

**PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN IMPLEMENTING THE
DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE APPROACH IN THE
DEPARTMENT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT,
LIMPOPO**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Perspectives of social workers in implementing the developmental social welfare approach in the Department Social Development in Mopani District, Limpopo

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In 1997 the democratic government of South Africa adopted the White Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1997) which committed the country to a developmental approach to social welfare. The implementation of the developmental approach to social services is a shared responsibility of the state, non-governmental organisations and the private sector (Patel, 2015:93). Despite the ongoing studies relating to developmental social welfare service delivery, there is insufficient evidence of the shift made towards a developmental approach by government social workers employed by the Department of Social Development.

The goal of the study was to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift towards the developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.

The study employed a qualitative research approach and a case study research design. The sample for the study was selected purposefully and included thirty-two (32) social workers and four (4) supervisors from four sub-districts in the Mopani District. Data was collected through one focus group interview with social workers and one-on-one interviews with supervisors in the four regions respectively.

The research findings indicate that social workers have made a partial shift towards a developmental approach in service delivery. The shift is more evident in protection and prevention service delivery than in promoting socio-economic development. The shift is reflected in some strides towards a human rights-based approach; social and economic development; participation; partnerships; and efforts to link micro and

macro practice. The findings further point out the barriers that hinder social workers from making significant progress towards the developmental approach.

The overall conclusion of this research endeavour is that there is a need in the Department of Social Development for guidelines and capacity building of social workers and supervisors in the developmental approach. The study recommends guidelines to accelerate the progress of implementing the developmental approach in the Mopani District.

KEY WORDS

Social Development

Developmental social welfare

Developmental social welfare services

Developmental social work

Department of Social Development

Mopani District

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1994, the first democratic government of South Africa inherited a discriminatory and inappropriate welfare system from the apartheid government. This was articulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1997:3): “Past welfare policies, legislation and programmes were inequitable, inappropriate and ineffective in addressing poverty, basic human needs and the social development priorities of all people.” It was thus imperative, according to the transformation agenda, that the democratic government reviewed all racist, discriminatory and exclusive legislations and policies in order to align them with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, and the overall direction of the country, which was outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (African National Congress [ANC], 1994). The RDP emphasised the need for people-centered development and a development-centered nation (ANC, 1994; Binza, 2006:493) which are part of the features of the National Development Plan (NDP) which was launched by the South African Government in 2012 (RSA, 2012) with the aim of alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities by 2030 (RSA, 2011:14). These instruments advocate for a developmental approach to social welfare service delivery.

In alignment with the RDP and South Africa’s commitment to social development as signatory to the Copenhagen Declaration which was agreed at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 (International Council on Social Welfare [ICSW], 1995), the social welfare sector adopted a developmental welfare system in the form of a White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997). At the center of this welfare system, is the developmental approach to social services which has to be incorporated in all spheres of social service delivery. Despite the prominence that was given to social development in the government’s agenda for transformation (Green, 2008:175) there is no monitoring and evaluation system in place for tracking the progress of developmental social service delivery (Patel, 2005:190).

The focus of the study was on the perspectives of Department of Social Development (DSD) social workers regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach, with a view to determine whether the DSD in the Mopani District of the Limpopo Province has made a shift to developmental service delivery. The Mopani District is largely rural in nature, has very low literacy levels and a high rate of crime, poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) (Mopani District Municipality, 2009). The community is therefore vulnerable and in great need of developmental social services. Despite the known high caseloads and demands for social grants and foster-care services (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:409; Earle, 2008:5-6; Statistics South Africa (Stats S.A), 2015:3), there was no evidence on the implementation of developmental approach in social service delivery by social workers employed by the DSD.

The key concepts of the study are as follows:

Social development

Midgley (2014:13) defines social development, as “a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole within the context of a dynamic multifaceted development process.” The concept was further clarified by Lombard (2007:299) who distinguished it as both a goal of development activities and an approach to social welfare “and thus an intervention strategy that incorporates social and economic processes to achieve social development as its ultimate goal.” This definition was adopted for the study.

Developmental social welfare

Developmental social welfare in South Africa is a right-based approach to social welfare that enhances the well-being of service users by linking social and economic development processes; and promoting active participation of service users in service planning and delivery (Patel, 2005:82). The approach promotes inter-sectoral collaboration of stakeholders to advance social development and bridges the historical division between the micro- and the macro-interventions in social welfare service delivery (Patel, 2015:94-98). Developmental social welfare is a pro-poor approach that focuses on development (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:691-692) and thus

implies that social welfare services and social work be approached from a developmental approach.

Developmental social welfare services

The study adopted Patel's (2015:129) definition of developmental social welfare services as "the delivery of integrated family-centred and community-based social services, facilities, social investment programmes and social protection – especially social assistance." The services are aimed at promoting social justice, building human capabilities and enhancing livelihoods and social functioning of service users to lead productive lives (Patel, 2015:129).

Developmental social work

Developmental social work is a type of social work that "is informed by the social development approach to social welfare and involves the practical and appropriate application of knowledge, skills and values to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups and communities in their social context" (Patel, 2015:127). Midgley (2010:13) emphasises that developmental social work include "facilitating change, the use of strengths, empowerment and capacity enhancement, the notion of self-determination and client participation, and a commitment to equality and social justice."

Department of Social Development

Department of Social Development is responsible for development and implementation of programmes, "for the eradication of poverty and for social protection and social development amongst the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable and marginalised" (DSD, 2008:11)

Mopani District

The Mopani District is one of the five district municipalities of the Limpopo Province, it is situated in the eastern part of Polokwane and consists of five sub-districts, which are Giyani, Letaba, Tzaneen, Ba-Phalaborwa and Maruleng. It is largely rural in nature and has very low levels of literacy, a high rate of crime, poverty, unemployment and HIV/AIDS (Mopani District Municipality, 2009). In this study the

term Mopani District is used to refer to the Giyani, Lataba, Tzaneen and Ba-Phalaborwa sub-districts, excluding the Maruleng sub-district.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The developmental approach to social welfare is based in the theory of social development which is concerned with the eradication of poverty (Gray, 2006:s53). In terms of the social development theory, economic and social processes are equally important components of the development process (Midgley & Tang, 2001:246). Social development advocates for the coordination of social and economic goals, and thus promote programmes that integrate social and economic development (Gray, 2006:s56; Midgley & Tang, 2001:246). Midgley and Tang (2001:246) indicate that the social development theory provides a counter response to the neo-liberal view of social welfare as detracting from economic development. They state that social development makes an argument that retrenchments in social welfare will impede economic development. They argue that social expenditures in the form of social investments do not detract from, but contribute positively to economic development. Midgley and Tang (2001:246) aver that "... social development seeks to promote human well-being in association with a dynamic process of economic development." Social development seeks to enhance material well-being of the people through participation in the economy (Patel, 2005:321).

Developmental social welfare is undergirded by a human rights-based approach (Lombard, 2008a:160-162; Patel, 2005:98; RSA, 1997) and embraces socio-economic rights, including the right to cash transfers and anti-poverty strategies (Lombard, 2008a:161). According to Patel (2005:98) the goals of developmental social welfare include "achieving social justice, a minimum standard of living, equitable access and equal opportunity to services and benefits..." It upholds the welfare rights and facilitate the meeting of basic human needs (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997:2) and thus encompasses social justice which requires the state to be primarily responsible for instituting social justice for all citizens (Banerjee, 2005). Banerjee (2005:12) note that social justice emphasises the need for cooperation of individual citizens and social, economic and political institutions, and fairness to all citizens. A broadly agreed view of social justice from

the social work perspective as indicated by Banerjee (2005:9) is that it means better living conditions and life circumstances for people who are poor, vulnerable, oppressed and marginalised in society. Social justice requires challenging the existing status quo (Chikadzi & Pretorius, 2011:259), hence the need for structural social work practice.

Within the theoretical framework of structural social work the developmental approach focuses on structural injustices, and according to Hick and Murray (2009:87), it “questions the legitimacy of institutions and economic systems...” It suggests that significant advances in social welfare cannot be realised if there are no “fundamental changes to the way in which global society organises the distribution of resources and power.” They note that structural social work refutes conventional approaches that emphasise client adaptation and support provision within the dominant social order. The advocates of the structural perspective view social problems as the product of social forces within the broader economic, social and political arena, and thus support a holistic approach that should bring change to both the individual and the environment (Chikadzi & Pretorius, 2011:260). In line with structural social work theory the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997) promotes the restructuring of services and social welfare programmes towards developmental approaches. The study was intended to determine whether the government has shifted its focus towards the developmental social welfare approach.

1.3 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997) has mandated social welfare to follow a developmental approach to social service delivery, recognising the sector’s contribution and role in achieving social development in South Africa. This poses challenges to traditional social services to follow a developmental approach (Department of Social Development, 2005; RSA, Department of Welfare, 1999; Landman & Lombard, 2006; Lombard & Kleijn, 2006) and to expand social service delivery in alignment with the dimensions of such an approach (Patel, 2005:98-110).

Government expects subsidised non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide evidence of their shift towards developmental social welfare services. However, there is no set of criteria or indicators in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of developmental social welfare services either by NGOs or the government sector. This is particularly relevant to the government sector, since NGOs have participated in studies providing research-based evidence that there has been some shift to developmental social service delivery (Green, 2008; Lombard, 2005; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008). The knowledge gap in this study, therefore, was that there was insufficient research-based evidence about the shift made in the government sector to a developmental approach in social service delivery. The need for research was pointed out by Patel and Hochfeld (2008:208).

As a social worker in the aforementioned department in the Limpopo Province from the year 2000 to 2006, the researcher observed that, in most cases, social workers responded to poverty through direct services delivery to individuals, families and communities by giving advice, providing food parcels and referring service beneficiaries, particularly those who claimed to be incapable of working, to the social security branch of the department to apply for social grants. In addition, the researcher observed a lack of involvement on the part of social workers in the DSD when it came to creating opportunities to empower poor people in rural areas to participate in socio-economic development activities. Empowerment would increase the opportunities and abilities of the service users to engage and participate in social development initiatives that would promote ownership of their own development.

The relevance of the researcher's observations and the subsequent conclusions, regarding the implementation of a developmental approach by social workers in the Mopani District during the period 2000–2006, were confirmed in personal discussions with two social work supervisors from two different sub-districts of the Mopani District. They confirmed the uncertainty amongst social workers as to what developmental social welfare entails. The researcher maintains Lombard's (2008a:159) comment that social workers neglected the challenge to shift 'traditional' practice towards incorporating other new approaches like strength-based and empowerment approaches. The shift poses a challenge to social workers, in particular to DSD social workers, hence it was important to carry the investigation.

It was envisaged that the study would provide empirical evidence to determine whether the DSD social workers have shifted to a developmental approach in implementing social services in the Mopani District. The study would also identify challenges pertaining to the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach and conscientise the department on the areas that need attention in order to improve and accelerate developmental social service delivery. In the absence of implementation guidelines (Dlangamandla, 2010), the study could contribute guidelines to accelerate a shift to developmental social work. Furthermore, the study had a potential to provide lessons that could inform the ongoing policy review of social policies in South Africa (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:209).

The following research question guided the study:

What are the perspectives of social workers on the shift to a developmental social welfare approach in the Department of Social Development, Mopani District, Limpopo Province?

The following sub-questions informed the main question:

- To what extent have the DSD social workers shifted towards implementing the developmental approach in social welfare services?
- What are the challenges for DSD social workers in implementing the developmental approach to social welfare services?
- What could be done to fast track the shift to a developmental approach by DSD social workers in social service delivery?

1.4 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The goal and objectives of the study were as follows:

1.4.1 Goal of the study

The goal of the study was to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To conceptualise the developmental social welfare approach within the theoretical framework of social development;
- To explore and describe DSD social workers' perspectives on the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery;
- To determine the challenges hindering the shift to a developmental social welfare approach in service delivery by DSD social workers in the Mopani District;
- To propose guidelines that will fast track the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development, Mopani District.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section provides a brief overview of the research methodology that was used in the study. A detailed presentation of the research methodology is provided in chapter three. The study utilised a qualitative research approach with an exploratory purpose (Fouché & Delpont, 2011:65). Applied research was used as the study was aimed at addressing a social work practice issue, namely the observed slow progress towards the developmental approach in service delivery (Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, 2006:45; De Vos & Strydom, 2011:42-43). A collective case study design was utilised to conduct an in-depth exploration of the views of social workers on how social service delivery in the Mopani District has shifted towards a developmental approach (Creswell, 2009:13; Fouché & Schurink, 2011:320; Marshall & Rossman, 2011:93; Stake, 2005:445).

The population of the study consisted of the grass-roots social workers, from the DSD in the Mopani District, and their supervisors. The study utilised a combination of stratified and purposive sampling techniques to purposefully select an appropriate sample from each of the four sub-districts of the Mopani District that were part of the study (Creswell, 2014:189; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:217; Strydom, 2011a:230). Semi-structured interview schedules were used to guide both the focus groups interviews with the grass-roots social workers and the one-on-one interviews with supervisors

(Greeff, 2011:351-352). The interview schedules allowed the researcher some freedom to ask follow-up questions and thus gather in-depth data (Greeff, 2011:351-352). Data was analysed according to the qualitative data analysis process as postulated by Creswell (2014:196-201). The ethical aspects relevant to the study are discussed in chapter three (see section 3.7).

1.6 DIVISION OF RESEARCH REPORT

Chapter one presents a general introduction and orientation of the study. It covers the theoretical framework of the study, the rationale and problem statement, goals and objectives, a brief overview of the research methodology and the chapter division.

Chapter two provides a literature study on the developmental social welfare approach within the theoretical framework of developmental social welfare and social development.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology, the ethical issues and the limitations of the study. It also presents the empirical findings and interpretations from literature perspective, as well as the ethical issues and limitation of the study.

Chapter four discusses how the goal and objectives of the study have been achieved and presents the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1994 South Africa transcended from apartheid to a democratic dispensation. In line with the intentions to address injustices inherited from apartheid, the transition encompassed the changing and alignment of policies with the new-found democracy. In the social services sector a developmental social welfare policy in the form of the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997) was adopted to guide and transform social welfare service delivery. The policy set forth the transition of South Africa from approaches that were purely traditional, pathological and remedial to the incorporation of a new policy approach based on social development, namely developmental social welfare (Patel, 2015:28). Social workers in South Africa have an obligation to make a shift towards the developmental approach in service delivery. Although the approach was adopted 19 years ago, the extent of progress made by social workers employed by the Department of Social Development (DSD) toward implementing the developmental approach is relatively unknown as most studies were conducted in the non-profit organisation sector.

This chapter provides a theoretical discussion of the relevant aspects of the developmental approach in social welfare and the social work profession. It starts with a discussion of the international and national contexts and policy framework for developmental social welfare. This is followed by a discussion of social welfare approaches in South Africa, including a conceptualisation of the developmental social welfare approach. Next, the progress made towards implementing the developmental approach is discussed and, finally, the challenges regarding the implementation of the approach in service delivery are explored.

2.2 THE INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXTS AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE

In this section the international and national contexts and policy framework for developmental social welfare is discussed, including international arrangements, and

national policies and legislations that were adopted by the South African democratic government to promote social development.

2.2.1 International context

According to Ferguson and Smith (2011:978) the adoption of a developmental approach to social welfare in South Africa was largely influenced by the social development theory as postulated by Midgley (1995). Patel's research on social welfare options for South Africa (Gray, 2006:s54) and the commitments of the United Nations World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995 (RSA, 1997:2), also made a significant contribution in this regard. The summit on social development was organised by the United Nations with a view to find a global solution to problems of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion (Rao, 1998:1). The summit was in response to the distorted development witnessed by the world during the second half of the 20th century where the benefits of economic growth were not distributed equally among the global population, and the gap between rich and poor people and between rich and poor countries widened (Rao, 1998:4). According to Midgley (1995:4) distorted development exists when economic development is not accompanied by social development. The summit culminated in the commitment of the state participants to what became known as the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, which was adopted as an international agenda to address global poverty and unemployment (Ngundu, 2010:16).

Continued commitment to the Copenhagen Declaration was strengthened when the targets were reformulated and adopted as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the United Nations General Assembly at a special session in September, 2000 (Midgley, 2010a:11). The MDGs include a commitment to reduce the incidence of world poverty by half between 1990 and 2015 (D. Green, 2012:291; Midgley, 2010a:11). This goal was achieved as "globally, the number of people living in extreme poverty has declined by more than a half, falling from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015 (United Nations [UN], 2015a:4). Despite global progress, more needs to be done in the sub-Saharan Africa region as its levels of poverty remains high at 41% and it "remains the region most severely affected by [the] HIV pandemic" (UN, 2015a:45).

As the UN's MDGs term came to an end in 2015, the next period of the agenda for development introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were adopted by the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development held in New York in September 2015. The summit adopted seventeen (17) SDGs that build on the MDGs and are set to advance and complete what the MDGs did not achieve (UN, 2015b:para.1). The SDGs include eradication of poverty in all its forms, achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, ensuring healthy life and promoting well-being for all, and ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting life-long learning opportunities for all (UN, 2015b). It is the researcher's view that a shift from poverty reduction (MDGs) to poverty eradication (SDGs) is an indication of increased commitment of the UN to social development.

On the African continent, the Organisation of African Union (OAU) adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001 with a view to eradicate poverty and position the African countries for sustainable growth and development (Bach, 2016:116). Although NEPAD is intended to address the social, economic and political problems of Africa, it was formulated by a few elite African leaders and, as such, it was criticised for not representing the will of the people (Sewpaul, 2005:116). NEPAD is further criticised for being based on neoliberalism which according to Sewpaul (2005:119) "holds the possibility for further marginalisation of the poor, for entrenching inequality, and for worsening the plight of the most vulnerable for our society." Neoliberalism is a capitalist ideology which rejects the notion of welfare rights and views the market as the main mechanism through which individuals should meet their welfare needs (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2012:66; Ife, 2012:143).

2.2.2 National context

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) forms a legal framework upon which all policies and legislations of the country, including the developmental social welfare policy, are based (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:101). According to S. Green (2012:32) the Constitution "created a normative framework for a society built on the principles of participation, accountability, unity, non-discrimination, equity and partnership." It includes the Bill of Rights which provides

for basic human rights as well as socio-economic rights (DSD, 2013:12). The Constitution entrenches a duty to alleviate poverty (S. Green, 2012:32) which creates a conducive environment for developmental social welfare service delivery. Social work is historically a human rights profession (Lombard & Twikirize, 2014:316), thus the Constitution's emphasis on human rights confirms the relevance of the profession in the democratic dispensation.

The developmental path for social welfare in South Africa was also informed by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of the African National Congress (ANC) which became the first socio-economic policy framework adopted by the new democratic government in 1995 (Binza, 2006:493). The RDP served as the basis for democratisation of social welfare in South Africa (S. Green, 2012:32). Its focus on people-centred development (Binza, 2006:493) and principles were of great importance to the transformation processes of social welfare towards the developmental approach (Gray, 2006:s54). The original RDP of the ANC (1994) showed a commitment to social development by listing the integration of social and economic development as a key task of the new government (Lombard, 2008b:24).

However, in compliance with the neoliberal capitalist macro-economic policy of Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) the task was scaled down in the White Paper for Reconstruction and Development (Lombard, 2008b:24). A shift from RDP to GEAR implied a shift of resources and focus from welfare provision to economic growth, thus a reduction of state expenditure on welfare in favour of capital accumulation (S. Green, 2012:38; Kaeane & Ross, 2012:18). Although both the RDP and GEAR aimed at promoting social development, they differ in terms of approach in that the GEAR emphasises the need for economic growth first and redistribution later (Gray, 2006:s62; Triegaardt & Kaseke, 2010:61). This contradicts the developmental approach (Hölscher, 2008:116) which advocates for integration of social and economic development as well as investments in social welfare programmes (Midgley, 2014:65,66). The shift in economic policy from RDP to GEAR slowed down the progress towards social development. The subsequent cuts in state subsidies to welfare organisations, as a result of GEAR, impacted negatively on the delivery of developmental social welfare services by NGOs (Lombard, 2008a:157).

The White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997) is a policy framework that was adopted to facilitate the transformation of social welfare towards a developmental approach (DSD, 2013:12; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:691). The policy embodies the social development approach which is based on human rights (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:691); as such, it is aimed at restructuring social welfare in alignment with the human rights principles enshrined in the Bill of Rights and the RDP (RSA, 1997:10). The White Paper for Social Welfare intends to address the past imbalances in provision of services, as it directs that there should be equitable and accessible social welfare services that respond to the needs of poor people (RSA, 1997:10,12). In alignment with the Constitutional obligation of the state to alleviate poverty (S. Green, 2012:32), the White Paper for Social Welfare focuses on meeting basic human needs and addressing issues of poverty and inequality (Gray, 2006:s56; Lombard, 2007:295). Lastly, it “promote[s] social development by integrating social interventions with economic development” (Lombard, 2007:295).

In view of implementation challenges and the lack of implementation guidelines of the White Paper for Social Welfare, the Department of Social Development developed a number of documents to facilitate implementation. These include the Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM) (DSD, 2006a), Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (DSD, 2005), and the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013). These documents prescribe principles and provide guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services but do not provide guidelines on how the approach should be implemented in practice. In the absence of clear guidelines, social workers continue to experience chronic challenges in implementing the approach (Dlangamandla, 2010; De Jager, 2005; Gray, 2006; Ntjana, 2014).

One of the critical contributions of the ISDM in social welfare service delivery is the classification of developmental social welfare services in terms of levels of intervention (DSD, 2006a:18). The ISDM classified services into prevention; early intervention; statutory, residential and alternative care, and reconstruction and aftercare levels of intervention (DSD, 2006a:18-19).

Developmental social welfare services in terms of the levels of intervention are explained in the ISDM (DSD, 2006a:18-19) and the Framework for Social Welfare

Services (2013:29-30). Services delivered at prevention levels are aimed at strengthening and building the capacity, self-reliance and resilience of service users and preventing development needs from developing into social challenges or risks. Services rendered at early intervention level focus on early detection of potential risks and symptoms that could negatively affect social well-being, with the aim of preventing development of social problems. The services ensure that people who are identified as being at risk are assisted before they go through statutory intervention. Statutory services are rendered at the statutory level of intervention. They are provided when the social functioning of individuals are compromised by social problems. They include removal of service beneficiaries from their families and communities and placement in alternative care or residential facilities through court order. The services at this level include protection services that aim at safeguarding the well-being of service beneficiaries. As statutory services are meant to be a temporary measure, they are followed by reunification and aftercare services that are aimed at enabling the service beneficiaries to return to their family or community as quickly as possible. Services delivered at this level are aimed at reintegration and support services to enhance self-reliance and optimal social functioning.

The aim of the review of the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997) was to improve the provision of social development services in addressing challenges posed by poverty, inequality and related social problems (DSD, 2015:para.4). The review was critical to ensure the alignment of the social welfare policy with the NDP (RSA, 2011), priorities on social protection and social development (DSD, 2015:para.2). The NDP goals of eradicating poverty and reducing inequality by 2030 (RSA, 2011:14) commit the country to the social development agenda. Amongst other approaches to social welfare, the developmental approach is recognised as an appropriate approach for achieving the social development goals of eradicating poverty and reducing inequality. The next section provides a discussion of social welfare approaches in South Africa.

2.3 APPROACHES TO SOCIAL WELFARE IN SOUTH AFRICA

In this section three theoretical approaches to social welfare in South Africa, namely the residual, institutional and social development approaches will be discussed. The residual and institutional models were the two prominent approaches to social welfare in South Africa prior to the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare in 1997. In order to understand why the democratic government opted for a developmental approach it is important to first discuss the residual and institutional approaches, as they form a critical part of the history of social welfare services in South Africa. Particular emphasis is placed on how social policies based on these models and approaches can promote or retard social development.

2.3.1 Residual approach

The residual model of social welfare advocates for limited state intervention in the provision of social welfare services (S. Green, 2012:29). As such, it encourages governments to implement drastic social welfare expenditure cuts and to withdraw from social welfare provisioning (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2012:64). To achieve minimal state intervention, the residual model institutes social welfare spending cuts, also known as austerity measures (Tellmann, 2015:37).

Austerity measures are a major concern for social workers as they diminish the ability of individuals to access and exercise their rights and, on the other hand, the ability of the state to protect rights (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2013:6), and as such, retards social development. Austerity measures impacts negatively on the poor and result in increased levels of inequality and poverty (International Federation of Social Workers [IFSW], 2016:para.4; OHCHR, 2013:6). Despite the negative consequences of reducing social welfare spending, the advocates of the residual model believe that the pursuance of economic growth alone will have a ripple effect that will automatically reach out and improve the welfare of the wider population (Hall & Midgley, 2004:4).

The residual model of social welfare is based on the capitalist ideology of neoliberalism which rejects the notion of welfare rights and views the market as the

main mechanism through which individuals should meet their welfare needs (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2012:66; Ife, 2012:143). It places the responsibility for meeting human needs on individuals through the private market where they purchase services to meet their own needs (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2012:64; Kirst-Ashman, 2013:7). This implies that people should pay user fees in order to access social services; as a result, failure to pay automatically excludes the poor from accessing basic social welfare services and thus compromises their social well-being.

The residual approach provides for short-term social welfare services following the existence of problems and failure of the individual to resolve them through other societal institutions like the family and the market (Weyers, 2013:434). The use of short-term interventions clearly reflects the lack of commitment to changing the pre-existing conditions which is, in fact, a long-term process to produce progressive social change (Midgley, 2014:13). This shows that the residual approach is not concerned about addressing the root causes of problems. The model perceives the service users' failure to meet their needs as an individual fault (Zastrow, 2010:8). As a result, its policies and programmes focus on addressing individual faults and neglects the structural causes of social problems which the developmental approach is concerned about (Gray, 2006:s63; S. Green, 2012:29; Hick & Murray, 2009:87; Midgley, 2010a:4; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:691). The remedial approach's preoccupation with individuals at the expense of wider community issues is not holistic, nor developmental, in that it reflects a separation of individuals from the environment.

Another social welfare approach which forms an integral part of the history of social welfare services in South Africa, and currently embraced in the developmental approach, is the institutional approach which is discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Institutional approach

Contrary to the residual model is the institutional approach which holds that the difficulties experienced by people are caused by circumstances beyond their control; as such, it perceives people's needs as a normal part of life and the provision of

welfare services as a right (Kirst-Ashman, 2013:7). The approach is non-discriminatory and promotes universal access to services by all members of society, irrespective of their financial status (Patel, 2015:19), however, in the apartheid South Africa institutional services were meant for Whites, while residual services focused on Blacks (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:691).

Institutionalised social welfare services, such as the social grants that were extended to other racial groups in South Africa after the democracy, were not equitably redistributed as there was no equality across racial groups in terms of social benefits from the state (Patel, 2015:49). Access to social grants is developmental as it is a socio-economic right to social protection and it also contributes to the economy in that it gives people the opportunity to look for employment and participate in the economy (D. Green, 2012:174). The challenge with the institutional model of service delivery is that it does not provide exit options for poor people from the welfare system (Mazibuko, 2008:14). This portrays the institutional approach as a poverty trap as it simply maintains beneficiaries in the welfare system. In the context of social development, it is important to look at exit strategies in order to bring economic freedom.

The institutional approach is embraced in the developmental approach to social welfare as the latter does not replace or supersede any other approaches to social welfare (DSD, 2005:3), instead it requires the state to commit resources and social investment in social development programmes. Within the developmental paradigm, institutional interventions like social grants are complemented with developmental strategies such as prevention, strength-based approaches, human capital and social capital development. In order to understand the new paradigm in social welfare, the following section will provide a theoretical discussion of the developmental social welfare model and highlights how it differs from the residual and institutional models.

2.3.3 Conceptualisation of developmental social welfare approach in the South African context

According to Gray (2006:s53) “developmental social welfare ... is the name given to South Africa’s new welfare system...” Developmental social welfare approach is a

model to social welfare that is based on the theory of social development (Gray, 2006:s53). It provides a framework for poverty alleviation and promotes integration of social and economic development (Midgley, 2012:98). According to Patel (2015:82) developmental social welfare is organised around five themes, namely: a right-based approach; interrelations between social and economic development; democracy and participation in development; social welfare pluralism; and bridging the micro-macro divide.

As a right-based approach to social welfare, the developmental approach covers socio-economic rights, including the right to social assistance, development and anti-poverty strategies (DSD, 2013:14; Lombard, 2008a:161). Socio-economic rights are defined as the "...rights that give people access to certain basic needs (resources, opportunities and services) necessary for human beings to lead a dignified life" (Khoza, 2007:20). The South African Constitution, as enshrined in the Bill of Rights (RSA, 1996) regards socio-economic rights as the right to housing (Section 26), the right to health care, food, water and social security (Section 27), and the right to education (Section 29). These rights are especially relevant for people who are marginalised (Khoza, 2007:20) and are thus important to social work, as the profession is primarily concerned with the well-being of poor and vulnerable people. Human rights imply having access to resources by all populations of society, including the rural communities that were historically disadvantaged and excluded due to apartheid (Lombard, 2008a:160; Patel, 2015:84). This implies that inaccessibility of basic social services constitutes a violation of basic human rights, which social workers must strive to protect. The study explored the extent of progress of developmental social work which is embedded in a human rights-based approach.

The intention of the developmental social welfare approach is to facilitate the achievement of social development goals in the welfare sector as outlined in the World Summit of Social Development (ICSW, 1995), the Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015), the RDP (ANC, 1994), the NDP (RSA, 2011), as well as the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996). Social development goals include, "... achieving social justice, a minimum standard of living, equitable access and equal opportunity to services and benefits, and a commitment to meeting the needs of all

South Africans with a special emphasis on the needs of the most disadvantaged in the society” (Patel, 2015:82). Social development goals clearly affirm the developmental social welfare’s commitment to human rights, social justice, eradication of poverty and inequality (Lombard, Kemp, Viljoen-Toet & Booyzen, 2012:180). Eradication of poverty is the prime social development goal that has received wide attention in the social welfare sector (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:698). It is more relevant in the South African context as there is a high rate of poverty, unemployment and inequality. Poverty is “a condition of material and social deprivation in which people fall below a socially acceptable minimum standard of living or in which they experience deprivation relative to others in a society” (Midgley, 2014:235). This definition reflects poverty as a consequence of deprivations rather than individual faults, which is in line with a developmental approach that emphasises socio-economic rights as important in addressing the deprivation associated with poverty.

The developmental approach integrates social and economic interventions as they are interrelated and equally important aspects of social development that should be pursued simultaneously (Midgley, 2012:98). The harmonisation of social and economic development is brought about by social interventions that contribute to economic development, for which the approach advocates (Midgley, 2014:65; Patel, 2015:125; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:692; Zastrow, 2010:9). By advocating for social welfare programmes that contribute to economic development, the developmental approach provides an appealing case to the conservative residual approach that contends that the expansion of social welfare programmes will have a negative impact on the economy (Zastrow, 2010:9). The developmental approach also addresses the liberal institutional approach by advocating for expansion of social welfare programmes (Zastrow, 2010:9). The approach thus bridges the residual and institutional approaches to social welfare, and it is for this reason that Midgley (1995:25) indicates that, “social development may also be viewed as an extension of the residual-institutional dichotomy...”

Unlike the residual and institutional approaches, the developmental approach aims to tackle poverty and improve the social well-being of marginalised people by promoting participation in development rather than service provision (Midgley,

2014:67), which implies a requirement for social workers to involve the service users in their own development. Capabilities are essentially a prerequisite for the service users to take part in their own development (Sen, 1999:87), thus social workers should focus on enhancing capacities of service users. They should incorporate strength-based and empowerment approaches where the focus is on identifying and building on the strengths of the service users to take part in economic activities (Kirst-Ashman, 2013:62). The Mopani District has a very low level of education and many people lack proper knowledge and skills required for employment (Mopani District Municipality, 2013:121). Therefore, strength-based and empowerment approaches in service delivery are critical for increasing marginalised people's capacity for participation in their own development (Landman & Lombard, 2006:1; Weyers & Geyer, 2011:83). The strengths-based approach is a collaborative effort where the social worker works with the service user "to uncover, reveal and recognise individual strengths and strengths in the world around them" (Sullivan, 2012:183).

In addition to identifying and enhancing service users' capabilities, the developmental approach also focuses on removing structural barriers to participation. To achieve this, the approach advocates for policies and practice-strategies that are designed specifically to target the most destitute people with a view to integrate them into community life (Midgley, 2014:68). This requires social workers to advocate for the removal of institutionalised barriers, including discrimination and other factors that hinder the service users from realising their aspirations (Midgley, 2010a:24). In fighting the barriers to participation, Ife (2012:59) asserts that service users should be actively involved in the advocacy process so that they learn the approach and do not become dependent on social workers.

The developmental approach incorporates traditional social work services such as rehabilitation and counselling services, which are remedial in nature (Lombard & Kleijn, 2006:215). In dire situations of hunger, remedial services such as the provision of food are important before involving the service users in development initiatives. This is in line with the developmental approach as it recognises the fact that there will always be people in need of traditional social work services (Landman & Lombard, 2006:1; Midgley & Tang, 2001:247). The approach does not nullify other

approaches or reduce their interventions (Midgley, 1995:25). What is required within the developmental paradigm is that traditional social work services be rendered from a strengths-based perspective in a developmental manner (Lombard, 2008a:158). The services should be rendered with a view to integrate and promote social and economic development (Midgley, 1995:25).

Although the developmental approach encompasses remedial services, it emphasises prevention of social problems, which is a crucial aspect of service delivery (DSD, 2006a:18). Prevention services were neglected in the pre-1994 residual model as it heavily relied on the social treatment approach where services are reactive and only provided when problems arise (Dlangamandla, 2010:30; DSD, 2006a:13; Weyers, 2013:434). Rather than solely focusing on the treatment of social problems, social workers should also “raise community awareness of social concerns and introducing [introduce] strategies to reduce and prevent social pathologies” (RSA, 2011:361). This implies that social workers must shift from being reactive to social problems, to taking a pro-active stance where they are involved in prevention oriented programmes.

In order to broaden and strengthen the understanding of the developmental approach, the next section discusses themes imbedded in the developmental approach. The themes provide direction and guidelines to social workers on how the developmental approach should be implemented in service delivery.

2.3.3.1 Themes imbedded in the developmental approach

According to Patel (2015:83) the conception of developmental social welfare in South Africa centres around five organising themes. These themes are: a rights-based approach; economic and social development; democracy and participation; social development partnerships; and bridging the micro- and macro divide. The researcher used these themes as a point of departure in this study to determine how the shift towards the developmental approach in service delivery has been made.

- **A rights-based approach**

The developmental social welfare is a rights-based approach as it is firmly rooted in human rights (Patel, 2015:82). This implies that developmental social welfare in South Africa is based on respect for human rights (RSA, 1997:9) and takes cognisance of human rights in both policy-making and service delivery. A human rights-based approach and practice implies a strong element of empowerment whereby social workers should promote and protect human rights; and educate the service users about their rights and responsibilities (DSD, 2013:14; Ife, 2012:230; OHCHR, 2006:15; Patel, 2015:129). In the Mopani District where there are low levels of education, high levels of poverty and unemployment (Mopani District Municipality, 2013), the empowerment of service users on human rights is important to help them claim, access and fulfil their rights (OHCHR, 2008:28). A human rights approach also implies that social workers should be involved in challenging policies and systems that compromise rights of users (DSD, 2013:14; Patel, 2015:129). The study was also geared towards determining the extent to which the social workers employed by the DSD focus on human rights in service delivery.

- **Economic and social development**

The second key theme underlying the developmental approach is the inter-relation between economic and social development (Patel, 2015:88). The theme implies that social and economic development processes are interdependent and should be harmonised to complement one another. The integration of social and economic development is essential to social workers as they “deal with social as well as economic problems” (Abramovitz, 2012:43). In order to improve human well-being of the population, economic growth should contribute to social development through investment in key social sectors like health, education and social welfare, that can contribute to human and social capital that are critical for economic development (Midgley, 2012:94; Patel, 2015:88; RSA, 1997:7). Social investment in education and health, for example, is important for social and economic development in that it benefits the economy as it results in the availability of healthy and educated people to contribute to economic growth by participating in productive economy in a meaningful way (Kirst-Ashman, 2010:9; Midgley, 2010a:22). The implementation of social welfare policies and programmes depends on social investments; as such, it is

critical that, in return, they promote the participation of welfare users in the productive economy to contribute towards economic growth (Midgley, 2014:66).

In order to make an impact on harmonising social and economic development, social workers should adopt human capital investments and social capital formation strategies (Patel, 2015:89,90). Midgley (2014:232) defines human capital as “the productive capacity of human beings in the process of economic development supported by investments in education, health and other programmes.” Human capital investment programmes will help to provide poor people with the knowledge and skills that they need to participate in productive economy, and thus contribute to the reduction of poverty (Midgley, 2010a:22). These programmes contribute to both social and economic development and they also include health care and nutrition (Midgley, 2010a:22; Patel, 2015:89).

Another critical strategy for the harmonisation of social and economic development that should be utilised by social workers is social capital formation. For Midgley (2014:236) social capital refers to “social relationships and networks that bind people together and facilitate coordinated action.” By developing social capital, social workers lay a foundation for economic development as it is believed that communities that have social networks are more likely to have economic development than those without social bonds (Patel, 2015:90; Midgley, 2010a:24). In communities with social capital, people trust one another and normally find it easy to engage in joint initiatives like stockvels or credit unions where members of a group agree to make a contribution of a fixed amount of cash to a common pool on a weekly or monthly basis to benefit members either in rotation or in times of need (Matube 2005:186).

- **Democracy and participation**

The third theme of the developmental approach to social welfare is the participation of people who are marginalised, in development (Patel, 2015:91). The theme implies that social workers should view the service users and communities as active participants in their own development, rather than passive recipients of services (D. Green, 2012:24; Patel, 2015:98). In line with the inclusive nature of the human rights-based approach to social development, social workers should promote

participation of service users in all aspects of service delivery (Ife, 2012:234; Green & Nieman, 2003:167), including planning and decision-making, implementation and evaluation. They should conscientise the service users of their right to participate to enable them to exercise their right.

To promote active participation of service users, social workers should move away from the “expert” model in which they prescribe solutions to fostering dialogical relationships where issues are bilaterally discussed and decisions considered with the service users (Midgley, 2010a:16). It is the researcher’s understanding that a dialogical relationship refers to a helping relationship where the client and social worker have equal opportunities to express their views and the social worker does not dominate the conversation or impose his/her own views on the client. This is consistent with the social work principle of self-determination which bestows service users with the right to make their own decisions (Kirst-Ashman, 2013:36). Social development is not solely the responsibility of social workers and service users; different stakeholders like the business- and the NGO sectors should also be brought on board.

- **Social development partnerships**

The fourth feature of the developmental approach to social welfare is social development partnerships, also referred to as welfare pluralism, which calls upon the state, civic society, private sector, communities and individuals to work together in collaborative partnerships to promote social development (Patel, 2015:93). It is in this regard that developmental social welfare policy views the meeting of human needs as a national collective responsibility (DSD, 2006a:29; OHCHR, 2006:3; Patel, 2015:93; RSA, 1997:15). The theme implies that social workers should engage in collaborative partnerships with the service users and other relevant stakeholders in service delivery. In rural areas like the Mopani District, social workers should establish partnerships with stakeholders such as the traditional leaders, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), ward councillors and other relevant government departments. This is important for social development as it has the potential to provide various stakeholders with the opportunity to share knowledge, experiences

and resources, particularly because they are normally targeting the same people; those who are marginalised and vulnerable.

- **Bridging the micro- and macro divide**

The fifth theme of the developmental approach to social welfare is the bridging of the division between the micro- and the macro-interventions in service delivery (Patel, 2015:98). Micro-interventions are those interventions aimed at individuals and families and involve personal growth, whereas macro-interventions are aimed at bringing about social change and collective improvement (Midgley, 2010a:13; Patel, 2015:98). The traditional division between ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ practice is irrational as individuals or families cannot be seen in isolation from the broader societal context (Ife, 2012:248) and thus, the developmental approach dismantles this dichotomy.

The theme requires social workers to shift from only practicing casework, to incorporate other methods of practice including group, organisational, community, research and policy interventions, which has the potential to balance rehabilitation, prevention, promotion and social- and economic goals, which is the essence of the developmental social welfare approach (Patel, 2015:98). This implies that social workers should integrate the methods and levels of intervention in a complementary way to achieve individual- and wider social outcomes (Patel, 2015:98). It also links with the social reform model postulated by Pitman-Munke (1999:207), which utilises casework data to inform the need for social change and further evaluate the effectiveness of policies by analysing data that is gathered through casework. On the other hand, case workers need policy change if they are to realise lasting change in their clients’ lives. Hence, “Casework and social reform are necessary to each other” (Pitman-Munke, 1999:215). Therefore, social workers should shift from individual-focused interventions to encompass policy and advocacy work which is critical to bridging micro- and macro divide (Lombard, 2015:495).

Embedded in these five key themes of the developmental approach are several principles which have been outlined in the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997:8-10), the ISDM (DSD, 2006a:10), the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (DSD, 2005) and the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) to guide social workers in developmental social welfare service delivery. The

principles of the developmental social welfare approach provide a foundation for the shift towards a developmental approach in social welfare service delivery as discussed in the next section.

2.3.3.2 Principles of the developmental social welfare approach

In this section, some of the key guiding principles of developmental social welfare that should guide developmental social welfare policies, programmes and interventions, are discussed. The principles include empowerment, capacity development, appropriateness, accessibility, sustainability and social justice. Other principles such as participation, human rights and partnerships are not discussed in this section as they are directly implied in the themes discussed in the previous section. The shift towards the developmental approach should reflect the incorporation of principles in service delivery and programmes as discussed next (RSA, 1997).

- **Empowerment**

Empowerment is closely associated with the strengths-based approach and is underpinned by the premise that people have capacities and resources that can be used to help them solve their problems (Saleebey, 2000:129). It involves helping individuals, groups and communities to realise and utilise their capabilities and resources to meet their needs (Saleebey, 2000:127). Empowerment is considered as a process whereby capabilities of individuals, groups or communities to solve their problems, are increased (Green & Nieman, 2003:162; RSA, 1997:95).

The empowerment principle implies that social workers should focus on helping people to identify and use their inner resources, skills and abilities to solve their own problems (IFSW, 2012a:para.9; Midgley, 2010a:14; Zastrow, 2010:52). Helping people to develop an awareness that they have their own strengths and resources to solve their own problems can be achieved through dialogical practice where social workers engage in dialogical conversation with service users about their circumstances, as already stated in section 2.3.3.1 under the theme democracy and participation (Ife, 2012:230; Midgley, 2010a:16).

- **Capacity development**

Human rights go along with responsibilities; therefore, the service users should have the capabilities to act on their rights (Lombard, 2014:49). This implies that the lack of capabilities constitutes a barrier for people to realise their aspirations. Therefore, social workers should adopt the capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2011:143; Sen, 1999:87) to develop capabilities of the service users and raise their consciousness on issues that hampers them from exercising their social and economic rights (Lombard, 2014:49). Capacity development can be seen as an effective means to confront poverty by enhancing the capacities of marginalised people to participate in the productive economy (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437). Capacity development is defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2009:5) as “the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capacities to set and achieve their own development goals.” It involves imparting knowledge and skills that people need to participate meaningfully in productive economy (Marinas, 2015:494; Midgley, 2010a:22) and is seen as the “engine of human development” (UNDP, 2009:5).

- **Appropriateness**

In terms of this principle social welfare services should be appropriate and responsive to the social, economic, cultural and political conditions of the people it intends to serve (DSD, 2013:10; RSA, 1997:10). This implies that social welfare intervention programmes should consider and fit the general conditions of the service users. Social welfare interventions should focus on the needs expressed by service users. Appropriate social welfare programmes have the potential to increase the acceptance and effectiveness of intervention programmes in terms of the participation of users.

- **Accessibility**

In line with the human right to equality, the accessibility principle of developmental social welfare implies that services should be accessible to all people in need (RSA, 1997:12). To comply with the accessibility principle of the developmental approach, social workers should engage in the deliberate removal of barriers that prevent people from accessing social services and economic opportunities (Midgley,

2014:68; RSA, 1997:12). This includes physical accessibility where social welfare service centres should be within safe reach and wheelchair accessible (Khoza, 2007:283,418), as well as challenging institutionalised obstacles, including discrimination based on race, gender, age disability and other factors (Midgley, 2010a:24). Social welfare services should be made accessible to vulnerable populations, including rural communities that were historically disadvantaged and excluded (Khoza, 2007:386). The principle clearly focuses on ensuring equity in the distribution of social welfare services where people in rural areas should have equal access to social welfare services like those living in urban areas.

It is the researcher's observation that most rural communities in the Mopani District experience challenges in accessing social welfare services due to travel distances outside their respective communities. The DSD in the Mopani District is challenged to make a meaningful shift towards improving accessibility of social welfare services to all, in that there are no offices for social workers in most rural communities that they serve. The NDP (RSA, 2011:361) confirms that the distribution of and access to social welfare services remain skewed along racial and income lines. This is consistent with the fact that social welfare services are predominantly centralised in urban areas.

- **Sustainability**

The principle of sustainability emphasises the need for conservation and proper management of resources with a view to ensure continuity of development efforts (UNDP, 2003:3). The principle emanates from the notion of sustainable development which is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UNDP, 2003:2). Development efforts should integrate and balance the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development in accordance with the SDGs of the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development (UN, 2015b:para.1). This implies that social workers should be involved in programmes that promote environmental sustainability since sustainable development “can only take place in harmony with the environment” (Lombard, 2015:486).

On the economic dimension, the principle implies that developmental social welfare services should be cost-effective in order to ensure continuity of services for the long-term benefit of the present- and future generations (DSD, 2006a:11; Potgieter, 1998:71). McKinlay (2004:3) summed it up by stating that at the centre of sustainability is the idea of “ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come.” Developmental programmes, interventions and decisions should thus consider and balance the needs and rights of present- and future generations (Drexhage & Murphy, 2010:6; World Bank, 2013).

- **Social justice**

Social workers have an ethical obligation to promote social justice (IFSW, 2012b:para.6; Lombard, 2015:484) which is defined by Barker (2003:404) as “an ideal condition in which all members of a society have the same basic rights, protection, opportunities, obligations and social benefits.” In pursuit of social justice, social workers have a responsibility to challenge unjust policies and practices as well as the social conditions that contribute to social exclusion and stigmatisation or subjugation (IFSW, 2012b:para.6). Promoting social justice by challenging and improving policies and practices require a great deal of social workers’ involvement in policy development and advocacy work if they are to make a meaningful impact (Ife, 2012:61).

Social justice is also about ensuring equitable distribution of resources (Patel, 2015:147), however in practice the social welfare sector in South Africa is generally characterised by a lack of resources (Earle, 2008:72; Ntjana, 2014:88) and as such, it lags behind in terms of distributing social welfare services in rural areas (RSA, 2011:361). By fighting inequalities and promoting equity in distribution of resources, opportunities and services, which are the core of social justice (Banerjee, 2005:9), social workers will simultaneously be fighting poverty as according to D. Green (2012:24), “poverty is a symptom of deep-rooted inequalities...” The close association between poverty and inequalities is confirmed by Lombard (2013:5) who states that “... the ‘fight’ against poverty cannot succeed without a ‘war’ against inequalities.”

The themes and principles of developmental social welfare are used as a guiding framework for delivery of developmental social welfare services. Therefore, the progress towards a developmental approach should reflect the themes and principles of the approach in social welfare service delivery. The progress that has been made towards a developmental approach is discussed in the next section.

2.4 PROGRESS MADE TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE APPROACH

In this section, the progress toward the implementation of the developmental approach in service delivery is discussed. The developmental approach to social welfare was adopted with a view to redesign South Africa's welfare system to make it "appropriate, just, equitable and participatory in meeting the needs of all its citizens" (S. Green, 2012:40). In this endeavour, South Africa has made significant progress in terms of transforming policies and legislation to reflect the human rights-based approach (Patel, 2015:369). In the welfare sector, as already indicated (see 2.2.2), different policies, including the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997), the Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM) (DSD, 2006a), the Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers (DSD, 2005) and the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) were adopted. Legislation such as the Social Assistance Act (No. 13) of 2004, the Children's Act (No. 38) of 2005 and the Prevention of and Treatment for Substance Abuse Act (No. 70) of 2008 were also adopted to advance the developmental agenda of the country (DSD, 2006a:12; Lombard & Wairire, 2010:102).

In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), the adopted policies and legislations put an end to institutionalised racial discrimination in access to services (Patel, 2015:369). Deprivation of social services based on race has successfully been outlawed in South Africa. This is consistent with the right to equality as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996). Lombard (2008a:161) confirms that accessibility is one of the areas in which the social welfare sector has transformed well. However, despite successful de-racialisation of social welfare, the availability of social welfare services remains skewed along racial and income lines (RSA, 2011:361). The wealthy people in urban

areas have access to private services (RSA, 2011:361) and many NPOs are still concentrated in urban areas (Patel, 2015:372).

The right to access includes access to cash transfers which in the developmental approach is a socio-economic right (Lombard, 2008a:161). Social grants have been the new government's priority anti-poverty strategy since 1994 and there has been significant progress in increasing access. The social grants beneficiaries increased from 12,7% of the population in 2003 to 30,1% in 2015 (Stats S.A), 2015:3). Despite the progress in increasing access to social grants in South Africa, the levels of poverty and inequality in the country are rising (Lombard et al., 2012:179). This reflects the lack of balance between the provision of social grants and developmental social services (Lombard, 2011:236) and may be attributed to the lack of exit strategies from the social welfare system (Chikadzi & Pretorius, 2011:262). It shows there is a need for the DSD to develop exit strategies to facilitate movement of social welfare beneficiaries from the welfare system to economic activities (DSD, 2006b).

A study by Ntjana (2014:95) reveals that social workers have made a significant shift towards protective and prevention services. However, they are still challenged in understanding what the developmental approach entails (Ntjana, 2014:96). This lack of understanding can be associated with the finding that the social workers are challenged in integrating social and economic development in social work interventions and thus, have not been able to make a significant impact on poverty and unemployment (Ntjana, 2014:96). In responding to this challenge, the developmental approach has been incorporated into the social work curriculum in South African universities since the year 2007 (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:103). However, Chikadzi and Pretorius (2011:264) recommend that a social work curriculum based on indigenous alternative theory should be developed to address the socio-economic and political challenges in South Africa. They added that the curriculum should be able to provide social work students and practitioners with knowledge and skills that will enable them to deal with poverty and inequality at a structural level.

The underfunding of developmental services remains a major barrier hampering progress towards the developmental approach (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:693). In the

NGO sector, in particular, there has not been much progress in terms of expanding services to rural areas due to lack of financial resources to do so (Patel, 2015:372). According to Lombard and Wairire (2010:102) the underfunding of developmental services was worsened by “the fact that social security has for decades received the bulk of the social welfare budget.” However, government’s acknowledgement of the skewed allocation of the welfare budget to social security at the expense of social welfare services resembles a significant progress towards delivery of developmental social welfare services (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:102). Adequate funding, particularly of the NGOs as partners to government in service delivery, will go a long way in terms of increasing their capacity to deliver developmental social welfare services.

Another significant milestone towards the developmental approach was the declaration of social work as a scarce skill, which according to Lombard and Wairire (2010:103), “reflected open political support for the social work profession.” This was an acknowledgement of the critical shortage of social workers and the importance of the profession in meeting the social development goals and priorities of the country. The declaration of social work as a scarce skill has led to the formulation of the recruitment and retention strategy for social workers, according to which the salaries of the public sector social workers were improved (Earle, 2008:8,70). Another crucial development in strengthening the capacity of social workers to meet the social development goals was the introduction of a comprehensive scholarship programme for undergraduate student social workers (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:103).

In view of the overreliance of service users on social workers, the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997:32) created the opportunity for appointment of other categories of social service providers. These categories “include social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers, community development practitioners and probation officers” (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:103). There is remarkable progress in this regards as social auxiliary workers, child and youth care workers and auxiliary child and youth care workers are registered at the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) to render services in the social welfare sector (SACSSP, 2016:1). However, the progress for recognising other categories of social

service personnel is slow when measured against the 19 years that has passed since the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare in 1997.

Despite the evidence of progress, the implementation of the developmental approach has been met with many challenges since the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare in 1997 (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:101). The slow progress may be attributed to the challenges that are discussed in the next section.

2.5 CHALLENGES REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Several studies (Chikadzi & Pretorius, 2011; S. Green, 2012; Green & Nieman, 2003; Lombard, 2007, 2008a; Patel, 2015:369) show that there are challenges hampering progress towards the developmental approach in the welfare sector. The challenges include poor working conditions, shortage of social workers, lack of understanding of developmental social welfare, lack of implementation guidelines, lack of monitoring and evaluation system, and the state's influence on the developmental agenda. These challenges are discussed next.

2.5.1 Poor working conditions

In South Africa, social workers in the welfare sector are key role players in developmental social welfare service delivery, however their working conditions does not reflect their importance as they "...are generally very poor" (Earle, 2008:72). The poor working conditions for social workers include limited (or lack of) access to resources such as adequate supervision, stationery, office space and furniture, information technology, administrative support, vehicles and supporting professionals (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:407; Earle, 2008:72; Ntjana, 2014:83).

Poor working conditions negatively impact on the ability of social workers to deliver quality and effective developmental social welfare services and to make a significant shift towards the developmental approach in service delivery. It also contributes to a shortage of social workers in the country as a high number of social workers leave the profession and move from both the government and the non-governmental sector for better prospects elsewhere (DSD, 2009:17; Sithole, 2010:9).

2.5.2 Shortage of social workers

South Africa experiences a disjuncture between a critical shortage of social workers and an increased demand for social welfare services (Patel, 2015:111; RSA, 2011:377). The study by Green (2008:186) indicates that social workers are overwhelmed by the increased demand for social welfare services and as such, most of the time they are preoccupied by short-term and individual interventions with hardly any time for developmental efforts because of the survival needs of client systems and acute poverty issues. This implies that the situation does not provide adequate opportunity for social workers to also focus on mezzo- and macro interventions, in particular, bridging the micro- and macro divide in service delivery. As a result, micro-interventions, particularly in the form of case work, continue to dominate over the mezzo- and macro interventions (Earle, 2008:72; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:698) and thus delays progress towards social development. In the non-governmental sector, the challenge of shortage of social workers was exacerbated when the government reduced the subsidy (RSA, 2011:377). The subsidy cuts significantly reduced the sector's capacity to provide developmental social welfare services as they were unable to recruit and retain social workers (RSA, 2011:377).

2.5.3 Lack of understanding of developmental social welfare

According to Patel (2015:110), the successful achievement of the goals of developmental social welfare policy depends on both the availability and capability of social workers to effectively deliver the desired outcomes. The knowledge base on developmental social welfare is one of the prerequisites for social workers to shift towards developmental social work paradigm (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:700). There is a lack of knowledge and skills on developmental social work among social workers and this constitutes a major barrier to progress toward the implementation of the developmental approach (Ntjana, 2014:100; Patel, 2015:371). Based on this evidence it can be deduced that social workers do not have sufficient knowledge to implement the approach. In this regard, it is worth noting Ife's (2012:216) remarks that practice without knowledge is "anti-intellectual, uninformed and usually dangerous." The lack of knowledge impacts negatively on the progress towards developmental social welfare service delivery and can be addressed if the DSD can invest in capacity building of social workers on developmental social work. The lack

of knowledge is closely associated with the lack of implementation guidelines, which is discussed in the next section.

2.5.4 Lack of implementation guidelines

The lack of implementation guidelines poses a serious challenge for social workers in implementing the approach. Lombard (2007:296) emphasises that over and above the lack of resource capacity, “the lack of proper guidelines as to how social welfare should achieve social development goals was an even bigger obstacle.” According to Lombard and Kleijn (2006:214), finding the “how” in making a shift towards the developmental paradigm in social welfare service delivery has been a major challenge since the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare in 1997. S. Green (2012:40) confirms this by stating that “the direction to take action and implement developmental social welfare services is outlined in relevant policy documents, but the challenge for the state, the non-profit sector and society remains to creatively determine how to get there.” In the absence of implementation guidelines, it is unlikely that social workers would make a meaningful shift towards a developmental approach.

2.5.5 Lack of monitoring and evaluation system

Green and Nieman (2003:178) assert that social development is a process that “requires thorough planning, monitoring and evaluation.” Midgley (2014:77) confirms this by arguing that the outcomes of social development interventions should be assessed as it cannot just be assumed that the interventions will achieve their goals. Monitoring and evaluation could contribute towards the progress of social development in that it could help to provide information necessary to improve social development interventions, build increased support for effective services and add to the knowledge base (Lewis, Packard & Lewis, 2012:209). However, in South Africa, social development services have not been thoroughly monitored and evaluated due to the lack of capacity in provincial governments (Patel, 2015:372). Furthermore, there are no agreed-upon indicators for monitoring and evaluating developmental interventions (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012:693).

In the absence of monitoring and evaluation, the government loses out on educational opportunities to learn from best practices to inform policy and

programme review (Noyoo, 2005:232). The available evidence of best practices is acknowledged (Lombard & Twikirize, 2014; IFSW, 2014; Patel, 2015), and shows some progress in developmental service delivery, but it is certainly not enough and more are needed. It is, therefore, imperative that the DSD invests in developing a monitoring and evaluation system that would assist in tracking and documenting the progress in developmental social welfare service delivery. The lessons from monitoring and evaluation of developmental social welfare service delivery would make an immense contribution in guiding social workers in implementing developmental programmes and thus, fast-tracking the shift towards the developmental approach.

2.5.6 Developmental agenda is driven by the state

Developmental social work involves the social justice value which requires social workers to adopt a critical approach focusing on the empowerment of people who are marginalised to act collectively for social change (Healy, 2005:174). Patel (2015:27) asserts that social workers advocating for social justice within the critical framework are likely to locate themselves outside the state and private sector organisations in order to maximise their opportunities for critical engagement and expression.

Thus, the challenge for social work in this regard is that the social workers who are employed by the DSD, who are the target of this study, are in an awkward position when it comes to facilitating social change as they are part of the system. Those in the NGO-sector are also not in a position to do so due to their dependence on the state for financial subsidisation. As a source of funding, the state is in a advantageous position to dictate and drive the developmental agenda at the expense of the other partners. This is detrimental to a developmental approach as it is embedded in partnerships for developmental service delivery. According to Chikadzi and Pretorius (2011:258), the social work profession is struggling to gain its autonomy and self-determination as social workers derive their operational resources from the state, and the programmes and the agenda are politically determined by the government. This challenge was confirmed by Dlangamandla's (2010:101) research outcomes where all the participants (social workers from the Gauteng Department of Social Development) were of the opinion that political

agendas tend to influence their approach to practice. This implies that social workers have less or no control over their work as the delivery of social work services is influenced by those in power, instead of the needs of the people they serve.

The discussion in this section clearly shows that the DSD has failed to effectively create a conducive environment to impact on the envisaged shift towards the developmental approach.

2.6 SUMMARY

Social welfare services in South Africa were historically inequitable across racial groups in accordance with the apartheid policies of separate development. In order to address the unjust history in social welfare service delivery, a developmental social welfare policy was adopted. The policy provides for developmental social welfare service delivery whereby services should be just, appropriate and equitable to all service users and particularly the people who are poor, vulnerable and marginalised. Developmental social welfare service delivery highly regards the principle of social justice and intends to reverse the historical inequalities in social welfare by ensuring that service users in rural areas like the Mopani District also receive quality services that will impact positively in their lives. From the literature review it appears that progress has been made towards the developmental approach but it has been slow as it has been accompanied by ongoing challenges. In view of the increasing demand for developmental social services to respond to the challenges of poverty, unemployment and the HIV and AIDS pandemic, the acceleration of the pace of implementation is imperative (DSD, 2005:3; RSA, 2011:377). Chapter three will report on the empirical study's findings on the progress that has been made with implementing social welfare services from a developmental perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPIRICAL STUDY AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret the research findings of this study. The research question that guided the empirical study was as follows:

What are the perspectives of social workers on the shift to a developmental social welfare approach in the Department of Social Development, Mopani District, Limpopo Province?

The following sub-questions informed the main question:

- To what extent have social workers shifted towards implementing the developmental approach in social welfare services?
- What are the challenges for social workers in implementing the developmental approach to social welfare services?
- What could be done to facilitate the shift to a developmental approach by social workers in social service delivery?

The chapter begins with a discussion of the research approach, followed by the type of research and research design. The next focus is on the research methodology for the study, followed by a discussion of the pilot study, the ethical aspects involved in the study, and finally, the limitations of the study. The next section will present and discuss the empirical findings of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study utilised a qualitative research approach with an exploratory purpose (Fouché & Delport, 2011:65). The flexible nature of the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to ask follow-up questions and thus, penetrate deeper into the experiences of participants and gather in-depth information regarding the shift towards the developmental approach in service delivery (Babbie, Mouton, Vorster & Prozesky, 2001:270; Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013:16; Kumar, 2014:14).

3.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The type of study was applied research as it was intended to contribute towards addressing a problem in practice (Bless et al., 2006:45; De Vos & Strydom, 2011:42), namely the slow progress in implementing developmental social welfare services in the Mopani District. Besides exploring the perspectives of social workers on the shift towards the developmental approach, the study also focused on detecting the challenges they experience in implementing the approach, with a view to identify and propose strategies that may be adopted to assist in speeding up the implementation. The study findings may help to guide social workers' practice decisions (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:42) in rendering social welfare services within the developmental approach framework.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, a case study research design was used as it allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth exploration of selected participants' views (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:93; Fouché & Schurink, 2011:320-323) on how social welfare service delivery in the Mopani District has shifted towards a developmental approach. In particular, a collective case study which is defined by Fouché and Schurink (2011:322) as "an instrumental case study extended to a number of cases" was utilised to examine several cases/participants to provide insight into the progress towards developmental social work.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research methods that were used in the study, including the population and sample of the study, data collection and data analysis methods, the trustworthiness of the study and the pilot study. Thereafter, the ethical aspects are outlined, followed by the limitations of the study.

3.5.1 Population, sample and sampling method

The population for the study included all social workers and social work supervisors rendering social work services in the Department of Social Development (DSD),

Mopani District, Limpopo Province. The study was conducted in four sub-districts of the Mopani District Municipality, namely Giyani, Letaba, Tzaneen and Ba-Phalaborwa.

According to Muhlari (2015/08/08) from the Human Resource Unit of the DSD in Mopani District, there were 244 social workers and thirteen (13) social work supervisors employed by the Department in the four sub-districts that were part of the study at the time when sampling was conducted (February 2015). Since the population of the study were from four different sub-districts of the Mopani District, the researcher adopted stratified sampling to ensure sufficient representation of each stratum (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014:217; Strydom, 2011a:230), namely Giyani, Ba-Phalaborwa, Tzaneen and Letaba. In each stratum, the researcher used a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling, to draw the samples (Kumar, 2011:127; Yin, 2011:89).

The purposive sampling technique allowed the researcher to target participants who met the set criteria for participation. Since the researcher did not know the social workers and social work supervisors in the sub-district municipalities, the heads of social work services in the sub-districts assisted him to purposively sample the social work supervisors who, in turn, helped to purposively select the social workers. The heads of social work services in the sub-districts are social workers who are responsible for the overall management of these services, and also the social work supervisors.

The criteria for selecting the social work supervisors were as follows:

- Employed as a social work supervisor in the DSD, Mopani District at the time of the study.
- Having a minimum of one year experience as a social work supervisor in the Mopani District.
- Being trained in, or inducted on the developmental social welfare approach.

The selection of social workers was guided by the following criteria:

- Employed as a social worker at grass roots level in the DSD, Mopani District at the time of the study.

- Having at least two years of work experience in the Mopani District.
- Having been trained in, or inducted on the developmental social welfare approach.

Six social workers and one social work supervisor in each sub-district were sampled to participate in the study. The target sample size was twenty-eight (28) participants comprising of twenty-four (24) social workers and four social work supervisors. An additional four (4) social workers were recruited in each sub-district respectively as a measure to compensate for no-shows. The additional social workers were also recruited in advance at the same time as the other participants. In Giyani sub-district, nine (9) social workers participated in the focus group while in Letaba, six (6) social workers participated. In Ba-Phalaborwa, ten (10) social workers participated in the focus group, however, four (4) of these participants were recruited on the day of the focus group as most of the social workers who were recruited in advance did not show up. In Tzaneen, seven (7) social workers participated in the focus group and, like in Ba-Phalaborwa, three (3) social workers were recruited on the day of the focus group to complement the four (4) social workers who showed up to meet the requirement of six (6) to ten (10) participants for a focus group as guided by Greeff (2011:366). A total of thirty-six (36) participants comprising of thirty-two (32) social workers and four (4) social work supervisors took part in the study.

The additional social workers who were recruited on the day of the focus group in both Ba-Phalaborwa and Tzaneen regions were purposefully selected by the social work supervisors, from the social workers who were available in the nearest welfare offices, using the same selection criteria for participation. The social workers who did not show up for the focus groups indicated that they had other commitments and transport problems of which they did not inform the researcher or the social work supervisors in advance.

3.5.2 Data collection methods

The research data was collected through focus groups and one-on-one interviews (Greeff, 2011:347, 360) over the duration of four days where the researcher conducted one focus group and one-on-one interview respectively in each region per day. Thus, data was collected through eight interviews, i.e. four focus group

discussions with social workers, and four one-on-one interviews with social work supervisors. The researcher used semi-structured interview schedules to guide both the focus groups and one-on-one interviews (see Appendixes A and B). The semi-structured interview schedules assisted the researcher in gathering in-depth data as they provided the freedom to pose probing questions and follow-up on issues that emerged during the interview (Greeff, 2011:351).

With permission of the participants, the researcher used a digital voice recorder to record the interviews and this made it easier to concentrate on the flow of the interview (Greeff, 2011:359). The tapes were labelled which assisted the researcher to organise and access data (Schurink, Fouché & de Vos, 2011:408).

3.5.3 Data analysis

The researcher analysed the data in accordance with the qualitative data analysis process postulated by Creswell (2014:196-201). In accordance with this process, the researcher organised and prepared the data, read through the data, coded the data, generated themes, sub-themes and categories from the codes, and subsequently presented and interpreted the data. Creswell (2014:196) argues that in practice, the qualitative data analysis steps are interrelated and interactive and do not necessarily unfold in the sequential order as presented. Thus, in this study the data analysis steps were not necessarily followed in the order that they are presented. The researcher frequently moved backwards and forwards as he analysed and interpreted the data. Following the data analysis process proposed by Creswell (2014:196-201) the data analysis in this study unfolded as follows:

➤ Organising and preparing data for analysis

As all the interviews were audio recorded, the researcher organised and prepared the data for analysis by transcribing the interviews (Creswell, 2014:197; Schurink et al., 2011:408). This involved listening to the audiotaped interviews several times and producing manually typed transcripts in Microsoft Word documents. The transcribed data was then organised into folders according to each data collection session (Creswell, 2014:197).

➤ **Reading through the data**

Following the organisation and preparation of the data for analysis, the researcher read through all the data on the transcripts in order to get “a general sense of the information and an opportunity to reflect on its overall meaning” (Creswell, 2014:197). The researcher edited the data during the reading process and wrote memos (comments) of the insights that emerged during reading, in the margins of the transcripts (Creswell, 2014:197; Schurink et al., 2011:409).

➤ **Coding the data**

This phase of the data analysis involved the formation of codes or categories and sorting of text data into these categories (Creswell, 2014:198). In this regard the researcher identified similar responses across the transcripts by using text highlight colours and clustered them into codes by way of cutting and pasting related information together (Creswell, 2014:198; Schurink et al., 2011:410). The memos that were written also contributed to making it easier to classify the data into categories. Guided by Creswell (2014:198), the researcher scrutinised the data for codes that readers would expect to find, and codes that were surprising and not anticipated at the beginning of the study. The researcher collected a large amount of data, and thus, the categorisation of data into codes helped to reduce data to a manageable set of themes and sub-themes (Schurink et al., 2011:410).

➤ **Generating themes**

The researcher used the data coding process to generate themes, sub-themes and categories for analysis (Creswell (2014:199). Three (3) themes, fourteen (14) sub-themes and five (8) categories were generated. Since the investigation was a collective case study, the identified themes, sub-themes and categories were analysed for each individual case, that is social workers and supervisors respectively, and across cases, namely the two-category participants (Creswell, 2014:200). The generated themes, sub-themes and categories are presented in this chapter (see 3.9.2) as the major findings of the study (Creswell, 2014:199-200).

➤ **Interrelating themes/descriptions**

In section 3.9.1 the biographical information of participants is presented narratively and where applicable, figures complement the discussions (Creswell, 2014:200).

The themes and sub-themes of the findings are presented in section 3.9.2 in the form of narratives and substantiated by the views of the participants in the form of quotations (Creswell, 2014:200).

➤ **Interpreting the meaning of themes/descriptions**

Following the presentation of findings, the researcher interpreted the findings which involved making sense of the data by assessing what it means (Schurink et al., 2011:416). As a social worker, the researcher interpreted findings from his social work practice perspective and by comparing the research findings with literature to determine whether they confirmed or diverged from information obtained from various sources (Creswell, 2014:200).

3.5.4 Trustworthiness

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in Lietz and Zayas (2010:191), qualitative research should reflect trustworthiness, which according to these authors, implies that a study should represent “as closely as possible the perspectives of the research participants.” The researcher evaluated the quality of the study by applying the credibility, confirmability and dependability strategies to ensure trustworthiness of findings (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009:132; Lietz & Zayas, 2010:191).

Credibility refers to the degree to which a study’s findings represent the meaning conveyed by the research participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Lietz & Zayas, 2010:191). To strengthen the credibility of the findings, the researcher applied the reflexivity strategy whereby he considered his personal bias pertaining to the study and openly acknowledged it from the onset of the study (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:193). Having worked in the Mopani District during the period 2000 to 2006, the researcher entered the field with a preconception that the social workers in Mopani have not made a significant shift towards the implementation of the developmental approach. In addition to reflexivity, the researcher used semi-structured interview schedules that were compiled under the guidance of the study supervisor. Another method that was used to ensure credibility is member checking whereby the research findings are confirmed by seeking feedback from participants (Lietz & Zayas, 2010:193; Franklin, Cody & Ballan, 2010:367). He conducted member checking by presenting the findings to six (6) social worker participants from the Tzaneen region, four (4)

from Giyani and three (3) from Letaba. In addition, three (3) supervisors, each from Tzaneen, Ba-Phalaborwa and Giyani regions confirmed the findings and, therefore, there was no need to make any amendments.

Confirmability is an alternative to objectivity that is concerned with ensuring that the researcher was honest in conducting the study (Bryman, et al., 2009:133). The researcher used peer debriefing to establish confirmability of the findings (Creswell, 2009:192; Franklin, et al., 2010:367; Lietz & Zayas, 2010:197) by getting assistance from two social work colleagues who reviewed his analysis and interpretations to confirm whether they clearly link with the data. Confirmability was also enhanced through the study supervisor by giving feedback to the student on the interpretations and conclusions he made from the data.

The researcher has also utilised dependability strategy to ensure trustworthiness of the findings. Dependability is the alternative to reliability in terms of which the researcher attempts to account for changes in the study (Schurink et al., 2011:420). It involves keeping complete records of all phases of the research process (Bryman, et al., 2009:133) which the researcher has done. The records of the study process include field notes, informed consent forms, and the interview tapes and transcripts. Dependability of data was also increased by collecting first-hand information and ensuring that it was offered voluntarily, and interviews were conducted in venues that participants were familiar. This is confirmed by Coleman and Unrau (in Grinnell, Williams & Unrau, 2012:372).

3.6 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was carried out before the main investigation with a view to determine the feasibility of the study and to test the data gathering instruments (Fouché & Delpont, 2011:73; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:112). The pilot study was conducted at Tzaneen sub-district which is one of the stratum selected for the main study, and this has helped to orientate the researcher with the real practical situation in the region (Strydom, 2011b:240). Tzaneen was selected as it was the region with the highest number of social workers. A pilot study was conducted with three (3) social workers participating in a focus group and one (1) social work supervisor

participating in a one-on-one interview. The same selection procedures and criteria for the main study were utilised in the pilot study. The pilot study confirmed the applicability of the sampling procedures as highlighted in section 3.5.1 of this chapter. The pilot study was effective in generating relevant responses except in one area where the question on partnership had to be refined. The pilot study participants were excluded in the main investigation.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

The study involved drawing information from human beings and thus made the consideration of ethical issues compelling (Strydom, 2011c:113). From conception to conclusion of the study, the researcher was always conscious of the ethical issues pertaining to the study and thus, considered them in every step of the research. The researcher sought and received permission to engage the participants in the study from the provincial office of the Department of Health and Social Development¹, Limpopo (see Appendix C) and thereafter obtained ethical clearance to conduct the study from the Research Ethics Committee in the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pretoria (see Appendix D). The following ethical aspects were considered by the researcher in conducting the study.

3.7.1 Avoidance of harm

The researcher was not aware of any form of harm that the study could inflict on the participants, as the research subject matter and the interview schedules did not involve extracting sensitive and private information (Strydom, 2011c:116). However, since it is not always possible to foresee situations that could arise during an investigation and to prevent them before the study, the researcher fully informed the participants about the study and its potential impact before he collected the data (Strydom, 2011c:115; 116). The information was given as a matter of caution and to allow those who would feel the study may negatively affect them, the opportunity to withdraw their participation if they so wished (Strydom, 2011c:115).

¹ Note: Permission and approval for the study were granted in 2013 while the health and welfare sectors in the Limpopo Province were still integrated into one department called Department of Health and Social Development. The sectors were separated in 2014 and the welfare sector is now an independent department known as the Department of Social Development (Bosveld Review, 2014)

3.7.2 Informed consent

Before engaging social workers and social work supervisors in interviews, the researcher ensured that they were equipped with accurate and complete information about the study in order to make an informed decision to voluntarily participate in the study (Kumar, 2011:244; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:105). He informed participants about the research topic, goal, interview, the use of audio recorder and transcripts, and the fact that they have the right to decline to participate if they choose to do so or to withdraw from the study at any stage. Following the provision of information and clarification of participants' concerns about the study, the researcher asked them to sign the informed consent form which was accompanied by a cover letter explaining the aforementioned details of the study (see Appendix E).

3.7.3 Violation of privacy/anonymity/confidentiality

The researcher maintained privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants throughout the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:109, 316; Strydom, 2011c:119). In all the briefing sessions prior to the interviews, the researcher requested participants in the focus groups to maintain confidentiality. He appealed to the focus group participants that once outside the group they should refrain from revealing the identities of other participants and indicating who made specific comments during the interview. The researcher assured all participants that the research information (i.e. tapes, field notes and transcripts) will be handled with strict confidentiality and would not be shared with any unauthorised or undeclared person (Strydom, 2011c:120), except the study supervisor at the University of Pretoria. He assured participants that their privacy will be protected throughout the research, including the research report in that the findings will be presented anonymously (Strydom, 2011c:120); i.e. no identifying information that could be linked to a specific respondent would be included in the research report. The aspect of confidentiality and anonymity was also addressed in the informed consent letter. The letter includes that all the transcripts, tapes and signed informed consent letters will be safely stored for fifteen years and that the data will not be used for further analyses without their permission (see Appendix E).

3.7.4 Actions and competence of the researcher

The researcher was competent to undertake the study. He was acquainted with the subject matter that was being investigated, namely the developmental social welfare approach. Having successfully completed a research module as part of the requirements for the Master's degree in Social Development and Policy, the researcher deemed himself competent to undertake the study. He was also guided by an experienced and competent supervisor.

3.7.5 Release or publication of findings

The research findings are documented in this research report (Strydom, 2011c:126) in the form of a mini-thesis submitted to the Department of Social Work and Criminology in the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pretoria. A copy will be submitted to the provincial office of the Department of Social Development, Limpopo, as part of the conditions for the permission that was granted to the researcher to conduct the study. The research findings will be submitted to a scientific journal for publication and the participants were made aware of this arrangement in the informed consent letter. The researcher compiled the report in an ethically sound manner in that he remained objective and did not alter the data to support his personal point of view on the subject (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:316; Strydom, 2011c:126). The sources that were consulted by the researcher for the purpose of the study were acknowledged and referenced accordingly (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:316; Strydom, 2011c:126).

3.7.6 Debriefing of respondents

To minimise any harm that might have occurred as a result of taking part in the study, the researcher debriefed the participants immediately after the interviews where he focused on their experience of the interview and afforded them an opportunity to ask any questions about the study (Strydom, 2011c:122). Even though some of the participants were orientated on the developmental social welfare approach and others were trained while at university, their questions during debriefing centered around what the developmental approach is all about, which the researcher clarified. The researcher recommended that participants - both social workers and social work supervisors - contact the Directorate: Service Standards in

the Welfare Services Transformation branch of the national Department of Social Development if they wanted to make follow-ups on implementing developmental social work in practice.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The majority of participants who took part in the study were junior social workers with a few years of experience. It could be assumed that the more recently trained social workers would be in a better position to report if service delivery reflects a developmental approach, as they were supposed to have been trained on developmental social work. The participants might have been in a less qualified position to report on a shift from a residual to a developmental social welfare policy context.

Despite participants' misunderstandings and misconceptions of developmental social work that were identified throughout the interviews, the researcher did not ask respondents about their understanding of a developmental approach. Posing this question to participants could have enriched the data significantly.

Some of the participants in Tzaneen and Ba-Phalaborwa sub-districts were recruited on the day of the study as indicated in section 3.5.1. Thus, some of the participants had to make an impromptu decision to participate in the study and this might have impacted the quality of the data. However, the number of participants who were recruited in advance and prepared for the study, mitigate against this limitation.

3.9 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The empirical findings of the study are presented and discussed in two sections. The first section focuses on biographical information of participants, whereas the second section presents the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged from the data.

3.9.1 Biographic profile of participants

In this section, the biographic profiles of the thirty-two (32) social workers and four (4) social work supervisors who took part in the study are presented. The biographical profiles of both categories of participants (social workers and supervisors) include their sex, age, race, job position, area of operation, and years of experience.

3.9.1.1 Social Workers

The findings on the biographical information of the social workers are as follows:

➤ **Sex**

Of the thirty-two (32) social workers who participated, twenty-five (25) (78%) were females and seven (7) (22%) were males. The majority representation of women in this study is consistent with the dominance of women in the social work profession in South Africa (Earle, 2008). This scenario was expected by the researcher.

➤ **Age**

The social workers who took part in this study were relatively young adults. The age ranged between 25 to 29 and 40 to 44. Of the thirty-two (32) social workers who took part in the study, fourteen (14) (44%) were between the ages of 25 to 30; another fourteen (14) (44%) were in the 30 to 34 age range; three (3) (9%) were between the ages of 35 to 39; and one (1) (3%) was between the 40 to 44 age range. None of the social workers were above the age of 44. Figure 3.1 presents the data in a visual format.

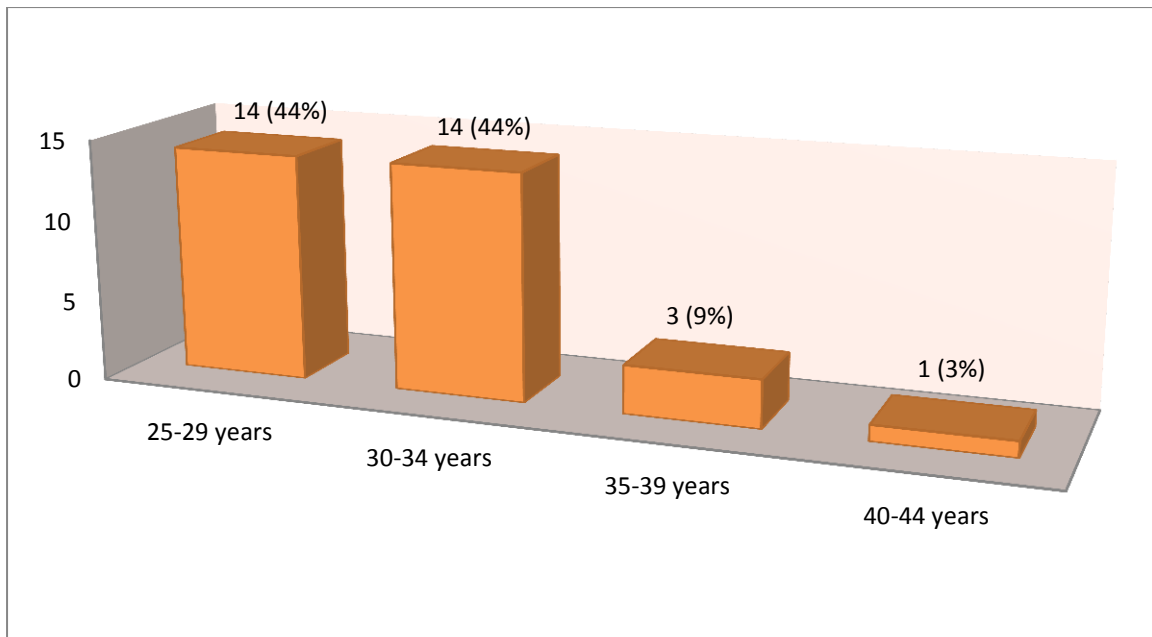


Figure 3.1: Distribution of social workers by age

Figure 3.1 illustrates that the majority of the social work participants were still in their youth with ages below 35 years, and at the early stages of their social work career. This is consistent with the fact that in many instances most social workers at the grass roots implementation level are younger than 35. Older social workers are more likely to be occupying supervisory- and other higher managerial positions. In addition, the age category of the majority of the social workers who took part in the study is consistent with the expectation for participants to have had some training or orientation on developmental social work as a criterion to participate in the study. Training in developmental social work became compulsory at South African universities in 2007 (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:103).

➤ **Race**

All thirty-two (32) social workers who participated in the study were Africans. This may be attributed to the fact that the Mopani District is predominantly populated by African people.

➤ **Job position**

Thirty-one (31) of the thirty-two (32) social workers who took part in the study were junior social workers, and the remaining one (1), a senior social worker. This implies that the study mostly represents the views of junior social workers, who were

formerly trained on developmental social work and are at the forefront or grassroots level of service delivery.

➤ **Area of operation**

The areas of operation for social workers who took part in the study were the Tzaneen, Ba-Phalaborwa, Giyani and Letaba sub-districts of the Mopani District. As illustrated in the figure below, the Giyani region was represented by ten (10) (31%) social workers, Ba-Phalaborwa by nine (9) (28%) social workers, Tzaneen region had seven (7) (22%) social workers and Letaba included six (6) (19%) social workers.

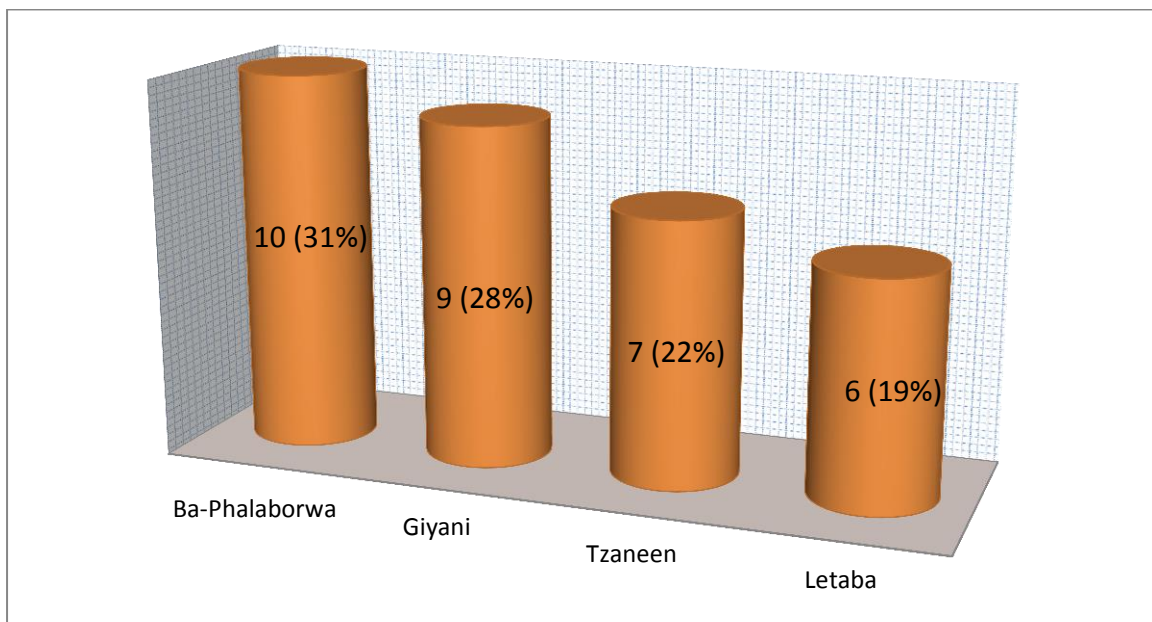


Figure 3.2: Distribution of social workers by area of operation

Figure 3.2 illustrates that the four sub-districts, which were the areas of operation for social workers who took part in the study, were not equally represented in the social workers' participant category. However, in each sub-district, ten (10) social work participants were invited to participate, but some did not show up as explained in section 3.5.1. The researcher concludes that there was a reasonable representation of all the four sub-districts as a minimum of six (6) participants for each focus group was reached.

➤ **Years of experience**

From the thirty-two (32) social workers who took part in the study, twenty-two (22) (69%) had 2 to 5 years of experience as social workers, nine (9) (28%) had 6 to 10 years of experience, while one (1) (3%) had 11 to 15 years. None of the social work participants had more than 15 years of experience.

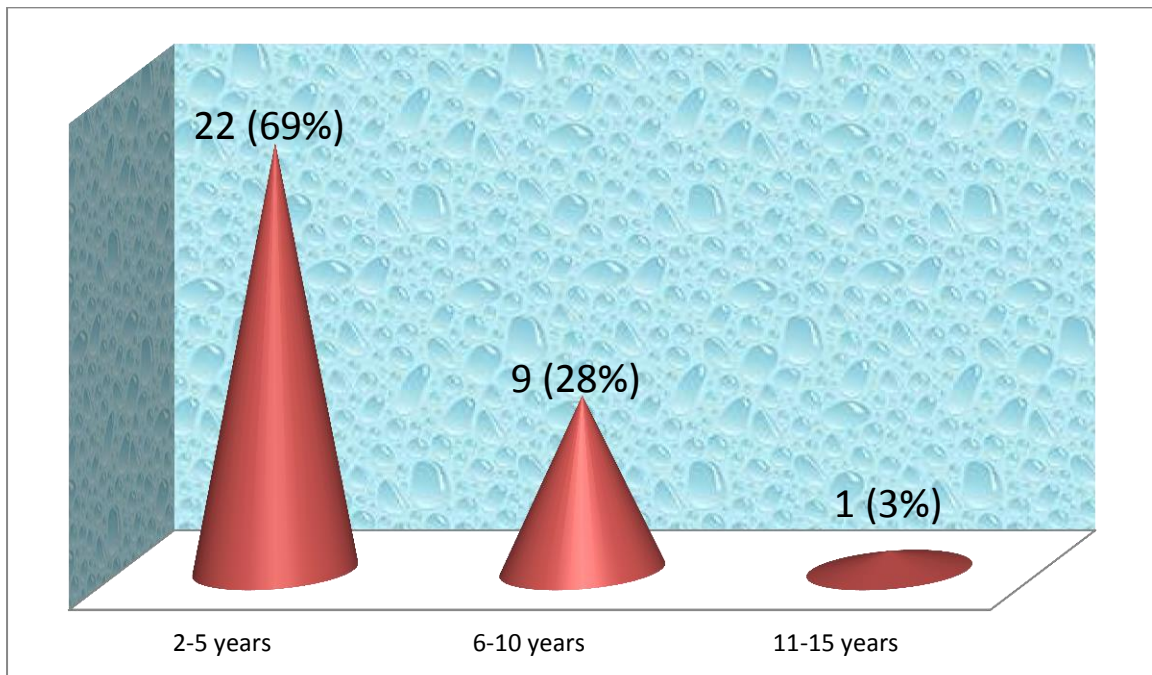


Figure 3.3: Distribution of social workers by years of experience

Figure 3.3 shows that the majority of social work participants had 2 to 5 years of experience as social workers in Mopani and this is consistent with their relatively young age and the finding related to their job position that the majority of them were junior social workers at the time of the study. The finding implies that the majority of the social work participants were relatively recent graduates from universities who should have received formal training on developmental social work. This also confirms that the majority of social work participants were social workers at service delivery level.

3.9.1.2 Social work supervisors

The following is a presentation of biographical information of social work supervisors.

➤ Sex

In the social work supervisors' category of participants, only females were represented. As in the case of social workers, this reflects the general sex profile of the social work profession in South Africa (Earle, 2008).

➤ Age

One (1) of the supervisors was between the age range of 30 to 34 years old; two (2) supervisors were between 35 to 39, and the final one's age ranged between 50 to 54 years of age.

➤ Race

The four (4) social work supervisors who took part in the study were Africans which matches the profile of the social workers and the predominantly African population in the Mopani District.

➤ Job position

Three (3) supervisors were principal social workers, while one (1) was a senior social worker.

➤ Area of operation

As it was a criterion for participation in the study, the four (4) social work supervisors operated, respectively, in the sub-districts of the Mopani District, namely, Letaba, Ba-Phalaborwa, Tzaneen and Giyani.

➤ Years of experience

With regards to the years of experience as social work supervisors in the Mopani District, the data indicated that two (2) supervisors had 6 to 10 years of experience, one (1) had 2 to 5 years of experience whilst the remaining one (1) had 11 to 15 years of experience. The years of experience indicate that three (3) supervisors had formal training in developmental social work.

3.9.2 Key themes, sub-themes and categories

Similar patterns of data emerged from both the social workers (focus groups) and the social work supervisors (one-on-one interviews) and, therefore, the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged will be reported in an integrated manner. However, where the themes, sub-themes or categories are more relevant to either the social workers or social work supervisors, the researcher has distinguished their voices in the quotes accordingly. Direct quotes will be included in the research findings to give voice to the participants. Literature has been integrated into the analysis of the research findings. Table 1 below displays a summary of the themes, sub-themes and categories that emerged from the data.

Table 3.1: Summary of themes, sub-themes and categories

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
1. Shift towards the developmental approach in social service delivery	1.1 Developmental social welfare levels of intervention 1.2 Promoting human rights 1.3 Promoting partnerships 1.4 Bridging the gap between micro and macro levels of service delivery 1.5 Empowering service users to participate in solving their own problems	1.2.1 Promoting the right to education 1.2.2 Promoting the right to food 1.2.3 Promoting the right to health care 1.2.4 Promoting children's right to protection and family care 1.2.5 Promoting the right to equality and human dignity

<p>2. Challenges hindering the shift towards the developmental approach</p>	<p>2.1 Lack of social welfare infrastructure in most communities 2.2 Lack of operational resources 2.3 Poor salaries and lack of incentives 2.4 Lack of participation by service users 2.5 Lack of proper supervision 2.6 Lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work 2.7 The use of quantitative system of managing performance by the DSD</p>	
<p>3. Accelerating a shift towards the developmental approach</p>	<p>3.1 Capacity building of all social workers in the developmental social welfare approach 3.2 Address challenges related to working-conditions</p>	<p>3.2.1 Provide operational resources 3.2.2 Address the shortage of office infrastructure 3.2.3 Improve salaries for social workers</p>

Theme 1: Shift towards the developmental approach in social service delivery

The majority of participants' responses with regards to whether they have made a shift towards the implementation of the developmental approach and whether social services are developmental, reflect their opinion that they have done so. Their views emerged into the following sub-themes which are discussed next: developmental social welfare levels of intervention; promotion of human rights; promoting

partnerships; bridging the gap between micro and macro levels of service delivery; and empowering clients to participate in solving their own problems.

Sub-theme 1.1: Developmental social welfare levels of intervention

The majority of the participants were of the opinion that they have made a shift towards the developmental approach in that they provide services in accordance with the levels of intervention of the Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM), namely prevention; early intervention; statutory intervention; and reconstruction and aftercare services (DSD, 2006a:18; DSD, 2013:29). The provision of prevention services in the form of awareness raising campaigns was strongly emphasised by both social workers and supervisors as major evidence for their shift towards the developmental approach.

With regards to their involvement in the rendering of prevention services, the participants indicated that, in all social work programmes, they conduct awareness campaigns for both prevention and promotion purposes. The following comment from one of the social workers in Giyani sub-district represents the view of the majority of participants on the provision of prevention services:

“...we dwell a lot on prevention... in each and every KRA [key responsibility areas] we do campaigns. Campaigns on substance [substance abuse]... we do campaigns for all the programmes that we render; there is [are] campaigns, there is [are] dialogues...”

One of the supervisors² strengthened the view on the prevalence of prevention services by articulating how the prevention services have helped in reducing the number of foster care placements and children in conflict with the law in their sub-district:

“...nowadays because we are going out educating ... individuals out there about the HIV pandemic, they do have knowledge, they understand what... it entails. So, it's like those prevention programmes, they are really helpful to us because

² Note: In order to protect the anonymity of the supervisors, the sub-districts are not indicated.

our numbers or statistics on the placement of foster care is very low; as I'm speaking, [it] is not like before. And also, when we look at the crime prevention programme for probation officers, the rate of juveniles in our statistics is also reduced a lot..."

In terms of rendering early intervention services, the majority of the participants indicated that they are involved. However, only a few social workers were able to articulate what they do on early intervention. They indicated that they focus on family preservation services and their views are captured in the following remarks by two social workers from Ba-Phalaborwa and Giyani sub-districts:

"Yes we do [focus on early intervention], like the issue of family preservation is early intervention, because the problem has already started in the household; so when we render family preservation is part of early intervention we are trying to intervene at an early stage."

"Early intervention - I can say we do them on a daily basis because already a problem has happened and another reporting to a social worker so from thereon there is counselling that we have to render."

The researcher observed that the majority of participants (both social workers and supervisors) easily articulated what they do on prevention, statutory intervention and reunification levels of intervention. However, they avoided explaining what happens on early intervention, except one supervisor who was honest to say that she does not know what early intervention entails. This reflects the lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work as will be discussed in theme two.

With regards to providing social welfare service at the statutory level of intervention, the majority of the participants indicated that they are involved in statutory cases where they remove and place children in foster care and places of safety. In this regard their views are represented by the following responses of two social workers from Tzaneen and Ba-Phalaborwa sub-districts respectively:

“We also render service like foster care whereby we place children [in foster care] by court order in [from] court; we do extensions, reviews...”

“Usually we deal with rape cases for children and the older people, we also handle those cases, sometimes we go to court and testify and sometimes we remove the kids if ‘need[s]’ be and take them to those places of care.”

Most of the participants indicated that they are involved in reunification and aftercare services for the reintegration of clients who were removed from their families. Their view in this regard is represented in the following quote by a social worker from Letaba sub-district:

“We also do the family reunification, isn’t it that those children when they are placed there [at a child and youth care centre (CYCC)] they need to be reunited with their families because a place of safety is not a permanent placement.”

The findings on this sub-theme show the involvement of social workers at different levels of developmental social welfare service delivery. The four levels of developmental social welfare service delivery reflected in the finding are prevention, early intervention, statutory intervention, and reunification and aftercare levels of intervention which are confirmed by DSD (2013:29). By incorporating prevention and early intervention services in social work service delivery, the findings reflect a shift from solely focusing on remedial services towards balancing the different intervention strategies as confirmed by Patel (2015:98).

Sub-theme 1.2: Promoting human rights

The majority of participants were generally of the opinion that they have made a shift towards the developmental approach in that they promote human rights in social work service delivery. Although, when responding to the question on the extent to which they promote human rights, most of the participants were challenged in clearly identifying and articulating the rights that they promote. Most of the participants were not able to link their activities with specific human rights. Therefore, the researcher picked up most of the human rights from the discussion of other questions. Rights that emerged from the discussion were promoting the right to education; the right to

food and health care; children's right to protection and family care; and the right to equality and human dignity.

Category 1.2.1: Promoting the right to education

In terms of promoting the right to education, the majority of the participants indicated that they encourage children to go to school; are involved in a programme where the Department of Social Development (DSD) buy and distribute school uniforms to orphans and vulnerable children (OVC); and they write recommendation letters for bursaries when the service users require financial assistance for studying at tertiary institutions. Participants' involvement in promoting the right to education is reflected in the following quotes by social workers from Ba-Phalaborwa and Giyani sub-districts:

"...every year we have child protection week wherein children[s]... level of awareness is ... raised about their rights, right to education as an [for] example..."

"... those who are victims of teenage pregnancy - we are showing them the bright side of their future... to go back to school and study ..."

The involvement of social workers in promoting the right to education is also reflected in the following quotes from two supervisors:

*"...we mostly provide them [OVC] with the school uniforms and the food parcels."
"And also the issue of financial services like in January we have been writing letters to universities ... [for] individuals who have got financial problem[s] ... recommend[ing] that the school [university] ... provide that particular person with financial assistance."*

The findings reveal that participants are involved in activities that relate to promoting the right to education. By promoting the right to education, the participants are contributing to human capital development, which is confirmed by Kirst-Ashman (2010:9) and Midgley (2010a:22) as critical for social and economic development.

The findings also confirm Wanka's (2014:66) assertion that education is critical in dealing with unemployment and poverty.

Despite their emphasis on promoting the right to education, the majority of the participants indicated that they are not involved in programmes or activities that directly or indirectly contribute towards the promotion of adult basic education. The following quotes were made by social workers from Tzaneen and Letaba sub-districts respectively:

"No, we are not involved [in promoting adult basic education]."

"... I didn't see it as my responsibility ... I never saw it as our baby [meaning responsibility]."

The non-involvement of social workers in promoting adult basic education was also echoed by one of the supervisors as follows:

"We thought ... is for the Education [Department of Education] to do that campaign or awareness [on promoting the right to adult basic education]."

The findings show that the majority of participants are not involved in promoting the right to adult basic education. The findings suggest that the participants focus on children at the expense of the adults or their parents. This is contrary to the life-cycle approach which advocates for the provision of services in accordance with the different stages of human development (RSA, 1997:58). Given the high rate of illiteracy in the district (Mopani District Municipality, 2013:177), adult basic education should be promoted. It is thus an opportunity to develop human capital in the region. Social workers should empower their service users to access their right to adult basic education.

Category 1.2.2: Promoting the right to food

With regards to promoting the right to food, the majority of participants indicated that they help people to access food by assisting them with food parcels, recommending social grants and encouraging them to engage in vegetable gardens. Participants' views with regards to their involvement in the promotion of the right to food are

illustrated in the following quotations of social workers from Letaba and Giyani sub-districts:

“...in services of HIV and AIDS ... we encourage our support group members to plant those vegetables ... and then also in the older persons’ project we also encourage them to have the gardens and almost in all the projects that we are facilitating we encourage them to have those gardens [vegetable gardens].”

“...when people are infected by HIV and are unable to work we try to advocate for them to get food parcels and to get a disability grant ...”

“...by making sure that we recommend foster care and foster care grant we make sure that they have something to eat at the end of the day...”

The following quote from one of the supervisors confirms involvement of social workers in activities that relates to promotion of the right to food:

“Another programme is SRD [Social Relief of Distress]; that is where we provide services ... to individuals, families ... who are unable to meet their basic needs... that is where we provide food parcels...”

In terms of promoting the right to food security, by encouraging people to engage in food gardens, there were a few participants who held a different view that the initiatives, like food gardens, are not social work’s responsibility, but rather that of the community development unit of the Department. The minority’s view is captured in the following quote of a social worker from Letaba sub-district:

“We are not necessarily involved [in food gardens] because normally the food gardening; it fall[s] under the services of community development and Agriculture, we are not really involved.”

Although social grants and social assistance are human rights, the findings show that participants mainly rely on social assistance to help people who are poor to access their right to food. Facilitating access to social and economic rights, like the

right to social security, is important for social development as access to social grants contributes to poverty reduction (Green D, 2012:173; Lombard, 2008b:155). Other than social security, the findings show little and insignificant efforts by social workers to assist people to access food on their own without assistance from the state. This seems to support the view of the minority who held that food security is not their responsibility as social workers. This opinion reveals the lack of clear role clarification among some of the participants.

Category 1.2.3: Promoting the right to health care

Despite the lack of specific reference to the right to health care by most of the participants, their responses to other questions in the study reflected that they promote the right to health care in social work service delivery. Participants indicated that they are involved in awareness campaigns for prevention of substance abuse and HIV and AIDS; they refer people who are addicted to chemicals and substances to rehabilitation centres for rehabilitation; they provide counselling to people affected and/or infected by HIV and AIDS; and they ensure the maintenance of good hygiene at the Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs) and Drop in Centres (DICs). The following quotes by social workers from Tzaneen, Giyani and Letaba sub-districts represent the majority of participants' view with regards to promoting the right to health care:

“We also render substance abuse focusing on the prevention programme. We conduct campaigns in the community, schools and crèches.”

“And we also refer the clients who are ... addicted to the substances ... to the centres for substance abuse for rehabilitation.”

“We are involved [in health campaigns] ... we do awareness campaigns on HIV and AIDS in the community [and] also at the drop-in centres.”

“... we ... do monitoring [of drop-in centres] to check whether their food is still in good condition so that they don't give those kids food that has expired and also check the environment which they have placed those kind of food that they are safe or are they mixing the food with things to clean, those kind of things.”

With regards to promoting the right to health care, the findings reflect the involvement of social workers in preventive health care services. Promotion of health care is confirmed by Midgley (2010b:186) who states that health related social work services are essential for economic progress, although they are not normally regarded as part of economic development. It relates to human capital development, which is a critical ingredient for economic development in that it benefits the economy, as it results in the availability of healthy people to participate in productive economy and thus, contribute to economic growth (Kirst-Ashman, 2010:9). Thus, the social workers' contribution to people's health care reflects a shift towards the developmental approach in that it has a link with social and economic development through human capital development.

Category 1.2.4: Promoting children's right to protection and family care

The findings reveal that the majority of the participants are involved in interventions that focus on promoting the children's right to protection and family care. The responses reflect that the participants promote and protect children's right to protection and family care. The participants stated that they place children in residential facilities as a last resort after all efforts of retaining a child in the family have failed. In a bid to promote the care and protection of children in their families, social workers also provide parenting skills to parents and foster parents in order to strengthen their capacity to look after the children. They promote the children's right to protection by raising awareness of children's rights, particularly during the child protection week. Participants' views on promoting the children's right to protection and family care are provided in the following quotes of social workers from Tzaneen, Giyani and Letaba sub-districts respectively:

"... because placing a child in places of safety is actually our last resort, before we place the child we try to trace the family or check the background if is suitable for the child..."

"We also focus on parenting skill[s] and a programme such as fatherhood which includes all those things because as a father figure you need to ... take care of the wife and the children, you need to be empowered with skills in order to ensure that your family is taken good care of."

“... we have a one week in between May and June... that [is] the child protection [week] where we go out, starting from the crèches and everywhere [where] there are children ... [to] empower the community of the rights that the children have.”

In terms of promoting the right to family care, the findings show the provision of developmental statutory services by social workers in that they emphasise and prioritise parental/family care over residential care in service delivery whereby the institutionalisation of children is only considered as a last resort. The finding correlates with Midgley’s (2010a:18) argument that developmental social workers do not prioritise residential services but utilise them as a last resort and on a temporary basis. The placement of children in alternative care and raising awareness of children’s rights show the involvement of social workers in promoting the children’s right to protection which is confirmed by Section 28(1) of the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996).

Category 1.2.5: Promoting the right to equality and human dignity

With regard to promoting civil and political rights in social work service delivery, some participants’ responses reflected on the right to equality and human dignity. They highlighted the prevalence of non-discriminatory practices which reflect the right to equality. They also indicated that they treat service users with respect and dignity. Their view in this regard is reflected in the following quote of a social worker from Tzaneen sub-district:

“We treat our clients with respect and we treat them as individuals, we don’t compare them. ...we do not judge a person based on their race or their culture or religion ...”

The right to equality and human dignity is also embedded in the following statement by one of the supervisors who indicated that they do not discriminate against service users:

“We serve all the entire community irrespective of whether [what] that community looks like or the person looks like, there is no discrimination we serve them, we respect their worth and dignity.”

The finding shows that social workers treat service users with respect and do not discriminate against them. This is consistent with the non-discrimination, equality and accessibility principles of the developmental approach (RSA, 1997). The findings resonate with Lombard and Twikirize's (2014:321) argument that promoting the right to equality, the right to be treated with dignity, and freedom from discrimination by social workers, is particularly important for vulnerable people to be able to access services.

Sub-theme 1.3: Promoting partnerships

The majority of the participants were of the view that they have made a shift towards the developmental approach in terms of collaborating and networking with other stakeholders in social welfare service delivery. The majority of the participants indicated that they cooperate with the police (South African Police Services), nurses (Department of Health), educators (Department of Basic Education) and NGOs when they conduct awareness raising campaigns in communities; they collaborate with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DJCD) and the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) when dealing with foster care matters; and they partner with NGOs that render social welfare services to communities.

With regards to partnerships focusing on awareness raising, the participants' opinion is captured in the following quote by one of the social work participants from Tzaneen sub-district:

"...when it comes to substance abuse when we go to campaigns, [it] is not only social workers, we invite SAPS, Love Life, Department of Health... because we understand that when it comes to substance abuse there is part of social workers, there is part of SAPS, there is part of Health and there is a part which Love Life play."

Almost all participants indicated that they have partnerships with the DJCD and SASSA regarding the facilitation of foster care placements and grants. In this regard, one of the social work supervisors stated that:

“...we do have partnerships with other stakeholders like in foster care we don’t do foster care alone, the placement is done at the Magistrate. We have a partnership with the Department of Justice and we also have partnership with SASSA. After the placement, we refer the client to SASSA for foster child grant application.”

With regard to partnerships with NGOs one of the supervisors stated the following:

“We also working with ... non-profit organisations... if may be ... we don’t have facilities to be able to accommodate the older persons [who were abused and removed] we ... rely on the organisations for taking care of those older people.”

The findings indicate that social workers collaborate with other stakeholders in service delivery. The findings resonate with several authors (DSD, 2006a; OHCHR, 2006:3; Patel, 2015:93; RSA, 1997) that partnerships is an essential component of social development which is a collective responsibility of government, civil society and the business sector.

Sub-theme 1.4: Bridging the gap between micro and macro levels of service delivery

The majority of participants’ responses revealed that, unlike in the past, they do not solely focus on individual and family services, but they incorporate interventions that focus on the community at large; they advocate for service users to access services from other departments; and they lobby the Department of Agriculture to assist and capacitate service users on farming. The bridging of micro- and macro divide is reflected in the following statements by social workers from Giyani and Tzaneen sub-districts:

“...we facilitate the placement of children who are in need of care and protection. We also do campaigns informing communities about the issues of foster care...”

“...we have HIV programme, we conduct awareness campaign and we also provide counselling to our clients if they come to our offices.”

“...most of our clients ... come to our office saying that they have been to SAPS and they have not been helped ... we advocate for them to make sure that they get the service that they want from SAPS and anywhere...”

“...when people are infected by HIV and are unable to work we try to advocate for them to get food parcels and to get a disability grant we try by all means to advocate for them.”

Involvement of social workers in advocacy is also reflected in the following quote from a supervisor:

“... for those centres [ECDs & DICs) ... doing the gardening we do liaise with the Department of Agriculture to assist them, capacitate them, surveying their land, providing them with seeds.”

In terms of bridging the micro- and macro divide, the findings show a shift in social workers from solely focusing on case work services to encompass community interventions. The participants engage in both micro-interventions, which aim at individuals and families and involve personal growth, and macro interventions aimed at bringing about social change and collective improvements, as confirmed by Midgley (2010a:13) and Patel (2015:98). The findings further link with Patel's (2015:98) argument that social development must go beyond the micro and macro division of interventions and “enhance individual, family, [and] community empowerment and development.” The findings reflect advocacy work where the social workers advocate for clients to access services from other stakeholders, which is critical for the realisation of human rights (IFSW, 2014:4). The lobbying of the Department of Agriculture to capacitate and assist NGOs on farming, reflects a focus on community services (Patel, 2015:202) and human capital development which are essential for economic participation of service users in the labour market (Midgley, 2010a:22).

Sub-theme 1.5: Empowering service users to participate in solving their own problems

Most of the participants were of the opinion that they engage service users to participate so that they develop capacity and become empowered to solve their own problems. They indicated that they do not decide for the service users, but rather encourage them to make decisions about their circumstances; they encourage individuals to look for employment; they encourage communities to engage in income generating projects to address poverty and unemployment; and they proactively empower the elderly people about their rights so that they can actively participate in solving their problems. The areas of empowerment are captured in the following remarks of social workers from Ba-Phalaborwa, Letaba and Giyani sub-districts respectively:

“There are also cases like joint sessions with families ... we ... encourage them to make their own decisions ... we are not taking decisions on their behalf ... we ... encourage them to do that [take decisions].”

“...people with HIV and AIDS ... we give them food parcels but ... for those that we see that this person can still go and ... work we ... counsel that person ... to ... go and look for employment ...”

“We also empower older people about their rights as older people when they are victimised what is it that they have to do.”

The empowerment of service users to participate in solving their problems is also reflected in the following quotation of one of the supervisors:

“Our role as social workers like I said before is to conduct campaigns and encourage our youth or our clients to engage themselves maybe in the projects that are there or to start a project for themselves ... in order to reduce the poverty and create employment.”

The findings on encouraging service users to take responsibility and participate in uplifting their lives, correlate with the empowerment approach in service delivery, as

articulated by authors (IFSW, 2012a:para.9; Midgley, 2010a:14; Zastrow, 2010:52), whereby individuals, groups and communities are enabled to participate in solving their own problems. The finding that social workers provide the opportunity for service users to make their own decisions correlates with the social work principle of self-determination as articulated by Ife (2012:255) and Midgley (2010a:16). The finding also corresponds with Patel's (2015:92) view that the service users are active partners and should be actively involved in their own development.

Despite the majority of participants' view that they empower service users to engage in economic development initiatives, a few participants were of the opinion that activities relating to income generation are not a responsibility for social workers, but rather that of community development practitioners. These views are captured in the following quotes by two of the supervisors:

“On the issue of poverty alleviation mostly rely on ... the food parcels ... [and the] community development [practitioners] ... are advising the communities to come up with the income generating projects...”

“They [social workers] are not involved because mostly the food gardens I would say it is for the community development practitioners, because they are the ones that help those organisations.”

The findings correlate with a study by Patel and Hochfeld (2012:699) where some participants “questioned whether economic development was indeed a social work role...”

In summary, the findings on theme one indicate that welfare services address the four levels of developmental social service delivery, therefore, balancing the provision of rehabilitation and early and preventive services (DSD, 2006a:18; DSD, 2013:29; Patel, 2015:206). They incorporate prevention and early intervention services and, thus, their services are no longer predominantly reactive. Service delivery reflects the incorporation of the five central features/themes of the developmental approach (Lombard 2007:295; Patel, 2015:82; Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195).

Theme 2: Challenges hindering the shift towards the developmental approach

The findings indicate that although the participants understand that they are required to incorporate a developmental approach in service delivery, they experience numerous challenges that hinder them to make meaningful advances towards the approach. These challenges include the lack of office space, lack of operational resources, poor salaries and lack of incentives, lack of participation by service users, lack of proper supervision, lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work and the use of quantitative/target system of managing performance of social workers by DSD. These challenges are next presented as sub-themes.

Sub-theme 2.1: Lack of social welfare infrastructure in most communities

Almost all participants complained about the lack of infrastructure for social workers in most of the communities that they serve. This challenge hinders them from shifting towards the developmental paradigm in terms of making services accessible to communities. The following quotation from one of the supervisors represents the view of all participants in this regard:

“...they [social workers] are...clustered [crowded] in one office, you will find that in one office there are three to four social workers. We don't have infrastructure ... within the communities where we can distribute our officials [social workers] to render services ... clients are travelling long distances to access the services.”

The findings show that access to social work services is still a challenge in some areas because in most cases, the social workers are centralised in one office, instead of being stationed next to or within the respective communities that they serve. The findings on the lack of social welfare infrastructure corroborate the research findings of Alpaslan and Schenck (2012:407) and Ntjana (2014:83) where in both instances the participants cited the lack of office accommodation as a hindrance to social work service delivery. The findings imply that nineteen years after the adoption of the White Paper for Social Welfare, the DSD in the Mopani District has not significantly decentralised social welfare services.

Sub-theme 2.2: Lack of operational resources

In all social work service delivery, operational resources are critical. In relation to developmental social welfare services, participants indicated that they lack transport to travel to the communities that they serve. The participants' view with regard to lack of transport is reflected in the following quote by one of the social workers from Giyani sub-district:

“We have the challenges of [lack of] resources, more especially the cars ... we sometimes go out to the communities doing the campaigns and the home visits using our own cars.”

As indicated on sub-theme 2.1, social work services are still inaccessible in some areas due to a lack of infrastructure within most of the communities that the social workers serve. The lack of transport aggravates the inaccessibility of social work services as social workers are unable to reach out to communities. The challenges regarding a lack of resources corroborate the research findings of Alpaslan and Schenck (2012:407). The participants in their study (governmental and non-governmental social workers practicing in rural areas) raised the challenges of shortage of cars, shortage of computers, lack of offices and office space, and lack of confidentiality (Alpaslan & Schenck, 2012:407). Access to social services is a key principle in the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997).

Sub-theme: 2.3: Poor salaries and lack of incentives

Almost all social workers complained about the failure of the Department to improve their salaries and pay them the rural and danger allowance. They questioned how the DSD can expect them to render services effectively and make communities happy while they are not happy; and how they can liberate service users from poverty while they are also poor. Participants' concerns with regards to poor salaries and lack of incentives are reflected in the following quotations of social workers from Giyani and Ba-Phalaborwa sub-districts:

“...they [the employer] have been denying our rights as social workers to improve our salaries [salary] which is affecting our service delivery to such an extent that we are no longer focusing on the quality.”

“Another thing that I want to mention is the issue of the stipend that they are giving us, I mean the salary. It is discouraging to tell you the honest truth... we are here advocating for the poor while we remain poor and vulnerable social workers.”

“Even the employer must treat us with dignity and respect in a sense whereby talking about remuneration ... if we as employees are not happy; how can we go out there and do the best that we can if we ourselves are not happy.”

“... [name of another participant] reminded me of danger allowance, we are dealing with the same people with the same clients with the nurses, and they consult in hospitals they are dangerous and when they come to us they are no longer dangerous. So, we don't know what it is being used to measure how a person is dangerous.”

“There is no rural allowance for us.”

Findings indicate that the social workers are not satisfied with the salary that they receive from their employer and would like their salaries to be improved and to be paid the rural and danger allowance as promised in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (Earle, 2008:72; DSD, 2009:40, 48). Participants' dissatisfaction with salary resonates with the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (DSD, 2009:11) which states that “... a lucrative salary is essential for employee satisfaction.” The finding also concurs with the research outcomes of a study by Ntjana (2014:89) where participants (social workers and social work supervisors from Vhembe District, Limpopo) voiced their discontent about their salaries and the lack of incentives. The dissatisfaction with poor salaries, along with the poor working conditions as indicated in sub-theme 2.1 and 2.2, may result in stress that can culminate into burnout which, in turn, can negatively affect service delivery and the progress towards the developmental approach (DSD, 2009:7; Earle, 2008:73; Farmer, 2011:1; Sheafor & Horejsi, 2012:430).

Sub-theme 2.4: Lack of participation by service users

The majority of participants were of the opinion that the lack of participation in social development initiatives by service users is another barrier hindering progress towards developmental approach. They attributed the lack of participation to the dependency of service users on social assistance from the government. The lack of participation is captured in the following quotes by social workers from Letaba and Tzaneen sub-districts:

“...when we try to empower the people of this community it’s very difficult to actually find those who are willing to stand up and actually do something for themselves no matter what angle you try.”

“...when they [people who are marginalised] come to us they are expecting food and nothing else.”

The lack of participation in social development initiatives and service users’ dependency were also expressed by one of the supervisors as reflected in the following quote:

“Whenever you [we] try to maybe help a person to be able to fish a fish on their own, dependency - I don’t know it has been created, may be previously and is still showing even now people are so dependent.”

Several participants were of the opinion that some service users are not willing to participate in poverty reduction initiatives due to social benefits, such as grants and food handouts from the government. This opinion resonates with the residual approach to social welfare, according to which social welfare benefits create dependency on government and discourages people from working for themselves (Cunningham & Cunningham, 2012:62). The findings also correlate with the results of the study by Dlangamandla (2010:88) where the participants (the Gauteng DSD social workers) indicate that communities show a dependency syndrome in that services are provided to them primarily in the form of social grants. In essence, the findings imply that the participants are challenged to engage people who are marginalised in social development initiatives aimed at promoting self-reliance and

reducing poverty, thus the exit strategies from social welfare services are missing. The dependency syndrome narrative is not new and is implied by the former First Lady, Zanele Mbeki, in Lombard (2008a:26) who criticised the government on fighting poverty, “warning that more welfare will not buy the poor out of their misery.” However, these narratives are contrary to the current evidence that: social grants are making an impact on poverty; give people access to education, health and nutrition; and contribute to labour force participation (Lekezwa, 2011:111, 114; Midgley, 2010c:110; Tanga & Gutura, 2013:136; Triegaardt, 2009:4).

Sub-theme 2.5: Lack of proper supervision

The majority of social work participants cited the lack of proper supervision as one of the challenges that hampers the shift toward the developmental approach. They indicated that they are not provided with proper supervision from their supervisors; and their supervisors interact with them only when they require statistical reports and when there is a challenging case to discuss. In their view, the interaction that they have with supervisors does not empower or enable them to implement the developmental approach. In this regard the social worker participants from Ba-Phalaborwa and Letaba sub-districts commented as follows:

“...there is no proper supervision from our supervisors, they will only attend you only if you have got a challenging case, other than that we just do things the way we want.”

“...they [supervisors] only attend [to] you when they need statistics. That is where you see the supervisor when we say there is supervision.”

“...we lack supervision, I think it’s been done but to the extent which we are not satisfied as social workers so that we can shift from the welfare mentality and in adopting the developmental mentality part of it.”

The supervisors conceded to social workers’ view on the lack of proper supervision by indicating that they have many social workers under their supervision and do not have time to render proper supervision. Their view is represented by the following quotes from two of the supervisors:

“We are having many supervisees ... every time we are called for meetings, workshops, running around the district, so we do not have enough time to sit down with our supervisees for supervision.”

“There is no way one person can manage 40 social workers with caseload of 40, 100 or 250 each, you can never get it right.”

The findings on lack of proper supervision reveal that social workers do not receive ongoing support and guidance to enable them to render developmental social welfare services. The findings corroborate with the research findings of Ntjana (2014:79) where social workers from Vhembe District in Limpopo, cited the lack of proper supervision as one of the factors contributing to their inability to deliver developmental social welfare services. Supervision is confirmed by Engelbrecht (2014:127,129) as educational and important in enabling supervisees to effectively utilise knowledge and skill to deliver quality services to service users.

Sub-theme 2.6: Lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work

The majority of participants felt that they are unable to make a significant shift towards the developmental approach because they do not know how the envisaged shift should unfold. This reflects the lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work which is captured in the following expressions of two social work supervisors:

“...when approaching the developmental part of it, it is where the difficulty came [comes] ... there is still a confusion how do we move from welfare to the developmental part, ...out of ten social workers I think one ... is going to a right direction [in terms of implementing developmental approach]. But all in all, we are still struggling, to be honest.”

“...early is early what? Early intervention I can't remember what is ... happening in early intervention.”

The lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work is also reflected in the following quote of a social worker from Tzaneen sub-district:

“...we understand that we are no longer a welfare department...we no longer offer welfare services we totally understand that ... but the executing part of that [developmental service delivery], it is questionable.

On the issue of the prevalent lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work, participants added the reasons thereof. They articulated that the employer, DSD, does not capacitate them on developmental social work. Their opinion in this regard is reflected in the following expression of a social worker from Ba-Phalaborwa sub-district:

“The issue of trainings, I know we were trained at school but there are things that need to be done again... [there are] no trainings, like us who started long ago we still do things in the old way ... each and every day there are new developments, so [but] they don’t capacitate us or workshop us on the developments.”

The lack of in-service training as a reason for poor knowledge on developmental social work was also articulated by one of the supervisors as reflected in the following quote:

“There are no more trainings to develop the officers [social workers] because always they will tell you about budget...so most of our officers [social workers] they are just from school and we are stuck with them and they are not well trained.”

The lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work was also observed by the researcher during the interviews. He observed that the majority of participants struggled to identify and articulate the basic human rights such as the right to education, food and social protection that they claimed to promote, as already indicated (see sub-theme 1.2). The challenge of lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work reveals the prevalence of misconceptions and misunderstandings of the developmental approach by participants. The misconceptions and misunderstandings on developmental social work are evident in responses provided by some social workers and supervisors, where they indicated that developmental social work is about making ‘follow ups’ and developmental

services are about recording information on social welfare services' forms. The misconceptions and misunderstandings associated with the lack of knowledge on developmental social work are captured in the following quotes of a social worker from Tzaneen sub-district and one of the supervisors respectively:

“Honestly, they [welfare services] are not [developmental], we are still rendering welfare. The thing is with developmental approach, you need do a lot of follow-ups... of which that is not our reality, we don't have resources to do follow ups.”

“They [services] are developmental in this way like for now... each and every case that we receive in our offices or each and every campaign that we are doing, previously we were not having the file for our clients, even though we were recording but we were not recording in a proper manner. So, for now since we were Social Development they have introduced these things of the SWS [Social Welfare Services] forms whereby we record each and everything.”

The findings show misconceptions that that welfare cannot be developmental; and that when social workers keep proper records of their activities, the services are developmental. These clearly shows that they do not understand the approach, because the developmental approach includes social welfare services and is not about record keeping, although it (record keeping) is important in all social work services. It indicates a lack of accurate and sufficient knowledge and competency to render developmental social welfare services, which will enable them to make a meaningful shift towards the developmental paradigm. The misunderstanding and misconceptions of the developmental approach articulated by participants confirm the ongoing challenge in this regard, as pointed out earlier by Lombard (2007:313), and recently confirmed by Patel (2015:371). However, the findings show that participants are aware that they are expected to shift from the residual approach to the social development approach in service delivery, but that they are challenged on how to make such a shift. Lombard and Kleijn (2006:214) confirm that finding the “how” in making a shift towards the developmental paradigm has been a major challenge since the adoption of the White Paper in 1997. Despite the fact that the data revealed a lack of sufficient knowledge and the existence of misunderstandings and misconceptions of developmental social work, the researcher could have

enriched the data by specifically asking participants about their understanding of what the developmental approach entails, as was already indicated in the limitations of the study (see 3.8).

Sub-theme 2.7: The use of target numbers to measure performance of social workers by the DSD

The majority of participants indicated that the use of target numbers to measure performance of social workers by the DSD hinder social workers from shifting towards a developmental approach. Through the target number system, the social workers are required to reach a certain number of service users per month. The participants indicated that they work under pressure in order to reach the set targets. This makes them rush their interventions, which then compromises the quality of services rendered. With regards to performance target numbers, the social work participants from Letaba and Ba-Phalaborwa sub-districts expressed their views as follows:

“... the quality of the services that we are rendering... deteriorated in the sense that the Department is now focusing on the numbers, how many have you done versus how have you done, the quality thereof is not that much of good quality but we are rather just chasing the numbers.”

“...the effectiveness of the services that we are rendering [is questionable] because what we normally do ... [is] chasing numbers. I have to reach 20 people before the end of this quarter, 30 cases of family preservation must be done before the end of this quarter and [therefore] I don't have time to go out there to ensure that indeed these people can stand on their own and solve other challenges they might encounter in life. So I'm just doing what I'm doing simple because somebody from up there ... decided that this person must reach so many people within this period.”

The challenge of quantitative system of managing performance of social workers was also highlighted by one of the supervisors as reflected in the following quote:

“We are just been pushed to reach the targets and not looking at the effectiveness of whatever that we are rendering to our communities.”

The findings show that social workers rush their interventions in order to reach the set target numbers. This is contrary to Green and Nieman’s (2003:178) assertion that “development is a process and not a ‘quick fix’ for needy individuals, groups and communities.” The finding further shows that the DSD is more interested in the number of service users reached than the quality and impact of the services rendered by social workers. The use of target numbers to manage productivity of social workers as a barrier to developmental service delivery is confirmed by Ntjana’s (2014:88) research findings where participants also pointed at this issue as a challenge. This finding correlates with Noyoo’s (2005:235) assertion that South African welfare monitoring and evaluation systems focus more on performance and tend to neglect the process of how tasks are carried out as well as the impact of interventions on the well-being of service users.

In summary, both social workers and supervisors pointed out that they experience numerous challenges that make it difficult for them to implement the developmental approach. The findings on this theme indicate that participants are mainly challenged by a lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social work and a lack of proper supervision and guidance, which correlates with the findings of the study of Ntjana (2014:82) on progress made with the developmental approach in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. In addition to these core challenges, the findings show that participants are also hindered by poor working conditions, including a lack of social welfare infrastructure in communities and a lack of operational resources, which corroborate the study findings of Alpaslan and Schenk (2012) and Ntjana (2014:83). Other challenges that emerged from the study are poor salaries and lack of incentives for social workers, lack of participation by service users and the use of target numbers to measure performance of social workers by the DSD, which are also confirmed in the studies by Alpaslan and Schenk (2012:407-408) and Ntjana (2014:82).

Theme 3: Accelerating a shift towards the developmental approach

Participants' views on what could be done to accelerate the pace of a shift towards the developmental approach are embedded in the challenges presented in the preceding theme. Participants were of the opinion that the shift towards implementation of the developmental social welfare approach could be accelerated through capacity building of social workers and social work supervisors, office infrastructure development, provision of operational resources and improved salaries for social workers which will next be discussed as sub-themes.

Sub-theme 3.1: Capacity building of all social workers in the developmental social welfare approach

The majority of participants indicated that social work service delivery towards the developmental approach could be accelerated if the DSD could provide capacity building workshops on the developmental social welfare approach to all social workers. Their views are captured by one of the social workers from Tzaneen sub-district as follows:

“... we ... need to be capacitated on all programmes ... all social workers must be capacitated they mustn't send one person, only to find that the person will sit with the information, so all social workers must be capacitated.”

In support, one of the supervisors said:

“For effective and better service delivery, the social workers should be capacitated on different programmes, on different methods, on different skills so that they can do their work in a manner that the Department will be satisfied...”

Patel and Hochfeld (2012:700) confirm that a sound knowledge base is one of the prerequisites for the developmental social work paradigm and thus, in relation to this finding, they recommend training of social workers and continuous professional development. Re-training of social workers who are already in practice, on

developmental social work, is also emphasised by Lombard and Wairire (2010:107), Dlangamandla (2010:99) and Ntjana (2014:105).

Sub-theme 3.2: Address challenges related to working conditions

The majority of participants related poor working conditions to their inability to render developmental social services. Thus, they recommended that the DSD should address the challenges relating to the working conditions of social workers in order to enable them to make the envisaged shift towards the developmental approach. They indicated that the DSD should provide operational resources, address the shortage of office infrastructure, and improve the salaries of social workers. These recommendations for accelerating the pace or shift towards developmental social work are discussed next as sub-categories.

Category 3.2.1: Provide operational resources

All participants indicated that the shift towards the developmental approach could be accelerated if DSD could provide the resources required for social work service delivery. By resources, they specifically referred to transport (cars), computers, telephones, printers, stationery and Internet access, in particular for access to email services (see sub-theme 2.2). The following response from one of the social work supervisors captures the view of the majority of the participants:

“If the Department could be able to ensure that all the tools that the social workers must have - they must purchase them...the Department must make sure that all the resources are available... for an example stationery...cars...offices... laptops, phones, everything, even the emails...”

The finding resonates with Ntjana’s (2014:106) recommendation for DSD to provide “political leadership and commitment in lobbying for improved...allocation of resources like cars and budget for social welfare services.” The need for provision of resources for social workers is also emphasised in the study by Alpaslan and Schenck (2012:415). The operational resources would enable social workers to bridge the micro- and macro practice in service delivery and thus help to accelerate the shift towards the developmental approach (Ntjana, 2014:106).

Category 3.2.2: Address the shortage of office infrastructure

All the participants were of the opinion that service delivery could be enhanced if DSD provides office infrastructure for social workers. This is reflected in the following statement by a social worker from Tzaneen sub-district:

“We need offices in order for us to be productive.”

The need for DSD to provide office infrastructure for social workers, in order to enable them to deliver developmental welfare services, was also supported by a social work supervisor:

“Number one that I can recommend is offices, I...recommend that at least our officers [social workers] can have offices because they are sharing...”

Closely linked with the preceding finding on recommendation for the DSD to provide operational resources, the finding on addressing the shortage of office infrastructure is in line with the government’s responsibility to “provide an enabling environment for the delivery of developmental welfare services” as articulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997:29). The finding is also confirmed by Earle’s (2008:83) recommendation for government to provide social workers with resources, including the offices and transport they require to perform their work.

Category 3.2.3: Improve salaries for social workers

Almost all participants were of the opinion that delivery of developmental social welfare services could be enhanced if DSD could improve the salaries of social workers. They indicated that improved salaries could motivate them to do their work. The following responses of social workers from Letaba and Giyani sub-districts reflect the view of participants:

“I think they should increase our salaries so that we can be motivated more in doing our work.”

“I think the main thing is to address our needs as social workers before addressing the needs of the vulnerable people that we are servicing because we

might be of harm when we are servicing people who are vulnerable while we are not happy ourselves.”

The finding corroborates Ntjana’s (2014:107) recommendation that the DSD should “improve the working conditions of social workers by improving their salaries and incentives like danger and rural allowances, which will boost their morale and motivate them to focus on developmental social welfare service delivery.”

In summary, the social workers indicated that if they may be re-trained and oriented on developmental social work, they will be in a better position to deliver developmental social welfare services and make a significant shift towards the developmental approach. In addition to capacitating social workers on developmental social work, participants recommended that DSD should provide a conducive working environment to ensure the delivery of developmental social welfare services by providing office infrastructure and operational resources for social workers, and by improving their salaries.

3.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher presented a biographical profile of thirty-two (32) social workers and four (4) social work supervisors who took part in the study. The three themes that emerged from the data which were discussed are: a shift towards the developmental approach in social service delivery; challenges hindering the shift towards the developmental approach; and accelerating the shift to implementation of the developmental approach.

The overall finding indicates that there are some indications of a shift towards the developmental approach, however, there are challenges that hinder the participants from making a meaningful shift. The findings reflect some shifts in the areas of human rights, prevention services and alignment with the themes of the developmental approach, namely a rights-based approach; social and economic development; participation; partnerships; and bridging the micro-macro divide. However, the shift is slow due to a variety of challenges, including a lack in knowledge on developmental social work, a lack of operational resources and a lack

of proper supervision. The findings also indicate that the pace of accelerating the shift could be increased if all social workers could be trained on the developmental approach and if resources are provided to facilitate service delivery.

CHAPTER 4

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study. It begins by discussing how the goal and objectives of the study were reached. The key findings of the study follow next, from which conclusions will be drawn. Finally, recommendations are made, including areas for further research.

4.2 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the study was to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.

This goal was accomplished through achieving the following objectives:

Objective 1

- To conceptualise the developmental social welfare approach within the theoretical framework of social development.

The objective was achieved in Chapter two (see sections 2.3.3; 2.4; 2.5 & 2.6) where the theoretical framework for developmental social welfare service delivery was discussed. It was indicated that both social and economic development are equally important components of the development process and should be integrated into social programmes and interventions in service delivery (Midgley & Tang, 2001:246). Social development is aimed at addressing social ills, of which poverty is the main priority. It was highlighted that the developmental approach aims to address poverty by promoting the participation of service users in social and economic development (Midgley, 2014:67). Thus, the approach emphasises empowerment, capacity building, strengths-based and participatory approaches in service delivery (Midgley, 2010a:13).

It was indicated in Chapter two (see section 2.3.3.1) that the developmental approach is a human rights-based approach that upholds social justice and clearly has a focus on reversing the injustices and inequalities of the past by promoting equitable distribution of and access to resources, services and opportunities (Patel, 2015:82). It was also argued that developmental social welfare services should be rendered at both micro and macro levels, instead of focusing on one at the expense of the other (Ife, 2012:248; Patel, 2015:98). The developmental approach emphasises partnerships between individuals, groups, communities, civil society, donors, development agencies, and the private and public sectors in service provision (Patel & Hochfeld, 2008:195).

Objective 2

- To explore and describe DSD social workers' perspectives on the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery.

The objective was achieved as reflected in Chapter three (see theme 1) on discussion of the views of participants on the shift towards a developmental approach. The general view of the majority of the participants is that they have made a shift towards the developmental approach (see theme 1). Their views indicated that shifts were made in terms of incorporating prevention- and early intervention services (see sub-theme 1.1); promoting human rights (see sub-theme 1.2); promoting partnerships (see sub-theme 1.3); bridging the micro-macro divide (see sub-theme 1.4); and empowering the service users to participate in solving their own problems (see sub-theme 1.5). However, the analysis of data revealed that the approach has not been fully implemented as the participants do not have sufficient knowledge to enable them to implement the approach effectively and, thus, make a meaningful shift (see sub-theme 2.6). The lack of knowledge on developmental social work impacts on the social workers' competency to render developmental social welfare services.

Objective 3

- To determine the challenges hindering the shift to a developmental social welfare approach in service delivery by DSD social workers in the Mopani District.

This objective was accomplished in the literature study in Chapter two (see section 2.7) and in the presentation of findings in Chapter three (see theme 2). The study corroborates the findings of a study by Ntjana (2014), revealing that the challenges that hinder the progress of developmental social welfare service delivery in the Mopani District include a lack of sufficient knowledge and understanding of developmental social welfare; a lack of commitment from management towards the developmental social welfare approach to service delivery; a lack of resources and infrastructure; and poor working conditions.

Objective 4

- To propose guidelines that will fast track the shift to a developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development, Mopani District.

This objective was achieved through a presentation of recommendations in this chapter (see section 4.4), which can be used as guidelines to facilitate and accelerate the shift towards the incorporation of the developmental social welfare approach by DSD social workers in service delivery.

4.3 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This section presents the key findings of the study and the conclusions that can be drawn from these.

- ❖ The findings show a partial shift towards developmental social services which is biased towards preventive- and protective services. The findings point out that the majority of participants are fully aware that they have to incorporate the developmental approach in social welfare service delivery, but are challenged in doing so due to the lack of a clear understanding of what developmental social welfare entails and how a shift towards the approach should unfold in practice. The findings show that both social workers and supervisors are challenged in articulating the social and economic rights which they claimed to promote. The

findings correlate with the lack of capacity among social workers to enable them to implement the approach, which was identified as one of the major barriers hindering the shift towards the developmental approach.

- It can be concluded that participants have not yet made a significant shift towards a developmental approach as they are still grappling to understand what developmental social welfare entails and how to fully implement the approach in practice. Furthermore, although the participants are aware of human rights and their role in promoting it, they do not have the adequate knowledge on socio-economic rights and how these rights relate to social work and social service delivery. This contributes to their challenge to implement a rights-based approach in service delivery which, in turn, confirms the need for capacity building in the developmental approach. The lack of adequate knowledge on the developmental social welfare approach indicates that there is insufficient in-service training on developmental social work for both social workers and supervisors.

- ❖ Despite the evident lack of sufficient knowledge on developmental social welfare, the findings reveal that participants make a positive contribution towards the reduction of poverty and unemployment through social assistance programmes. They facilitate access to social grants and social relief of distress where they provide food parcels to needy individuals and families. However, findings indicate that the majority of the participants are of the opinion that some service users display a dependency syndrome in that they rely on the government for food parcels and grants, and thus, are not always willing to take action to address their situation. This dependency syndrome among service users was identified as one of the challenges stalling progress towards the developmental approach in service delivery.

- It can be concluded that although participants contribute to poverty alleviation and people's right to social protection, they do not necessarily regard this as developmental social service delivery. They question the provision of the socio-economic right to social protection. This emphasises a lack of understanding among social workers that human rights are embedded in the developmental approach. They also do not understand their role in planning with clients for exit strategies from social grants.

- ❖ The findings indicate that social workers engage in partnerships that focus on delivery of statutory services, and community outreach programmes for advocacy and prevention purposes as well as the promotion of human rights. They emphasised the partnership with the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and the South African Social Security Agency for facilitation of foster care applications.
- It can thus be concluded that participants have partially made some progress in terms of social development partnerships since they collaborate with other stakeholders in service delivery. However, they lag behind in terms of engaging in partnerships that focus on social and economic development for the purpose of reducing poverty and unemployment, which are at the centre of the developmental approach to social welfare service delivery.

- ❖ The findings indicate a partial shift towards the inclusion of people participation in service delivery. A significant shift towards participation is evident in the area of case work where social workers involve the service users in addressing their own challenges. However, participation is absent in community work interventions where social workers merely empower communities with information without giving them opportunities and resources to foster participation. Findings indicate that they are challenged in making sustainable contributions towards reducing poverty and unemployment in that they do not have tangible programmes that focus on promoting economic participation.
- It can be concluded that the social workers are challenged to mobilise the strengths of service users to participate in socio-economic development initiatives that can make an impact on sustainable livelihoods. They limit their role to information-giving through which they empower people who are marginalised to participate in social and economic development. Although they encourage service users to engage in economic activities, there is no tangible evidence that human capital development and social capital formation promote participation of service users in productive economy.

- ❖ The findings show a disjuncture between participants in terms of understanding their role in engaging the service users in economic development initiatives. Some of the participants felt that facilitation of economic development initiatives

is not the role of social workers, but rather of community development practitioners.

- It can be concluded that there are still social workers who do not see social work as a role-player in economic development. There could be no significant progress towards the developmental approach if social workers continue to negate the relevance of economic development in social service delivery. There is a need for the DSD to clarify and clearly demarcate a developmental role for social workers if the adopted social welfare policy is developmental social welfare.

- ❖ The findings show that participants bridge micro- and macro practice in social welfare service delivery. Their interventions do not solely focus on individual and family issues, but extends to cover communities as they engage in community and partially in advocacy work. Their involvement in advocacy work centres on helping the service users to access services and promoting human rights through awareness campaigns, and there is no evidence of engaging in policy work, which according to Lombard (2015:495) is critical in bridging the micro- and macro divide practice.
- It can be concluded that social workers have made some progress towards bridging the micro- and macro divide in service delivery as they are involved in case work, community work and partially in advocacy.

- ❖ In correlation with the research outcomes of a study by Ntjana (2014:88), the findings indicate a relatedness between the developmental approach and poor working conditions, lack of infrastructure and operational resources, lack of supervision in developmental social work and the DSD preoccupation with the target system approach to performance management whereby the social workers are required to reach the set target number of individuals per month at the expense of the quality of services delivered. Most social workers in the Mopani regions are concentrated in one office due to a shortage of offices, rather than being decentralised into the communities that they serve as envisaged in the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, 1997).
- It can be concluded that the DSD is failing to deliver on its mandate of creating an enabling environment for social service delivery, which is necessary to facilitate progress in shifting towards developmental social work. In agreement

with the study by Ntjana (2014:103), it can be deduced that accessibility to social welfare services is still a challenge to some communities as the concentration of social workers in one office implies centralisation of social welfare services, which is in contrast to the White Paper for Social Welfare's emphasis on decentralisation of services to address disparities of the past (RSA, 1997:9). The lack of resources, such as transport, escalates the challenge of accessibility to social welfare services as it implies that social workers are challenged to take services to communities. Another implication is that the lack of transport provides ample opportunity for social workers to focus on micro services at the expense of macro services at community level, which is an essential component of developmental social welfare service delivery. The lack of resources for social service delivery is in contrast with the government's responsibility to provide an enabling environment for social service delivery (Landman & Lombard, 2006:9; RSA, 1997:27).

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and conclusions indicate a need in the DSD for developmental social welfare service delivery guidelines and capacity building of both social workers and supervisors in the developmental approach. The researcher recommends the guidelines for accelerating the pace of developmental social welfare service delivery in the Mopani District. The recommendations are based on both the literature and the empirical study, and are discussed next.

❖ Capacity building of social workers and supervisors in developmental social welfare

In order for social work to be recognised as a partner in social development, social workers must be well acquainted with what developmental social welfare services entail. It is recommended that the DSD further capacitates its social workers and supervisors on developmental social work. The training should emphasise the themes of the developmental approach, more specifically with regard to the integration of social and economic development, human rights, partnerships and participation. Capacity building must also include the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the developmental approach on a continuous basis. This will

help social workers from DSD to fast-track developmental service delivery and sharpen their knowledge and skills to provide leadership on implementing the developmental approach in the social welfare sector (Lombard & Wairire, 2010:107). Continuous professional development opportunities in developmental social work and services should be scheduled on an ongoing basis for both supervisors and social workers.

❖ **Establish dedicated forums to discuss developmental social welfare service delivery**

In addition to the training of social workers on developmental social work, it is recommended that the DSD creates discussion platforms for social workers and supervisors at sub-district level, to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss the developmental approach, its implementation, progress, challenges and best practice models. This will help them to share knowledge and experiences and to keep them up to date with trends in developmental social welfare service delivery, and in turn, contribute to accelerating the pace of progress towards implementing the developmental approach.

❖ **Increase collaboration through partnerships to reduce poverty and unemployment**

Social workers must increase collaboration with stakeholders through partnerships focusing on the reduction of poverty and unemployment through development and service user participation. This could be done by establishing a stakeholder's forum with NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, Community Development Practitioners and other relevant government departments like the Department of Small Business Development, Department of Rural Development and the Department of Agriculture, whose focus relates to the reduction of poverty and unemployment. This will promote concerted and coordinated efforts of stakeholders against poverty and unemployment; provide the opportunity for mutual learning between stakeholders on developmental interventions; and, in turn, fast-track the integration of social and economic development in welfare service delivery.

❖ **Enhance supervision of social workers on developmental social work**

Supervisors must fulfil their responsibility to supervise social workers. They should be abreast of the developmental focus in social welfare service delivery in order to effectively guide social workers in social work interventions which are in line with the developmental approach. Supervisors must utilise supervision opportunities to ensure that the developmental approach is always taken into consideration by social workers in service delivery.

❖ **DSD must create an enabling environment for service delivery**

The DSD should create an enabling environment for social workers by providing office infrastructure and operational resources such as cars, computers, internet, email, printers, scanners and photocopying machines. This will make the working conditions for social workers more favourable for the implementation of the developmental approach.

❖ **DSD must improve salaries of social workers and implement danger and rural allowance**

DSD should improve salaries of social workers and pay them danger and rural allowances, as promised in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (Earle, 2008:72; DSD, 2009:40, 48). This will improve the morale of social workers and motivate them to show commitment to developmental social welfare service delivery as envisaged by the White Paper for Social Welfare (DSD, 2009:11; RSA, 1997).

Recommendations for further research

Recommendations for further research in this study area are as follows:

- The implementation of this study's recommendations could be followed up with a study to determine how interventions in social service delivery have changed through improved knowledge and skills of social workers in the developmental approach.
- Similar studies can be done in other provinces to determine the national progress made by DSD social workers in implementing the developmental approach.

- Finally, comparative studies can be done between government and non-governmental social workers to determine their level of knowledge, skills and progress made in implementing developmental social work and services.

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APPENDIX A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SOCIAL WORKERS

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Goal of the study: The goal of the study is to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift to the developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. Sex: Female: Male:

2. Age: 25-29: 30-34: 35-39: 40-44: 45-49:
 50-54: 55-59: 60+:

3. Race: African: Coloured: White: Indian:

4. Job position: Junior Social Worker: Senior Social Worker:

5. Years of experience as a social worker:
 2-5: 6-10: 11-15: 16-20: 20+:

6. Area of operation: Giyani sub-district: Letaba sub-district:
 Tzaneen sub-district: Ba-Phalaborwa sub-district:

7. In which year have you completed your social work studies?

8. If you have been trained or inducted on developmental social welfare, in which year did it take place?

9. What type of supervision do you receive with regard to social service delivery?
 Individual supervision: Group supervision:
 Telephonic supervision: Electronic supervision: None:

10. How often do you receive supervision?

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the kind of social services that you deliver in the district.
2. To what extent would you say the social services that you render, are developmental?
3. In your view, have DSD social workers in your district made a shift to the developmental approach? Why do you say so?
4. To what extent do you focus on human rights in your social service delivery?
5. Explain the nature of the partnerships for social service delivery that you engage in as social workers in the district.
6. To what extent do social work service delivery in the district focus on a micro level, that is on individuals and families, versus a community and policy level?
7. Who are the service beneficiaries of the services that you render?
8. To what extent do service beneficiaries participate in decisions that affect them directly? Please give examples.
9. What is your view on social work's role and contribution to poverty reduction and unemployment and addressing of socio-economic inequalities in your district?
10. To what extent are you involved in projects such as
 - Feeding schemes and food gardens to reduce hunger of children and families?
 - Early childhood development, after school activities, and adult education?
 - Promoting and supporting of health campaigns such as HIV/AIDS, family planning and maternal care?
 - Supporting infrastructure development in communities such as clean water and sanitation?
 - Income generating projects?

11. To what extent are you involved in social service delivery on the levels of

- Prevention
- Early intervention
- Statutory intervention and
- Reconstruction services?

12. What are the challenges that you experience with regard to the implementation of the developmental approach?

13. In your opinion and experience of working in the Mopani District, what could be done to accelerate the pace of DSD social workers towards the implementation of the developmental approach?

APPENDIX B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISORS

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW

Goal of the study: The goal of the study is to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift to the developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. Sex: Female: Male:

2. Age: 25-29: 30-34: 35-39: 40-44: 45-49:
 50-54: 55-59: 60+:

3. Race: African: Coloured: White: Indian:

4. Job position: Senior Social Worker: Principal Social Worker:
 Assistant Social Work Manager:

5. Years of experience as a social work supervisor:
 1-5: 6-10: 11-15: 16-20: 20+:

6. Area of operation: Giyani sub-district: Letaba sub-district:
 Tzaneen sub-district: Ba-Phalaborwa sub-district:

7. In which year have you completed your social work studies?

8. If you have been trained or inducted on developmental social welfare, in which year did it take place?

9. What type of supervision do you engage in with the social workers that you supervise? Individual supervision: Group supervision:
 Telephonic supervision: Electronic supervision:
 None:

10. How often do you engage in supervision with the social workers that you supervise?.....

QUESTIONS

1. Explain the kind of social services that are delivered by social workers that you supervise.
2. Guided by the supervision that you provide to social workers, to what extent would you say the social services that are rendered by social workers in the district are developmental?
3. In your view as a supervisor, have DSD social workers in the district made a shift to the developmental approach? Why do you say so?
4. To what extent do social workers in the district focus on the promotion of human rights in their social service delivery?
5. Explain the nature of the partnerships for social service delivery that you and social workers engage in, in the district.
6. To what extent do social workers service delivery in the district focus on a micro level that is on individuals and families, versus a community and policy level?
7. Who are the service beneficiaries of the services that are rendered by social workers in the district?
8. To what extent do service beneficiaries participate in decisions that affect them directly? Please give examples.
9. What is your view on social work's role and contribution to poverty reduction and unemployment and addressing of socio-economic inequalities in your district?
10. To what extent are social workers in your district involved in projects such as
 - Feeding schemes and food gardens to reduce hunger of children and families?
 - Early childhood development, after school activities, and adult education?

- Promoting and supporting of health campaigns such as HIV/AIDS, family planning and maternal care?
 - Supporting infrastructure development in communities such as clean water and sanitation?
 - Income generating projects?
11. To what extent are social workers in the district involved in social service delivery on the levels of
- Prevention
 - Early intervention
 - Statutory intervention and
 - Reconstruction services?
12. From your perspective as supervisor, what challenges are experienced by the social workers in the district regarding the implementation of the developmental approach?
13. In your opinion and experience of working as supervisor in the Mopani District, what could be done to accelerate the pace of DSD social workers towards the implementation of the developmental approach?



APPENDIX C



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ref : 55/3/1/2
Enq : Ledwaba MS
Tel : 015 293 6406
Date : 06 March 2013
To : Mr Chabalala KI
1687 Thorn Valley Complex
Cnr Selie&1st Avenue
Chantelle
0182

RESPONSE ON THE REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH TITLED "PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE APPROACH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO".

1. The above matter refers to the letter dated 16 January 2013 forwarded to the Department (Social Development) and the Department hereby acknowledge receipt thereof.
2. The Department of Social Development hereby grant permission to conduct the above-mentioned research, on the provision that proof of granting ethical clearance be provided prior to commencement of the study.
3. NB. On completion of the study, a copy of the research report should be submitted to Department of Social Development in honour of your commitment.
4. The Department take this opportunity to wish you well during the period of research.

SENIOR MANAGER: HUMAN CAPITAL
DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

06/03/2013
DATE



APPENDIX D



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Deputy Dean

4 September 2013

Dear Prof Lombard

Project: Perspectives of social workers in implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in the Department of Health and Social development in Mopani District, Limpopo
Researcher: I Chavalala
Supervisor: Prof A Lombard
Department: Social Work and Criminology
Reference number: 29500614

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the above application was **approved (with comment)** by the **Postgraduate Committee** on 13 August 2013 and by the **Research Ethics Committee** on 29 August 2013. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Sakhela Buhlungu
Chair: Postgraduate Committee &
Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: sakhela.buhlungu@up.ac.za



APPENDIX E

24/08/2013

Researcher's name: Isaac Chavalala

Address: 1687 Thorn Valley Complex
Cnr 1st & Salie Street
Chantelle
0182

Contact details: Work: 012 312 7635
Cell: 072 378 0685

1. **Title of the study:** Perspectives of social workers on the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in the Department of Social Development in Mopani District, Limpopo.
2. **Goal of the study:** The goal of the study is to explore social workers' perspectives on the shift to the developmental approach in social service delivery in the Department of Social Development in the Mopani District, Limpopo.
3. **Procedures:** The study will use focus group and one-to-one interviews to collect data from participants. Each interview is expected to take approximately 1 hour. The interviews will be recorded on tape. The tape recordings will be transcribed for data analysis purposes. Only the researcher and the study supervisor will have access to the tapes and transcripts which will ultimately be stored in a secure place by the University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years. If data is used again, permission will be requested from participants.
4. **Risks and discomforts:** There are no known risks and discomforts that may be endured by participants in this study.

5. **Benefits:** The study will benefit the participants indirectly in that they will gain a better understanding of the extent of the shift to the developmental approach by Department of Social Development social workers in social service delivery. They will also benefit by identifying the challenges and the envisaged guidelines which should assist them to facilitate the shift to the developmental approach in social service delivery in the district.

6. **Participants' rights:** Participation in the study is voluntary and participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants have the right to refuse to answer any question that they do not wish to respond to.

7. **Confidentiality and anonymity:** Information collected in the study will be treated confidentially and the names of participants will not appear in the research report or the scientific journal in which the results will be published. Findings will not be presented in a way that could be directly linked to any specific participant.

8. **Person to contact:** If participants have questions or concerns relating to the study, they may contact the researcher, Isaac Chavalala on 072 378 0685.

Declaration

I,, understand my rights as a research participant, and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I understand what the study is about and how and why it is being conducted.

Date

Place

Participant's signature

Date

Place

Researcher's signature