

**THE EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF A DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL
WELFARE APPROACH WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GAUTENG PROVINCE**

BY

VATHISWA PORTIA DLANGAMANDLA

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ABSTRACT

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In South Africa, commitment to switch to the developmental approach with the aim of alleviating poverty and integrating social and economic development is evident in the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997), the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (1994), the *Growth Employment and Redistribution strategy* (1996), the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (2005) and the *Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM)* (2005). These policy documents attempt to integrate social development goals and economic development within a developmental approach to social welfare.

The social development approach to social welfare in the South African context is firmly rooted in a rights-based approach. Its 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 people in the society.

The right to dignity for all citizens is the core of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act 108/1996). This basic human rights value endorses the inherent worth of all human beings, as well as equity without bias based on gender, race or religion. In addition to this, the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) states that social welfare services and programmes must be based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as articulated in the Constitution of the country. The social developmental approach is relevant as it embraces human rights values and ensures socio-economic development. It is therefore of immense importance for the social work profession to incorporate the new approach into its professional interventions.

The research tool was administered to the social work practitioners who are in the employment of the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province. The respondents confirmed that the developmental approach to welfare was essential and has been adopted, as reflected on the policy documents and frameworks that guide service delivery. Implementation of the developmental approach in practice, however, poses some challenges as the model has not yet been adopted by some practitioners who have to implement policy.

The aim of this study was thus to investigate the experiences of social workers regarding the current implementation of a developmental social welfare approach.

The objectives of this research study were the following:

- to conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare;
- to explore and describe social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice;

- to identify the challenges social workers are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice; and
- to make recommendations, based on the research findings, to enhance the effective implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in social work.

Against this background the study was guided by the following research question:

- What are the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province?

A qualitative research approach was used to investigate the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a social developmental approach. Applied research focuses on problem solving in practice and emphasizes the participation of the people who are experiencing a problem, by involving them in finding the solution to the problem. In this study applied research was applicable to contribute towards solving the problems related to the implementation of the developmental approach in practice. In the context of qualitative research the collective case study design was utilized as the most appropriate case study design, because the researcher wanted to further her understanding of a 'social issue' namely the implementation of the social developmental approach to social welfare services.

The data collection method entailed focus group discussions. Qualitative data was collected through interviews of group members. The participants were social workers within the Department of Social Development employed in the five regions of Gauteng Province. There was one focus group, consisting of 10 participants, in each region; thus the researcher conducted five focus groups with 50 participants in total. The researcher utilized a combination of stratified and systematic sampling to select the participants for the five focus groups.

The process used in data collection for the study entailed initially a pilot study which was used to test the focus group interview schedule among respondents who were not included in the focus group discussions that were held for data collection for the study. Using the Creswell method of data analysis, the data that was collected in the focus group discussions was subsequently analysed, interpreted and finally displayed in the form of themes and sub-themes.

The goal of the study was definitely achieved as the study determined not only that there is a need for ongoing training and reorientation of social workers toward the implementation of the developmental approach in practice, but also the revelation that there is a need to develop an action plan and clear procedure guidelines on how to implement the approach in practice, at national level. From a qualitative perspective, it is thus recommended that a procedure guideline and a national plan to implement the social developmental approach in practice should be developed in order to enhance the implementation process.

Key Words:

Social welfare

Social development

Developmental social welfare

OPSOMMING

DIE ERVARINGS VAN MAATSKAPLIKE WERKERS VAN DIE TOEPASSING VAN 'N ONTWIKKELINGS- MAATSKAPLIKE WELSYNSBENADERING IN DIE DEPARTEMENT MAATSKAPLIKE ONTWIKKELING, GAUTENG PROVINSIE

Deur

VATHISWA PORTIA DLANGAMANDLA

STUDIELEIER: PROF. C.S.L. DELPORT

**DEPARTEMENT MAATSKAPLIKE WERK EN KRIMINOLOGIE
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In Suid-Afrika is die toewyding om om te skakel na die ontwikkelings-benadering, met die doel om armoede op te hef en die maatskaplike en ekonomiese ontwikkeling te integreer, duidelik te lese in die *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Departement van Welsyn en Bevolkingsontwikkeling, 1997), die *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (1994), die *Growth Employment and Redistribution strategy* (1996), die *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (2005) en die *Integrated Service Delivery Model* (ISDM) (2005). Hierdie beleidsdokumente poog om maatskaplike doelwitte en ekonomiese ontwikkeling te integreer binne 'n ontwikkelingsbenadering tot maatskaplike welsyn.

Binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks is die maatskaplike ontwikkelings-beleid tot maatskaplike welsyn stewig geanker in 'n regte-gebaseerde benadering. Die doelstellings hiervan sluit in die bereiking van maatskaplike geregtigheid, 'n minimum-lewenstandaard, billike toegang en gelyke geleentheid tot dienste en voordele, en 'n verbintenis om in die behoeftes van alle Suid-Afrikaners te voorsien, met besondere klem op die behoeftes van die mees benadeelde mense in die samelewing.

Die reg tot waardigheid vir alle burgers is die kern van die *Grondwet van die Republiek van Suid-Afrika* (Akte 108/1996). Hierdie basiese menseregte waarde onderskryf die inherente waarde van alle mense, asook gelykheid sonder vooroordeel gegrond op gender, ras of geloof. Daarbenewens stel die *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Departement van Welsyn en Bevolkingsontwikkeling, 1997) dat maatskaplike welsynsdienste en –programme gegrond moet wees op respek vir menseregte en fundamentele vryhede, soos uiteengesit in die land se Grondwet. Die maatskaplike ontwikkelings-benadering is relevant omdat dit menseregte omarm en sosio-ekonomiese ontwikkeling verseker. Dit is daarom van ontsaglike belang vir die beroep maatskaplike werk om hierdie nuwe benadering in sy professionele bemoëienis te inkorporeer.

Die navorsingshulpbron is beskikbaar gestel aan die maatskaplike werkers in diens van die Departement Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, Gauteng Provinsie. Die respondente het bevestig dat die ontwikkelings-benadering tot welsyn noodsaaklik is en dat dit aangeneem is, soos gereflekteer word in die beleidsdokumente en –raamwerke wat dienslewering rig. Die implementering van die ontwikkelings-benadering lewer egter in die praktyk 'n aantal probleme op, aangesien die model nog nie aangeneem is deur sommige praktisyns wat die beleid moet implementeer nie.

Die doel van hierdie studie was dus om die ervarings van maatskaplike werkers aangaande die huidige toepassing van 'n ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn-beleid te ondersoek.

Die doelwitte van hierdie navorsingstudie was die volgende:

- om die maatskaplike ontwikkelings-benadering teoreties te konseptualiseer binne die veld van maatskaplike welsyn;
- om die ervarings van maatskaplike werkers aangaande die toepassing van die ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn-benadering in die praktyk te verken en te beskryf;
- om die uitdagings te identifiseer wat maatskaplike werkers in die praktyk ervaar met die toepassing van die ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn-benadering; en
- om, gebaseer op die navorsingsbevindings, voorstelle te maak ter verbetering van die doeltreffende implementering van 'n ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn-benadering in maatskaplike werk.

Teen hierdie agtergrond is die studie begelei deur die volgende navorsingsvraag:

- Wat is die ervarings van maatskaplikewerk praktisyns in die toepassing van 'n ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn-benadering binne die Departement Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, Gauteng Provinsie?

'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is gebruik om die ervarings van maatskaplike werkers te ondersoek in die toepassing van 'n maatskaplike ontwikkelings-benadering. Toegepaste navorsing fokus op probleemoplossing in die praktyk en beklemtoon die deelname van die mense wat die probleem ervaar deur hulle te betrek by die vind van die oplossing vir die probleem. In hierdie studie was toegepaste navorsing toepaslik om by te dra tot die oplossing van probleme aangaande die toepassing van die ontwikkelings-benadering in die praktyk. Binne die konteks van kwalitatiewe navorsing is die kollektiewe gevallestudie-ontwerp gebruik as die geskikste gevallestudie-ontwerp, omdat die navorser haar begrip van 'n 'maatskaplike kwessie' wou uitbrei, naamlik die toepassing van die maatskaplike ontwikkelings-benadering in maatskaplike welsynsdienste.

Die data insamelingsmetode het fokusgroepebesprekings behels. Kwalitatiewe data is versamel deur onderhoude met groeplede. Die deelnemers was maatskaplike werkers binne

die Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, in diens in die vyf streke van Gauteng Provinsie. Daar was een fokusgroep, bestaande uit 10 deelnemers, in elke streek; dus het die navorser vyf fokusgroepe gelei, met 'n totaal van 50 deelnemers. Die navorser het gebruik gemaak van 'n kombinasie van gestratifiseerde en sistematiese steekproef tegnieke ten einde die deelnemers vir die vyf fokusgroepe te selekteer.

Die proses wat tydens dataversameling vir die studie gebruik is, het aanvanklik 'n loodsstudie behels. Dit is gebruik om die fokusgroep se onderhoudskedule te toets onder respondente wat nie ingesluit is nie in die fokusgroep-besprekings wat gehou is vir dataversameling vir die studie. Deur gebruik te maak van die Creswell data-analisemethode is die data wat versamel is tydens die fokusgroep-besprekings vervolgens geanaliseer, geïnterpreteer en eindelik voorgestel in die vorm van temas en sub-temas.

Die doel van hierdie studie is definitief bereik, aangesien die studie bepaal het dat daar nie slegs 'n behoefte bestaan vir voortgesette opleiding en heroriëntasie van maatskaplike werkers ten opsigte van die toepassing van die ontwikkelings-benadering in praktyk nie, maar ook dat daar 'n behoefte is aan die ontwikkeling van 'n operasionele plan en duidelike prosedure riglyne vir die implementering van die benadering in die praktyk op nasionale vlak. Vanuit 'n kwalitatiewe perspektief word daar dus voorgestel dat 'n prosedure riglyn en nasionale plan ontwikkel word vir die implementering van die maatskaplike ontwikkelings-benadering in die praktyk, ten einde die implementeringsproses te verbeter.

Sleutelwoorde:

Maatskaplike welsyn

Maatskaplike ontwikkeling

Ontwikkelings- maatskaplike welsyn

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Many new policy initiatives have emerged in post-apartheid South Africa as instruments designed to correct past imbalances” (Gathiram, 2005:124). In the social welfare field, in 1994 the government of National Unity also adopted the overarching socio-economic policy of the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (referred to as the RDP) to confront and challenge poverty, inequality and injustice in South Africa (Gathiram, 2005:124) from a social developmental approach. Osei-Hwedie (2007:106-116) mentions that social development has ushered in an ideology emphasising equality of all people, social justice, human rights, access to services, opportunity and resources and, more importantly, a new and concerted drive towards poverty reduction.

According to the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997), as well as several other authors like Midgley (1999:3-21), Lombard (2003: 224-239) and Green and Nieman (2003:161), a social development approach focuses on the sustained improvement of the well-being of the individual, family, community and society at large. The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) states that the reduction or eradication of mass poverty, inequality and conditions of underdevelopment are widely accepted indicators of social progress based on the social development approach.

To achieve social progress, the social development approach advocates for the integration of both social and economic aspects. This is confirmed by Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-263) who mention that: “Social Development policy sees welfare as an investment in human capital. Human capital development and economic development are linked in a significant way. Economic development is not possible without development of human resources and without social development.”

In this regard Midgley and Tang (2001:247) also note that “the following elements underpin a social developmental approach: investment in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development, micro enterprises, social investment and promotion of the productive capacities of people.”

Lombard (2005:211) highlights that social development is an approach which invests in human, social and economic capital. Human development is closely linked to education and an investment in human capacity through skills training and education. Social capital is used to connote the creation of strong bonds of community reciprocity, the strengthening of social relationships and the creation of social infrastructure. This is supported by Patel (2005:30), who notes that human well-being is about the development of people and that the achievement of human well-being is the goal of social development. These qualities can be achieved by investment in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development, social capital development and micro enterprises. Patel (2005:30) further states that the integration of economic and social development can be achieved through macroeconomic policies that promote employment, fostering the social inclusion of people in the development process through employment and self-employment, as well as raising the standards of living of the poor and the unemployed.

What can be ascertained from the above discussion is that Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-263), Midgley and Tang (2001:247), Lombard (2003:211) and Patel (2005:30) agree that the social development approach can best be achieved through programmes and policies that will foster human capital development, foster the social inclusion of people in the development process, invest in human capacity through skills training and education, and invest in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development.

Within the Department of Social Development the above discussions are reflected in the vision of the proposed National Developmental Social Welfare strategy which is

formulated in the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) as follows: “a welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment.”

Authors like Midgley and Tang (2001: 244-253) and Patel (2005:207) highlight the following key characteristics of a social developmental approach:

- it is linked to economic development;
- it has an interdisciplinary focus;
- it is progressive in nature;
- it utilises various strategies;
- it is inclusive or universal in scope; and
- its goal is the promotion of social welfare.

In South Africa this developmental focus in the welfare field was revealed in different policy documents such as the *Reconstruction and Development Policy* (1994), the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) and the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005). In the *Reconstruction and Development Policy* (ANC, 1994:10) the government indicated that it wishes to transform South Africa by focusing on meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy and democratising the state and society.

Flowing from the *Reconstruction and Development Policy*, the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:7) elaborated on this developmental approach by indicating that the purpose of the policy was to chart a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development. The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:11) also proposed the transformation of social services from fragmented, specialised services to one that is more developmental.

To achieve this transformation the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005:9-12) was intended to be a tool for

transforming the traditional welfare sector by changing the manner in which welfare organisations were funded. The policy indicates that the financing of welfare services should create an environment in which the paradigm shift towards a developmental approach can be made and should ensure that transformation shifts are consciously supported and encouraged through the financing policy and mechanisms. The *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005:9-12) also provides for a social services delivery framework, which includes prevention, early intervention, statutory processes and a continuum of care and developmental services, and as such challenges social workers to adopt and implement a developmental approach to all social work interventions.

To be successful in the implementation of a developmental approach, social workers needed to make a paradigm shift towards a developmental approach. This is supported by Rankin (1997:189), as well as Forward (2003:131), who conducted a study on the perceptions of social workers regarding the social developmental approach from the statutory point of view, and how it should be implemented. Forward (2003:131) emphasized the fact that training should be provided to social workers in order to stimulate such a paradigm shift.

This research study will thus elaborate on the study conducted by Forward (2003), by focusing on the experiences and perceptions of social workers regarding the current implementation (since 2003) of a developmental social welfare approach over the whole spectrum of social work interventions and not only on statutory work.

The logic behind the study is embedded in the fact that a clear understanding of the concept of social development, the relationship between the proposed developmental approach and policy frameworks, as well as an exploration regarding the actual implementation of a developmental welfare approach will serve as a basis for the enhancement of more effective social welfare services. As such the research results will enhance the knowledge base and effective implementation of the social development approach by providing recommendations that will lead to improvement in developmental service delivery.

1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The South African government participated in the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, where seventy countries were represented. One of the World Summit's agreements was that there should be greater international cooperation in the development and implementation of economic and social policies focusing on a social developmental approach. This summit resulted in the formulation of a programme of action, which aimed to reduce poverty by 2015 (International Council on Social Welfare, 2000:1-20). The 1995 World Summit on Social Development helped to popularise the need for a renewed commitment by the social work profession to social development, implying the harmonising of human and economic policies and interventions (Lombard, 2003:224-239). This study is subsequently an attempt to review implementation of the programme of action which was agreed upon in the World Summit for social development in 1995.

Midgley (1999:3-21) states that a social developmental approach not only emphasizes productivity in social policies and programmes, but also links them to broader attempts to harness the power of economic growth for social ends. He further points out that attempts by social development advocates to direct economic development toward social ends are accompanied by attempts to shift the emphasis in social welfare from consumption and maintenance-oriented social programmes, to those that invest in people and enhance their capacity to participate in the productive economy.

In South Africa, commitment to switch to the developmental approach with the aim of alleviating poverty and integrating social and economic development is evident in the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997), the *Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)* (1994) and the *Growth Employment and Redistribution strategy* (Department of Finance, 1996). These policy documents attempt to integrate social development and economic development within a developmental approach to social welfare. In accordance with the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in 1995,

the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997:2) paves the way for the promotion of a national social development approach to social welfare policy in stating that:

The approach and strategies contained in this *White Paper for Social Welfare* will inform the restructuring of services and social welfare programmes in both the public and the private sectors. The identified principles, guidelines and recommendations for developmental social welfare policies and programmes will be implemented progressively. A five-year strategic plan of action will be developed.

Although the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) clearly describes the principles of a social development approach and also gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services, it seems as if social workers still experience some challenges in the implementation of the approach in practice.

According to Du Preez (2007), the shift of social welfare towards a developmental paradigm is based on a constitutional, policy and legislation mandate. After the adoption of the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997), training sessions were conducted by the National Department of Social Development between 1999 and 2004 for most social workers. However, according to Du Preez (2007) there was no systematic implementation plan initiated by the National Department of Social Development to promote the implementation of the developmental approach.

The researcher observed that the social welfare operationalisation plan was put into place during 1999, but because of political influences the process was stopped and there was no roll-out of the new approach to social welfare. The gaps in the field were because the change management process was not put into place to be able to drive the process forward; the change management would have allowed the movement from the old welfare system to the developmental perspective in social work.

Du Preez (2007) further highlighted that the fundamentals of the developmental approach are not clearly understood by all social workers. She stated that many social workers still do not understand the developmental approach and each social worker interprets the approach differently. Social workers who have received training on the approach still find themselves in a system that is largely geared to the old paradigm and they realise that the structures that they find themselves in do not allow for the full implementation of the approach.

A critical success factor in implementing the new approach is quality and appropriately trained social workers and the re-orientation of social service professionals to a social developmental perspective. Du Preez (2007) supported the view that a paradigm shift by all social workers is needed. She highlighted that in terms of policy and legislation documents, the Department has aligned all its policies to incorporate the principles of a social developmental approach. Makhaphela (2007) elaborated on the opinion of Du Preez by stating that the social welfare system and structures tend to hinder some social workers from implementing the social developmental approach. Although the Department which was initially referred to as the Department of Social Welfare has now changed its name to the Department of Social Development, the structures and systems, however, do not yet conform to a developmental perspective.

Dauids (2007) confirmed this by noting that the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) charts a new approach in the delivery of social welfare services. She highlighted the problem that, although the policies that govern service delivery within the Department of Social Development have encompassed the principles of a social development approach, there was, however, no action plan on how to implement the new approach. The challenge posed by adopting a paradigm shift is that the social workers are reluctant to utilise the developmental approach in the whole spectrum of service delivery. In this regard Du Preez (2007) mentioned that most social workers are of the opinion that their mandate is on statutory intervention and that the social developmental approach cannot be utilised in conjunction with statutory work, especially where there is a backlog in terms of statutory work, e.g. foster care placement, as was the

case at the time of this study. Lombard (2005:209-228) suggests that integrated social services does not mean that services can be provided in one area at the cost of service delivery in another. A holistic balance needs to be found according to the needs of the targeted groups for social services.

Lombard (2003:224-237) argues that social workers play a major role in poor communities with regard to micro and small enterprises. However, because the social work profession is traditionally associated with food security and social grants, it remains a challenge to actively promote social development and shift community work practice to community economic development. These challenges were confirmed by a study conducted by Fouché and Delport (2000:64-70), who found that: "Social workers interpret the social development concept in different ways. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that social development equals community development and leaves little scope for individual, group, or family intervention aimed at enhancing human empowerment."

These challenges are also observed in practice from the researcher's own experience as a social worker. She observed that generally quite a substantial number of the social workers' interventions on various service levels are not always successful and that they tend to use an unsustainable intervention procedure. Some social workers do not have a thorough knowledge base regarding the integration of social and economic aspects toward the implementation of a social developmental approach. Many social workers are not equipped with business management skills, such as entrepreneurship, and they are reluctant or do not know how to get involved and therefore fear the thought of being involved with economic development.

A research study conducted by Taback (2001) that deals with policy implementation in the Gauteng Department of Welfare and Population Development reveals that policies need to be made accessible to the people who are implementing them. In this regard Taback (2001) recommends that this can be achieved through practical application, including a re-orientation towards developmental social welfare and the development of a manual, which delivers the message of policy implications in an accessible manner.

According to the researcher, academic discussions have been published on the meaning of the social developmental approach and training has been provided for the majority of social workers. Unfortunately the training does not automatically ensure that the new approach is fully implemented.

In order to address this problem an in-depth exploration of the experiences of social workers themselves regarding the current implementation of a social developmental approach is needed. The researcher is of the opinion that there is a gap in the relationship between developmental social welfare policy and the practical implementation of a social developmental approach. This gap seems to be one of the obstacles in rendering effective and efficient welfare services. It seems as if there is a lack of clear guidelines for the practical implementation of a transformation process of social welfare services based on a developmental approach.

1.3 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The goal and objectives of the study serve to delimit the parameter within which the study can be conducted.

1.3.1 The goal of the study

Fouché (2002:107) states that the words 'aim' and 'goal' can be used interchangeably to refer to the end towards which an effort or ambition is directed. The goal is more like a dream and it is broad. According to De Vos, Schurink and Strydom (1998:7), a goal is a broader, more abstract conception of the end toward which effort or ambition is directed.

The goal of this study has been formulated as follows: **To explore the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.**

1.3.2 Objectives of the study

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:42) state that the objective of exploratory research is to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual. They added that the need for such a study could arise out of a lack of basic information on a new area of interest, or in order to become acquainted with a situation so as to define a problem or develop a hypothesis. Fouché (2002:107) defines the objectives of a

study as being the steps one has to take, one by one, realistically at grassroots level, within a certain time span, in order to attain the goal.

The objectives of this research study were the following:

- to conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare;
- to explore and describe social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice;
- to identify the challenges social workers are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice; and
- to make recommendations, based on the research findings, to enhance the effective implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in social work.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Taylor (2000:63) states that the research question and hypothesis are essential in guiding the research process and providing the solution to any problem in both quantitative and qualitative research.

Based on the fact that the researcher wants to explore the experiences of social work practitioners related to the current implementation of a developmental social welfare approach, this study was guided by the following research question:

- What are the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province?

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research seeks to explore and understand people's feelings, experiences, lifestyles and perceptions. The qualitative approach was used as an appropriate approach in the context of this study, because the researcher wanted to investigate social workers' experiences about the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in practice.

Applied research was used as the most appropriate type of research, because this approach focuses on exploring a problem in practice. In the context of the study the focus was on the practical problem regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in practice and social workers' experiences in this regard.

In the context of applied research the collective case study design was utilised as the most appropriate qualitative research design. The rationale for using the collective case study design was to provide the researcher with a better understanding of a 'social issue', (Fouché, 2005:272), namely the implementation of the social developmental approach to social welfare services. Furthermore, the interest of the researcher was not in the experiences of social workers as individuals, but in the collective experiences of a group of social workers (Fouché, 2005:272), hence the researcher utilized focus group interviewing as the data collection method. The focus group interviews allowed the researcher to obtain in-depth understanding of a number of viewpoints concerning the specific social issue, namely the implementation of the social developmental approach to social welfare services. The participants in this study were social workers within the Department of Social Development employed in the five regions in the Gauteng Province. One focus group consisting of 10 participants was assembled in each region; thus the researcher conducted five focus groups with 50 participants in total. The focus group discussions were held in the regional offices in Gauteng, in order to help the participants to have easy access to the venue and to relax and provide as much

information as possible. Participants were allowed flexibility in terms of responding to the focus group questions. The questions in the focus group interview schedule were carefully formulated and based on a thorough literature review. The sessions were audio taped and were later transcribed.

In order to analyse the collected information, the researcher used Creswell's (1998) method of data analysis. Briefly it means that the researcher read the transcripts over and over again to familiarize herself with it. While reading the transcripts the researcher performed minor editing, such as doing away with the information that is not relevant to the study. The information that was gathered, was categorized by themes, described, classified and interpreted. A coding system was utilised to analyse the information and to identify similarities and differences.

The study was preceded by a pilot study with a group of five social work practitioners who were not part of the sample selected for the main study. Piloting was necessary in order to test the research tool and modify it before the study could be conducted. After this process, the final interview schedule was administered to five different groups, each comprising of 10 respondents who had been selected as the sample to represent the total population of social workers who use the developmental approach in their daily activities.

The feasibility of the study was reassured, as the following activities were done:

- A written permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Department of Social Development, Gauteng. It also implied that the respondents, namely social workers employed by the Department of Social Development, were available.
- The Research Unit in the Department provided assistance to arrange meeting times at the Regional offices to assist the researcher in conducting the study.
- Permission to have focus group discussions during working hours was obtained from management in order to ensure availability of all respondents.

The universe of the study comprised all the social workers in South Africa employed by the Department of Social Development, while the population was restricted to the

social workers employed at the Department of Social Development in Gauteng Province in the following five regions: the Sedibeng Region; North Rand Region; Johannesburg Region; Ekurhuleni Region; and West Rand Region. According to the Human Resource Unit in the Department of Social Development, 699 social workers in total were employed by the Department of Social Development in Gauteng at the time the sampling was conducted.

For the purpose of this study the researcher selected a sample of 10 participants in each of the five regions in the Department of Social Development, Gauteng to form five different focus groups. The researcher utilised a combination of stratified and systematic sampling to select the sample of 50 participants. After the researcher had divided the strata in terms of the regions (stratified sampling), the systematic sampling method was used to select 10 participants (social workers) from each stratum. In the study the researcher selected every 10th name on an alphabetical list of social workers in each region until 10 participants in each region were selected. In total, a sample of 50 participants was selected to take part in the study.

1.6 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Du Plooy (1999:47) claims that a research project should conform to moral, ethical and legal standards of scientific enquiry. According to Strydom (2005:57), ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. The ethical issues discussed below were critical in this study.

1.6.1 Avoidance of harm

Harm refers to either physical or emotional harm. Strydom (2002:64) explains that harm to respondents in the social sciences will mainly be emotional in nature. It is the responsibility of the researcher to protect the respondents from any physical or emotional harm. Strydom (2002:64) further states that the respondents should be

thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation. Such information offers the respondents the opportunity to withdraw from the investigation, if they so wish.

The research study was conducted in a safe environment so as to avoid any possible physical harm. The researcher believes that failure to mention any possible harm in the study can be viewed as unethical. When the subjects are aware of any potential harm, they are able to make informed decisions. Those who choose to continue with the study are aware of what to expect in the course of the research.

In the execution of this study, special care was taken to ensure that participants were not emotionally or physically harmed. With regard to this study, the study did not stir any emotions or physical harm as such.

1.6.2 Informed consent

Neumann (2000:96) mentions that it is a fundamental ethical principle of social research to never coerce anyone into participation; participation must be voluntary. It is not enough to gain permission from subjects; they need to know what they are being asked to participate in so that they can make an informed decision.

Strydom (2005:59) indicates that informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedures which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed, as well as the credibility of the researcher should be rendered to potential subjects or their legal representatives. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006:479) postulate that informed consent is the process of seeking the explicit and uncoerced agreement from subjects to participate in a research project, based on their full understanding of the procedures involved and their likely efforts.

The researcher compiled a written consent form which participants must sign. The information included the name of the researcher, the goal of the research, the

procedures that would be followed during the investigation, as well as the possible risks, advantages and disadvantages. The researcher also mentioned that she would make use of a tape recorder and that the data would be stored for the period of 15 years at the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria. This was communicated to the participants before they signed the informed consent letter.

1.6.3 Deception of respondents

Trochim (2001:25) notes that the prospective research participants must be fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research. Strydom (2005:60) describes the deception of subjects as deliberately misrepresenting facts in order to make another person believe what is not true, violating the respect to which every person is entitled.

Before the commencement of this study, prospective respondents were fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the research beforehand. The researcher clearly stated the goal of the research on the informed consent letter and the procedures were communicated in order to avoid deception.

1.6.4 Confidentiality and violation of privacy

Babbie (2001:472) explains that confidentiality implies that only the researcher and possibly a few members of his/her staff should be aware of the identity of participants, and that the latter should also have made a commitment with regard to confidentiality. Strydom (2005:61) claims that violation of privacy, the right to self-determination and confidentiality can be viewed as being synonymous. Yegidis and Weinbach (in Strydom, 2005:61) state that “this principle of the right to privacy can be easily violated in a variety of ways, and it is imperative that researchers be reminded of the importance of safeguarding the privacy and identity of the respondents, and to do so with the necessary sensitivity where the privacy of subjects is relevant.”

The researcher maintained this principle of privacy and confidentiality in every step of the research. In this study the researcher gave assurance to the respondents that the information would be reported in such a manner that the identity/names of the respondents would not be disclosed. In order to adhere to this a number system was used to identify them. Furthermore, the focus group interviews were conducted in a neutral office such as training rooms or meeting rooms. The environment was familiar to the participants and it maintained the principle of confidentiality because most people use it as a neutral venue.

1.6.5 Action and competence of researcher

Strydom (2002:69) emphasizes that the researchers are ethically obligated to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation.

The researcher believes that she was competent enough to conduct the study, based on her professional experience and academic knowledge in the field of social policy, developmental social welfare and social development, and the fact that she has passed the module course in research methodology.

1.6.6 Release or publication of findings

Babbie (2001:475) mentioned that the researcher has an obligation towards all colleagues in the scientific community to report correctly on the analysis of data and the results of the study. Regarding this study the researcher would reveal her data in an accurate manner and would make her findings available in the form of a research report. The names of the social workers who participated as respondents would not be disclosed in the research report.

The social workers were informed at the beginning of the study that the recommendations would be communicated to the Department of Social Development during policy meetings and executive committee meetings and that the Departmental library would be provided with a copy of the research report.

1.6.7 Debriefing of respondents

According to Babbie (2001:475), debriefing entails interviews to discover any problems generated by the research experience so that those problems could be corrected. Regarding this study, there were no issues that emotionally disturbed the respondents and therefore debriefing was not necessary. However, the researcher enquired from the respondents if there were any matters that disturbed their emotions so that debriefing could be done, but the response from the respondents was that there were none. Participants were grateful that this study gave them an opportunity to explain their experiences in practice.

1.6.8 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study are as follows:

Not all social work practitioners selected in the sample for the study were available to take part in the study. One participant was called to attend a children's court case and the researcher could not wait as this was delaying the study. The researcher finally interviewed 49 participants instead of 50.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following concepts were relevant in the context of the study:

1.7.1 The White Paper for Social Welfare

The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) has been drawn up with the full participation of the stakeholders in the welfare field. It is a negotiated policy framework and strategy, and it charts a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development. The proposed direction of the White Paper is in line with the approach advocated by the United Nations World Summit for Social Development, held on 6 to 20 March 1995.

According to Fouché and Delport (2000:64) “*the White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) provides the policy framework for developmental social welfare in South Africa.”

Drawing from above definitions, *The White Paper for Social Welfare* can be defined as a set of procedures, guidelines and principles to be followed in the welfare field, whilst implementing the developmental framework in social welfare (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997).

1.7.2 Social welfare

Zastrow (1995), in Patel (2005: 19), defined social welfare as “a nation’s system of programmes, benefits, and services that help people meet those social, economic, education, and health needs that are fundamental to the maintenance of society.” Patel (2005:19) adds that “social welfare is also understood to be not only about meeting needs; it is also about the management of social problems or conditions and the maximization of opportunity to promote the common good.”

According to the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997:4), social welfare refers to an integrated and comprehensive system of social services, facilities, programmes and social security that aims to promote social development, social justice and the social functioning of people.

On the basis of the above theoretical definitions it can be deduced that the concept social welfare refers to the comprehensive systems that the Government has put into place to address social ills such as maladjustment, poverty, and social and economic policy aspects through the provision of resources to its citizens. The provisions of these resources aim to promote social development, social cohesion and a well-functioning society that will in turn contribute to the economic growth of the country.

Social welfare services and programmes are, therefore, part of a range of mechanisms that are geared to achieve social development such as health, nutrition,

education, housing, employment, recreation, rural and urban development, and land reform (*White Paper for Social Welfare: RSA*, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997).

1.7.3 Social Welfare policy

Social welfare policy refers to “a specific group of social policies; those that mandate and control the distribution of benefits to those who experience but are unable to meet basic human needs such as food, shelter, employment, housing, income, health care, or physical safety” (Ellis, 2003:4). Patel (2005:19) alluded to this by indicating that social welfare policies and programmes serve to promote social inclusion, social cohesion and integration in a society.

The researcher is of the opinion that social welfare policies are the guiding course of actions that aims to improve the quality of people’s lives. They are step-by-step guidelines or principles that intend to address a specific social issue or concern.

1.7.4 Social Development

According to Midgley (1995) in Fouché and Delpont (2000:65), “Social Development is a process of social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development.” Patel (2005:30) notes that social development is essentially a people-centred approach to development that promotes citizen participation and strengthens the voice of poor people in decision making and in building democratic and accountable institutions.

Midgley and Tang (2001:246,251) assert that social development is ultimately concerned with the well-being of all members of society. Social development views economic and social processes as equally important components of the developmental process. It is within this broader framework that developmental welfare and its emphasis on productive and social investment is best able to address the needs of welfare clients, the poor and needy, and the members of deprived, low-income communities.

Patel (2005:30) suggests that the social development approach is essentially a pluralist approach focusing on strong government action and partnership between individuals, groups, communities, civil society and the private sector.

According to David (1991), as quoted by Markward (1999:58):

Social development is the ongoing socioeconomic process that involves the structural transformation of a society rather than simply the stimulation of economic growth. As such, the structural transformation of society means that all facets of society, including education, employment, and human services, must be changed to meet the needs of individuals in a particular society.

From the above definition, it can be deduced that social development is a process of social improvement incorporating all the levels of society's needs, whether these are physical, economic or societal goals, and that the social and economic aspects reinforce each other and should be mutually integrated to address societal development.

1.7.5 Developmental Social Welfare

Developmental social services refer to the delivery of integrated and community-based social services, facilities, social investment programmes and social assistance to promote social justice, build human capabilities, and enhance livelihoods and social functioning in order for people to lead productive and fulfilling lives. Developmental social services should be based on guiding principles set by the overall policy framework (Patel, Noyoo, Du Preez, & Triegaardt, 2005:23).

Midgley and Tang (2001:247) claim that “developmental welfare is concerned not only with increasing labour-market participation among welfare clients but with a variety of interventions that foster economic participation and raise standards of living.”

From the statements made above, it can be ascertained that Developmental Social Welfare is concerned with the rendering of social welfare services that enhance the social functioning and capacity of people within the delivery of comprehensive integrated services that link socio-economic development.

1.7.6 Experience

“Experiences are actual observation of practice acquaintance with facts or events, knowledge or skill resulting from this” (Reader’s Digest Oxford Dictionary, [nd]:123).

The New Trace English dictionary ([nd]:114) defines experience as observation or practice resulting in or pending towards knowledge.

According to the researcher, the concept experience refers to the process that one has undergone which shakes or changes one’s thoughts and influences the way one acts or conducts oneself.

1.8 CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report for the present study consists of the following chapters.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Chapter 1: | General background to the study |
| Chapter 2: | Theoretical conceptualization regarding the social development approach in social welfare. |
| Chapter 3: | Empirical findings regarding the experiences of social workers about the implementation of a social developmental approach in the Department of Social Development Gauteng Province. |
| Chapter 4: | Chapter 4 focuses on a summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the research findings. |

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL WELFARE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African government participated in the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, where 70 countries were represented. One of the World Summit's agreements was that there should be greater international cooperation in the development and implementation of economic and social policies focusing on a social developmental approach (International Council on Social Welfare, 2000:1-20). In this regard Lombard (2003:224-239) states that the 1995 World Summit on Social Development helped to popularise the need for a renewed commitment by the social work profession to social development, implying the harmonising of social and economic policies and subsequent interventions.

“The social developmental approach transcends the debates about residual and institutional welfare by encouraging the adoption of social programmes that are primarily concerned not with providing remedial social services, but with enhancing the capacities of vulnerable/marginalised people to participate in a productive economy” (Midgley & Sherraden, 2000:437). The researcher in this study holds the view that social development can be brought about by the involvement of people in developmental programmes that could enhance their capacity and improve their quality of life. The researcher's belief is that developmental programmes can bring about some changes in the way welfare consumers are viewed. Developmental programmes must integrate both social and economic aspects.

The concept and theories of social development are a fairly recent innovation in the social work profession. To a large extent they coincided with the inception of the present democratic government in South Africa which is exploring innovative ways of poverty alleviation. It is against this background that the South African welfare system was changed. The process represented the first ever inclusive consultation process in the welfare field, which resulted in the adoption of the

White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) coupled with other policy documents such as the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005).

Patel (2005:3) states that the social development perspective on social welfare has provided the most appropriate and sustainable way to tackle the dual challenge of addressing past disparities and new needs flowing from the risks to human security and development in a global and Southern African context. The challenge for the future is to ensure that social and human development goals remain on the African agenda and that policy is implemented incrementally. According to the researcher the South African political transformation since 1994 has influenced the social welfare sector, because this transformation has presented South Africa with the potential for change.

The post 1994 South African government adopted a developmental agenda into its political mandates with the view of addressing social ills. Lombard (2007:295) states that in line with its developmental agenda, South Africa adopted the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) which adopts a developmental approach to social welfare with the intention to address issues of poverty and inequality, and promotes social development by integrating social interventions with economic development.

According to the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997), the goal of social development is to bring about sustained improvements in the well-being of the individual, family, community and society at large and social welfare is defined as an “integrated and comprehensive system of social services, facilities, programmes and social security to promote social development, social justice and the social functioning of people.” This is confirmed by Osei-Hwedie (2007:106-116) who mentions that social development has ushered in an ideology emphasising equality for all people, social justice, human rights, access to services, opportunity and

resources and more importantly a new and concerted drive towards poverty reduction.

Based on the above theoretical discussions the researcher is of the opinion that the social developmental approach could address all social ills as it tends to incorporate a holistic approach to human development. As such the social developmental approach is essential to the South African society in that it will bring about socio-economic development and it is therefore of immense importance for the social work profession to incorporate the new approach into its professional interventions. McKendrick (2001:108) postulates that social workers are uniquely qualified to make an effective contribution to developmental social welfare. He based his argument on social workers' well-developed skills in developmental group work, their community work expertise, their proven ability to advocate, their programme design and evaluation skills, and the fact that their strength based perspective has put them in the best position to incorporate and implement the new paradigm to social welfare.

In order to implement a social developmental approach in the field of social work, the White Paper for Social Welfare (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) states that:

The approach and strategies contained in this White Paper for Social Welfare will inform the restructuring of services and social welfare programmes in both the public and the private sectors. The identified principles, guidelines and recommendations for developmental social welfare policies and programmes will be implemented progressively. A five-year strategic plan of action will be developed.

Although the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) clearly described the principles of a social developmental approach and also gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services, it seems as if social workers still experience some challenges in the implementation of the approach in practice. However, in order to explore these challenges it is important to have an in-depth understanding of the social developmental approach. This chapter will therefore focus on a theoretical discussion regarding the most relevant aspects of the social developmental

approach in social welfare and the social work profession. The following aspects will be discussed:

- The theoretical conceptualization of relevant concepts such as social welfare, social development and developmental social welfare.
- Different theoretical approaches towards social welfare.
- The social developmental approach to social welfare in the South African context.
- The concept of developmental social welfare services.
- Strategies for implementing a social developmental approach.
- Achievements and challenges regarding a social developmental approach.
- Monitoring and evaluation as a tool for social development.

2.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF RELEVANT CONCEPTS

In order to understand a social developmental approach in social welfare and social work as a profession, it is important to discuss the concepts social welfare, social development, and developmental social welfare.

2.2.1 Social welfare

According to Ginsberg (1998:1), social welfare is the total system of programmes, services, and policies which provides for human well-being. Patel (2005:19) defines social welfare as a nation's system of programmes, benefits, and services that help people meet those social, economic, education, and health needs that are fundamental to the maintenance of society. She further elaborates by stating that "social welfare is also understood to be not only about meeting needs, but also about the management of social problems or conditions and the maximization of opportunity to promote the common good" (Patel, 2005:19).

According to the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:7) social welfare services and

programmes are, therefore, part of a range of mechanisms that are geared to achieve social development such as health, nutrition, education, housing, employment, recreation, rural and urban development, and land reform.

On the basis of the above theoretical definitions it can be deduced that social welfare is the comprehensive system that the government has put into place to address social, economic, education and health needs such as maladjustment and poverty, as well as social and economic policy aspects through the provision of resources to its citizens. The provision of these resources aims to promote social development, social cohesion, and a well-functioning society that will in turn contribute to the economic growth of the country.

2.2.2 Social development

The second key concept in the context of a social developmental approach in social welfare is social development.

According to Midgley (1995) as cited in Fouché and Delport (2000:65), “social development is a process of social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development.”

Elaborating on this, Midgley and Tang (2001:246 -251), assert the following:

Social development is ultimately concerned with the well-being of all members of society. Social development views economic and social processes as equally important components of the developmental process, and it is within this broader framework that developmental welfare and its emphasis on productive and social investment are best able to address the needs of welfare clients, the poor and needy, and the members of deprived, low-income communities.

Adding to Midgley and Tang’s view, Patel (2005:30) notes that social development is essentially a people-centred approach to development that

promotes citizen participation and strengthens the voice of poor people in decision-making and in building democratic and accountable institutions. She further suggests that “the social development approach is essentially a pluralist approach focusing on strong government action and partnership between individuals, groups, communities, civil society and the private sector” (Patel, 2005:30).

Markward (1999:58) states that social development is the ongoing socioeconomic process that involves the structural transformation of a society rather than simply the stimulation of economic growth. As such, the structural transformation of society means that all facets of society, including education, employment, and human services, must be changed to meet the needs of individuals in a particular society.

Lund (2008:138) articulates that social development is embedded in an idea of overall development that has as its goal the improved well-being of people, rather than economic growth itself; that it is decisively redistributive in addressing both poverty and inequality; that it recognizes the need for active state intervention; and that it is participatory, giving voice to all interest groups, but especially to the poor and marginalized – both as a way of consolidating democracy, and as a way of improving policies themselves.

In this study, the researcher concludes that social development is a process of social improvement incorporating all the levels of society’s needs, whether these are physical, economic or societal goals, and that the social and economic aspects reinforce each other and should be mutually integrated to address societal development; as such, social development is an essential approach to social welfare.

2.2.3 Developmental social welfare

Based on the discussion regarding the concepts social welfare and social development, Midgley and Tang (2001: 247) claim that “developmental welfare is concerned not only with increasing labour-market participation among welfare

clients but with a variety of interventions that foster economic participation and raise standards of living.”

In this regard Patel, Noyoo, Du Preez, and Triegaardt (2005:23) state that “developmental social welfare thus refers to the delivery of integrated and community-based social services, facilities, social investment programmes, and social assistance to promote social justice, build human capabilities, and enhance livelihoods and social functioning in order for people to lead productive and fulfilling lives.” This view is confirmed by Lombard (2008:162) who mentions that developmental social welfare goes across the range of services comprising social services delivery and that practitioners and researchers are endeavouring to shift to a developmental approach.

The researcher in the current study observed that the social work profession is working closely with the poor towards achieving the goals of developmental social welfare. In this regard Midgley and Tang (2001:247) describe developmental social work as “the practical and appropriate application of knowledge, skills, and values to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in their social context. It also involves the implementation of research and development of social policies that contribute to social justice and human development in a changing national and global context.”

From the statements made above, it can be ascertained that developmental social welfare is concerned with the rendering of social welfare services that enhance the social functioning and capacity of people within the delivery of comprehensive integrated services that link social and economic development. South African social welfare services have transformed over a period of time from curative, highly specialized services, to incorporate a social developmental perspective, community based services and socio-economic developmental programmes that aim to foster a developmental approach with the view of alleviating social ills and poverty.

Based on the discussion, it is clear that social welfare is the basket of services that is rendered to improve the quality of life, especially for the poor, and that social development is an approach to social welfare that aims to enhance people's well-being within the context of social and economic development. Authors such as Lombard (2008:159) affirm very clearly that a social developmental approach does not negate the other approaches, or minimize their effort to enhance people's wellbeing. It is also clear that developmental social welfare comprises of the use of a developmental approach as a model to deliver social welfare services.

In order to theoretically contextualize the social developmental approach in the South African context it is imperative to highlight the early approaches to social welfare, as discussed in the following section.

2.3 THEORETICAL APPROACHES ON SOCIAL WELFARE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Several authors (Midgley, 2001:271; Midgley & Tang, 2001: 244; Patel, 2005:3; Mkhwanazi & Triegaardt, 2003:49) agree that social welfare services in South Africa prior to 1994 were entrenched on the following two early theoretical approaches: the residual approach and the institutional approach. In order to have a clear understanding on the history of social welfare services in South Africa prior to 1994, it is thus crucial to discuss these two early approaches to social welfare.

2.3.1 The residual approach

According to Patel *et al.* (2005:4), "the residual approach to social welfare sees the family and the private market as the natural mechanisms for meeting needs. It was associated with minimal state intervention in the provision and financing of social welfare services and social security. If there is a breakdown in these natural systems of support then a third mechanism in the form of social welfare comes into being."

This proposition presumes that social welfare provision should be of a short-term, emergency nature and help people over a crisis period. Potgieter (1998:116) indicates that the residual model blames people's difficulties on their own mistakes and inadequacies. This is also exactly what traditional statutory services tend to do – they blame the parents and then remove their children from them (Nieuwoudt, Epprecht, Matlakala, Moremi, Muller, Raganya, Rich & Timm, 2001:6).

Mkhwanazi and Triegaardt (2003:50) mention that “the notion that social work had clinical, nurturing, therapeutic, and caring functions reinforced the perception that social work is rehabilitative and confined within the residual model.” They further note that in South Africa, the focus of the social work practice has been largely on service delivery and statutory work. Social work practice focused primarily on the individual, making it casework oriented. An approved social work post was based on the number of cases that a social worker had on the caseload, and not on the quality of interventions.

It seems thus as if the residual approach to social work intervention alone has lead to client dependency. This approach was not developmental in nature and its intervention was reactive, not proactive, and tended to neglect the utilization of prevention programmes. Matthias (2004:172) and Potgieter (1998:116) concur with this by stating that the residual model blames people's difficulties on their own mistakes and inadequacies, for example, the services rendered were remedial in nature, providing protection to children once abuse has already taken place.

2.3.2 Institutional approach

Patel (2005:23) mentions that “in contrast to the residual approach, which recommended minimal state intervention, the institutional approach urges the extensive involvement of state in all aspects of social welfare”, and further “the state's role in social welfare provision is substantial in the institutional approach,

interventionism is seen as a necessary step in meeting needs in modern industrial society.”

In a nutshell, the residual model isolates the individual who has a problem from his/her environment as it suggests that the cause and solution for problems lie within the individual, while the institutional model reflects the belief that the individual is a member of society and therefore, the environment contributes to his/her difficulties, as it states that these are due to causes largely beyond his/her control. The residual model favours “limited and selective state intervention, a high degree of personal responsibility, the extensive involvement of non-profit organization, and the full utilization of the market”, while the institutional model favours “large scale state intervention, collective involvement, universal of coverage and long term provision” (Midgley, 1999:2; Lombard, 1996:164).

With the introduction of the new dispensation in South Africa, the limitations of both the residual and the institutional model were exposed. Both models were found to be focusing only on the treatment approach to service delivery as they both utilised the medical model and thus both models were found to be inadequate in addressing needs of communities, specifically poverty alleviation. Lund (2008:138-152) highlights the need for change in service delivery in South Africa, as she notes that:

In the last decade before the political transition in South Africa, a stream of energy focused on forging a different vision of welfare. This was a welfare which was politicized, in the sense that it was drawn from grassroots organizations, had an analysis of political economy, had a theory of causes of inequality, located social problems in structures as well as in individual, and was about material redistribution. It found its way, after extensive consultation, into the White Paper for Social Welfare, and then into the official adoption of the idea of developmental social welfare.

In order to fully understand the new paradigm in social welfare, the following section will focus on a theoretical discussion of the social developmental approach.

2.3.3 Social development approach

The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:7) clearly states that the welfare system must devise appropriate and integrated strategies to address the alienation and the economic and social marginalization of vast sectors of the population, who are living in poverty, are vulnerable, and have special needs. This includes the people who did not have access to social services.

Midgley (2001:2) maintains that the social development approach seeks to link economic and social policies and to promote social welfare, also known as social development, within the framework of a planned dynamic, ongoing process of economic development. Midgley (2001:2) further described this approach as transcending the residualist-institutional debates that have characterized social policy thinking for decades and offered a new perspective that may facilitate a renewed basis for state intervention in social welfare.

The value of such a new perspective is highlighted by Castells (1998:14), who states that “social development leads to cultural development, which leads to innovation, which leads to economic development, which in turn fosters institutional stability and trust; and this underlies a new, synergistic model that integrates economic growth and the enhancement of quality of life”. This is confirmed by Patel *et al.* (2005:7) who mention that “the proponents of social development argue that social investments in social programmes that enhance people’s welfare through their participation in the productive economy is the most effective way of enhancing people’s welfare and achieving economic development.”

It is thus clear that the developmental model of social welfare is distinguished from other approaches for promoting social welfare by its effort to purposefully link social interventions to a dynamic process of economic development. A developmental model takes on a broader connotation compared to previous models because of its focus on socio-economic process and context.

“The integration of economic and social objectives is thus the key elements of social development” (Lombard, 2003:2). However, Macdonald (1998:97) postulates that the underlying assumption is that economic development is not an end in itself but must be interpreted as a means to improve the quality of life and to offer better opportunities to people living on the outside of the mainstream of society. This is supported by Midgley and Tang (2001:246), who emphasize that “social development cannot take place without economic development, and economic development is meaningless if it fails to bring about significant improvements in the well-being of the population as a whole.” It is thus true what Naude and Jansen van Rensburg (2002:9) said: “when a community thus follows this approach, economic development serves the larger goal of human development.”

Midgley and Tang (2001:246) and Patel (2005:29) highlight that this approach requires purposeful intervention from state and non-state actors and the creation of organizational and institutional arrangements at national level that harmonise economic and social policies within a comprehensive commitment to people-centred development.

According to Midgley and Tang (2001:244) “the notion of developmental welfare is rooted in vintage beliefs about social progress, the desirability of change and the prospect of social improvement.” They further state that “the notion of developmental social welfare challenges the neo-liberal claim that social welfare is incompatible with economic development. It offers an opportunity to integrate economic and social policy considerations in ways that reassert social policy’s traditional commitments. Its central premises, which is based on the need to integrate economic and social policy, posits that social expenditures in the form of social investments do not detract from but contribute positively to economic development” (Midgley & Tang, 2001:246).

In this regard Patel (2005:28) mentions that the goals and principles of a social developmental approach emphasise social and economic justice, democratization, transformation of societal institutions and empowerment of the

oppressed and marginalized. Patel (2005:28) further states that social development is essentially a people-centred approach to development that promotes citizen participation and strengthens the voice of poor people in decision-making and in building democratic and accountable institutions.

Social development thus advocates the belief that a closer integration of economic and social policies can enhance the welfare of all. To achieve the goal of social development, Midgley and Tang (2001:246) proposed the adoption of three primary axioms, namely:

- Creating organisational arrangements at the national level;
- harmonizing economic and social policies within a comprehensive commitment to sustainable and people-centred development; and
- economic and social-service agencies working more closely together within a unified development framework.

By implementing the above mentioned axioms social progress can be stimulated and the goal of a social developmental approach can be achieved. This is confirmed by several authors (*White Paper for Social Welfare*, 1997:96; Midgley, 1999:3-21; Lombard, 2003: 224-239; Green & Nieman, 2003:161) who agree that a social development approach focuses on the sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual, family, community and society at large and that the reduction or eradication of mass poverty, inequality and conditions of underdevelopment are widely accepted indicators of social progress.

It is thus clear; in order to achieve social progress the social development approach advocates the integration of both social and economic aspects. As such the social developmental approach has the potential to stimulate social progress because as Midgley and Tang (2001:247) note, “the following elements underpin a social developmental approach: investment in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development, micro enterprises, social investment and promotion of the productive capacities of people”.

This is supported by Patel (2005:30) and Midgley (1999:8) who note that the integration between economic and social development can best be achieved through macroeconomic policies that promote employment, foster social inclusion of people in the development process through employment and self-employment, as well as raising the standards of living of the poor and the unemployed. Patel (2005:30) further states that human well-being is about the development of people and that the achievement of human well-being is the goal of social development. The above can be achieved by investment in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development, social capital development and micro enterprises. Carrilio (2007:528) indicates that social workers are uniquely equipped to address forces contributing to social and economic injustice as well as to more personalized, specific needs of communities. Social work's focus on well-being and dual remedial and developmental functions place it in a unique position to play a role in international development work.

Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-269), as well as Lombard (2003: 211), highlight the important role of the person who seeks a service as a participant in the service delivery, as they point out that social development is an approach which invests in human, social and economic capital. Human development is closely linked to education and investment in human capacity through skills training and education. Social capital is used to connote the creation of strong bonds of community reciprocity and the strengthening of social relationships, and the creation of social infrastructure.

What can be drawn from the above discussions is that Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-263), Midgley and Tang (2001:247), Lombard, (2003: 211) and Patel (2005:30) all confirm that social development can best be achieved through programmes and policies that will foster human capital development, foster social inclusion of people in the development process, invest in human capacity through skills training and education, and invest in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development,

as human capital development and economic development are linked in a significant way.

In a nutshell then, the researcher in this study interprets the definitions of social development by several authors (Midgley, 1995:26-27; Midgley & Tang, 2001:244-253; Patel 2005:207) which highlight the following key characteristics of a social developmental approach:

- it is linked to economic development;
- it has an interdisciplinary focus;
- it is progressive in nature;
- it utilises various strategies;
- it is inclusive or universal in scope; and
- its goal is the promotion of social welfare.

Based on the above theoretical contextualisation of the social developmental approach, it can be deduced that the social developmental approach is a pro-poor approach and should be adopted by any country that needs to advance the welfare of its citizens. However, in order to understand the essence of the social developmental approach it is important to look at the historical development of the approach in the South African context. The following section will thus focus on the history of the social developmental perspective in the South African context.

2.4 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In order to understand the social developmental approach to social welfare in the South African context, the focus of this section will be on: (1) the history of social development in South Africa, and (2) the different themes embedded in the social developmental approach.

2.4.1 History of the social development approach in South Africa

According to Patel (2005:98) the developmental approach to social welfare evolved from South Africa's unique history of inequality and the violation of human rights as a result of colonialism and apartheid. She further states that this history, experience, and meaning of oppression for the majority of South Africans together with a long tradition of human agency and social action to change these conditions shaped the construction of the new society.

In support of the above view Patel *et al.* (2005:16) postulate the following:

Social welfare thinking and practice was infused with the notions of transformation and human emancipation and an acknowledgement that reconciliation and healing the divisions of the past was critical to building a united South Africa based on democratic values, social justice and human rights. These ideas are enshrined in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996) and the subsequent adoption of policy and legislation to reflect the vision and values of the new society.

Osei-Hwedie (2007:106-116) concurs with Patel (2005) by stating that in South Africa the social developmental approach has ushered in an ideology emphasising the equality of all people, social justice, human rights, access to services, opportunity and resources and, more importantly, a new and concerted drive towards poverty reduction. It is the researcher's opinion that in South Africa the transition to majority rule in 1994 brought with it expectations and demands by the voting public; improved social services among others. Furthermore, the involvement of the South African Government in the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 helped to popularise the need for incorporating a developmental paradigm to social welfare practice and social policies.

The World Summit for Social Development (1995) resulted in the formulation of a programme of action, which set a goal aimed to reduce poverty by 2015. The Copenhagen Declaration and its accompanying Programme of Action comprise an extensive and diverse range of agreements about the key goals which must be pursued in order to enhance social development, along with agreements on

detailed methods for achieving those goals (International Council on Social Welfare, 2000:1-20). A study aimed at evaluating progress towards achieving the set goals is thus necessary. The current study is but part of the process of meeting the goals of the World Summit (1995).

Lombard (2003:226) highlights that the Copenhagen Social Development Summit (1995) signalled the fact that development needed to address the needs of the poorest of the poor and to include them, not only among the priority beneficiaries of developmental programmes, but also as full participants in the twin process of socio-economic development design and delivery and political decision-making. According to the researcher it is based on the above principles that the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) advocated for the inclusion of people into the whole spectrum of a developmental framework to social welfare.

In South Africa, commitment to a switch to the developmental approach with the view of alleviating social ills and poverty is evident in the *White Paper on Reconstruction and Development* (1994) and the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997). These policy documents introduced a developmental approach to social welfare.

The *White Paper on Reconstruction and Development* (1994) sets out the government's strategy for transformation which includes five key policy objectives, namely the provision of basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, the democratization of the state and society, and the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development program (RDP). The RDP advocated the idea of developmental social welfare and set out preliminary proposals, which were widely supported by the social welfare sector. According to Patel (2005:11) it paved the way for the further development of social welfare policy in South Africa. It is against this background that the Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development was established in 1994 and welfare policy and strategy was developed and implemented. For the first time in South Africa's

history a separate Ministry for social welfare was created, as social welfare was historically part of the health portfolio (Patel *et al.*, 2005:7).

Flowing from the *Reconstruction and Development Policy* (1994), the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:7) elaborated on this developmental approach by indicating that the purpose of the policy was to chart a new path for social welfare in the promotion of national social development. The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:11) also proposed the transformation of social services from fragmented, specialised services, to one that is more developmental.

The White Paper for Social Welfare was compiled with the participation of key stakeholders in the welfare field. The purpose of the policy was to chart a new path for social welfare in the promotion of a developmental perspective in the social welfare programmes. The *White Paper for Social Welfare* contains the approach and strategies that inform the restructuring of services and social welfare programmes in both the public and the private sectors towards a developmental perspective. This policy document also clearly describes the principles of a social development approach and it gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:2).

Other important policy documents that gave further effect to the social development approach are: the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005) and the *Integrated Service Delivery Model* (ISDM) (Department of Social Development, 2006). The *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005) is one of the important policy documents that helped to established a social development delivery framework, which includes prevention, early intervention, statutory processes, and a continuum of care, and developmental services, and as such challenged social workers to adopt and implement a developmental approach to all social work interventions.

To achieve the required transformation, the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005:9-12) was intended to be a tool for transforming the traditional welfare sector by changing the manner in which welfare organisations were funded. The policy indicated that the financing of welfare services should create an environment in which the paradigm shift towards a developmental approach could be made and should ensure that transformation shifts are consciously supported and encouraged through the financing policy and mechanisms.

Flowing from the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005), the *Integrated Service Delivery Model* (Department of Social Development, 2006) “provided a national framework that clearly determines the nature, scope, extent and level of work that constitutes the service delivery model for developmental social services and also provide a basis for determining appropriate norms and standards for service delivery” (Lombard, 2007:295-299).

Although these policies are commendable and aim to facilitate the transformation of social services delivery toward the social developmental approach in South Africa, it is the researcher’s opinion that they can only be effective if there are practical guidelines to steer the implementation of the social developmental approach in practise. Currently however, there are no practical guidelines to stimulate the implementation of the social developmental approach. Guidelines to implement the developmental approach to social welfare should thus be formulated within the theoretical framework of social development.

2.5 THEMES EMBEDDED IN A DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WELFARE APPROACH IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

According to the researcher the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA, Act 108 of 1996) has incorporated a social developmental approach into its mandate as reflected in the following themes: a rights-based approach, the

inter-relations between social and economic development, democracy, participation in development, social welfare pluralism, and reconciling the macro-micro divide in developmental social welfare theory and practice. These themes form the basis of a developmental approach in South Africa, and therefore it is important to highlight each indicator in detail in the following section.

2.5.1 A rights-based approach

The developmental perspective to social welfare in South Africa is firmly rooted in a rights-based approach. “Its 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 most disadvantaged in the society” (Patel, 2005:98).

The *Constitution of the Republic South Africa* (RSA, Act No108 of 1996:76) guarantees all citizens the right to dignity as one of its central values and connotes the inherent worth of the human and his/her humanity. The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:9) states that social welfare services and programmes will be based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as articulated in the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (RSA, Act No 108/1996). The researcher in this study maintains that the South African social welfare services are rooted in the rights-based approach by emphasizing social justice, a minimum standard of living, equal opportunity, and equal access to all social services.

2.5.2 Interrelations between social and economic development

Patel (2005:102) highlights a second theme undergirding the policy framework set by the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) that relates to the interrelation between economic and social development. She notes that the welfare of the population

will not automatically be enhanced by economic growth only. Development must be accompanied by redistribution through social investment in key social sectors

that can make a significant contribution to human and social capital and can improve the human development status of majority of the population.

Patel (2008:192-211) states that essentially, developmental welfare is a pro-poor approach that promotes people-centred development, social investments in human capabilities and building of social capital. Community economic development starts by getting people involved at the grass roots level. In this regard Lombard (2003:231) emphasises that community economic development tends to be project focused and is relevant for entrepreneurship in the African context, since it is not primarily about economic development in the conventional sense of stimulating the growth of private enterprises. In community economic development there is a link between social and economic development, the tradition of mobilisation and advocacy for social change, and building of alternative community institutions.

Lombard (2003:231) points out that social workers are well-trained in these community development practices. It is therefore not difficult, although it is challenging, to shift community work practice to community economic development. She further states that social workers are faced with the daily challenge of alleviating poverty. Within an integrated sustainable entrepreneurial strategy to alleviate poverty, the social welfare sector can embark on the entrepreneurial road by facilitating community economic development. In support of social workers' capacity to facilitate community economic development, current social work training programmes provide training in entrepreneurship and business management.

Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-263) mention that social development policy sees welfare as an investment in human capital. Human capital development and economic development are linked in a significant way. Economic development is not possible without development of human resources and without social development. It is therefore imperative to note that social workers can and

already do play a major role in poor communities with regard to micro and small enterprises. However, social workers will always be responsible for delivering social services to the vulnerable in society and, whilst the profession's traditional association with food security and social grants remains, social workers are challenged to promote social development actively (Lombard, 2003:225).

2.5.3 Democracy and participation

Democracy and participation in social and economic development is a key premise of the developmental approach to social welfare in South Africa (Patel, 2005:105; van Breda & du Plessis, 2009:330).

In the *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) (1994), as well as the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) the notion of participation and democracy to promote social development is also introduced. In this regard Patel (2005:105) notes that social welfare policy states that welfare and development constituencies must be consulted in decisions that affect them and that citizen participation in development is critical to ensure accountability by government and civil society for their actions. It also incorporates the concept of citizen participation in service delivery as partners in meeting human needs.

According to the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997:9) appropriate and effective mechanisms will be created to promote the participation of the public and welfare constituencies in decision making about welfare policies and programmes which affect them. This is evident through the development of social welfare policies.

In this regard Ascroft and Hristodoulakis (1999:17) confirm that “people designated as beneficiaries of development initiatives in health or industry have a right to participate in decision-making on all aspects of the initiatives. Methods such as sample survey, focus groups, case study can be used as techniques for effectuating the principle of participation. Participation as an institutionalized behaviour was assumed to raise the level of commitment by the beneficiaries thus encouraging them to seek ways and means to sustain the project.”

According to the researcher it is clear that participation in development focuses on active citizenship and civil engagement in achieving human development. This idea is confirmed by different authors in different ways, for instance Potgieter (1998:41) highlights that in the process of participation, life skills of people must be developed to empower people. This would include skills to participate in national debates, organize for social justice, and demonstrate on behalf of themselves.

Gathiram (2005:45) mention that “the importance of conscientisation in the participation process is critical”. She defined conscientisation as “a process through which people achieve awareness of socio-economic, cultural, and political realities which shape their lives”. Midgley and Sherraden (2000:437) adds by saying that “the social development approach sees social policies and programmes as tools to enhance the capacities of the needy people to participate in the productive economy”, while Mashologu-Kuse (2005:378-387) agrees by stating that “the development approach specifically targets the poorest and the most disadvantaged, the least powerful and the most vulnerable”. She emphasizes grassroots participation, focuses on small activities, and involves local people in the designing, implementation, and management of social development projects.

Through participation as a key premise of the social developmental approach, the empowerment and capacity of people can be enhanced. This is confirmed by Eade (1997:32) and more specifically by Mashologu-Kuse (2005:378-387) who notes that the thrust of the developmental approach is to promote the well-being of individuals and families so that they can experience change in their lives and become self-sufficient through empowerment and capacity building.

According to McKendrick (2001:109) the objectives of the social work profession have been to empower people. Empowerment is achieved through a combination of personal and social development processes that give power to people, recognizing them as fellow citizens with equal rights to education, employment, and full participation in the mainstream culture. Gathiram (2005:124) agrees and

emphasizes that empowerment is central to development and should be the ultimate objective of all poverty-alleviation programmes. As such, empowerment is defined as a process that involves changing power relations between individuals, groups, and social institutions. It implies a process of personal change as individuals take action on their own behalf and then redefine their understanding of the world in which they live.

The researcher in this study concludes that it is clear that without empowerment and capacity building everything that happens in the name of development is bound to be unsustainable. The social development approach empowers people and enables them to become more self reliant and improve their quality of life.

2.5.4 Social welfare pluralism

According to Patel (2005:107) social welfare pluralism is informed by the partnership model of social provision between individuals, groups, communities, civil society, donors, development agencies, and the private and public sector. She further states that social development advocates a key role for the state in promoting development and equity in a collaborative partnership and that the meeting of human needs is a national collective responsibility. This implies a pluralistic approach which involves the state, civil society (including the private sector), individuals, families and communities. In view of resource constraints and the neglect of basic needs over years, government, civil society, corporate social investment and occupational social service programmes should be provided through a collaborative partnership.

The researcher has observed that strong partnerships depend on partners and role players understanding their roles and contributions related to their specific field of expertise or experience. Lombard (2010:nd) is of the opinion that there should be clear role demarcation and job description in respective practice scenarios for role players such as community developers, community liaison officers, community workers, social development workers, social workers and volunteers. Each role player or partner should engage in the team based on

his/her strength to contribute to service delivery. A human resource strategy is thus an important component of integrated developmental social welfare services. Patel (2005:108) alluded to this by stating that social welfare pluralism consist of four sectors: government, voluntary non-government organisations, informal sectors such as the family and other social networks, and commercial sectors through which social provision could be financed and delivered.

2.5.5 Macro-micro divides in developmental social welfare theory and practice

In terms of this theme, Patel (2005:110) notes that the national policy was formulated to bridge the divide that has existed historically in the social work and social services professions between micro interventions, on the one hand, and mezzo and macro intervention, on the other hand. This dichotomy between micro interventions targeted structures and institutions of society that discriminated against people and provided services only to a minimal number of people thus causing social economic injustice to others. Social development must transcend this dichotomy and enhance individual, family, community empowerment and development. It must build on the strength of all those it purports to serve and meet their needs in a contextually appropriate manner; one, in other words, that recognizes the diversity and dignity of all people.

It is clear that in order to bridge the micro divide there should be a balance in terms of development, prevention, protective and rehabilitative interventions. Social work profession must focus on empowering individuals and families by using generic social welfare interventions, community based services and integrated generalized practice interventions that do not negate other approaches, but focus on integrating the approaches toward the delivering of developmental social welfare services and social developmental goals.

From the above historical and thematic discussion of the social developmental approach in South Africa it can be deduced that the shift of social welfare towards a developmental paradigm is based on constitutional and policy

mandates. How the developmental paradigm materializes in social welfare services will be discussed in the following section.

2.5.6 Developmental social welfare services

Patel (2005:154) highlights that the new direction for developmental welfare services requires a shift in the paradigm of welfare services delivery from a social treatment model to a developmental service delivery model. She further states that the new developmental model of welfare services breaks away significantly from the remedial services delivery model of the past and posits a completely new paradigm and path for welfare services in a democratic society.

This new developmental welfare services delivery model has the following features:

- rights-based welfare services delivery model;
- integrated family-centred and community-based services;
- generalist approach to service delivery; and
- community development and developmental services (Patel, 2005:156).

It is on the opinion of the researcher that the new developmental social welfare services model implies thus that developmental social work must also make a shift from the traditional individualistic, remedial approaches to a developmental mandate, as specified by the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (Act 108 of 1996) and other policy documents.

According to Midgley and Tang (2001:247), “developmental social work is the practical and appropriate application of knowledge, skills and values to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities in their social context. It also involves the implementation of research and development of social policies that contribute to social justice and human development in a changing national and global context”. Adding to this description Sewpaul and Rollins (1999:250-263) mention that “developmental

social work, serves to operationalise the principles and values of social development and thus refers to skills; roles; models and intervention strategies that further the goals of social development.”

“As such, social development thus offers a comprehensive approach to social welfare that is universalistic, interventionist and committed to progressive social change” (Midgely & Tang, 2001:247). In this regard Green and Nieman (2003:161) note that “social development provides an obvious choice to combat many of the socio-economic problems confronting the majority of social work clients and communities.” They maintain that social work is the largest profession that works within the social development sector. Woods (1999:209-221) confirms this by stating that South African social work is now as a whole in an excellent position to ‘participate in change’ and clearly locates itself within social development. The researcher observed that although social work practice locates itself within the development paradigm, the implementation of this new approach to social welfare poses some challenges in practice. Lombard (2003:225) agrees with the above by stating that social workers will always be responsible for delivering social services to the vulnerable in society and, whilst the profession’s traditional association with food security and social grants remains, social workers are challenged to promote social development actively.

The researcher endorses this view point and maintains that despite the lagging behind of the welfare sector to deliver on its constitutional mandate based on the social development perspective, the South African government has come a long way in addressing societal ills by encompassing the development approach into its policy documents. The most recent development in this regard is the formulation of the so-called Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM) (Department of Social Development, 2006) to improve service delivery which has created a new dawn in the delivery of welfare services based on a social development approach to welfare.

Lombard (2007:297) states that the Integrated Service Delivery Model (Department of Social Development, 2006) provides a national framework that

clearly determines the nature, scope, extent and level of work that constitutes the service delivery model for developmental social services. She further states that the ISDM is one of a series of interrelated documents that give effect to the implementation of the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997), including the *Policy on Financial Awards to service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005). In practice it seems, however, that the implementation of policies is a challenge and is lagging behind. In this regard Gray (1997:360) notes that: “a critical examination of current social work roles, programmes, services and policies is necessary. Social workers should become shapers of policies. They should become more active in translating policy into services. In this way the social workers will play a more successful role in addressing the needs of people”. In this regard Rankin (1997:189) claims that a paradigm shift is needed to make social workers more receptive towards developmental work.

The idea of a paradigm shift is endorsed by Lombard (2007:295) who mentions that despite having adopted a developmental approach to service delivery, the social welfare sector’s progress in delivery on its developmental mandate is lagging behind. She further emphasizes that the lack of proper guidelines as to how social welfare should achieve social development goals was an even bigger obstacle. There are no specific guidelines as to how integrated developmental social services and social development would be achieved. Makhaphela (2007), however, noted that “although the Department has changed its name to the Department of Social Development, the structures and systems have not yet conformed to a developmental perspective.”

At this stage it thus seems crucial to examine the strategies that can be used to implement a social developmental approach to social welfare.

2.6 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING A SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

According to Midgely (1995) in Lombard (2003:225) there are three strategies that may be applied by the social work profession to achieve development in implementing a social developmental approach, i.e. individualistic, communitarian and government strategies. Each strategy will be briefly discussed.

2.6.1 Individualistic strategy

According to Lombard (2003:230) the individual or enterprise approach to social development is embedded in the belief that the welfare of the society is enhanced when individuals strive to promote their own welfare. Within this strategy, the social worker can facilitate a process whereby individuals and families can become self-reliant and participate effectively in the market. This could be achieved through advancing the capabilities of disadvantaged communities, households and individuals by improving their access to assets, both physical and social.

“The individualistic or enterprise strategy focuses on individuals and proponents of this approach believe that small enterprises will lead to the growth of the economy and provide excellent opportunities for the poor to engage in productive economic activities” (Lombard, 2003:230). The economic focus of the individualistic approach is thus essential in eradicating poverty in the individual and family context.

However, the individualistic approach does not only focus on the economic aspects, but it also emphasizes that individuals are participants in the developmental process. This is confirmed by Potgieter (1998:120) who postulates that the developmental model does not focus on a particular system, but sees individuals, married couples, families, small groups, organizations and communities as the vehicle for change. He further notes that the social developmental approach does not limit itself to a particular method but sees the

helping process as a partnership that seeks to attain specific objectives through the utilization of one or a combination of strategies.

Therefore, according to Sturgeon (1998:25), when individuals' issues are dealt with using the method of casework, "casework should not be done in isolation, but needs to form part of integrated practice methods." This is supported by Lombard (2005:209-228) who notes that integrated social services do not mean that services can be provided in one area at the cost of service delivery in another. A holistic balance needs to be found according to the needs of the targeted groups for social services.

2.6.2 Communitarian strategy

"The underlying principle for a communitarian strategy to social development is that social development can best be promoted by people themselves working together harmoniously within their local community" (Lombard, 2003:230). Lombard further states that the African entrepreneurial route to micro- and small enterprises in a community is achieved through a project. Social workers can engage the communities in projects that will create employment and small enterprises.

2.6.3 Government strategy

Midgley (1995:125) argues that the state embodies the interest of society as a whole and that it has the responsibility to promote the well-being of all citizens. Government can practice social development by means of mobilizing resources, formulating social development policies and ensuring the implementation thereof. Government can also ensure that social and economic policies are harmonized. This is confirmed by Midgley and Sherraden (2000:437) when they postulate "that it must be stressed that social development does require state involvement and public expenditure. It does not merely urge social welfare clients to become economically productive but insists that adequate investments are made to ensure that these clients have skills, knowledge, resources, opportunities,

incentives, and subsidies to participate effectively in the productive economy. It is also stressed that government actions should be combined with individual and community efforts to enhance economic participation”.

In order to be successful in implementing these strategies, Lombard (2007:299) emphasizes that social development needs to be clearly distinguished as (1) an ultimate (end) goal of development activities; and (2) as an appropriate approach to social welfare and thus an intervention strategy that incorporates social and economic processes to achieve social development as its ultimate goal. As such, social development cuts across many government departments’ responsibilities.

“Sustainable development can thus function as a unifying concept in community practice because it has the potential to connect local and global issues, focus on protecting both the physical environment and human population, impose a long-term view of the consequences of present-day activities, serve the goals of social justice and gender equity, and integrate social and economic development” (Gamble & Varma, 1999:47).

However, it has been observed in practice that although the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) provided a policy framework to incorporate developmental focus to service delivery and advocate for sustainable development, the implementation of the policy in practice is a huge challenge. The following section will allude to the challenges regarding the implementation of a social developmental approach.

2.7 CHALLENGES REGARDING A SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

A number of researchers explain that in principle, the South African Government is facilitating the implementation of the social developmental approach. Patel (2003:6) points out that there has been a significant shift in political commitment to social welfare with a focus on pro-poor policies which need to be maintained based on the social development approach. She further explains that a separate ministry was established, a national consensus was reached on the direction of

future policy and a range of policies, and legislation have been developed involving all parties. In this regard Lombard (2007:295) states that the democratic government of South Africa has adopted a developmental framework and is aspiring to be a developmental state. Woods (1999:209-221) mentions that the democratic elected government has committed itself to a developmental social welfare strategy that provides the basic policy guidelines for social work practice in the state and civil society sectors. This is further confirmed by Davids (2007) who notes that the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) charts a new approach in the delivery of social welfare services. The researcher, however, notes that there is a problem that emanates from the fact that although the policies that govern service delivery within the Department of Social Development have encompassed the principles of a social development approach, there is no action plan on how to implement the new approach. The challenge thus remains that the social workers do not think that they can utilise a developmental approach over the whole spectrum of service delivery. The existence of this problem is highlighted by Lombard (2007:295) who mentions that despite having adopted a developmental approach to service delivery, the social welfare sector's progress in delivering on its developmental mandate is lagging behind.

Lombard (2007:295) highlights that one of the challenges to welfare services was that whilst the government was bridging the gap between the rich and the poor by investing more money in social security at the expense of social welfare services delivery and the achievement of social development goals, there was no exit level planned for social grants and as a result the government did not fully deliver on its developmental goals. Lombard (2007) refers to the then Deputy Minister of Social Development, Jean Benjamin, who expressed this neglect during 2005 as follows: "the intensive social security focus has been to the detriment of other developmental social services" (Department of Social Development, 2005a:1). She further alluded that "this neglect has led to, among other things, deepening poverty, poor developed protection services and an increase in social pathologies" (Department of Social Development, 2006:5).

Lombard (2007:296) also refers to the lack of proper guidelines as to how social welfare should achieve social development goals as a bigger obstacle. She states that besides the broad social welfare policy framework of the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) and the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Developmental of Social Development, 2005) there were no specific guidelines as to how integrated developmental social services and social development would be achieved. It is, therefore, clear that the implementation of the developmental approach has brought many challenges to the social work profession. According to Green and Nieman (2003:164), it is essential that changes should be made in behaviour, procedures and practices to meet the requirements to perform social development functions successfully. Patel's (2003:230) study on a perspective on the transformation of social welfare for the period 1994 to 2002 confirms the above mentioned challenges. Based on her findings, she reported the following:

- There was clearly a need for an integrated automated welfare information system;
- a monitoring and evaluation system and empirical research were needed to assess implementation, and
- there was no comprehensive legislation to guide the implementation of the developmental approach to social welfare delivery.

Midgley (2001:267-275) points out that the lack of well prepared professional and administrative personnel presented a serious challenge to the success of the Department's developmental welfare strategy. He stresses that it is important that the Department of Welfare redouble its efforts to translate its commitment to developmental social welfare into practice and that the continued association of developmental welfare with conventional remedial and maintenance social services presents a challenge that still needs to be met not only in South Africa, but in other countries as well.

According to Green and Nieman (2003:178), “development is a process and not a ‘quick fix’ for needy individuals, groups, and communities; it requires thorough planning, monitoring, and evaluation. The willingness to learn new and different ways, to act in new and different ways, and also the willingness to unlearn can add to building capacity, skills and knowledge.”

Noyoo and Mamphiswana (2003:78) indicate that “social development is not a linear and predictable process which can be understood by a supposedly casual input-output-impact relationship. Programmes and projects are the basic instruments of the development intervention but we cannot base the evaluation of social development merely upon their supposed outcomes and impact.” They further point out that social development has to be understood more broadly and hence explanations of its outcomes and impact have to employ a number of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and not merely seek to measure direct programme and project outcomes. They further urge that there are several reasons why evaluation of the implementation of social developmental programmes needs to be undertaken:

- To judge the worth of ongoing programmes
- To estimate the usefulness of attempts to improve programmes
- To increase the effectiveness of management and administration of programmes
- To delay a decision
- To justify and legitimize already made decisions
- To vindicate the programme/project in the eyes of its constituencies

Noyoo (2005:12) elaborates by mentioning that the monitoring and evaluation of development activities provide government officials, development managers and civil society with better means of learning from past experiences, improving service delivery, planning and allocating resources and demonstrating results as part of accountability to key stakeholders. It will provide direct feedback and help

both policy makers and practitioners to arrive at effective and efficient projects that yield better results.

It is in the view of the researcher that monitoring and evaluation can be used as a tool for developmental social welfare to measure whether the programmes are reaching the intended beneficiaries, if resources are being used efficiently and if the programmes or services can be improved to achieve intended outcomes. It is therefore of immense importance for social workers to integrate the tools of monitoring and evaluation in the projects and programmes that aimed to deliver on the goals of social development.

Evaluation can be used with multiple purposes; for instance it can be used to increase knowledge both about social problems and about the ways in which human service programmes address problems.

As discussed, it is clear that the social work profession still faces some challenges in terms of the delivery of developmental social welfare goals. It was observed in practice that challenges such as lack of proper development guidelines, the lack of action plan for the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) and the lack of exit plans from social grants have contributed to the social workers thinking that they cannot utilise a developmental approach over the whole spectrum of service delivery. This has hindered the process of implementing the developmental approach to social welfare services; therefore the Department of Social Development needs to redouble its efforts to translate its commitment to developmental social welfare into practice.

2.8 CONCLUSION

South Africa has embraced the developmental approach to social welfare. This discursive shift is enshrined, most pertinently, in the 1997 *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) which forged a vision for developmental welfare in the South African context. The social development approach is seen as a significant tool for poverty alleviation

and for building people's capabilities to achieve self sufficiency. In the last 10 years after the adoption of the approach it appears that now, more than ever before, the welfare organisations have developed far greater conceptual clarity about the relationship between welfare and development, and about what constituted a developmental approach and the implications of this approach to service delivery. However, there are still challenges linked to the implementation of this approach in practice.

Given the discussions around literature conceptualisation the following section will highlight the empirical research findings.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) has been credited with providing a paradigm shift from remedial to developmental social welfare services. The aim is to bring about sustained improvements in the well-being of individual, family, community and society at large. Social workers are thus called to implement the goals of developmental social welfare. McKendrick (2001:108) postulates that social workers are uniquely qualified to make an effective contribution to developmental social welfare. He further refers specifically to social workers' well-developed skills in developmental group work, their community work expertise, proven ability to advocate, programme design, and evaluation skills. Their strength based perspective has put them in the best a position to incorporate and implement the new paradigm to social welfare. It is therefore of immense importance for the social work profession to be involved in the implementation of a social development approach to social welfare.

The main purpose of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret the research findings of this study. The research goal, objectives, question and methodology will be described, followed by a discussion of the empirical findings, which will be presented according to the identified themes.

The goal of this study was formulated as follows:

To explore the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.

In order to obtain the goal of the study, the following objectives were formulated:

Objective 1:

To conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare.

Objective 2:

To explore and describe social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice.

Objective 3:

To identify the challenges social workers are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice.

Objective 4:

To make recommendations, based on the research findings, to enhance the effective implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in social work.

From the above goal and objectives of the study, the following research question was formulated:

What are the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province?

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 Research approach

The research approach that was used for the study was a qualitative research approach.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003:5) explain qualitative research as “involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. It studies people in their natural

setting and interprets phenomenon in terms of meaning people attached to them.” Adding to this description, Fouché and Delport (2002:81) note that the purpose of qualitative research is to “construct detailed descriptions of social reality”. Yates (2004:138) states that “qualitative research explores how individual or group members give meaning to and express their understanding of themselves; their experiences and/or their worlds.”

Based on the above discussion, it could be construed that qualitative research seeks to explore and understand people’s feelings, experiences, lifestyle and perceptions. For the purpose of this study, the researcher was of the opinion that a qualitative research approach was the most appropriate approach, because the aim of the study was to investigate through focus group inquiry the social workers’ experiences about the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in practice.

3.2.2 Type of Research

“Applied research most often is the scientific planning of induced change in a troublesome situation” (Fouché & De Vos, 2005:105). Several authors (Babbie, 2004:24; Neumann, 2000:22; Fouché, 2002:108) agree that applied research tries to solve specific policy problems or help practitioners accomplish a task and it focuses on solving problems in practice.

In the present study applied research was adhered to, as the researcher’s goal was to contribute towards solving the problems encountered by social workers in implementing developmental social welfare approach in practice. In the context of the study the focus was on the practical problem regarding implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in practice and social workers’ experiences in this regard.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006:43) point out that “the goal of exploratory studies is to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research and attempt to look for new insights into phenomena.” Little was known about the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the current implementation of a

developmental social welfare approach; therefore, in the broader context of applied research, exploratory research was used to achieve this study's goal and objectives.

3.2.3 Research design

Kerlinger (in Kumar, 2005:84) defines a research design as a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as obtain answers to research questions or problems. It includes an outline of what the investigators will do, from formulating the hypotheses and their operational implications, to the final analysis of data.

Mouton (2001:55) states that the term 'design' refers to a plan or blueprint setting out how one intends to conduct a research project. Creswell (in Fouché, 2005:268) defines design in the qualitative context as the entire process of research, from conceptualising a problem to writing the narrative. Fouché (2005:268) adds that, in qualitative research, the researcher's choices and actions will determine the design or strategy. In the study, the research design was utilised as a plan of action in which the researcher outlines the procedures and logistics to be used to conduct the study and to collect data.

The case study design was utilised as the most appropriate qualitative research design. Creswell (in Fouché, 2005:272) defines a case study as an exploratory or in-depth analysis of a 'bounded system' bounded by time and/or place or single or multiple case, over a period of time. Trochim (2001:161) states that the case study is an intensive study of a specific individual or specific context. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:113) highlight the fact that a "case study method is an approach to studying a social phenomenon through a thorough analysis of an individual case. The case may be a person, group, episode, process, community, society or any other unit of social life."

In the context of the study a collective case study was used as the most appropriate design, as the researcher wanted to further her understanding of a "social issue", namely the implementation of the social developmental approach to social welfare services. Furthermore, the interest of the researcher was not in the experiences of

social workers as individuals, but in the collective experiences of a group of social workers. Mark (in Fouché, 2005:272) states that the collective case study furthers the understanding of the researcher about a social issue or population being studied. The interest in the individual case is secondary to the researcher's interest in a group of cases.

3.2.4 Data collection method

The researcher utilised focus group interviewing as a data collection method.

Greeff (2002:25) indicates that a focus group can be used when the researcher is looking for a range of ideas or feelings that people have about something. She maintains that a focus group can have six to ten participants, and further claims that the number of focus group meetings necessary for a particular study varies and depends on the research aim or purpose of the study. In this study, four groups consisting of 10 members each and one group consisting of nine members participated in discussions around issues that were stipulated in the interview schedule.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003:836), as well as Kumar (2005:23) focus group interviewing is a collective rather than an individualistic research method that focuses on the multivocality of participants' attitudes, experiences and beliefs.

Data that was collected with the aid of a tape recorder provided the researcher with an in-depth understanding of a number of viewpoints concerning a specific social issue. In this study multiple responses were essential to answer the research question, namely: what are the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach?

The researcher used focus group interviewing as method of data collection for the reasons listed below.

- A focus group has a well-planned focal point and agenda.

- The topic for discussion gives the researcher the opportunity for exploring the understanding, experiences, and range of ideas and feelings of social workers about developmental social welfare.
- Information gathered would be shared with experts and compared to findings of other authorities.

The respondents in the study were social workers within the Department of Social Development employed in the five regions in Gauteng Province. One focus group consisting of 10 respondents was planned to assemble in each region, with the result that the researcher planned five focus groups with 50 respondents in total.

The researcher aimed to gain as much information as possible from the respondents and therefore the respondents were allowed flexibility in terms of responding to the focus group questions. The focus group interview schedule contained five questions (See Appendix D). The sessions were audio taped and later transcribed. Field notes were written up directly after the group sessions as a verifying measure. The researcher also appointed an assistant facilitator who recorded and arranged for food and venues.

However, it is also important to mention that the researcher tested the data collection method by conducting a pilot study with one focus group (five respondents) who were not part of the main study. Focus group testing has enabled the researcher to test the effectiveness of apparatus such as tape recorders and specifically the questions in the focus group interview schedule. The focus group interview schedule was also refined in that the first question was added to have a follow up question that is: “what do you understand about developmental social welfare approach” (see appendix D). These recommended changes from the pilot study made utilization of the instrument in the main study much more effective.

3.2.5 Description of the research population, sample and sampling method

3.2.5.1 Research universe and research population

Arkava and Lane (in Strydom & Venter, 2002: 198) draw a distinction between the two terms 'universe' and 'population'. They state that 'universe' refers to "the potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher is interested and the population on the other hand, is the term that sets boundaries on the study units. It refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics."

With regard to this research study, the universe was all the social workers in South Africa employed by the Department of Social Development. This universe possessed attributes in which the researcher was interested, as they are responsible for the implementation of a social developmental approach in the delivery of social welfare services.

The population in this study was all the social workers employed in the Department of Social Development in the Gauteng Province in the following five regions:

- Sedibeng Region
- North Rand Region
- Johannesburg Region;
- Ekurhuleni Region
- West Rand Region

According to the Human Resource Unit in the Department of Social Development, in the Gauteng Province there were 699 social workers in total employed by the Department at the time when sampling was conducted.

3.2.5.2 Research sample and sampling method

Strydom (2005:194) describes a sample as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested. According to Kerlinger (1986), in Strydom

(2005:193), sampling means “taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe”. In the context of the study the researcher selected a sample of 10 respondents in each of the five regions in the Department of Social Development, Gauteng to form five different focus groups. A sample of 50 respondents was selected in total.

The researcher made use of a combination of stratified and systematic sampling to select the sample. In stratified random sampling the researcher stratified the population in such a way that the population within a stratum is homogeneous, with respect to the characteristics or the basis of which it is being stratified (Kumar, 2005:175). In the research study the strata was the 5 regions of the Department of Social Development in Gauteng Province. Strydom (2005:200) notes that this kind of sample is mainly used to ensure that the different groups or segments of a population acquire sufficient representation in the sample.

After the researcher divided the strata in terms of the regions, the systematic sampling method was utilised to select 10 participants (social workers) from each stratum. According to Strydom (2005: 200), only the first case is selected randomly from a random table in systematic sampling and all subsequent cases are selected according to a particular interval depending on the percentage of sample needed. In the study the researcher selected every 10th name on an alphabetical list of social workers in each region until 10 participants in each region had been selected. In total, a sample of 50 participants was selected to take part in this study. However, at the time of the focus groups only 49 participants were available and involved in the study. The motivation for the researcher using systematic sampling was that it was possible to select systematically participants from a list of social workers employed at Gauteng Department of Social Development.

3.2.6 Data analysis

Creswell (in De Vos, 2005: 333) is of the opinion that data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. Information that has been collected by means of an interview needs to be analysed so as to bring

order and meaning. In this study the researcher used Creswell's (1998) method of data analysis, as discussed in De Vos (2002:340), which refers to six steps in the process of analyzing qualitative data namely:

- **Collection and recording data**

According to De Vos (2002:340) collected data is usually disorderly before it is analysed.

In the study the researcher systematically planned the recording of data by labelling tapes and field notes. This has assisted the researcher to have organised and accessible data.

- **Data analysis**

De Vos (2002:341) states that a qualitative study involves an inseparable relationship between data collection and data analysis. This means that data analysis can be done whilst the researcher is still collecting data.

The researcher made use of tape recorders and also took notes during focus group discussions. As part of data analysis, various methods such as notes, names, titles, dates, context and attendance were colour coded on site to define categories for data analysis and the final product of the research.

- **Managing data**

According to Creswell (in De Vos, 2002:343), this is the first step in data analysis away from the site. At this stage, the researcher organised data into file folders. The files were then converted to appropriate text units, e.g. a word, a sentence, and/or an entire story for analysis by hand. The researcher also organised and managed her data into texts in the format of transcripts.

- **Reading and writing memos**

After the organisation and conversion of the data, De Vos (2005:337) suggests that the researcher should continue analyse the data in order that he/she may get a feeling for the whole database.

Following the process of converting data, at this stage the researcher studied the transcripts to familiarize herself with the content. While analyzing the data, the researcher also performed editing, to retain the valuable information. The key concepts were also noted at this stage by writing memos, which the researcher was able to refer to later on as she classified and interpreted the data.

- **Describing, classifying and interpreting**

Creswell (in De Vos, 2002: 344) states that the process involves noting regularities in the setting or people chosen for the study.

The researcher noted similarities in the responses given by respondents. The similar responses for the same topic were classified as a theme or a sub-theme which was then supported by quotations from the respondents. The data that has been collected was also interpreted to making meaning and sense of the data.

In the study the researcher made use of coding to analyse the data and to identify similarities and differences.

- **Representing and visualising**

According to De Vos (2002:344), this is the final stage of the spiral where researchers present the data in either text, tabular or figure form. With regard to the researcher's study, the data was presented in a text form.

3.2.7 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the qualitative study was ensured through the “external audit” of data and the interpretation thereof by experienced colleagues, as well as by “member checking” where the interpretation of results were verified with research participants (Glesne, 2006:38; De Vos, 2005:362). With regard to this study the trustworthiness of the qualitative data was ensured through consultation with experienced colleagues and checking with the participants during and after focus group interviewing sessions.

3.3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH FINDINGS

As mentioned before, the primary aim of this chapter is to present, analyse and interpret the qualitative data collected by using focus group interviews with 49 Social Work practitioners. According to Creswell (in De Vos, 2005:333) data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data.

To analyse qualitative data in this study, the researcher utilised text analysis. All the focus group interviews were first recorded on the audio tape, then transcribed and then analysed by carefully going through all the transcripts following a code system. Themes and sub themes were then identified, interpreted and verified with literature.

The presentation of the findings of the study has been done according to the following outline:

- Section 1: A biographical profile of the research participants
- Section 2: A presentation of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the process of data analysis. Each theme and sub-theme will be discussed according to a summary of findings, quotations to verify the findings, and an integration of literature.

SECTION 1: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

3.3.1 Biographical profile of participants

The biographical profile of the sample of 49 participants has been displayed hereunder. The profile of the participants entails the following variables: gender, age, race, level of job position, years of experience, and area of operation as social work practitioners.

3.3.1.1 Gender of participants

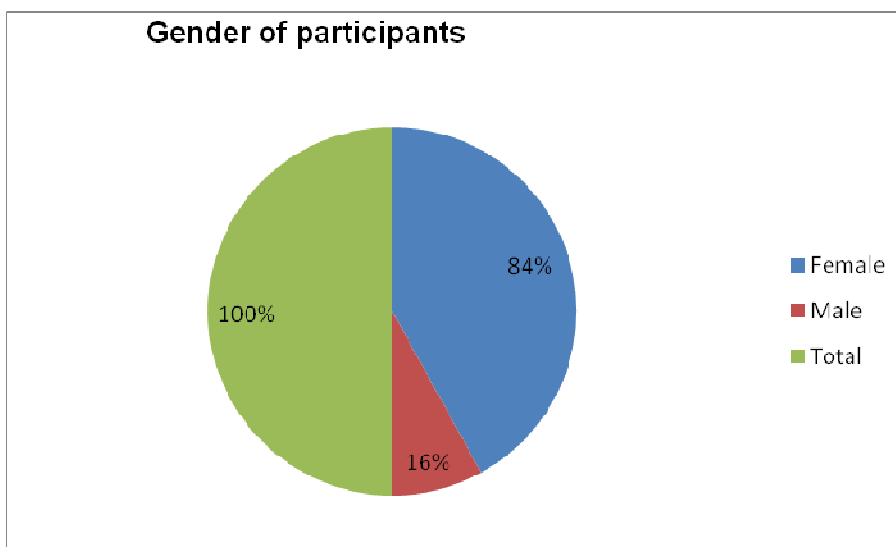


FIGURE 1: Gender of participants

Figure 1 illustrates that the majority of participants (84%) were female social work practitioners and only (16%) were males. This was not unexpected as the social work profession is currently dominated by females. The gender presentation of male against female practitioners can be generalised not only to the population, but to the universe as well.

3.3.1.2 Age of participants

Regarding the age of participants, 45% of the participants were between the ages of 21 to 35 years; 49% of participants were between the ages of 36 to 50 years and 6% were between the ages 51 to 65 years. It was interesting to note that most of the

participants were from the age group 21 to 50. The researcher viewed this as a result of the fact that in many instances most social workers at the implementation level are between the ages 21 and 50, and that there are few social workers who are still practising at the age of 51 to 65.

3.3.1.3 Race of participants

The race of the participants formed part of the biography and is portrayed below in Figure 2.

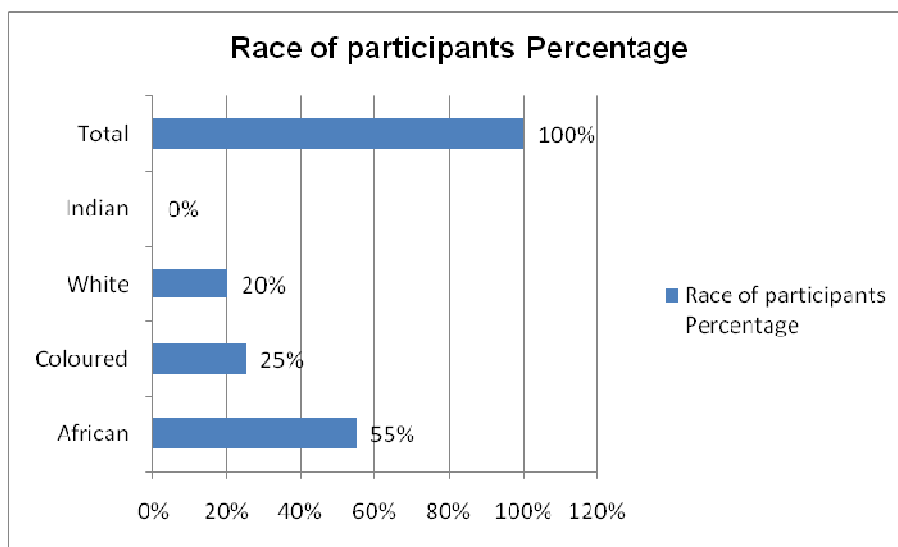


FIGURE 2: Race of participants

Figure 2 indicates that 55% of participants were Africans, whilst 25% were Coloured, 20% were Whites and 0% of the participants were from the Indian race. In this study no Indian social workers participated, while African social workers (55%) comprised just above half the number of participants. The above is the racial presentation of social workers within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.

3.3.1.4 Job position of participants

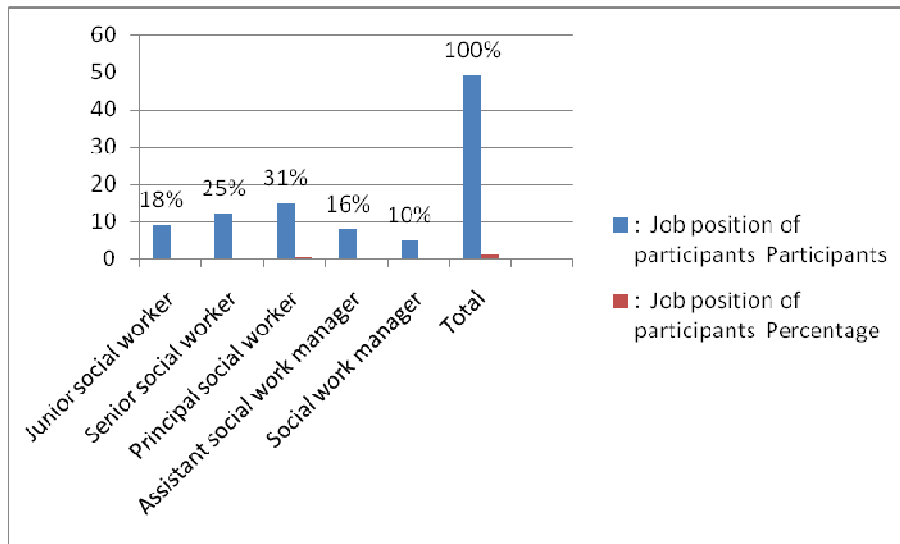


FIGURE 3: Job position of participants

Figure 3 highlights that 18% of the participants were junior social workers at the time of the study, 25% were senior social workers, 31% were principal social workers, 16% were assistant social work managers and 10% were social work managers. Figure 3 displays a representative level of job position in the different social work categories. Most of the participants were holding the job position of a junior social worker to assistant social work manager. The job position of junior social worker to assistant social work manager is viewed as implementation levels, in which this positions' work plans involves implementation of social welfare policies and strategies. The social work managers are responsible for policy development. The majority of participants (90%) were thus responsible for the implementation of policies, while only (10%) were involved in policy development.

3.3.1.5 Years of experience of the participants

Figure 4 demonstrates the range of years of experience of the participants.

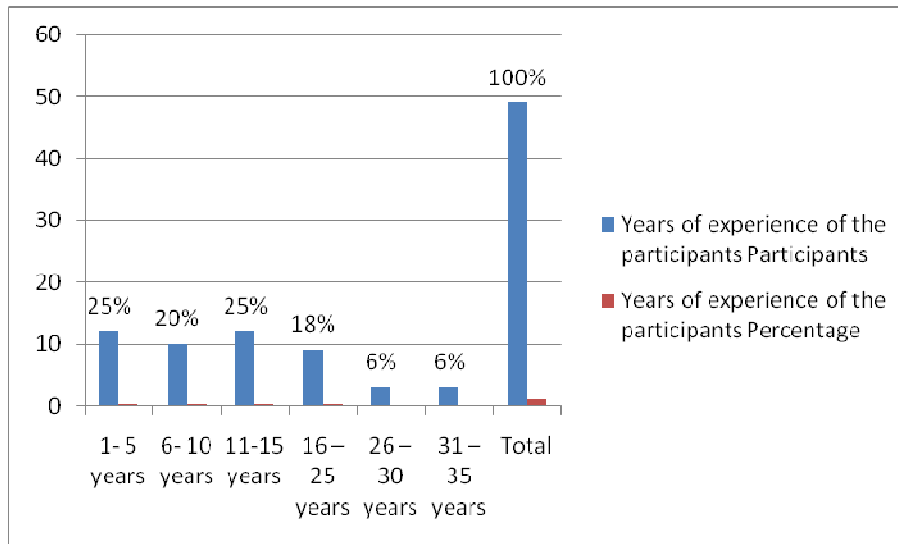


FIGURE 4: Years of experience of the participants

Figure 4 indicates that 25% of the social workers were practising social work for 1 to 5 years. Of the social workers, 20% were practising in the profession for 6 to 10 years. It is also clear from the table that another 25% of social workers have 11 to 15 years of experience, whilst 18% have been practising as social workers for 16 to 25 years, 6% were practising for 26 to 30 years and 6% for 31 to 35 years. From Figure 4 it is observed that social workers participating in the study possess years of experience in the field as social work practice, hence they are expected to be conversant with the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) and that they are called by the *White Paper for Social Welfare* to implement the developmental social welfare approach. The sample gave a balanced spread of the experiences of participants as social workers and it implies that the participants were in a position to give valuable information regarding their experiences in the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach to service delivery.

Adding to the above it was interesting to note that 12% of social workers had been in practice for more than 25 years, while 43% had been in practice more than 10 years. As more than half (55%) of the social workers had been in practice for a period between 11 and 35 years, it was not surprising that they were conservative in their way of serving clients and that they could feel threatened by having to change to the developmental approach which is community-oriented, while they were used to the individualistic approach. Only one quarter (25%) of the participants has been in practice for less than five years. It is this small number perhaps who could have been emotionally ready to embrace the paradigm shift, while the majority (75%) could have been hindered by numerous factors such as habit and lack of understanding in implementation of the approach or expediency in service delivery.

3.3.1.5 Area of operation of the participants

The area of participants' operation is presented in Figure 5 below.

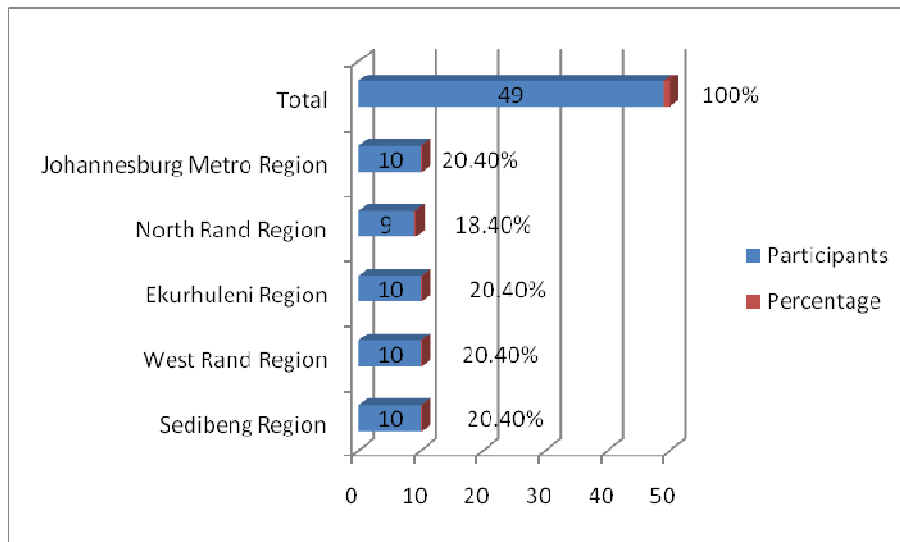


FIGURE 5: Area of operation of the participants

From the above figure 5, it is clear that an equal number (20%) of the respondents had been chosen from each region, but one representative could not avail himself to take part in the focus group is responsible for the uneven number. The researcher concludes that the area of operation is a reasonable and balanced reflection of the

different regions. The areas of operation are equally divided between different regions.

The above section concludes the biographic information of participants. The following section will focus on the different themes and sub-themes that emerged from the process of text-analysis.

SECTION 2: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

3.3.2 QUALITATIVE INFORMATION ACCORDING TO THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

Table 1 displays a summary of the identified themes and sub-themes in this study.

Table 1: A summary of identified themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
Theme1: Conceptual understanding of the social developmental approach.	
Theme 2: Experience of the implementation of the social developmental approach.	2.1 Partial implementation of the social developmental approach 2.2 Lack of guidelines. 2.3 The link between economic and social development. 2.4 Need for a paradigm shift
Theme 3: Challenges for implementation of a social developmental approach.	3.1 Intellectual discourse. 3.2 Organisational factors. 3.3 Political influences. 3.4 Partnership 3.5 Dependency syndrome 3.6 Lack of resources 3.7 Professional working conditions.

Each theme has been described according to the following structure:

- Summary of findings
- Quotations to verify findings
- Integration of literature

3.3.2.1 Theme 1: Conceptual understanding of the social developmental approach

The majority of the respondents defined the developmental approach from their own conceptual understanding and only three (3) of the respondents indicated that they had not been trained on the approach. The latter group lacked clear understanding of what was expected of them. The conceptual understanding of majority of respondents was a clear indication that the majority of social workers in practice have insight into the concept of the social developmental approach and also of the goals of the developmental social welfare approach in spite of the fact that they tend to interpret the concepts differently and lack common understanding. A number of the participants indicated that the social developmental approach is a long and time-consuming process, and that there is a need to expose practitioners to a re-orientation capacity building process in order to help them adopt a paradigm shift and to have a common understanding of the approach. The practitioners highlighted the importance of involving communities in development and therefore they believed that once the practitioners gained a better understanding of their professional roles in utilising the developmental approach, they would willingly use the approach. The following verbatim statements by the respondents are an indication of their understanding of the developmental process:

- *“I thinkit is a strength based approach; developmental social welfare endorses in the strengths of the people in that people themselves are the beneficiaries’ of development and they will on their own come up with ideas about how they will develop themselves. The approach is about looking at the strengths of the people. It also identifies resources that are available and how to utilise those resources for the benefit of the people.”*

- *“Social development is a two-way process. It needs collaborative efforts between the community and the Department. The community needs to be involved ... people should be able to identify their needs and development should start there.”*
- *“Developmental social welfare means various things such as social cohesions, social relations ... People need to be involved in their development. It is about empowering people to do things for themselves ... the social development approach also means the same thing. The approach brings about change, it also gives the people an opportunity to grow through information sharing ... and it also refers to bringing about change.”*
- *“It is a movement from the treatment perspective to the prevention perceptive.”*

The above statements endorse Patel's (2005:30) explanation that human well-being is about the development of people and that the achievement of human well-being is the goal of social development. The above can be achieved by investment in building the capacities of poor people to participate productively in the economy through human capital development, social capital development and micro enterprises.

One of the participants elaborated as follows:

- *“The way I see it people were disadvantaged in the past and depended on the welfare state for many things, but now with the concept of the social developmental approach and developmental social welfare, it allows people to be self reliant and that social workers should empower people to be able to sustain themselves through realisation of their strengths.”*

The latter statement is better understood in Lombard's (2008:154-173) remark that, the *White Paper for Social Welfare* marked a turning point in the history of social welfare services provision in South Africa. Not only has it redressed decades of

historical imbalances, but it has also repositioned social welfare as a role player in social development in the new democracy. She further noted that there is now a much clearer understanding of developmental social services in relation to traditional social welfare and social work than there was 10 years ago.

It was commendable that the majority of the participants in the study were able to describe the principles and goals enshrined in the two concepts, such as empowerment, socio-economic development, and people's participation in decision making, people's strengths, and social integration. However, it is important to note that three (3) of the respondents demonstrated some confusion regarding the concepts by stating:

- *"I am not really sure whether I can define the concepts' meaning ... to me, both concepts seem to be similar as they are about empowerment of the people. The thing is, we were trained a long time ago, were not exposed to these new approaches."*

This latter utterance confirmed that practitioners who were steeped in the conventional method of individualising clients and residual service delivery might understand the concepts superficially but fail to understand the roles of the social workers when utilising the developmental approach. This emphasizes the fact that re-orientation of practitioners in the field is an essential tool to keep them updated and to prepare them emotionally for a paradigm shift.

Lombard (2008:154-173) alluded to the fact that the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (1997) did not elucidate concepts clearly enough. It neglected to define concepts like 'developmental services' and developmental social work. She further emphasised that this has caused confusion and that this conceptual confusion must not be underestimated in terms of its impact on South Africa's progress in developmental social welfare. In this regard Du Preez (2007) also confirmed that the fundamentals of the developmental approach are not clearly understood by all social workers; many still do not understand it and each interprets the approach differently. Those who have received training on the approach find themselves in a system that is still

largely geared to the old paradigm and realise that the structures that they find themselves in do not cater for the full implementation of the approach.

3.3.2.2 Theme 2: Experiences on the implementation of the social developmental approach.

Almost all participants indicated that the approach is partially implemented in their institution. Clearly this means there was an understanding of the stipulation of the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997), but there were some inhibitions towards full implementation of the developmental approach. The inhibitions as identified by the researcher were based on the fact that there were no guidelines nor an action plan from the National Department of Social Development with regard to what had to be done with the regular clientele who required individual attention and residual services. The responses of the participants with regard to whether or not their organisation implemented the developmental approach focused on the following sub-themes.

- Partial implementation of the social developmental approach
- Lack of guidelines.
- The link between the economic and social development.
- Need for a paradigm shift.

Sub theme 2.1: Partial implementation of the social developmental approach

The majority of participants indicated that they did not fully implement the social developmental approach, while only three (3) indicated that they were fully implementing the approach in practice, it was clear that there was no significant implementation of the developmental approach within the Department of Social Development in Gauteng Province. The respondents highlighted that although they are expected to implement the developmental approach in practice, it is still overwhelming to them in that they are used to rendering services in accordance with the old welfare model. The respondents communicated that structural changes are not really accommodating the implementation of the approach. Their experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental approach is that they focused

more on the statutory welfare services in finalising statutory cases (in terms of numbers), and that the developmental aspects in their interventions do not get included because the focus is on the quantity of services provided and not quality of services. All the participants mentioned that they were pressurised in pushing numbers to be able to report how many people had received the services over a period of time (monthly) instead of what impact the services had on developing individual clients. It was observed that institutional arrangements and structural changes do not give social workers an opportunity to render developmental social welfare services. The statistical presentation of services rendered to clientele by service providers did not cater for lengthy hours being reserved for qualitative service provision.

The comments made by respondents in this regard indicate their doubtfulness about the success of implementing the developmental approach in the Department of Social Development.

- *“My experience is that this approach is overwhelming. We are used to operate in terms of the old model but now developmental programmes seem to be something very big ... But I think, after sometime, people will be able to implement it on a limited basis ... because we have job descriptions that we need to adhere to and that are not really taking to rendering of developmental programmes ... even community development is on the small scale.”*
- *“I think it does bring change, somehow. We need to be capacitated to implement the approach, and it is difficult; especially when working with people who are the poor of the poorest. However, it is challenging.”*
- *“The developmental approach is not really practiced, in the statutory section. It is difficult, because the welfare system is structured in a way that it is more concerned on pursuing numbers of how many clients or people have received services. It is difficult; we are chasing numbers instead of quality services ... We are still using a top down approach instead of a bottom up approach because development is about the*

people ... We have high case load ... It is even difficult to conduct empowerment groups because there is no time and cases are high.”

- *“The developmental approach is not practiced yet, because of the high case load. It is even difficult to conduct groups with our clients ... There is no room for the developmental approach in what we are doing; more especially on statutory supervision. It is impossible to conduct developmental programmes.”*
- *“The approach is not fully implemented; or rather, we are not at that point. At the moment we are using a top down approach whereas we ought to be using a bottom up approach.”*
- *“The concept of impact evaluation needs to go together with the developmental approach. But we can’t, because we have to hurry ... we need to be productive and record our services statistically, every week, so that we can report at least a number of cases that have been finalized.”*

The above is supported by Makhapela (2007) who mentioned that social welfare systems and structures tend to hinder some social workers from implementing the social developmental approach. Whilst the traditional association between the social work profession and food security and social grants remains, social workers are challenged to promote social development actively.

Most of the participants indicated that they do not have programmes that reflect the developmental approach. However, three (3) of the participants indicated that they are trying to incorporate the approach in practice although it is on a limited basis. The following quotation illustrates the minority of respondents’ view:

- *“We do have programmes that reflect the approach although it is on a limited basis ... in probation services we are working on the developmental approach, we conduct life skills training, and we assist youth to develop perceptions.”*

Although the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) clearly describes the principles of a social development approach and also gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services, it is apparent that social workers still experience some challenges in the implementation of the approach in practice. The researcher observed that social workers are struggling to come up with programmes that will encompass the approach in practise.

Sub theme 2.2: Lack of guidelines

All the participants indicated that the lack of procedure guidelines on how to implement the developmental approach in practice has led to some confusion and has caused a delay in implementation. The following quotations highlight this overwhelming opinion of the participants:

- *“My experienced is that, we are not really sure on how to implement developmental approach, yes we are trying but there is no implementation, very little is put into practice.”*
- *“My experience is that, we are trying to break away from traditional treatment social work practice, to incorporate the new approach and we try to make the clients self reliant; however, it is difficult in that there are no guidelines on what we are expected to do to implement the approach in our work.”*
- *“For the social workers who are new, those who have just completed their training it might be easier to implement the approach ... but for all of us trained in the old welfare model, it is difficult to implement. I think if we can get clarity on what we are to do to incorporate the approach in our interventions, perhaps, it might be easier and we will be able to move but at the moment it’s not clear.”*

- *“We are not really aware of what we need to do. Awareness of the approach is limited. We grapple with it along the way. ... We do not know what we are supposed to be doing and that hinders the process of implementation.”*

A lack of guidelines to promote the implementation of the developmental approach is confirmed by different authors. For instance Patel (2003:230) indicated that there was no comprehensive legislation to guide the implementation of the developmental approach to social welfare delivery. In this regard Du Preez (2007) also mentions that there was no systematic implementation plan initiated by the National Department of Social Development to promote the implementation of the developmental approach.

Lombard (2007:295) confirmed the above by indicating that “the lack of proper guidelines as to how social welfare should achieve social development goals is an obstacle” and further “there were no specific guidelines as to how integrated developmental social services and social development would be achieved.” This is supported by Makhaphela (2007) who noted that “although the Department has changed its name to the Department of Social Development, the structures and systems have not yet conformed to a developmental perspective.”

Sub theme 2.3: The link between economic and social development

In terms of the implementation of a developmental approach, the majority of participants referred specifically to the link between economic and social development. The respondents indicated that the link between economic and social developmental aspects in their programmes presented a challenge in that they believe social workers had not been trained in economic issues. It was observed that social workers do acknowledge the importance of socio-economic development by indicating that most of the developmental programmes, such as sustainable livelihood, fail in that people have not been trained in economic business managing skills in order to advance and have sustainable projects. The respondents also viewed socio-economic development as a specialised field in social work, which therefore merited special training. The following excerpts reflected the respondents’ opinions:

- *“My experience is that we are not oriented toward implementing programmes that are aimed at economic development; most of the time, we focus on the social aspects.”*
- *“It poses a challenge in that I think social workers are not trained to consider economic development or business skills, while this social developmental approach advocates for linking socio-economic aspects ... There is really a gap. That is why; most of our programmes are not sustainable. The question then, is how we are going to implement the approach if we are not capacitated on economic issues?”*
- *“I think we need people with specialised training in this field ... but on the other hand I think we can contribute towards programmes that will change the lives of the people for the better. We need to be capacitated on socio-economic issues in order to guide people in their venture for economic development.”*

In support of the above statements Lombard (2008:159) asserts that “while the social workers were struggling to adapt and shift their practice to incorporate social development as an approach into their practice, they also had to grapple with how to make sense of the integration of socio-economic issues into their programmes.” She also emphasises that “social workers should consciously seek to understand the socio-economic political context in which they operate if they wish to make an impact on poverty and inequality” (Lombard, 2008:166).

Sub-theme 2.4: Need for a paradigm shift

All the respondents postulated that they should make a paradigm shift towards the implementation of a developmental approach to welfare services. This statement is illustrated by the following quotation:

- *“I think, as social workers, we are in the position to implement the approach because, we assist the poor people to advance in their lives. The only thing we need to do is to try to shift our thinking from the welfarism approach to the implementation of a developmental approach.”*

Green and Nieman (2003:164) confirm that “the implementation of a developmental approach requires changes in behaviour, procedures and practices to meet the requirements to perform social developmental functions successfully”. This is also endorsed by Patel (2005:155) who states that “the new direction for developmental welfare services required a shift in paradigm of welfare service delivery from a social treatment model to a developmental service delivery model”.

3.3.2.3 Theme 3: Challenges for implementation of a social developmental approach.

Although the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) clearly describes the principles of a social development approach and also gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services, social workers still experience some challenges in the implementation of the approach in practice.

All the respondents indicated challenges in implementing the approach. These challenges are incorporated in the following sub-themes:

- Intellectual discourse
- Organisational factors
- Political influences
- Partnerships
- Dependency syndrome
- Lack of resources
- Professional working conditions

Sub-theme 3.1: Intellectual discourse

All the respondents highlighted the fact that they lack social work structures at the implementation level that will focus on on-going research information sharing and intellectual debates regarding the challenges of policy implementation in practice and paving the way for implementation of a developmental approach. The following quotations highlight the respondents' experiences:

- *“We lack structures for intellectual discourse. We need a platform where we can discuss our role towards poverty alleviating and also debate possible strategies on how to implement the developmental approach.”*
- *“We need transformational leaders who will bring about the difference, to take the profession to a different level in terms of participation and decision making.”*
- *“There is not enough marketing of the developmental concept; those who have not registered for the post graduate degree do not have a clue about the approach.”*

By implication Lombard (2008:154-169) also refers to intellectual stimulation when she notes that “social workers are challenged in particular to produce a group of social workers who could influence social justice and redistribution of policies which will impact on poverty and inequality.”

Sub-theme 3.2: Organisational factors

Although the participants were positive and acknowledged the importance of the developmental approach in practise, they realised that their quest to implement the this approach faces challenges in terms of organisational factors such as the following: lack of support by management; lack of cooperation between social workers and the community planning and development section; and lack of consultation by management with social workers who are implementing policies.

The following comments illustrated these issues:

- *“We are operating on a crises level; there is no support from the managers.”*
- *“Decisions are taken by senior managers. A top down approach is utilised. There is no participation of service providers in decision making, and this has led to some resentment.”*
- *“The challenge we have experienced involved the lack of capacity, and lack of capacity building to enable social workers to implement the approach ... and communities are not yet empowered to embrace the approach. They are used to the dependency syndrome of the welfarist model.”*
- *“There is lack of integration of services. We do not work together within the department. I do not have an opportunity to know what other people are doing in their section. There is no integration between statutory case work and community development and the planning section. Often decisions are imposed on us, we do not have a say.”*

Sub-theme 3.3: Political influences

All the participants felt that the political agendas tend to influence their approach to practice.

They verbalized their experiences by stating the following:

- *“We are more politically driven rather than developmentally driven. We are not given an opportunity to implement the developmental approach. We live in a society where there is political influence to service delivery - those things are forever in conflict. We have this beautiful concept and we cannot implement it the way it is supposed to be done, because we have pressure*

from the politicians. They put pressure on us for projects to be finalised and at the end there is no sustainability.”

- *“There is lack of planning between the different stakeholders, e.g. political decision making in relation to departmental issues and are always in conflict. In the political arena, they just make decisions for programmes such as ... distribution of food parcels which are not sustainable. Imbalances are created because there is no consultation with the workers in order to plan around the programmes.”*
- *“We are rushed into doing things; politicians are looking at quantity not quality. Last year for instance, it was only about finalising foster care placements; we did not have time to plan on how we would empower foster children and their parents. Many cases are backfiring because we did not have a plan for developing those families. Even foster care supervision is suffering, in that we are focusing more on finalising cases in terms of numbers.”*

In a nutshell it seems as if the respondents are experiencing serious challenges in terms of structural influences whereby the political mandates tend to focus on immediate results in terms of quantity not quality.

Sub-theme 3.4: Partnerships

The majority of participants emphasised strongly that there is a lack of service integration and partnerships in service delivery. They voiced that for the Department to improve the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach there is a need for strong intersectoral networking and collaboration. These thoughts are reflected in the following quotations:

- *“The challenge and difficulties we experience is the lack of collaborative efforts between different departments. For instance you will find out that there is a programme that is already running yet other departments do not respond because they have not been informed nor clarified of the role they should*

play. In the developmental programmes, every department should be involved, as the integrated approach is fundamental.”

- *“One of the challenges is the lack of integration even within the Department.”*
- *“My experience is that we cannot do it alone we need integration of services.”*

These findings indicated that there is a huge challenge in terms of partnerships and integration of services in the welfare sector. The importance thereof is also confirmed in the *Policy on Financial Awards to Service Providers* (Department of Social Development, 2005) which defines partnership as mutual commitment and reciprocal relationship to advance a common vision. It is further stipulated that no single organisation or institution has the full resources, competencies and capacity to provide efficient and sustainable social services and programs.

In support of the above Patel (2005:283) noted that social development partnerships are an emerging response to the social and economic development needs of societies in a more interdependent global world. She further stated that a social development partnership is a collaborative agreement between one or more organisations whereby all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose.

Sub-theme 3.5: Dependency syndrome

Most of the participants felt that communities show a dependency syndrome due to the fact that services are being given to them primarily in the form of social grants. They further postulated that the dependency syndrome was created by the old welfare model to service delivery without the development of an exit model. Although participants acknowledged the importance of social grants, they alluded that the social grant system did not provide sustainable growth in the clients being served and that there was no exit plan on how to assist the people to be self reliant. Their opinions are demonstrated in the following excerpts:

- *“Really developmental welfare is about working with clients rather than doing things for them. The main challenge is that communities and clients are expecting the social workers to provide solutions for them; this is really a challenge in that even though we try to engage them, clients tend to think we do not want to assist them ... there are clients that will always depend on the social worker; the implementation of the developmental approach is not effective yet.”*
- *“The social problems and factors people find themselves in are difficult. These have created inequality in societies and dependency syndrome is increasing on government and to provide social grants. I do not know how we will address the situation, but the grants are creating dependency and there is no plan to assist people to be self reliant.”*

This is confirmed by Lombard (2007:295) who articulates that “although social grants make a huge contribution to alleviate the dire poverty of many households in South Africa, the financial burden of social security is increasing and has noted as becoming unsustainable, the government now acknowledges that no exit level were planned for social grants.”

Sub-theme 3.6: Lack of resources

The participants highlighted the lack of resources, specifically human resources, as one of the hindrances in implementing the social developmental approach in practise. With regard to the issue of lack of resources, respondents articulated their experiences as follows:

- *“The challenge is that social work is a scarce profession. We do not have enough social workers to implement the developmental approach.”*
- *“There are limited resources to refer the clients for developmental programmes. It’s disturbing that we cannot plan programmes; if we do plan*

we are stopped and told there is no budget ... and there is high staff turnover and high case load.”

In response to this problem, Lombard (2007:296) noted that whilst there is lack of resources, capacity was a major reason for not delivering on social services. The lack of proper guidelines as to how social welfare should achieve social development goals was an even bigger obstacle. Lombard (2008:164) further noted that “the skills shortage seriously undermines social work’s capacity to respond to its social change and development function and to deliver on socio-economic development goals.

Sub-theme 3.7: Professional working conditions

The majority of participants emphasised strongly that the professional working conditions they are operating under tend to hinder the processes of the social workers to implement the developmental approach to social welfare. They voiced their frustrations and indicated that their caseloads are too large and that they tend to operate on a crisis intervention due to high case load. The participants also feel burdened by administrative tasks. They voiced their frustration of the fact that they need to constantly fill in statistics forms which focus on “how many” numbers of clients instead of quality of service delivery. They indicated that the administrative tasks tend to consume most of their time and leave no room for developmental service delivery. The participants were also frustrated with the fact that they are expected to be innovative and come up with new programmes and when they finally do they are told that there is no funding to implement such developmental programmes; these factors demoralised the participants’ morale. It was also indicated by the participants that the morale of the social workers is also destroyed by organisational arrangements whereby there is a shortage of offices for social workers, but on the other hand the support service personnel have the privilege of getting offices. The following quotations confirm the respondents’ challenges with regard to professional working conditions:

- *“We are experiencing high case loads especially in statutory services, because of this we are forever operating on a crisis intervention, there is*

no time to plan, some of our cases tend to lapse especially the extension of foster care placements and not to forget other factors where by social workers have to leave their professional work to distribute food parcels, something that can be done by the administrative staff. There is lack of proper planning we call clients to the office, even before we attend to them the crisis arise we are really operating on a crisis management. Our working environment does not allow us to do developmental preventative work in statutory services.”

- *“We are forever completing the statistics forms when are we going to focus on the quality of services, the way the managers demand the statistics we are really pushing numbers. Even our performance management is measured according to how many cases you have finalised instead of what impact you have made. We are still on a long way to be able to work developmentally in our interventions.”*
- *“The administrative task, paper system it's too time consuming.*
- *“Our managers often task us to come up with innovating projects and programmes that will enhance the development of the clients, but when we do, come up with the programme we are told that there is no budget, this destroy the morale of the social workers because efforts are put to come up with a programme.”*
- *“We as social workers we are so frustrated with the shortage of office space, we are suppose to keep confidential files of the clients, but because of the of office shortages we tend to share the offices. In terms of professional conduct this is not right, confidentiality must be uphold all the time. What is frustrating more is the fact that the administrative support personnel have individual offices in most cases.”*

The professional working conditions hindrances are confirmed by Makhaphela (2007) who notes that “the welfare system and structures tend to hinder social workers from implementing the social developmental approach”, and that “the

structures and systems have not yet conformed to a developmental approach implementation.”

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, data collected from the participants in the focus group discussions have been analysed and presented in the form of empirical findings. Data was analysed according to themes and biographical details of the respondents were presented. The research findings gave information on the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach.

The next chapter will therefore focus on the overview of the main objectives of the whole study. Conclusions will be drawn and recommendations made. It should be noted that the provision of recommendations is one of the main objectives of the study. The recommendations regarding the experiences of social workers in the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in the Department of Social Development can be used as guidelines by the Department and other related welfare organizations to improve or enhance the implementation of the developmental approach in practice.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

“The social welfare sector’s response to the country’s transformation to a genuine democracy is embedded in the *White Paper for Social Welfare* (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) which was adopted in 1997” (Lombard, 2008:154). Within the Department of Social Development the above is reflected in the vision of the proposed National Developmental Social Welfare strategy which is “a welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment” (*White Paper for Social Welfare*, 1997:7).

Lombard (2003:225) argues that social workers play a major role in poor communities with regard to micro and small enterprises. However, because the social work profession is traditionally associated with food security and social grants it remains a challenge to actively promote social development and shift community work practice to community economic development. These challenges are confirmed by a study conducted by Fouché and Delport (2000:64-70) who noted the following: “Social workers interpret the social development concept in different ways. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that social development equals community development and leaves little scope for individual, group, or family intervention aimed at enhancing human empowerment.”

The goal of the study was thus structured to determine and explore the experiences of social workers regarding the current implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province. It is therefore essential to restate the objectives of the study and the research question in order to evaluate whether the study achieved the objectives it has set out to meet.

The objectives of this research study were as follows:

- To conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare;
- to explore and describe social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice;
- to identify the challenges social workers are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice; and
- to make recommendations based on the research findings, to enhance the effective implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in social work.

Against this background the study was guided by the following research question:

What are the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province?

Chapter 1 provided a general orientation of the study, focusing on the motivation for the choice of the research topic, problem formulation, goal and objectives of the study, research question, and brief description of research methodology, ethical issues and definition of key concepts.

In Chapter 2 the researcher theoretically conceptualized the social development approach within the field of social welfare in the South African context.

Chapter 3 dealt with the empirical findings of the study aimed at exploring the experiences of social work practitioners regarding the current implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development Gauteng Province.

Chapter 4 reviewed the whole study, providing a synopsis of its main objectives by making relevant conclusions and recommendations.

4.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

4.2.1 Objective1: To conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare

- The social developmental approach aimed to address the social ills and tends to incorporate a holistic approach to human development. As such the social developmental approach is essential to the South African society in that it will bring about socio-economic development and it is therefore of immense importance for the social work profession to incorporate the new approach into its professional interventions.
- The implementation of a developmental social welfare approach, however, requires changes in behaviour, procedures and practices.
- Social development views economic and social processes as equally important components of the developmental process.
- The social developmental approach transcended the residualist-institutional debates that have characterised social policy thinking for decades and offered a new perspective that may facilitate a renewed basis for state intervention in social welfare (Midgley, 2001:2).
- The developmental perspective to social welfare in South Africa is rooted in a rights-based approach; democracy and participation; as well as social and economic development as a key premise. It implies a pluralistic approach which involves the state, civil society, including the private sector, individuals, families and communities.
- There are different strategies for implementing a social developmental approach, i.e. individualistic, communitarian and government strategy.

Even though the literature describes certain focus areas of the social developmental approach and developmental social welfare, Objective 1 has

revealed that there is a lack of in-depth discussions regarding the practical implementation of a developmental social welfare approach. It was however clear that the literature emphasizes the importance of the implementation of the approach by social workers.

4.2.2 Objective 2: To explore and describe social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice.

Regarding the second objective the findings of the study revealed the following:

- In terms of conceptual understanding, almost all the participants had insight into the meaning of the developmental approach, while few participants indicated that they are not trained on the approach and therefore lack clear understanding.
- The majority participants who showed understanding of the concept social development agreed that the social developmental approach is a strength-based approach and that people or clients should be involved in their own development. They further agreed that the approach is a movement from a treatment perspective to preventative services.
- All participants viewed the approach as important in the social work field.
- The majority of participants were able to describe the principles and goals of the approach, such as empowerment, social and economic development, and people participation and that it promotes integration.
- Almost all participants indicated that they did not fully implement the developmental approach, due to the lack of guidelines.
- Few participants felt that they are trying to implement the developmental social welfare approach, but they are unsure of whether or not they are able to incorporate the economic development component to their social interventions.
- All the participants acknowledge the importance of incorporating the approach in service delivery and to their practice. However, they felt overwhelmed in that as far as they are concerned their practice has been focusing on the old

models, in which it becomes difficult to implement a new approach if there are no guidelines provided.

- The majority of participants described their experiences, with regard to the institutional unreasonable expectation to implement the approach, whilst they are overwhelmed with statutory cases in which they are expected to finalise a number of cases per month which compromises the quality of services.
- Almost all the participants acknowledged that they do not have programmes that reflect the developmental approach. Only few participants (3) indicated that they are trying to incorporate the approach in practice although it is on a limited basis.
- All the participants felt that there are no guidelines on how to implement the approach in practise.
- All the participants felt that structural changes are not really accommodating the practical implementation of the approach because they are more focused on the quantity and not the quality of services.
- All the participants felt that the lack of procedure guidelines and action plans on how to implement the developmental approach has led to some confusion.
- All the participants describe their experience in linking economic and social development as challenging, due to the fact that they were not trained in economic issues.
- The majority of participants were of the opinion that socio-economic development should be a specialised field.
- All the participants acknowledged that they should make a paradigm shift towards implementation of a developmental approach to welfare services.

The empirical study revealed that the social developmental approach is not fully implemented as social workers are battling with the understanding of how to implement the approach in practice. It seems as if there is a need to develop a national action plan to stimulate the implementation of a social developmental approach in practice.

4.2.3 Objective 3: To identify the challenges social workers are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice

Regarding the third objective, the findings of the study revealed the following:

- All the participants linked their challenges in implementing the approach to both internal and external factors such as organisational and social factors.
- All the participants indicated that there is a lack of social work structures at the implementation level that will focus on ongoing research information sharing and intellectual debates regarding challenges of policy implementation in practice.
- The majority of participants highlighted that organisational factors such as lack of support and consultation by management, lack of cooperation between social workers and community planning and development sections, and lack of integration of services poses a challenge to implementing the approach.
- A substantial number of participants indicated a lack of capacity, and lack of capacity building to enable social workers to implement the approach.
- All the participants described their experiences of implementing the developmental approach as challenging.
- All the participants indicated that the political influences pose challenges in their planning and implementation of services, because they are rushed to focus on the quantity of people reached not the quality of services.
- All the participants emphasised that they are experiencing a challenge in terms of a lack of collaboration efforts between different government departments and NGOs.
- The majority of participants mentioned that the social grant system has created dependency. They further postulated that the dependency syndrome was created by the old welfare model to service delivery without the development of an exit plan for social grant clients.

- All the participants highlighted the lack of resources and specifically human resource as one of the hindrances in implementing the social developmental approach in practice.
- A substantial number of participants mentioned the challenge of the sustainability of programmes and the difficulties of linking socio-economic development aspects to programmes.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the empirical findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- Training and reorientation of all social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental approach to social welfare should be offered continuously in order to keep them updated with the most recent trends, procedures and methods in the field of social development.
- Procedure guidelines and a national plan to implement the social developmental approach in practise should be developed.
- Training should be provided to social workers on how to integrate socio-economic issues and the current political context into their welfare programmes.
- Consultation regarding business strategies should be given to all social workers despite their professional level of employment in the organisation.
- The integration of services should be enhanced at the implementation level of the social developmental approach.
- Social work should extend its role beyond human development and become active participants in social development and engage in economic development of the poor and vulnerable clients; this must be done not only for sustainable livelihood programmes but also to empower the people and enable them to make informed choices.
- The involvement of social workers in economic development should be recognized as a specialized field.
- Training with regard to economic development should become part of the curriculum at tertiary level for social workers.

- Harmonising economic and social policies within comprehensive commitment to sustainable people centred development.
- Further research should be done with regards to the effective implementation and evaluation of the social developmental approach in practice.

4.4 ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Goal of the study: To explore the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.

Table 2 focuses on how the above goal and objectives of the study were accomplished.

Table 2: Accomplishment of the study objectives

Nr	Objectives	Objectives achievement
1	To conceptualise theoretically the social developmental approach within the field of social welfare.	This objective was achieved as reflected in the discussion presented in Chapter 2.
2	To explore empirically the social workers' experiences regarding the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice.	This objective was accomplished successfully through a detailed discussion in Chapter 3 on the qualitative findings on the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach.
3	To identify the challenges social workers	This objective was

	are experiencing in the implementation of the developmental social welfare approach in practice.	achieved through the discussions in Chapter 3 on the findings regarding the challenges experienced by social workers in implementing the developmental social welfare approach.
4	To make recommendations, based on the research findings, to enhance the effective implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in social work.	The objective was achieved through a summarized presentation of findings and recommendations in Chapter 4.

4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study aimed to explore the experiences of social work practitioners towards the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach in practice. The study has come up with a comprehensive exploration of the experiences of social workers in their implementation of the developmental approach as well as the challenges they face in the implementation. The research study has revealed that there is a need for ongoing training and reorientation of social workers towards the implementation of the developmental approach in practice.

The study also reveals that there is a need to develop an action plan and clear procedure guidelines on how to implement the approach in practice; this needs to be developed at a national level in order to guide the social workers on how to implement the approach in practice.

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION LETTER FROM THE GAUTENG, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Private Bag X 35
Johannesburg.
2000.
11th February 2008.

31 Alan Manor Mews
Constantia Avenue
Alan Manor
Johannesburg.

Dear Ms. V.P Dlangamandla,

Re: Application for a Permission to Undertake Research in the
Department of Social Development

This letter serves to confirm that your application to conduct research in the Department has been well received and you are given permission to organize and use the identified resources for your study. What is of importance is to inform the Research Unit as soon as you are ready to start with your study.

I will inform all the heads of the regions in Gauteng that you have been given permission to organize focus groups as a form of conducting your study as soon as you are ready you will be given the contact name of the person you will be expected to liaise with per region.

It is important to note that you will be expected at the end of your studies to give a copy of your thesis to the Research Unit as the copy will be kept in the Departmental specialized library for reference purposes. You chose a topical subject which will add value to the entire Department.

With thanks,


Ms D Quinichette
Chief Social Worker.



APPENDIX B

LETTER OF ETHICAL CLEARANCE



100
1908 - 2008



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Research Proposal and Ethics Committee

1 August 2008

Dear Prof. Delpont

Project: The experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province
Researcher: VP Dlangamandla
Supervisor: Prof. CSL Depont
Department: Social Work and Criminology
Reference number: 25371551

Thank you for the well edited application you submitted to the Research Proposal and Ethics Committee, Faculty of Humanities.

I have pleasure in informing you that the Research Proposal and Ethics Committee formally **approved** the above study on 31 July 2008. The approval is subject to the candidate abiding by the principles and parameters set out in her application and research proposal in the actual execution of the research.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to Ms Dlangamandla.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof. Brenda Louw
Chair: Research Proposal and Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail: brenda.louw@up.ac.za

Research Proposal and Ethics Committee Members: Prof P Chiroro; Dr M-H Coetzee; Prof C Delpont; Dr JEH Grobler; Prof KL Harris; Ms H Klopper; Prof E Krüger; Prof B Louw (Chair); Prof A Mlambo; Prof G Prinsloo; Mr C Puttergill; Prof H Stander; Prof E Taljard; Dr J van Dyk; Prof C Walton; Mr FG Wolmarans



APPENDIX C

RESPONDENTS' LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

Focus Group interview

Researcher: Vathiswa. Portia Dlangamandla

Tel. numbers: Work: (011) 355 7864
Cell: 083 9228680

Participant's name.....Date.....

INFORMED CONSENT

1. Title of the study: The experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.
2. Purpose of the study: The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.
3. Procedures: I expect to be involved in a focus group interview which will be conducted by the researcher. The focus group interview will be based on my experience, understanding, and observation as a social worker regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach. The focus group interview will take approximately one hour and it will be conducted in an accessible venue at my convenience.
4. Risk and discomforts: There are no known anticipated risks or discomfort to be gained from my participation in this study, because this is simply an investigation and not a treatment study. If I may experience fatigue or stress during the interview, I will be given as many breaks as I require during the session.
5. Benefits: I understand that there are no known direct benefits for me for participating in this study. Although the results of the study may help the researcher to gain better understanding of the challenges facing social

workers regarding the implementation of the social developmental approach in practice.

6. Participant's rights: I may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.
7. Financial compensation: I will receive no financial compensation from the researcher for my participation in this study.
8. Confidentiality: In order to record accurately what I will say in the focus group interview, a tape recorder will be used, but I have been assured that my response will be anonymous since I will not be requested to mention my name. The tape will be listened to only by the above-named researcher and authorized members of the research team. I understand that the obtained data will be kept confidential. The results of the study will be published in the researcher's final research document, professional articles or presented at professional conferences, but my identity will not be revealed. Anonymity is also assured through the use of a number system.
9. If I have any questions or concerns, I can call Vathiswa. Portia Dlangamandla at 083 9228680 at any time during the day

I understand my rights as a research subject and I voluntarily consent to participate in this study. I understand what the study is about, how and why it is being done. I am aware that the data will be stored for fifteen years.

I will receive a signed copy of this consent for

Signature of respondent

Date

Signature of researcher
supervisor

Signature of the

APPENDIX D

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT (FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE)

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The goal of this study can be formulated as follows: **To explore the experiences of social workers regarding the implementation of a developmental social welfare approach within the Department of Social Development, Gauteng Province.**

Question 1:

How do you understand the concept social development?

How do you understand the concept developmental social welfare?

Question 2:

What is your experience regarding the implementation of the social developmental approach?

Question 3:

What are the challenges that you experience regarding the implementation of the social developmental approach?

Question 4:

What are the programmes that you are involved with or which you have initiated that reflect the social developmental approach?

Question 5:

Why do you feel that the programmes that you have identified are developmental in nature?



APPENDIX E

EDITORIAL LETTER



IEDIT4U

I hereby declare that I have edited this document by Vathiswa Portia Dlangamandla, entitled “The Experiences of Social Workers Regarding the Implementation of a Developmental Social Welfare Approach within the Department of Social Development Gauteng Province”. The edit entailed correcting spelling and grammar where necessary, and checking for consistencies in style and reference method used. I have not helped to write this document or altered the student’s work in any significant way. I will not be held accountable for bad spelling or grammar where the student has rejected my editing.

It was not my responsibility to check for any instances of plagiarism and I will not be held accountable should the student commit plagiarism. I did not check the validity of the student’s statements/research/arguments. Editing does not improve the content of the document, only the spelling and grammar.

Lindi van der Merwe

Contact Details:

083 456 4358

iedit4u@gmail.com