.2.)

**Table 3. Social work ranks of respondents who participated in the study**

<b>Social work rank</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Social worker	31	74%
Senior social worker	11	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Discussion

The interesting thing about these findings is that the majority of the social workers (74%) are in the social work rank while only 26 % of the respondents are senior social workers. This suggests that most of the social workers are either young and new in the profession or they do not have the ability or opportunity to be promoted to a more senior rank.

According to the researcher's opinion these social workers need regular guidance and supervision to enable them render effective social work services to their respective clients.

### **3.2.2.3 Training in social work supervision (Question 2.3.)**

The respondents were requested to indicate whether they did receive training about social work supervision during their social work training. Eighty one percent (81%) of the respondents showed that they did receive training in social work supervision while 19 % indicated that they did not receive any training.

### **Discussion**

These findings revealed that 81% of social workers have a basic knowledge about social work supervision which they received during undergraduate training. This according to the researcher is another indicator that social workers have knowledge and understand what social work supervision is all about. This also suggests that it will not be difficult for the supervisors when they introduce supervision to their supervisees. What needs to be done is to put the kind of knowledge they have into practice. The supervisors need to bear in mind that their supervisees will become supervisors in the near future and should make sure that they practice supervision as another way of preparing their supervisees.

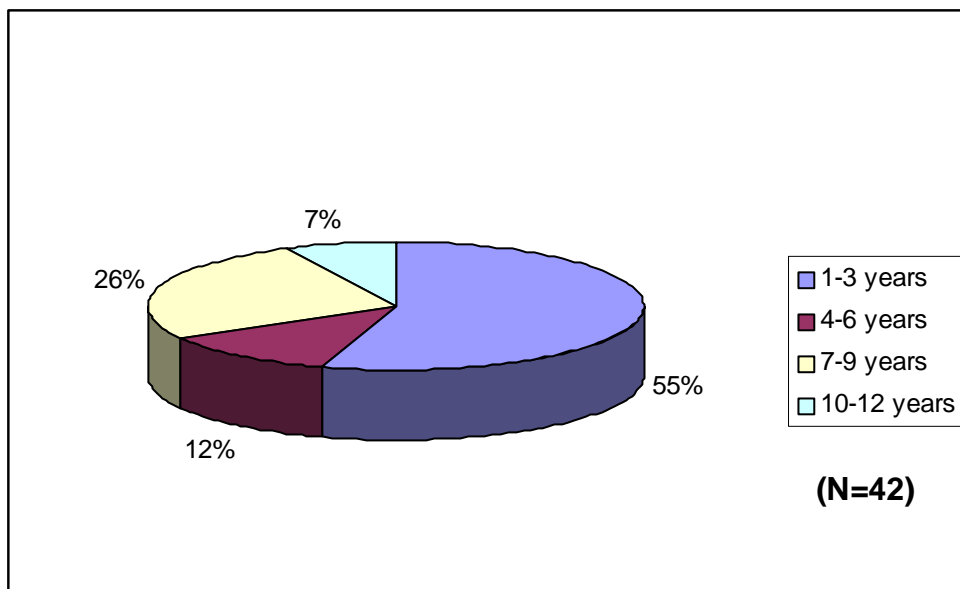
### **3.2.2.4 Duration of the training (Question 2.4.)**

Those respondents who indicated that they did receive training in supervision were requested to indicate the duration of their training. Out of eighty one percent (81%) of the respondents 69 % indicated that they received training for a semester at the under graduate level while 12% showed that they received training for a whole year also at the undergraduate level.

## Discussion

It is important to note that the majority of the respondents (69%) received training about social work supervision within a shortest period of time namely six months (semester). This raises a great concern because only a limited (short) time is spent on training in social work supervision on undergraduate level. The researcher believes that more time should be allocated to social work supervision since it is the backbone of the social work profession. Supervision assists social workers to be more effective in their working situations and service delivery.

### 3.2.2.4 Respondents working experience (Question 2.5)



**Figure 2. Working experience of the respondents**

Figure 2 shows that the majority of the respondents ( 55%) working experience fall within 1-3 years, 26 % between 7-9 years, 12% between 4-6 years while 7% have working experience within 10-12 years.

## **Discussion**

The findings in Figure 2 correlate with the age of respondents. The majority of the social workers (55%) are still young in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. This suggests that they lack working experience. The researcher suggests that their work must be monitored and guided through supervision on regular basis.

### **3.2.3 SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION IN GENERAL**

#### **3.2.3.1 Supervisee's understanding of social work supervision. (Question 3.1.)**

Hundred percent of the respondents (100%) agreed with all the statements in the questionnaire concerning what social work supervision is all about (see appendix 1). The respondents agree with authors such as Garrett and Herman (1995:97) and Rothmund (1992:3) who state that social work supervision is needed to promote social worker's opportunity for professional and personal growth, give support for the integration of theory and practice and it will improve their practice skills through relevant field guidance.

## **Discussion**

These findings point out to the fact that the majority of the respondents have basic knowledge regarding social work supervision. These data support the findings indicated in Question 2.3. regarding the respondent's training in social work supervision. The interesting point about these findings is that even the 19% of the respondents who indicated that they did not receive formal training supervision at under-graduate level, show an understanding of what social work supervision is all about. The researcher agrees with these findings that the rationale of social work supervision is centred around the promotion of professional and personal growth to provide quality services to the client. The findings also suggest that social workers have theory in social work supervision and that it is the duty of the social worker's supervisor to put this theory into practice.



### **3.2.3.2 Importance of social work supervision (Question 3.2.)**

The purpose of this question was to determine if the respondents understand the significance of social work supervision. The majority of the respondents (67%) indicated that social work supervision promotes the social worker's opportunity for professional and personal growth, because it enhances the social worker's ability to integrate theory and practice. Thirty three percent (33%) pointed out that supervision enables social workers to meet client's expectations of providing effective and efficient services, because supervision improves social workers practice skills.

### **Discussion**

The results show that the respondents have an understanding of how they can benefit if educational supervision is properly practised. The findings suggest that in each and every session the supervisor should make sure that the supervisee learns new knowledge regarding social work helping process in order to allow his/her professional growth and to enhance effective service rendering.

### **3.2.3.3 Goal of social work supervision (Question 3.3.)**

In this question the respondents were asked to show whether they agree or not with the statement about the goal of social work supervision. Ninety eight percent (98%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that the ultimate goal of social work supervision is to ensure that efficient and effective social work services are rendered to clients in accordance with the agency's policy and procedures by developing social workers skills. Only 1 % of the respondents disagreed with the statement and failed to motivate why they disagreed.

The respondents were also asked to motivate their answers in Question 3.3. The majority of the respondents (64%) did not give any motivation. The smaller group of the respondents 36% motivated that social workers that are encouraged and supported by their supervisors are productive and provide excellent services to the agency clients. Social workers work with human beings with different problems which need a well-equipped and a mature social worker to meet the client's needs.

## **Discussion**

These findings suggest that the majority of the social workers understand the main goal of social work supervision. This view is also supported by Hawkins and Shohet (1989:41) who see the goal of supervision as protection of the best interests of the client since it develops the skills, understanding and ability of the supervisee. The findings suggest that supervisee understand and have an idea about what they are supposed to gain at the end of every supervision session.

### **3.2.3.4 Qualities of a good supervisor (Question 3.5.)**

The majority of the respondents (64%) believe that a good supervisor is someone who has empathy, understanding, ability to share information, self-disclosure and warmth towards his supervisee, while (14%) indicated openness, self-disclosure and ability to share information as abilities which a good supervisor should have. Another (12 %) showed interest in a supervisor who shows congruence, genuineness, flexibility and warmth and only (10%) need someone who has flexibility, congruence, and ability to share information.

## **Discussion.**

The findings reveal that the majority of the social workers appreciate supervisors who are warm, understanding, congruent, flexible, open and is able to share information. This also suggests that all supervisees enjoy supervision which is characterized by a healthy relationship. All social workers enjoy to be listened to and want to learn a lot out of the supervision sessions. It seems therefore that supervisors must have the necessary knowledge and they must be well-informed about the social work services and the policies of the agency.

### **3.2.3.5 Roles of the supervisor (Question 3.6)**

This question was asked to get the respondents opinion about the roles which are carried out by the supervisor during social work supervision sessions. The majority of the respondents (74%) indicated that supervisors fulfill the role of a planner, teacher, leader and trainer, (14%) mentioned that supervisors fulfill the roles of monitor and controller only, and 12% cited organiser, learning facilitator and trainer as the most important roles.

## Discussion

These findings suggest that the supervisor has a lot of roles which he needs to fulfill during the supervision process. The majority of the social workers stated that the supervisor should be a good planner, teacher, leader, trainer, guider and learning facilitator. The implication therefore correlates with Farley, Smith and Boyle (2003:125) who state that the role of the supervisor is to support, encourage, to impart information and to listen to worker's needs. It also suggests that social workers know what they should expect from the supervisor during the supervision process.

### 3.2.3.6 Methods of social work supervision (Question 3.7.)

**Table 4. Methods of social work supervision**

<b>Methods of social work supervision</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Individual supervision	30	71%
Individual and Group supervision	7	17%
Individual, Group and Peer supervision	2	5%
Individual, Group supervision and Live supervision	3	7%
Task supervision	0	0%
Adaptive supervision	0	0%
Supervision on wheels	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 illustrates that the majority of the respondents (71%) are familiar with the individual supervision method, 17 % are familiar with individual and group supervision, 5% are familiar with individual supervision, group supervision and peer supervision while 7% are familiar with individual supervision, group supervision and live supervision.

## **Discussion**

The majority of the respondents (71%) singled out individual supervision as the only social work supervision method which they are familiar with. This finding emphasised the lack of knowledge and experience regarding the different types of supervision methods in supervision.

These findings also suggest that very little is known about implementation of social work supervision and this also implies that individual supervision is dominating in the Vhembe District. This means that training is needed to cover all the different kinds of social work supervision as a way of expanding social workers knowledge and experience regarding social work supervision.

### **3.2.3.7 Functions of social work supervision (Question 3.8)**

The significance of this question was to find out if the respondents have knowledge about the different functions of social work supervision. The majority of the respondents (81%) pointed out the administrative, educational and supportive function of supervision as the most important functions of social work supervision, 12% also mentioned the motivation function while 7% indicated the modelling and personality enrichment functions.

## **Discussion**

The findings suggest that the majority of respondents agree with Kadushin (1992:3) that the major functions of social work supervision are administrative, educational and supportive supervision, although there are also other functions of supervision namely motivation, personality enrichment and modelling. These findings revealed that there is a knowledge gap regarding the functions of supervision. These knowledge gaps (short comings) may be attributed to the fact that the majority of the social workers do not have post-graduate education or in-depth supervision training.

### 3.2.4 EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION

#### 3.2.4.1 Main aim of educational supervision (Question 4.1.)

In this question the respondents were asked to indicate whether social work educational supervision is concerned with developing the skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities of the social workers in order to do work effectively for the benefit of their clients. Sixty two percent (62%) agreed that educational supervision is always concerned with developing the skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities of the clients, 31% indicated often while 7% said sometimes. The respondent's answers are tabulated in Table 5.

**Table 5. Respondents' view on the main aim of educational social work supervision**

Answers	Number of respondents	%
Always	26	62%
Often	13	31%
Sometimes	3	7%
Never	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100 %</b>

#### Discussion

These findings suggest that majority of the respondents (62%) feel strong about the fact that educational supervision must enhance their skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities to deliver effective social work services for the benefits of the clients. The supervisors thus have a huge task of making sure that every supervision session conducted assists the social workers to improve service rendering. This is also an indication that social workers enjoy working with a supervisor who understand them and who has the goal of improving their job performance.

#### **3.2.4.2 Benefits of educational supervision (Question 4.2.)**

This question was asked to find out if the respondents have an idea or understand the benefits of the educational function of supervision. The majority of respondents (69%) percent indicated that educational supervision help the supervisee to receive information and another perspective concerning one's work and skills to evaluate his/her own practice, while (31 %) indicated that educational supervision allows the supervisee to receive both content and process feedback, develop understanding and skills within the work setting and providing a regular space for the supervisee to reflect upon the content and process of his/her work.

#### **Discussion.**

It is important to note that the respondents were able to differentiate between the benefits of social work supervision in general and that of the educational function of social work supervision. The findings suggest that respondents have a common understanding of what educational supervision is all about. According to the researcher this implies that educational supervision is conducted to benefit the social worker through transmission of skills and knowledge so that he could be an effective worker. This also suggests that social workers can play an important role during the planning phase in determining the agenda for the supervision session since they know what they want to learn and the benefits thereof.

#### **3.2.4.3 Primary goal of the educational function of educational supervision. (Question 4.3.)**

All the respondents (100%) agreed that the primary goal of the educational function of supervision is to teach social workers social work knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective and efficient social work services delivery.

#### **Discussion**

The significance of these findings was to determine respondent's understanding of the goal of educational supervision as compared to the goal of social work supervision in general. These results suggest that educational supervision is the backbone of social work supervision, because it provides the social worker with information to enable him/her to render effective services.

This also means that more time should be spent on this function of social work supervision. It seems the respondents are aware of what they should gain during the educational supervision session.

#### **3.2.4.4 Focus areas of the educational function of social work supervision (Question 4.5.)**

This item was aimed at finding out the respondent's, perceptions regarding the focus areas of the educational function of social work supervision and to determine if they really understand the main focus behind educational supervision.

The majority of the respondents (74%) indicated that educational supervision should focus on the clients served by the particular organisation, the client's problem, social worker's place of work, the process of social work intervention and the service provider. Twenty- four percent (24%) indicated that educational supervision should focus on clients and methods of social work.

#### **Discussion**

The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents have the perception that educational supervision should focus on training regarding the kinds of clients that are served by the agency, nature of the client's problems, agency policies and regulations, social work methods and the social worker. This further suggests that the supervisor should have understanding of the agency and kinds of services that are rendered by the agency because the knowledge and skills needed by the supervisee to render effective welfare services are centred around the person, problem, place, process and personnel namely, the so called five P's as described by Kadushin (1992:142). This is another indication that social workers have the theory about supervision, but need to put this theory into practice.

#### **3.2.4.5 Educational supervision contract (Question 4.6 and 4.7)**

Sixty-seven (67%) of the respondents believe that an educational supervision contract is necessary during the supervision process while 33 % argued that it is not important.

Those respondents who indicated that a contract is important indicated that a supervision contract provides opportunity to the supervisee for self-evaluation; a supervision contract directs the supervision process; a contract provides clear timing for review of the impact of supervision and promotes good relationship between the supervisor and supervisee.

Those respondents who did not think a contract is necessary air their views as follows: Supervision contract is not necessary because if needs arise you have to wait for time and a date to have supervision take place, it is not important because supervision can be determined by the flow of a working situation.

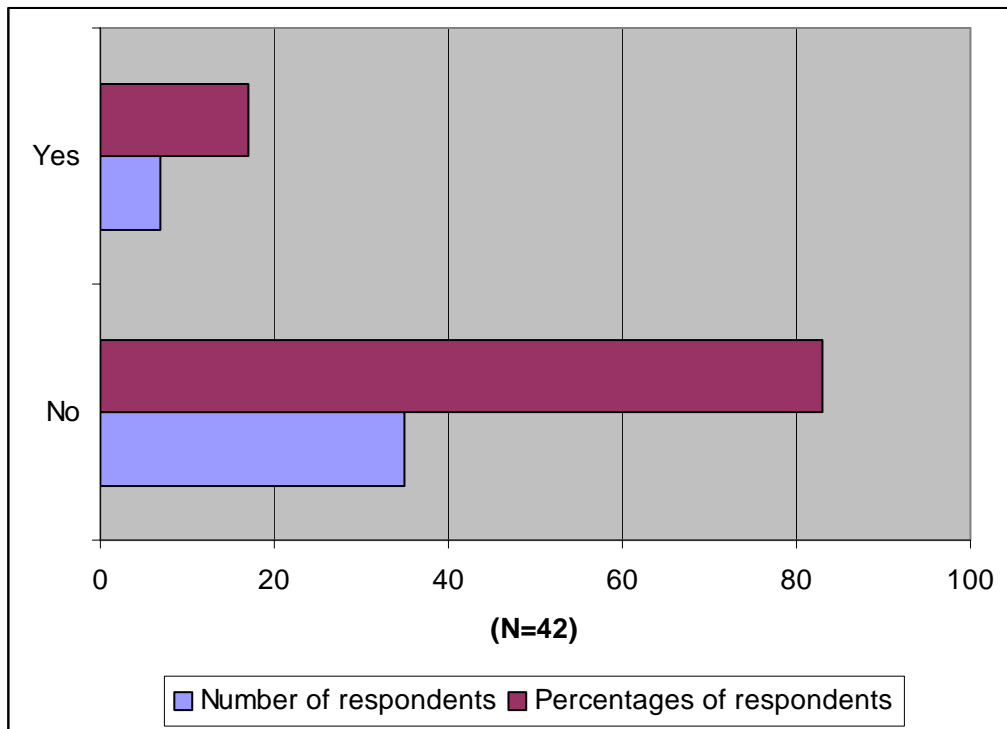
#### **Discussion**

The findings suggest that the majority of the social workers (67%) in the Vhembe District understand that a supervision contract is an important element in social work supervision. Shulman (1993:164) indicate that supervision contracting forms part of the initial supervision process. On the other hand (33%) seemed to have a knowledge gap around the supervision contract and they do not realise the importance of a supervision contract. It is important to note that some of these supervisees stated that supervision could be determined by the present working conditions which could be a suggestion that there is no formal educational supervision or educational supervision programme.

#### **3.2.4.6 Supervisee's response regarding needs assessment (Question 4.8.)**

The respondents were asked if a needs assessment should be used as a starting point for the educational supervision process. The majority of the respondents (83%) indicated that it is not important to begin with a needs assessment while (17 %) agreed. See Figure 3.





**Figure 3. Supervisee’s responses regarding needs assessment.**

**Discussion.**

A needs assessment is an indication of the importance of the educational function of social work supervision since it gives the supervisor a clear indication of what the social worker already knows, what she needs to learn, what she wants to learn and how she wants to learn it. Needs assessment gives the supervisor an opportunity of holding a supervision session starting where the worker is filling the gaps and enriching the knowledge already obtained by the supervisee (Hoffmann, 1990:214).

The fact that the respondents do not know the importance of a needs assessment is an indication of the lack of educational supervision in the area of study. The assessment of the supervisee’s learning needs is very important because it makes educational supervision factual, purposeful and meaningful. It gives the supervisor a better chance to understand his supervisee and this helps during the preparation of every supervision session.

#### **3.2.4.7 Supervisee's learning objectives (Question 4.9.)**

The aim of this question was to get respondent's opinion as to whether it is necessary to formulate learning objectives based on the identified individual learning needs during supervision. Hundred percent (100%) of the respondents indicated that determining of learning objectives is very important.

#### **Discussion**

It is important to note that the majority of the respondents contradicted themselves. The previous question asked if needs assessment is important during educational supervision and 83% indicated that it is not important. In this item they indicated that learning objectives based on needs assessment are important in educational supervision. According to Middleman and Rhodes (1985:242) learning objectives are formulated after needs assessment. These findings indicate that the respondents are not sure about the different components of educational supervision. This means that urgent training is needed in connection with educational supervision.

#### **3.2.4.8 The importance of an educational programme (Question 4.10)**

The respondents were asked to indicate why an educational programme is important during educational supervision. The majority of the respondents (53%) indicated that it is important because the programme serves as a guideline towards the achievement of learning objectives while (37%) stated that an educational programme indicates learning areas which need first priority, another (10%) agreed with both statements as indicated above.

#### **Discussion**

These findings suggest that some of the respondents used their common sense in answering some of the questions in the questionnaire. This shows that there is a very serious lack of knowledge regarding educational supervision because there is no way that one can formulate a supervisee educational programme without a needs assessment. Most of the respondents (83%) indicated that needs assessment is not necessary as a starting point for educational supervision, but on the other hand they indicated that an educational programme is needed to serve as guidelines towards achieving learning objectives, which is difficult to formulate without a needs assessment.

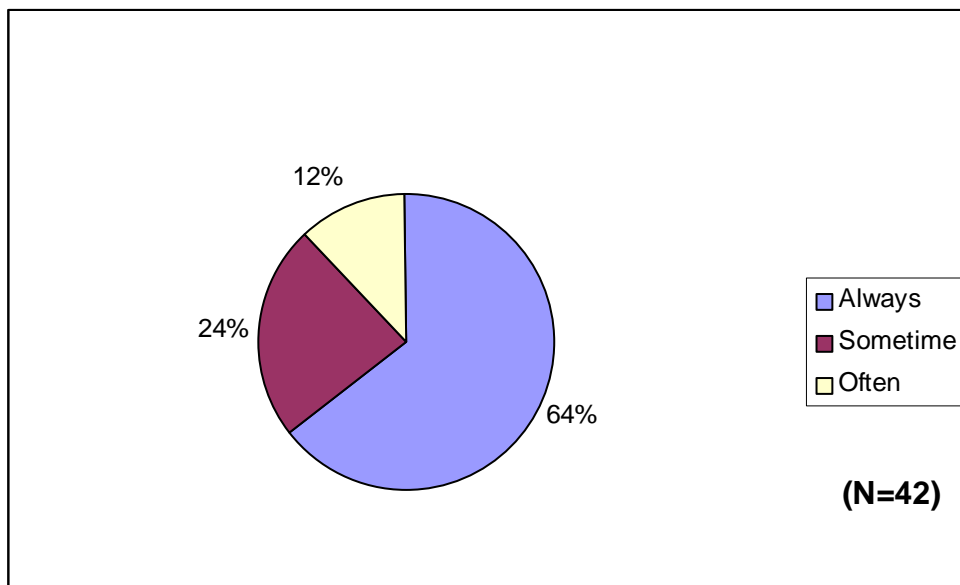
**3.2.4.9 Phases of educational supervision (Question 4.11.)**

The largest group of the respondents (52%) indicated that the phases of educational supervision are preparation phase, middle phase, feedback phase and termination phase, while (24%) indicated preparation phase and middle phase, 14% pointed out feedback phase and middle phase and another (10%) indicated preparation phase, middle phase and feedback phase as phases of educational supervision.

**Discussion**

These findings revealed that the majority of the respondents (52%) have some background information about phases of educational supervision. However 48% of the respondents who identified two to three phases as phases of social work supervision cause a great concern. It means that there are still some social workers who have knowledge gaps in connection with the process of educational social work supervision. This also indicates that there is no formal educational supervision taking place in some of the offices.

**3.2.4.10 Supervisory relationship (Question 4. 12)**



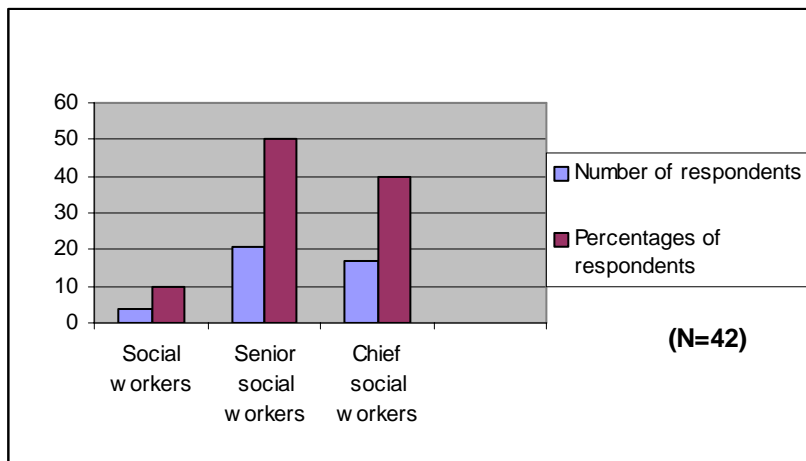
**Figure 4. Respondent’s perceptions regarding the supervisory relationship**

Figure 4 indicates that the majority of the respondents (64%) answered that the supervisory relationship is always crucial during educational supervision, 24% indicated sometimes while 12% indicated that the said relationship is not always crucial.

**Discussion.**

It is interesting to note that the majority of the social workers enjoyed supervision, which is an indication of a healthy supervisory relationship. This suggests that if there is a bad relationship it will have a negative impact on the supervision, and then there will be no stimulation of positive attitudes, confidence, trust and openness on both sides. The fact that some of the respondents do not support a healthy relationship is a clear indication that proper educational supervision is needed. According to the researcher if there is proper and well-structured supervision then there would be no differences in opinion with regard to this question. The point is how can a supervision session go well in a situation characterized by a bad relationship. Both parties will not participate effectively because there would be lack of trust between them.

**3.2.4.11 Supervisor’s ranks (Question 4.13)**



**Figure 5. A column chart illustrating respondents supervisor’s ranks**

Figure 5 illustrates that the majority of the respondents 21 (50 %) are supervised by senior social workers, 17 (40%) are supervised by chief social workers while 4 (10%) are supervised by social workers.

## **Discussion**

These findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (50 %) are supervised by senior social workers. The district has only eleven senior social workers; this suggests that some senior social workers are supervising more than two social workers in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

### **3.2.4.12. Individual educational supervision. (Question 4.14.)**

This question asked the respondents if they receive individual educational supervision. The majority of the respondents (57%) indicated that they do not receive individual supervision, while 43 % pointed out that they do receive individual supervision.

## **Discussion**

These findings reveal that educational supervision is not practiced in some of the offices in the Vhembe district. The majority of the respondents (57%) indicated that they do not receive individual educational supervision. This is of great concern to the researcher because this data suggests that there are social workers who are not gaining new knowledge and educational guidance through individual educational supervision.

Those 18 respondents who indicated that they receive individual educational supervision were also asked follow- up questions regarding individual educational supervision namely:

### **3.2.4.13. Frequency of receiving individual supervision (Question 4.15)**

Out of the 18 who indicated that they receive individual educational supervision, 10(56) % indicated that they receive educational supervision monthly; 5(28%) receive it weekly and another 3(16%) indicated fortnightly. See Table 6

**Table 6. Frequency of receiving individual supervision**

<b>Answers</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Weekly	5	28%
Fortnightly	3	16%
Monthly	10	56%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Discussion**

The important thing about these findings is that the frequency of individual supervision varies in the Vhembe District. The majority of the 18 respondents receive individual educational supervision on a monthly basis.

**3.2.4.14 Compilation of educational supervision agenda (Question 4.16.)**

With this question the researcher wanted to find out who compiles the agenda for the supervision session. Eighty-nine percent out of 18 respondents indicated that the agenda is drawn by both supervisor and supervisee, while 11 % indicated that the agenda is compiled by the supervisor.

**Discussion.**

It is important to see that supervisees are participating in compiling a supervision agenda. This shows there is mutual understanding between the supervisor and supervisee in some of the offices. However, for the 11% of the respondents who are not participating in compiling their agenda for supervision it is of great concern because this situation prevents the supervisees from participating in their learning situation.

**3.2.4.15 Assessment of supervisee’s learning needs (Question 4.17.)**

This question was asked so that the researcher would be able to determine whether supervisors and supervisees implement the components of individual educational supervision. Hundred percent (100%) indicated that they assess the supervisee’s learning needs.

**Discussion**

This indicates that all the respondents who received educational supervision are receiving new knowledge based on their individual needs and that the supervisors and supervisees understand the process of the educational supervision. Needs assessment is one of very important elements regarding implementation of the educational function of educational supervision. According to Hoffmann (1990:214) needs assessment assist the supervisor to know the supervisee’s level of motivation, attitudes towards supervision, ability to develop work autonomy, personal reference and interest, adaptability, ability to relate professionally and internalisation of knowledge, skills and values.

**3.2.4.16 Instruments used for assessing supervisee’s learning needs (Question 4.18)**

**Table 7. Instruments which are used to assess supervisee’s learning needs.**

<b>Instruments</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Interview	4	22%
Reports	7	39%
Work schedule/plan	2	11%
Files	5	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7 indicates that 7 respondents (39%) out of 18 who receive individual educational supervision use work reports to assess supervisee’s learning needs, 5 (28%) use files, 4 respondents (22%) utilize interviews and another 2 (11 %) use work schedule/plans.

### **Discussion**

The findings reveal that traditional instruments are still used to assess supervisee's learning needs in the Vhembe district. There were no respondents who indicated modern instruments such as films, tape recorders and audiotapes. This suggests that social workers are not familiar with the modern instruments or functional aids.

#### **3.2.4.17. Value of the instrument (Question 4.19)**

All 18 respondents (100%) indicated that the instruments which they are using to assess their learning needs are valuable.

### **Discussion.**

The results that 100 % of the respondents are comfortable with the traditional instruments is an indication that all respondents are satisfied that the instruments are able to pick up their learning needs. It is also possible that the social workers are comfortable with these traditional instruments, because they are not familiar with other modern instruments.

#### **3.2.4.18 Educational supervision contract (Question 4.20)**

The respondents were also asked if they have an educational supervision contract. Out of 18 respondents only 5 respondents (28%) indicated that they do have a supervision contract while 13 (72%) do not have a supervision contract.

### **Discussion.**

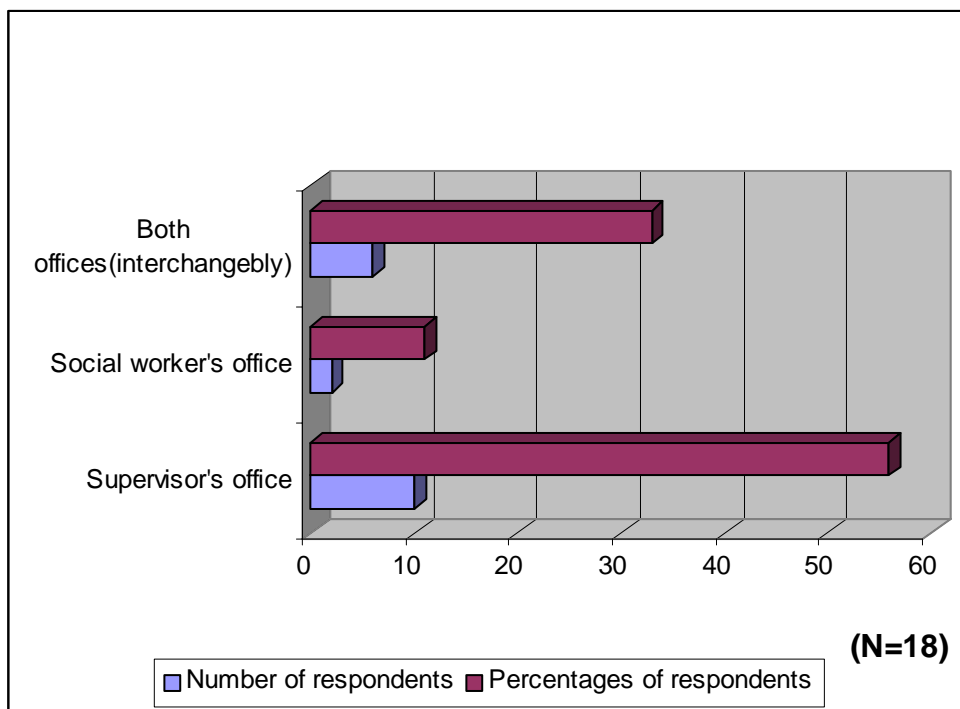
The majority (72%) of the 18 respondents indicated that they do not have an educational contract. This suggests that no structured educational supervision is taking place in the Vhembe District because an educational contract is a basic component of the supervision process. In this regard Shulman (1993:164) states that supervision contracting forms part of the initial stage of the supervision process and like any other function of social work supervision educational supervision requires certain formalities, structure and different role assignment.



**3.2.4.19 Utilization of supervision contract (Question 4.21)**

This question was posed as a follow up question to determine if the educational supervision contract is utilized by those who indicated that they have it. Those 5 respondents (28%) who said that they have a contract indicated that they always use it. This also suggests that some of the respondents receive structured supervision based on the supervision contract.

**3.2.4.20 Venue for educational supervision (Question 4.22.)**



**Figure 6. Venue for educational supervision sessions**

Figure 6 indicates that 10(56%) of the respondents receive educational supervision in their supervisor’s offices, 6(33)% use both supervisee’s and supervisor’s offices interchangeably while 2 (11%) utilizes supervisee’s offices.

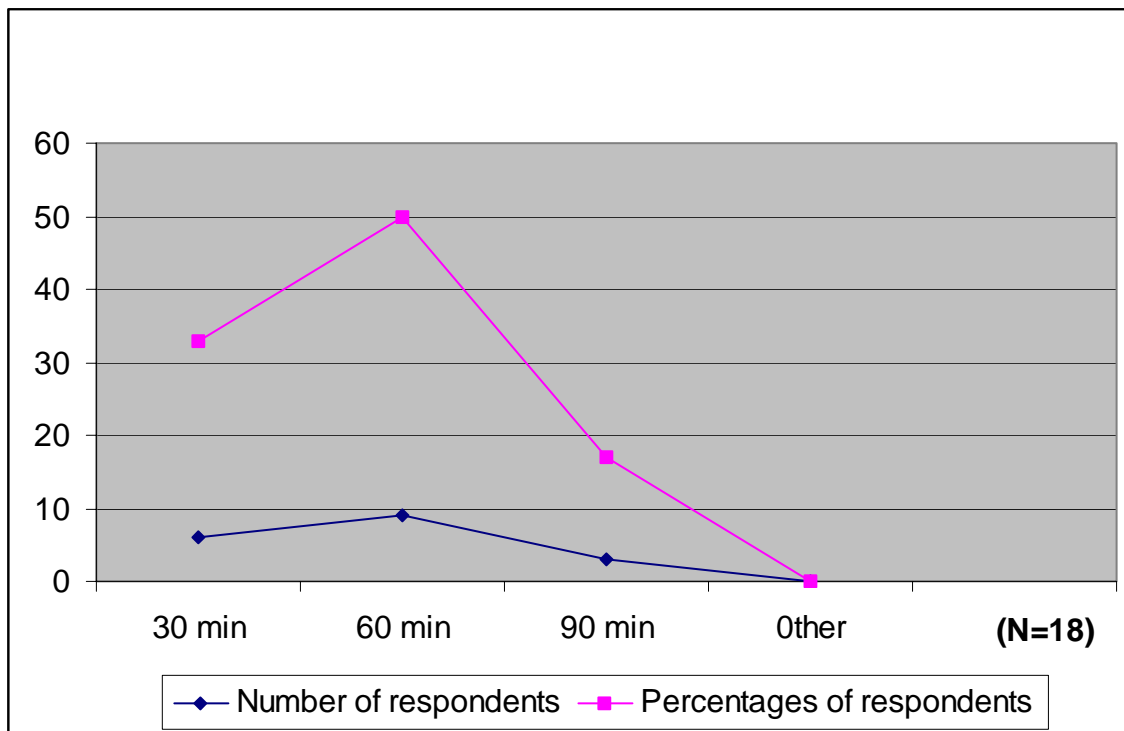
**Discussion**

These findings show that some of the supervisors do not perhaps want to move out of their offices to discuss work related issues with their supervisees. However it seems as if there are some supervisors who do not mind moving from their offices to visit their subordinates. The data also suggest that there are no neutral venues used for supervision purposes.

**3.2.4.21 Comfortability of the agreed venue (Question 4.23.)**

The respondents were also asked if the agreed venue is comfortable and conducive for good supervision. All 18 respondents (100%) agreed that the venue, which is used for supervision, is comfortable and user friendly.

**3.2.4.22 Length of supervision sessions (Question 4.24.)**



**Figure 7. Length of educational supervision sessions**

Figure 7 indicates that out of 18 respondents who receive individual educational supervision, 9 respondents (50%) stated that their supervision sessions last for 60 minutes at a time, 6 (33%) said that their sessions last for 30 minutes while 3(17%) indicated that their supervision sessions last for 90 minutes.

### Discussion

The findings revealed that the length of individual educational supervision sessions varies which means that there is no uniformity regarding this element of individual educational supervision.

#### 3.2.4.23 Functional aids which are used during supervision (Question 4.25)

The researcher asked this question to find out functional aids, which are used during supervision. The majority of the respondents 14(78%) indicated work records while 4(22%) use case conference. None of the respondents indicated modern functional aids such as audiotape and films.

Functional aids	Number of respondents	%
Case conference	4	22%
Work records	14	78%
Audiotape	0	0%
Films	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**Table 8. Functional aids which are used during supervision**

### Discussion

The findings do not vary with the results in question 4.18 regarding instruments that are used for assessment of supervisee’s learning needs. The findings reveal that traditional functional aids are dominating in the Vhembe district. The majority of respondents (78%) indicated that they use work records as their functional aids. This may also suggests that social workers in the area of study are not familiar with modern functional aids.

#### **3.2.4.24 Educational activities of the supervisor (Question 4.26)**

The respondents were asked about the educational roles which are performed by the supervisor during the educational supervision process. Five respondents (28%) view their supervisor as a monitor, 5(28%) indicated that their supervisor performs the role of a guide another 4(22%) describe their supervisor as a trainer, 2 (11%) view their supervisor as teacher while another 11% described their supervisors as a learning facilitator.

#### **Discussion.**

These findings reveal that some of the supervisors are doing their best to assist their supervisees. The supervisees are able to identify the roles of their supervisors as teachers, monitors, trainers, guides and learning facilitators. Based on the fact that supervisees experience their supervisors as teachers, trainers and learning facilitator is an indication that there are social workers who receive individual educational supervision. Farley et al (2003:125) states that supervisor's role is one of support, encouragement, imparting of information and of listening to the worker. Supervisors should be able to point out supervisee's knowledge gap and deficiencies in social work skills and knowledge and deal with those gaps.

#### **3.2.4.25. Effectiveness of supervisor's activities (Q 4.27.)**

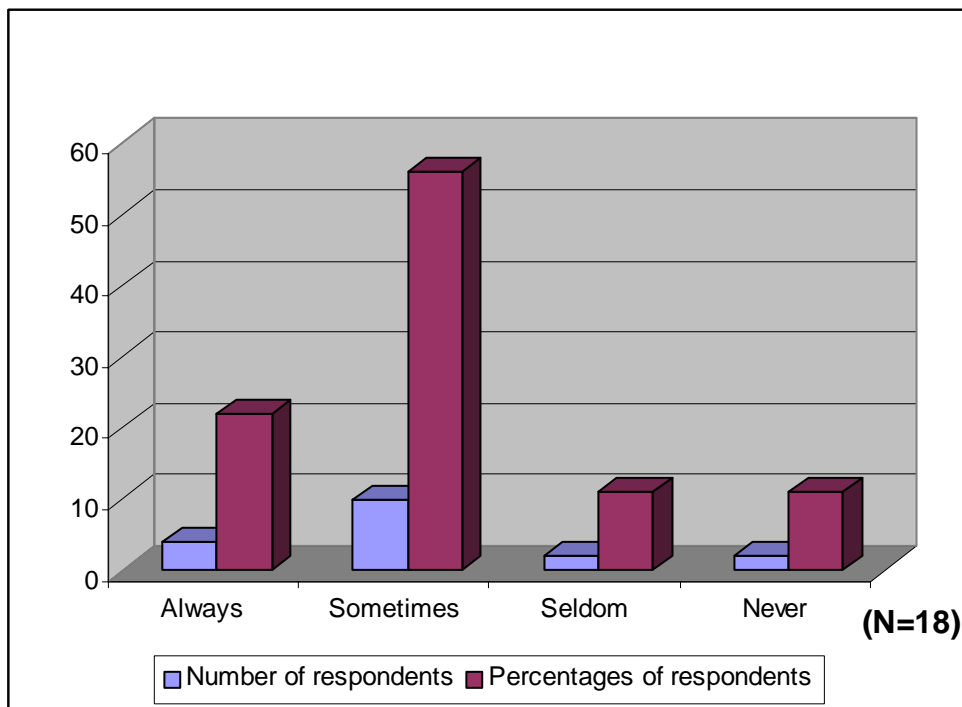
In this question the respondents were asked if the activities of the supervisors are improving their learning needs. All 18 respondents (100%) indicated that the educational activities of the supervisors are enabling them to grow professionally.

#### **Discussion**

This suggests that the respondents who received educational supervision are assisted to grow professionally and personally since they are receiving new knowledge, skills and support during the process of supervision. This means that their respective clients will also receive quality services.

**3.2.4.26. Phases of educational supervision during supervision sessions (Question 4.28)**

The researcher asked this question to find out if the phases of educational supervision are followed during the supervision sessions. Ten respondents (56%) indicated that they follow supervision phases sometimes, 4 respondents (22%) always follow the phases, another 2(11%) indicated seldom while 2 (11%) never follow the phases of supervision during supervision sessions. See Figure 8 below.



**Figure 8. Phases of educational supervision during supervision sessions.**

**Discussion**

These findings indicate another limitation concerning the implementation of formal educational supervision in the Vhembe district. Only a few respondents indicated that they are implementing the phases of educational supervision.

#### **3.2.4.27 Focus of feedback session (Question 4.29.)**

In this question the respondents were asked about the focus of the supervisor during feedback sessions. Out of 18 respondents 10 respondents (56%) indicated that the focus of feedback sessions is on job performance while 8 respondents (44%) pointed out that the feedback session focuses on supervisee's strengths and weaknesses and job performance.

#### **Discussion**

This suggests that although the focus of feedback differs, the feedback has the potential that social workers may grow professionally and personally. Hawkins and Shohet (1989:42) states that educational supervision capacitates every social worker with the knowledge and skills necessary for delivering quality, effective and efficient social work services and gives the social worker independence to function independently.

#### **3.2.4.28 Other methods of supervision (Question 4. 30.)**

Out of the 18 of the respondents who indicated that they receive individual educational supervision no one is involved in live supervision; 4 (22%) are involved in peer supervision; 10 (56%) are only using individual supervision as their method of receiving educational supervision, while 4 (22%) also use the group supervision method.

#### **Discussion**

The results reveal that the minority of social workers in the Vhembe district are not practically familiar with the other methods of supervision. The findings pointed out that individual educational supervision is dominating other methods of social work supervision.

#### **3.2.4.29 Functional aids which are used during individual educational supervision. (Q 4.31)**

The respondents were asked to indicate the functional aids that are used during the process of educational supervision. The majority of respondents (67%) indicated group discussions, 17% role play while another 16% do not use any functional aids.

**Table 9. Functional aids used during educational supervision**

<b>Functional aids</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
Group discussion	12	67%
Role play	4	17%
Games	0	0%
Films	0	0%
Audio tape	0	0%
Other (none)	2	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Discussion**

The findings of this item do not differ with the results in question 4.25. The findings reveal that traditional functional aids are used in the Vhembe district. The findings indicate that group discussion and role-play are used as functional aids. This also suggests that the respondents might not be familiar with modern functional such as videotape and audiotape and other useful functional aids.

### **3.2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter focused on the presentation of the empirical findings of the study. The data were analysed according to four sections of the questionnaire and a discussion was carried out according the individual questions in the questionnaire. The research findings give information about the research question regarding the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision. Therefore the next chapter will focus on the overview of the main objectives of the whole study by making conclusions and recommendations. It should be noted that provision of recommendations is one of the main objectives of this study. The recommendations regarding the empirical findings can be used as guidelines to enhance effective social work service rendering in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is an exploratory study, aimed at exploring the nature, extent and characteristics of educational function of social work supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province. The research problem is based on the researcher's practical observations and professional experience in the social work field namely that it seems as if there is a lack of educational supervision in the area of study. Therefore the study was guided by the following research question: **What is the nature, extent, and characteristics of the educational function of social work supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province?**

The objectives of this study were as follows:

- To conceptualise social work supervision with specific focus on the educational function.
- To investigate the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province.
- To make recommendations regarding educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in order to enhance effective social work services.

An extensive study of the literature provided the theoretical foundation upon which this study was based. Chapter One provided a general orientation of the study, focussing on the motivation for the choice of the research topic, purpose, goal and objectives of the study, research question, research approach, type of the research, research procedure, pilot study, research population, ethical issues and definition of main concepts.



In Chapter Two the researcher looked at the overview of social work supervision in general and more specifically the educational function of social work supervision. Chapter 3 dealt with the empirical findings of the study aimed at exploring the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision. Chapter 4 reviewed the whole study by providing a synopsis of its main objectives by making relevant conclusions and recommendations regarding each objective.

## **4.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **4.2.1 Objective 1: To conceptualise social work supervision with specific focus on the educational function.**

The first objective of the study (literature review) revealed that:

- Social work supervision is aimed at improving and motivating social worker supervisees to render effective and efficient services to meet the agency or organisational client's needs.
- Social work supervision is directed towards benefiting the social worker and the agency in which the social worker is employed.
- Supervision is needed to promote social worker's opportunity for professional and personal growth and gives the worker support to integrate theory and practice.
- The ultimate goal of social work supervision is to ensure that effective and efficient social work services are rendered to clients in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures.
- A healthy supervisory relationship plays a very important part to stimulate positive attitudes, confident, trust and openness for both supervisor and supervisee.
- The role of the social work supervisor is to provide a learning climate in which the supervisee receives direct teaching and at the same time receiving assistance to discover knowledge and skills for themselves.
- There are several functions of social work supervision namely an administrative, educational, supportive, motivational, personality enrichment and modelling function.

- There are a variety of social work supervision methods which the supervisor and supervisee could be used depending on the needs of the supervisee namely individual supervision, group supervision, peer supervision, live supervision, supervision by objective, supervision on wheels, task supervision and adaptive supervision.
- The educational function of supervision is concerned with developing the skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities of the supervisees in order to do their work effectively for the benefit of their clients.
- The educational function of supervision helps the supervisees to understand their clients better and to become more aware of their own reactions and responses to the clients. It is also the source of satisfaction for both the supervisor and supervisee. The supervisor experiences satisfaction in helping the supervisee grow and develop personally and professionally and the supervisee experiences satisfaction by learning new skills and knowledge.
- Educational supervision is aimed at imparting knowledge and skills which are centred around what is called the five P's namely person (client), problem, place, process and personnel.
- The educational supervision contract forms part of the initial stage of the supervision process. Supervision contract includes duration of supervision sessions, starting time, venue, relationship, termination period and methods of giving feedback.
- Educational supervision entails four components namely educational assessment, determining the learning needs, determining learning objectives and formulation of educational programme.
- Educational supervision is a process which took place through four phases namely preparation phase, middle phase, feedback phase and termination phase.

Supervision is very important in social work practice and it's a very crucial approach in helping social workers to reach their maximum job performance. Lack of supervision has a negative impact on the social workers. Those social workers who do not receive supervision are normally unable to render quality, effective and efficient welfare services. Lack of educational supervision contributes to social workers deterioration of work morale, which results in poor job performance. It also prevents social workers from getting proper social work skills and knowledge.

#### **4.2.2 Objective 2: To investigate the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province**

The second objective of this study is to investigate the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the area of study. The empirical study was done and a self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data.

##### **Regarding this objective the findings of the study revealed that:**

- The majority of the respondents (55%) were female social workers.
- Most of the respondents (86%) are still below the age of forty
- Respondent's home language varies and the majority of them (62%) are Venda speaking people.
- The majority of the respondents (83%) held BA (SW) 4 years degree and only few social workers (5%) have post-graduate degrees.
- Most of the respondents (74%) are still occupying social work ranks and have less than 3 years experience.
- The majority of the respondents (81%) did receive training about social work supervision during their undergraduate social work training, meaning that they have basic knowledge about social work supervision.
- Respondent's duration of supervision training differs, most of the respondents (69%) received supervision training within six months while other (12%) received it within a year.
- The majority of the respondents (55%) are still young and new in the profession.
- All respondents understand the significance and goals of social work supervision
- Respondents prefer supervisors who are warm, understanding, congruent, flexible, open and who are able to share information.
- The majority of respondents (71%) have a knowledge gap regarding the different types of social work supervision methods and functions of social work supervision.
- The respondents prefer educational supervision that improves service rendering in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures and which helps them to receive information concerning their work and skills evaluation.

- The majority of the respondents (67%) feel that the educational supervision contract, needs assessment, learning objectives and educational programme are the most important elements of educational supervision.
- The respondents have different views and knowledge gaps regarding the phases of social work supervision.
- One senior social worker supervises more than two respondents.
- The majority of the respondents (57%) do not receive individual educational supervision.
- The frequency of receiving individual educational supervision varies in the area of study.
- Most the supervisors involve their supervisees when compiling a supervision agenda.
- The minority of the respondents (17%) receive new knowledge based on their individual needs.
- Traditional instruments such as reports, interviews, work plans and files are used to assess supervisee's learning needs.
- There is a lack of structured educational supervision taking place in the area of study since most of the respondents (72%) do not have an educational supervision contract.
- There is no neutral venue for supervision in the area of study; most of the supervision sessions are conducted in supervisor or supervisee's offices.
- All of the respondents (100%) indicated that the venue for social work supervision in the Vhembe District is not consumer friendly or comfortable.
- There is no uniformity regarding the length of educational supervision sessions and most of the respondents (44%) indicated that they do not follow phases of educational supervision
- All the respondents (100%) who received educational supervision indicated that they are benefiting from supervision.
- Feedback sessions focus on job performance as well as strengths and weaknesses of the supervisees.
- Modernised functional aids such as films; audiotape and videotape are not used in this area of study.

Consequently, the study has been successful in exploring the main aim of the investigation. The empirical findings have confirmed that there are problems regarding the implementation of the educational function of supervision in the Vhembe District.

The findings suggested that there is no uniformity in implementing educational supervision. It should be noted that the successful implementation of educational supervision needs dedication from the supervisors and management of the particular organisation. The researcher would like to make recommendations based on the explored nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the area of study in order to trench more effective social work services. It should be noted that the formulation of recommendations is one of the objectives of this study (third objective).

### **4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.3.1. The district management should organise workshops and seminars to retrain all social workers regarding social work supervision.

4.3.2. The district management should come up with programmes to encourage supervisors and supervisees to attend courses in supervision e.g bursary for supervision trainees.

4.3.3. A task team should be formed to monitor the implementation of educational supervision in the whole district.

4.3.4. Management should make supervision attractive and enjoyable by providing modernised functional aids such as videotapes, one-way mirrors and audiotapes.

4.3.5. The management should make supervision venues more user friendly.

4.3.7. More staff should be hired to reduce workloads of the supervisors so that they can spend more time developing their junior staff.

4.3.8. The researcher also recommends that an in-depth study into the whole process and functions of social work supervision should be undertaken in the Department of Health and Welfare in the whole Limpopo Province.

#### **4.4.CONCLUSION**

Educational supervision is aimed at providing effective service to consumers and expands and refines the worker's knowledge, skills and values expressed in attitudes. It also promotes worker autonomy and independence which in turn reduces the burden of administrative supervision. This study was aimed at investigating the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision in the area of study to facilitate the tabulation of recommendations to enhance effective service delivery. The study found that a limited number of social workers are receiving educational supervision. It is the duty of the management to see to it that formal educational supervision is implemented in all social work offices in the Vhembe District.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND WELFARE IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE.

**INSTRUCTION**

Answer all questions by making a cross (X) or tick in the space of your choice and give a short motivation where requested. No names required as this study is anonymously and confidentially conducted.

**1 PERSONAL INFORMATION**

1.1 What is your gender?

Female

Male

1.2 What is your age?

26-30  36-40  45-50

31-35  41-44  51 and above

1.3 What is your home language?

English  Venda  N. Sotho

Afrikaans  Tsonga  Other specify  \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### 2.1 Indicate your highest social work qualification

BA(SW) 3 years

BA(SW) 4 years

Higher diploma (SW)

Honours (SW)

Masters (SW)

D Phil (SW)

### 2.2 What is your present rank ?

Social Worker

Senior social worker

### 2.3 Did you receive training about social work supervision ?

Yes

No

### 2.4 If yes specify the duration of the training

Semester

Yearly

### 2.5 How long have you been practising as a social worker?

1-3 years

7-9 years

12 years and above

4-6 years

10-12 years

## 3 SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION IN GENERAL

### 3.1 With which of the following statements do you agree?

Social work supervision is the process of overseeing the ability of social workers to meet the organizational goals.

Social work supervision is concerned with enhancing the quality of work performance standard.

Social work supervision involves a supervisor, a supervisee, a client and a work context.

Social work supervision is a planned, regular periods of time that supervisee and supervisor spend together to discuss the supervisee's work in the placement of receiving the learning process.

3.2 With which of the following statements regarding the importance of social work supervision do you agree?

- Social work supervision promote social worker's opportunity for professional and personal growth
- Social work supervision gives social worker support to integrate theory and practice
- Social work supervision improves social worker's practice skills
- Social work supervision enables social workers to meet client's expectations of providing effective and efficient services

3.3 Do you agree with the following statement: The ultimate goal of social work supervision is to ensure that efficient and effective social work services are rendered to clients in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures by developing social workers skills.

Yes

No

3.4 Please motivate \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3.5 What qualities do you think a good supervisor should have?

- |                              |                          |                 |                          |             |                          |                 |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Empathy                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Congruence      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Warmth      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Self-disclosure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Understanding                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Genuineness     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Flexibility | <input type="checkbox"/> | Openness        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ability to share information | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____       |                          |                 |                          |

3.6 Which roles are carried out by your supervisor?

- |                 |                          |                      |                          |         |                          |            |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Planner         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Organizer            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Leader  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Controller | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Learning facilitator | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trainer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Monitor    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |                          |         |                          |            |                          |

3.7 Which methods of social work supervision are familiar to you?

- Individual supervision  Peer supervision  Task supervision   
Group supervision  Live supervision  Adaptive supervision   
Supervision on wheels  Other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_

3.8 In your opinion what are the functions of social work supervision?

- Administrative function  Supportive function   
Educational function  Personality enrichment function   
Motivational function  Modelling function

#### 4 EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION

4.1 Social work educational supervision is concerned with developing the skills, knowledge, understanding and abilities of the supervisees in order to do their work effectively for the benefit of their clients. Please indicate.

- Always  Often  Sometimes   
Rarely  Never

4.2 From your point of view what are benefits of the educational function of social work supervision?

- Provides a regular space for the supervisees to reflect upon the content and process of their work  
 Develops understanding and skills within the work setting  
 Helps the supervisee to receive information and another perspective concerning one's work and skills to evaluate his own practice.  
 Allows the supervisee to receive both content and process feedback  
 Helps the supervisee to cope with stressful situations.

4.3 The primary goal of educational function of educational supervision is to teach social workers the social work knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the effective and efficient social work services rendering. Please indicate

- Agree   
Disagree

4.4 Please motivate \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

4.5 In your view what are the focus areas of educational function of social work supervision?

- |                                               |                          |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Clients (person)                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Client's problems                             | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social agency (where social worker works)     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Process (Social work methods of intervention) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Service provider (social worker)              | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4.6 Do you think an educational supervision contract is necessary during supervision process?

- |     |                          |
|-----|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4.7 Please motivate \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

4.8 Do you think an educational needs assessment could be used as a starting point for the educational function of supervision process?

- |     |                          |
|-----|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4.9 In your opinion how important are learning objectives in the educational function of social work supervision?

- |                |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Less important | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4.10 Why is an educational programme important during the educational supervision?

- Educational programme serves as a guideline towards achievements of learning objectives.
- Educational programme indicate learning areas which needs first priority
- Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

4.11 Which of the following phases are phases of educational supervision?

- Preparation phase
- Middle phase
- Feedback phase
- Termination phase

4.12 Do you think a healthy supervisory relationship is crucial during educational supervision?

- Always  Sometimes  Never
- Often  Rarely

4.13 What is the rank of your supervisor?

- Social worker  Chief social worker
- Senior social worker

4.14 Do you receive individual educational supervision sessions?

- Yes
- No

4.15 If yes, how often do you receive individual educational supervision?

- Weekly  Monthly
- Fortnightly  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4.16 Who compiles an agenda for your educational supervision sessions?

- Supervisor  Supervisor & supervisee
- Supervisee

4.17 Do you assess your learning needs with your supervisor?

Yes

No

4.18 If yes, which instruments do you use to assess learning needs?

Interview  Reports

Work schedule/ plan  Files

4.19 Do you find the above-indicated instrument to be valuable?

Yes

No

4.20 Do you have an educational supervision contract?

Yes

No

4.21 Do you follow the supervision contract?

Always  Never

Sometimes

4.22 Where do you hold your educational supervision?

Supervisor's office

Supervisee's office

Other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_

4.23 Do you think the agreed venue for educational supervision is comfortable and conducive for good supervision?

Yes

No

4.24 How long does an educational supervision session takes?

30 min  90

60 min  other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_



4.25 Which functional aids do you use during the supervision?

Case conference  Audio recorder  None   
Work records  Video tape

4.26 Which educational activities are carried out by the supervisor?

Teaching  Learning facilitator  Guider   
Monitor  Trainer

4.27 Do you think supervisor's activities are able to improve your learning needs?

Yes   
No

4.28 Do you follow the phases of educational supervision during your supervision sessions?

Always  Seldom   
Sometimes  Never

4.29 During feedback session what is the focus of your supervisor?

Job performance  Your weakness   
Your strength  Both strength and weakness   
Other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_

4.30 In which of the methods of social work supervision are you involved?

Group supervision  Live supervision  Other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_  
Peer supervision  Task supervision

4.31 Which functional aids are part of your educational supervision?

Group discussion  Films   
Role play  Audio Tapes   
Games  other (specify)  \_\_\_\_\_

**!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**APPENDIX 2**

**Informed Consent form**

Participants name..... Date.....

Principal investigator: (Name, Institution and Address)

Freddy Mbau, Mulima clinic welfare office, P.O BOX 117, MULIMA ,0817

**Informed Consent**

1. Title of the study : Educational function of supervision in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province.
2. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to explore and gain insight into the nature, extent and characteristics of educational supervision as implemented in the Department of Health and Welfare in the Vhembe district of the Limpopo Province.
3. Procedures: I will be receive a questionnaire in order to answer the questions as formulated by the researcher. The process of completing the questionnaire will take about 45 minutes.
4. Risks and discomforts: There are no risks and discomforts at all.
5. Benefits: The guidelines and recommendations regarding the study are going to benefits the district management team and social workers in the Vhembe district.
6. Participant's right: I may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.
7. Financial Compensation: I understand that there will be no financial compensation.
8. Confidentiality: In order to assure confidentiality I will not be asked to provide my identification particulars in the questionnaire. I understand that the results of the study will be kept confidential unless I ask that they be released. The results of this study may be published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences, but my records will not be revealed by the law.

9. If I have any questions or concerns, I can call Freddy Mbau at 015 975 1026 and 072 123 8973 (Cell).

I understand my rights as a research subject, and I voluntary consent to participation in this study. I understand what the study is about and how and why it is being done. I will receive a signed copy of this consent form

.....  
Subject's Signature

.....  
Date

.....  
Signature of Investigator