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**Emergence and future status of Youth Work:
Perspectives of Social Service Professionals
in South Africa**

by

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ABSTRACT

Emergence and future status of Youth Work: Perspectives of Social Service Professionals in South Africa

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With Youth work being one of the key interventions used to advance the development of young people, through this study, the researcher takes a closer look at how Youth work can be enhanced to ensure its maximised contribution to empowerment and development of young people. On that basis, the researcher investigates the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of social service professionals towards emergence and future status of Youth work practice in South Africa. This is essential, given that policy directions ought to be guided by rational, fact-based information.

The researcher used two-phased sequential mixed methods research approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods in sequence, to explore the research phenomenon. Qualitative data was gathered from four (4) focus groups, conducted in each of the selected South Africa's provinces. Quantitative data was gathered from five hundred and ninety-three (593) respondents who completed a measuring instrument.

Some of the key empirical findings suggested that the social development factors compared to human resources and diversion factors are key drivers behind emergence of Youth work. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that interventions primarily and consequently enhance the social functioning of young people. On the current status of Youth work, a significant majority of respondents indicated that Youth work is the responsibility of a multi-disciplinary team. The evidence also pointed to Youth workers being more skilled than Social workers and Child youth care workers in rendering services to the youth. Additionally, the findings showed that the involvement of social service professionals in Youth work was mainly in collaborating with other professionals when rendering Youth work services, and also in direct service delivery. Their involvement in policy development was to no extent. This was associated with a limited number of Youth workers in the public sector.

The findings on perceptions of social service professionals regarding the future status of Youth work showed that 75% of the respondents believe that Youth work should become an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work; followed by 17% who are of the opinion that it should remain as an occupation; whilst only 8% said it should be an autonomous profession. Additionally, an overwhelming majority of the respondents agreed with all statements which were listed as advantages or benefits of having Youth work recognised as an area of specialisation or a profession.

On the basis of these findings, the researcher recommended that young people's problems and aspirations should be addressed within their social contexts; there is a need to ensure that interventions primarily enhance the social functioning of young people; there is a need to have Youth work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work; and there is a need to create additional capacity to provide services to the youth, especially in government as a policy making structure.

It is essential to note that the support for specialisation supports South Africa's approach to mainstreaming youth development across various sectors. It could also be seen as a clear indication of the positive role and value placed on Youth work, and the potential

contribution it might have should it become an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work.

Key concepts:

- ⇒ Youth work;
- ⇒ Youth development;
- ⇒ Youth or Young person;
- ⇒ Occupation;
- ⇒ Profession;
- ⇒ Professionalisation;
- ⇒ Specialisation;
- ⇒ Social service professions;
- ⇒ Social work;
- ⇒ Child and youth care work;
- ⇒ Educators.

OPSOMMING

Opkomende en toekomstige status van Jeugwerk: Perspektiewe van Professionele Maatskapliedienverskaffers in Suid Afrika

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Met Jeugwerk as een van die hoofintervensies om die ontwikkeling van jongmense te bevorder, ondersoek die navorser met hierdie studie die wyse waarop Jeugwerk verbeter kan word om die maksimum bydrae daarvan tot die bemagtiging en ontwikkeling van jongmense te verseker. Die navorser ondersoek op grond hiervan die persepsies, houdings en opinies van professionele maatskapliedienverskaffers oor die ontstaan en toekomstige status van Jeugwerkpraktyk in Suid-Afrika. Dit is baie belangrik, aangesien beleidsbestuur deur rasionale, feitegebaseerde inligting gelei behoort te word.

Die navorser maak gebruik van 'n tweefase opeenvolgende gemengde navorsingsbenadering wat kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe metodes in opeenvolging gebruik om die navorsingsverskynsel te ondersoek. Kwalitatiewe inligting is met vier (4) fokusgroepe ingewin wat in elkeen van die gekose vier (4) Suid-Afrikaanse provinsies

gehou is. Kwantitatiewe inligting is onder vyfhonderd drie en negentig (593) respondente ingewin wat 'n meetinstrument voltooi het.

Van die kern empiriese bevindinge het voorgestel dat, behalwe ekonomiese, menslike hulpbronne en politieke faktore; sosiale faktore die hoof dryfvere tot opkomende Jeugwerk is. Dit is daarom belangrik om seker te maak dat intervensies hoofsaaklik die sosiale funksionering van jong mense bevorder. 'n Beduidende meerderheid respondente het aangaande die huidige status van Jeugwerk aangedui dat Jeugwerk die verantwoordelikheid van 'n multidissiplinêre span is. Bewyse dui voorts daarop dat Jeugwerkers meer bekwaam is in die lewering van dienste aan die jeug as Maatskaplike werkers en/of Kinder-en-jeugsorgwerkers. Die bevindinge dui ook daarop dat professionele maatskaplikediensverskaffers in Jeugwerk hoofsaaklik in samewerking met ander professionele persone betrokke is tydens die lewering van jeugwerkdienste, asook in direkte dienslewering. Hulle was glad nie in beleidsontwikkeling betrokke nie. Dit is geassosieer met 'n beperkte aantal Jeugwerkers in die openbare sektor.

Die bevindinge oor die persepsies van professionele maatskaplikediensverskaffers met betrekking tot die toekomstige status van Jeugwerk dui daarop dat 75% van respondente van mening is dat Jeugwerk 'n spesialiteitsarea in Maatskaplike werk en/of Kinder-en-jeugsorgwerk moet word; dit word gevolg deur 17% wat van mening is dat dit as 'n beroep moet voortbestaan; slegs 8% het aangedui dat dit 'n outonome professie moet wees. Voorts het 'n oorweldigende meerderheid respondente met alle stellings saamgestem wat as voordelig gelys is indien Jeugwerk as 'n spesialiteitsarea of professie erken word.

Op grond van hierdie bevindinge beveel die navorser aan dat jongmense se probleme en strewes binne hul sosiale konteks aangespreek moet word; dat daar 'n behoefte is om te verseker dat intervensies die sosiale funksionering van jongmense primêr verbeter; dat daar 'n behoefte is om Jeugwerk as 'n spesialiteitsarea vir Maatskaplike werk en/of Kinder-en-jeugsorgwerk te vestig; en dat daar 'n behoefte is om addisionele

kapasiteit te skep om dienste aan die jeug te bied, veral in die owerheid as beleidsbepalende struktuur.

Dit is belangrik om daarop te let dat die ondersteuning vir spesialisering ondersteuning aan Suid-Afrika se benadering verleen om jeugontwikkeling as 'n hoofstroomaktiwiteit oor verskeie sektore te vestig. Dit kan ook as 'n aanduiding gesien word van die positiewe rol en waarde wat aan Jeugwerk geheg word, asook die potensiële bydrae wat dit mag lewer indien dit 'n spesialiteitsarea vir Maatskaplike werk en/of Kinder-en-jeugsorgwerk word.

Sleutelbegrippe:

- ⇒ Jeugwerk;
- ⇒ Jeug ontwikkeling;
- ⇒ Jeug of Jeugdige persoon;
- ⇒ Beroep;
- ⇒ Professie;
- ⇒ Professionalisering;
- ⇒ Spesialisering;
- ⇒ Professionele maatskaplikediensverskaffers;
- ⇒ Maatskaplike werk;
- ⇒ Kinder en jeugsorgwerk;
- ⇒ Opvoeders.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU:	African Union
AUC:	African Union Commission
ABET:	Adult Basic Education and Training
AIDS:	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
ANC:	African National Congress
ASASWEI:	Association of South African Social Work Education Institution
AYC:	African Youth Charter
CBOs:	Community Based Organisations
CYP:	Commonwealth Youth Programme
DPME:	Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
DSD:	Department of Social Development
EFA:	Exploratory Factor Analysis
FBOs:	Faith Based Organisations
GA:	General Assembly
HIV:	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
NACCW:	National Association of Child Care Workers
NEPAD:	New Partnership for African Development
NGOs:	Non-Government Organisations
NPC:	National Planning Commission
NYC:	National Youth Commission
NYDA:	National Youth Development
NYDF:	National Youth Development Forum Agency
NYP:	National Youth Policy
NYS:	National Youth Service
PCAS:	Policy Coordination and Advisory Services
PRODYWOC:	Professional Development of Youth Work Consortium

PYCs:	Provincial Youth Commissions
PYU:	Pan African Youth Union
RPL:	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAASWIPP:	South African Association for Social Workers in Private Practice
SABSWA:	South African Black Social Workers Association
SACE:	South African Council for Educators
SACSSP:	South African Council for Social Service Professions
SANC:	South African Nursing Council
SAYC:	South African Youth Council
SAYWA:	South African Youth Workers Association
SAQA:	South African Qualification Authority
SWASWA:	Social Workers Association of South Africa
UN:	United Nations
UN GA:	United Nations General Assembly
UK:	United Kingdom
UNISA:	University of South Africa
USA:	United States of America
UYF:	Umsobomvu Youth Fund
YPAG:	Youth Practitioners Advocacy Group

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OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this first chapter of the research study, the researcher provides a broad overview of what this study is about. This chapter gives the context and background within which the phenomenon under study takes place. It outlines the reasons, research questions, a research goal and the objectives that inspired the researcher to conduct the investigation (Babbie, 2010:121). It then highlights the summary of the research methodology followed, ethics considered, and the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes by defining the key concepts used and outlines the content of this research report.

For the benefit of the readers, the central assumption of this study is that youth development is crucial to young people themselves and the society of which they are part. For this reason, the researcher is studying the emergence of Youth work - a practice that focuses on service provision to the youth. The focus is on investigating factors that led to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa, and also looking at the current and future status of this practice. This is crucial, given that there is an ensuing debate on the future of Youth work practice, particularly in relation to its professional status. At national, regional, and international levels, the debate is on whether Youth work should remain an occupation/ recognised as an area of specialisation/ recognised as a profession.

Significant to this study is that, in South Africa, Youth work is still an occupation, like in many other countries across the world. This occupation is practised by traditional helping professionals such as Social workers, Teachers and Nurses, but also by dedicated service providers (Maunder, 2006:24). In the context of Youth work being practised by other traditional helping professionals, it has become an area of specialisation within a specific professional field where it is subservient to the expertise and authority of the profession that serves the youth as part of their target group (Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:51; Villaruel, Perkins, Borden &

Keith 2003:389). As a distinct field of practice, Youth work is practised by service providers who focus on only serving young people as their main client through promoting and creating more supportive, youth-focused workplaces and rendering holistic services to them (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:75; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15).

Of importance is that, Youth workers as well as other helping professionals, such as Social workers, Teachers and Nurses, use a youth development approach – an approach that focuses on positive outcomes and building the capacities of young people rather than reducing their risk behaviours (Villaruel et al., 2003:2).

The utilisation of this youth development approach replaces the previously used approaches, which were treatment rather than development and strength-based oriented (Beker, 2001b:364; Villaruel et al., 2003:367). It is more proactive and offer long-lasting solutions compared to the reactive-treatment orientation. It is on that basis, that the researcher considers Youth work as a viable intervention, because of its focus on total/ holistic development of young people which considers every sphere of development (The Presidency, 2009b:31; Osei-Hwedi, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:7). This study explores and describes answers to questions that arise out of the emergence of this practice.

1.2 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

“Between 1996 and 2008, the South African population has grown from 40.6 to 48.7 million and is projected to increase to 51.5 million by 2014” (Department of Social Development, 2010:10). The recent statistics estimate the total population to be at 50.5 million, with young people constituting 41.2% of the total population. Like other developing countries, especially in the African continent, young people in South Africa are the largest segment of the population (Department of Social Development, 2010:10, 22; The Presidency, 2009b:11; Statistics South Africa, 2011a; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:14). They continue forming an increasing population share despite the decline in fertility levels. The 2010 mid-year population estimates report specifically indicated that, there is an estimated 29% of children aged 0-13 years; 41% of youth aged 14-35 years; and 30% of adults aged 36 years and above in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2010a), thus showing an

increase of 0.2% compared to the recent statistics – a positive trend of year on year growing youth population. The following Figure 1.1 illustrates a breakdown of the South Africa’s population groups by age:

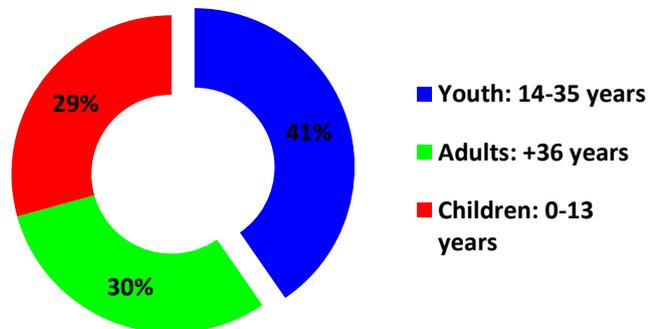


Figure 1.1: South Africa’s population groups by age (Statistics South Africa, 2010a)

The above situation is termed as “*youth bulge*” and can be an opportunity or threat (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:8). It is an opportunity if appropriate human capital investments are taken to ensure that the youth become positive contributors to the social and economic landscape. On the other hand, it is a threat that would offset the benefits of a development agenda since their lack of development could reduce their contribution to the society and increase their future dependency on the State since resources would be devoted to address the problems they experience (The Presidency, 2009b:6; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:14).

Therefore, it is clear that if the future of the generation to come is to be secured, the current generation of youth whether rich or poor; Black or White - must become the main target for development efforts. It is on this basis, that rapid enormous changes and advocacy efforts that prioritises and target all young people ought to be evidenced by the way in which services are rendered by government, non-governmental and private sectors. With the legacy of disadvantage and inequity in South Africa, continuing weigh heavily on different youth groupings, this is a challenge that would require policy shifts in favour of youth.

This study acknowledges the challenges that require service delivery for the youth to be turned around. A moment of thought suggests that, indeed, there is a need for an

effective youth service delivery channel that uses a *youth development approach* - a process that has an outcome of providing for all youth, troubled or not, with support, opportunities and services they need to empower themselves and promote the development of competence in multiple domains, thus enhancing their overall quality of life (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:127; Villaruel et al., 2003:353).

1.3 BACKGROUND

Although the concept of youth development is relatively new in South Africa, it has existed for many years in areas such as the United States of America (USA) and Europe. For example, in England, Youth work has a forty-year history as a registered and regulated profession. In this regard, a professional body called Community and Youth Work Union, which traces its origin back to over sixty years, was established (Beker, 2001b:364; Maunders, 2006:24; Villaruel et al., 2003:2).

In South Africa, the plight of young people became the focus of much attention when the youth fought against the Apartheid system between the 1960s and 1990s (Ntsabane & Tau, 2006 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:39). This was, in part, recognition of the key role played by the youth in liberating the country from the Apartheid regime, and a deliberate strategy of involving them in the reconstruction and development process as key players (National Youth Commission, 1997:4; Richter et al., 2005 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:39). Consequently, those responsible for rendering services to the youth intensified service provision with the support of donors sympathetic to the Apartheid cause.

1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Singh (2007:64) emphasised that there is a need for “*social research to be in place to design, plan, implement, and improve any development change process.*” For this to occur successfully, Bergman (2008:5) and Creswell (2007:5) assert that a researcher must have reasons and interest to conduct the inquiry. Fouché and De Vos (2005a:91) further specified that the interest should come from day-to-day activities and interactions in the work situation, thus leading to basic knowledge and

experience of the phenomenon under study. Additionally, Blaike (2000) as cited in Fouché and De Vos (2011:80) mentioned that the research should produce knowledge for understanding and action.

At the time of choosing the research topic, the researcher was a lecturer charged with the responsibility of placing students in organisations for experiential learning purposes. The researcher secured placements for students in government and non-government agencies. Most of those students were placed within the social service agencies under the supervision of Social workers. Although the placement experience afforded the students studying towards a degree in Youth Development an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the world of work, the researcher learnt through students' evaluation reports that there were problems faced by students, such as the negative attitude of some of the agencies' employees (predominantly Social workers); lack of capacity in utilisation of a youth development approach; and poor focus on serving the youth as the targeted client/s.

The researcher's interest was further shaped when she was employed by the national Department of Social Development and then given the responsibility of facilitating professionalisation of other social service occupations through the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) - a professional statutory body reporting to the national Department of Social Development. The priority list of occupations to be professionalised included: Child and youth care work, Youth work, Probation work, and Community development work. In that position, the researcher observed reluctance on the part of some Social workers in welcoming other emerging practitioners to the family of social service professionals. This was despite the fact that a Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006a:2) that revealed that there was a shortage of Social workers in the country and the demand to address the persisting challenges within the social service sector. This trend is however not foreign, because Gilbert and Specht (1981:266) observed that, "*when a non-professional occupation strives to obtain exclusive control over a service market by achieving professional status, it invariably encounters strong opposition to its aspiration from other interest groups.*"

It was mainly the support, cooperation, and in some instances, the lack thereof from the placement agencies that made the researcher to undertake this study. The aim is to understand the underlying attitudes, perceptions and opinions of social service professionals towards Youth work. By conducting this study, the researcher equally sought to expand knowledge and find answers to the concerns around the issue under investigation (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:254; Neuman, 2006:12). The researcher's present position as a senior manager responsible for overseeing youth development in the Presidency further propelled her to contribute to evidence-based decision making. It is envisaged that the information generated from this study could be used to advise policy makers and political principals on the future direction of Youth work within the borders of the South African community and probably beyond. This is essential as it would help indicate South Africa's position on Youth work, particularly in multilateral fora.

The recommendations of this study have the potential to contribute to good practice within government and non-government social service sectors, and institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the need and significance of conducting this social research cannot be ignored as it would satisfy the researcher's personal interest and curiosity. The study may also contribute towards making informed and rational, fact-based decisions by devising methods for resolution of problems and increasing knowledge as well as understanding of the research phenomenon (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:2; Fouché & De Vos, 2011:84).

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A problem statement conveys a specific problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:417); hence a research starts with the problem definition and ends with the problem resolution (Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:89; Singh, 2007:63). These authors further argued that the researcher must define the problem and solve it in the best possible way.

In this study, the researcher identified the emergence of Youth work in South Africa and its future status as a possible social service profession as a problem because:

- although social service professionals are providers of youth development services (Department of Social Development, 2007:56-57), they seem not to be prioritising young people as their target group, despite an increasing youth population (Statistics South Africa, 2011a), mounting and new challenges faced by the youth (The Presidency, 2009b:12-17; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:14), and global calls for nations to invest in youth (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2008:1; The Presidency, 2009b:6);
- there is a delay in finalising the professionalisation process despite international evidence showing that this field is worthy to be designated as a profession (Hahn & Raley; 1998:393; Maunders, 2006:24). The researcher conducted this investigation, because, as alluded by Gilbert and Specht (1981:433), sanctioning by the public and other professionals is an important requirement for establishment of a new profession;
- as part of service providers delivering services to the youth (Department of Social Development, 2007:56-57), the views of social service professionals on the emergence of Youth work are not known. The researcher deemed it crucial to close this research gap, particularly in view of youth development being a shared mandate;
- although, Sercombe (2010:7) believes that Youth work is a profession, regardless of whether it is recognised or not, or whether it organises itself that way, the researcher felt that there is a need to explore other different policy options alongside the option of professionalisation in order to weigh them and to inform policy decision taking with evidence base rationale.

Based on the specific problems enumerated above, the researcher identified a research gap that requires to be closed and of which this study seeks to fill.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In order to ensure that this problem is researchable, its meaning should have clear significance and utility for practice through building a convincing argument that demonstrates the usefulness of research in contributing to knowledge, relevant practice and the intended target population (Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:98; Fouché & Delport, 2011:107). Similarly, with this study, answering the research questions

would contribute to increased knowledge base in the field of Youth work and improve the practice for those involved.

Knowledge generated through this study would contribute to the growth and development of Youth work as a field of practice and could also be of practical value. It may assist policy makers in determining the future direction of Youth work, enable social service professionals and the general public to understand the practice better, and probably improve service delivery to the youth as service beneficiaries/recipients. This is crucial since there is a need to ensure that policy direction is guided by empirical evidence, and South Africa being one of the key players in the continent, should have a clear understanding of various issues, if she is to play a leading and exemplary role within and outside of the continent.

1.7 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The following are the goal and objectives for this study:

1.7.1 Goal

The goal of this study is to explore and describe the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa regarding the emergence of Youth work practice and its future status.

1.7.2 Objectives

The researcher identified the following objectives as a means towards attainment of the goal for this study:

- To identify, explore and analyse factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa;
- To explore the current scope and nature of Youth work services in South Africa;
- To determine whether Youth work should remain as an occupation, or recognised as an area of specialisation or an autonomous professional field of practice; and
- To analyse the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or an autonomous profession.

1.8 UNDERLYING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Through this study, the researcher sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa?
- What is the current status of Youth work in South Africa?
- What is the extent of involvement of South Africa's social service professionals in Youth work?
- What are the perspectives of South Africa's social service professionals regarding the future status of Youth work?
- What are the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or an autonomous profession?

The above questions fit the description of empirical questions, because they answer and address real life problems (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:4; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:105). This could lead to improved situation or solution of identified problems. The findings of this study could therefore add value to the current debate on the future of Youth work by contributing to and possibly guiding policy direction.

1.9 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is an applied research study that increases or expands the boundaries of knowledge in an endeavour to address and solve specific practical issues in a systematic manner with the support of verifiable facts (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:3; Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:105; Neuman, 2006:28).

The researcher followed a two-phased sequential mixed method research approach that mixes qualitative and quantitative methods (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:114; Bergman, 2008:53; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:6, 32; Flick, 2008:42). The qualitative approach was less-dominant whilst the quantitative one was dominant (Bergman, 2008:57). Data obtained from the primary qualitative method was used to inform secondary quantitative method in designing the measuring instrument used to collect quantitative data. The adopted exploratory mixed methods sequential research design, allowed for an exploration of the research topic by identifying qualitative themes, generating theories, and then using that exploration to guide the

subsequent quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:411; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:265).

Firstly, the researcher collected qualitative data that provided greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of the research situation from the point of view of the focus group participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:168, 292; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:37; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:76). The researcher selected a sample using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling techniques (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:166; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:112; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:177-178). The focus group members were selected from a population of recognised (i.e., Social workers, Child and youth care workers) and unrecognised social service professionals (i.e., Youth workers, and Community development workers). The total number of the population could not be determined due to practicalities of not having the contact details of individuals within that population.

In choosing the focus group members, the researcher employed “*maximum variation strategy*” that entailed selecting group members with similar, but different training backgrounds from different research sites (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:112; Greeff, 2005:299; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:90). One focus group was conducted in each of the four purposively selected South African provinces, namely: KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, Gauteng, and North West. Thus there were, in total, four (4) focus groups with members who were based in the specified research sites. There were eleven (11) focus group participants in Gauteng, nine (9) in Northern Cape, eight (8) in KwaZulu-Natal, and seven (7) in the North West province. On average, there were nine (9) focus group participants in each group and a total of thirty-five (35) focus group participants for all the groups combined. There was representation from all categories of social service professionals in the focus groups, viz., fourteen (14) Social workers, ten (10) Child and youth care workers, seven (7) Community development workers and four (4) Youth workers. A detailed breakdown of how the qualitative sample was selected is contained in *Annexure C*.

Data obtained from the focus group participants was then analysed, validated, interpreted, and its trustworthiness was determined. The qualitative results were presented and then used mainly to design a quantitative measuring instrument and to

also elaborate on or explain the quantitative results (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:358; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011: 6; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007: 15, 261; Rubin & Rubin as cited in Mouton, 2003: 196).

Secondly, the researcher selected a representative sample for the quantitative part of the study by using stratified random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling (Babbie, 2010:199, 215; Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 175). The research population of sixteen thousand eight hundred and eighty-six (16 886) recognised social service professionals was divided into three strata of one hundred and fifty-four (154) Educators, nine thousand and seventy-one (9 071) Social workers, and seven thousand six hundred and sixty-one (7661) Child and youth care workers.

Each stratum was then sampled separately as follows:

- (i) **Educators:** There was no sampling used in this stratum, because the population was small and the respondents were considered experts with demonstrable knowledge and experience on the research subject (Greeff, 2005:287-288; Singh, 2007:108; Strydom, 2005b:202). All 154 Educators (100% of the total population) were targeted as the research sample for this stratum, because they were few and their expertise would add value to the study.
- (ii) **Social workers:** To select a proportionally representative sample and to give each individual an equal and independent chance of being selected to participate in the study, the researcher used stratified random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:57; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172-175; Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:30). The stratified random sampling technique was used to divide the Social workers' population into nine sub-strata aligned to the nine South Africa's provinces. This was done in order to make comparison between different areas possible and to ensure sufficient proportional representation in the sample (Strydom, 2005b:200). The desired number of respondents was then selected proportionally in each stratum (province) using a simple random technique. Overall, of the nine thousand and seventy-one (9071) Social workers, one

thousand and eighty-five (1085) respondents (i.e., a proportional sample of 12% of the total population) were randomly selected to participate in the study.

- (iii) **Child and youth care workers:** Like Social workers, the same research procedure of using stratified random sampling technique was followed to select a sample from a population of Child and youth care workers. Of the seven thousand six hundred and sixty-one (7661) Child and youth care workers, nine hundred and fifteen (915) respondents (i.e., a proportional sample of 12% of the total population) were randomly selected to participate in the study.

In total, the quantitative sample breakdown consisted of two thousand one hundred and fifty-four (2154) respondents selected from a total population of sixteen thousand eight hundred and eighty-six (16 886) recognised social service professionals (i.e., 154 Educators, 9071 Social workers and 7661 Child and youth care workers). A breakdown of the composition of a quantitative sample is illustrated in *Annexure D*.

The researcher then collected quantitative data through administering a measuring instrument, attached as *Annexure H*. The measuring instrument was mailed by post or electronically or hand delivered (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:37; Delpont, 2005:167-168). Of the 2154 measuring instruments sent, only one hundred and fifty-one (151) completed ones were returned. There was a response rate of 7%.

As a result of that poor response rate, the researcher used convenience sampling method as an alternative method to further recruit the respondents to participate in the study (Babbie, 2010:192; De Vos, 2005:198-199; Singh, 2007:103, 107). The researcher posted or emailed or faxed or physically hand delivered or used personal and professional contacts in different research sites to deliver the measuring instrument (Delpont, 2005:168-169). In the end, a total of five hundred and ninety-three (593) respondents completed the measuring instrument. Quantitative data gathered was then captured, verified, analysed, and interpreted in order to keep it intact, complete, organised and accessible (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:51; Singh, 2007:82). The quantitative findings are presented in Chapter 6 of this research report.

A comprehensive description of the research methodology followed, is given in Chapter 5.

1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Extensive review of literature shows the way in which ethical considerations in research help to protect the interests of research subjects and serve as a basis for evaluating the researcher's conduct by dealing with what is good and bad or right and wrong through adhering to certain rules and conventions (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:85; Mouton, 2003:245-246; Strydom, 2011c:126-127).

The key ethics complied with include the following:

- **Ethics Committee:** The researcher duly considered that this study adheres to research ethics by ensuring general compliance, including submitting the research proposal to the Research Ethics Committee (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:87; Strydom, 2011c:126-127). In this case, the researcher submitted the proposal to the Faculty of Humanities' Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to see if it meets the set ethical requirements. The committee gave ethical clearance and granted the researcher permission to conduct the study – see *Annexure A*.
- **Permission:** The researcher obtained permission from authorities in various research sites to collect data from the focus group participants and respondents. Those authorities included the Director-General of the national Department of Social Development, the provincial Heads of Departments, the Heads of Departments in Universities, and managers in government departments and non-government organisations. The letter from the Director-General of the national Department of Social Development granting permission to conduct the study, and the one addressed to the provincial Heads of Departments seeking their support, are attached to this research report as *Annexure B*. These letters serve as examples of permission letters sent to authorities in various organisations. All these authorities granted the researcher permission to conduct the study in various targeted research sites

(Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:113; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:35). The use of this strategy enabled the researcher to build and keep relationship with the gatekeepers, thus making accessibility to organisations and consequently the ability to conduct research easier (De Vos, 2005:28; Glesne, 2006:44).

- **Consequences for human beings:** This refers to the protection of research subjects (i.e., focus group participants and respondents) against physical or emotional harm through provision of information on the potential impact of the investigation (Strydom, 2011c:113). In this regard, the researcher evaluated the research topic to ensure that it is not detrimental to the research subjects.

The anticipated consequences of the study were explained to the focus group participants prior to commencement of each session. The letter of consent that was distributed to focus group participants is attached as *Annexure E*. With regard to research respondents who completed the measuring instrument, a covering letter was attached to each measuring instrument. It was intended to debrief the research respondents on the purpose of the study, and to explain that there were no possible risks or harm that were physical, psychological or emotional that could emanate from participating in the study (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:36, 38; Mouton, 2003:244; Strydom, 2011c:115).

The researcher also explained fully every aspect of the study, including the goal and objectives and instructions on how to complete the measuring instrument. The explanation was done in advance, so that the choice they make would be an informed one (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:99; Strydom, 2011c:117). A sample of the covering letter and consent form are included as part of the measuring instrument on pages 1 and 2 of *Annexure H* respectively.

The potential benefits of the study were also highlighted and maximised (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:37). Over and above acting ethically by explaining the benefits of the study, the researcher even tried to “*convince the participants to participate*” in the study (Creswell, 2007:38). It was also emphasised that they may withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences.

- **Voluntary and informed consent:** The researcher requested voluntary participation of focus group participants and respondents (Creswell, 2007:123; De Vos, 2005:25; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:38; Strydom, 2011c:116). The consent forms were administered to the focus group members for the qualitative part of the study, and attached to each measuring instrument for the quantitative part of the study. This was done to allow the research subjects in both groups to give a written consent, and to offer them the choice of participating voluntarily, withdrawing or refusing to participate in the study, by explaining the possible risks involved in the study, as well as providing information as to who to contact in case of enquiries (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:99; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:85; Creswell, 2007:123; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:36). An example of the consent letter that was given to individual focus group participants is attached hereto as *Annexure E*.
- **Confidentiality:** The researcher guaranteed and assured the focus group participants protection of their privacy, which includes keeping their responses confidentially as a basic right (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:36; Strydom, 2011c:119). The respondents were also assured through the covering letter that the use of a unique number allocated to each measuring instrument will only be for the purpose of capturing data and will in no way compromise confidentiality or expose their views. The above authors linked confidentiality to the right to self-determination as well as violation of privacy. All these imply that individuals have the right and competence to evaluate available information, weigh alternatives against one another, and make their own decisions.

The researcher further requested the focus group participants to complete their biographical profile in order to determine their demographics. A sample of the profile form is attached hereto as *Annexure F*. The respondents who completed the measuring instrument were equally asked to complete the first part of the measuring instrument, which asked standard demographic information (refer to pages 5-6 of *Annexure H*). Of importance is that the focus group participants and respondents were all assured that the information provided and their identity will remain anonymous and that their privacy will be

safeguarded. For example, in the quantitative part, the research team in their interaction quoted the number rather than the name of the focus group participant (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:333; Strydom, 2011b:120).

The researcher then explained that, when disseminating the research findings, the information will be distributed in such a manner that it will not be linked to the identity of any focus group participant; and that the findings would be disseminated for professional purposes (De Vos, 2005:28; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:36). In adhering to the policy of the University of Pretoria, data will be stored for fifteen (15) years at the Department of Social Work and Criminology. By providing this information, the researcher was explaining the extent and limitation of confidentiality (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:99).

- **Credit for research endeavours:** The contribution made by each person in the study was acknowledged. This, according to Strydom (2005:65), refers to involvement either on a part-time or full-scale basis. In this case, the researcher compiled at the beginning of this research report a section on acknowledgements, specifying the roles of various contributors and contacted them before they were listed to ensure the correct spelling of their names, credentials and institutional affiliations (Grinnell, 1993:88). The researcher also acknowledges throughout this report, all data and information sources, and had accordingly compiled a list of references at the end (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:85). The aim was to recognise the contribution made by each contributor to this study (Strydom, 2011c:125).

1.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Even though this study looked at the emergence of Youth work by investigating the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa, the following limitations have been identified:

- The un-updated data base that lacked authentic addresses of individuals within the study population for quantitative part of the study led to elimination of some social service professionals prior to sampling. This narrowed the population to only those with authentic addresses. Further again, lack of

alignment between the demarcated provinces and postal area codes complicated the targeting process, because the provincial boundaries did not fully correspond with the areas of demarcation (Lombaard, 2004:1).

- For the qualitative part of the study, all categories of social service professionals were represented as focus group participants except the Educators. This is identified as a limitation for this study, because the qualitative findings cannot be generalised to this group and their expertise could not be tapped into. Nevertheless, the researcher compensated by targeting all Educators as respondents for the quantitative part of the study.
- The researcher excluded the unrecognised social service providers (viz., Youth workers and Community development workers) from participating in the quantitative part of this study, because there was no data base containing their contact details and it would have been difficult to track them. Although they were only included in the qualitative part of the study, their non-involvement in the quantitative part of the study presents a limitation, because they might have had different perspectives on the research topic and these could have probably led to different research findings and conclusions.
- When piloting the measuring instrument, the researcher hand delivered and emailed it to the respondents, mainly posted the measuring instruments to the respondents for the main study. The omission of using post when contacting the respondents in the pilot phase was a limitation to this study, because the pilot study was not fully executed in the same manner that the main study was planned to be executed. The researcher could possibly have been alerted earlier of the potential problems such as poor response rate, and then made necessary modifications, if the same methods that were used in the main study were also employed in the pilot phase.
- Collecting data from a Social work dominated sample resulted in occurrence of biasness towards this target group. This occurrence was despite the utilisation of random methods used to select quantitative sample with a view of offering the respondents equal chance of being selected. The sample bias emanated

from the domination of the overall research population by Social workers as well as the use of proportional sampling technique in an attempt to ensure representation. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised across different sample groups.

Additionally, a review of literature showed that the development of youth is the responsibility of various other professionals, including those not necessarily considered “*social service professionals*” as identified in this study, such as Teachers, Nurses and Religious leaders. Because the focus group participants and respondents in this study were recognised social service professionals, the findings cannot be generalised to unrecognised social service professionals as well as other categories of professionals in the youth development space. The findings of this study can therefore only be applicable to the targeted population, thus providing policy direction to their sector alone.

- The other omission in the measuring instrument was that of not combining different options as possible answer/s for the question on classification of Youth work. This would have provided the respondents with an opportunity to select two policy options if they preferred so. This limitation can therefore be redressed by future researchers.
- There was an increased number of missing values in the completed measuring instrument (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:225). This was due to the non-provision of neutral options (e.g., unsure/ uncertain/ do not know) and the unavailability of the researcher during the actual completion of the measuring instruments to provide clarity when complications were encountered (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:320). In this regard, the researcher only reported on observed cases.
- The use of a four-point rating scale in measuring some of the dimensions of the research variables became complex in the analysis and interpretation of the data, thus resulting in the researcher combining the ratings into binary scales for easy interpretation. This process presented a challenge as the

frequencies could not be used to obtain the average scores. The researcher had to use the mean to rank and weigh the magnitude of the responses.

- Furthermore, the scales within the measuring instrument were not tested for internal validity prior to them being administered as the tests. Internal validity was only conducted after collection of data and it was by default that on average, the sub-scales had high internal consistency. However, the results of the tests showed instances where few items were identified within particular factors, e.g., Factor 2 of the first Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), labelled Human resources and diversion factor in a scale measuring contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work as well as Factor 2 of the third EFA, labelled: Capacity creation and cohesion building. In both instances, four items were identified within each of this factors and these items, even though they constituted sub-scales, they did not adequately cover the content of the construct being measured (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:147).
- Further again, the results of Capacity creation and cohesion building showed moderate Chronbach's alpha, thus indicating moderate reliability of this sub-scale for the target population.
- Finally, lack of adequate information on Youth work as an area of specialisation limited the researcher's ability to analyse this policy option extensively as compared to the other two options of "*occupation*" and a "*profession*".

1.12 DEFINITIONS OF KEY CONCEPTS

This section describes the key concepts/words assigned to events in this study, thus allowing us to distinguish one event from the other (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:xv). According to Singh (2007:70), "*when the word is not in popular usage it must be preceded by a brief explanation.*" Similarly, the following key concepts are defined to clarify their meaning and to provide common understanding on how they have been used in the context of this study (Babbie, 2010:131; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:5; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011:509). The following is a description of the key concepts, some of which are related:

1.12.1 Youth or Young person:

Mufune (1999:358) defines *youth* as phase of life necessary for personal development and social placement.

Osei-Hwedie and Ndulo (1989:354) define *youth* as a person between 15-25 years. These authors further describe youth as a period between childhood and adulthood.

In South Africa, different cultures describe a *young person* differently. For example, in some cultures, there are rites-of-passage that mark transition from childhood into adulthood. So, whatever the age, it means that if you have not gone through the initiation school for circumcision, you are considered a minor (i.e., regardless of age), whereas if you have gone through that process, even if you are still a young person, you are considered an adult.

The National Youth Policy (NYP) of South Africa refers to *young people* as those falling within the age group of 14 to 35 years (National Youth Commission, 1997:3; The Presidency, 2009b:11). The age of majority in South Africa is eighteen (18) years, meaning that children are those between the ages of 0-18 years, and those above eighteen are considered adults (Children's Act No. 38 of 2005; *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996:14; Correctional Services Act No. 111 of 1998).

The African Youth Charter (AYC) defines *youth* as those aged 15 to 35 and minors as young people aged 15-17 years (African Union Commission, 2006:3).

The United Nations (UN) and the World Bank define youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:2).

For the purpose of this study the researcher bracketed the terms **youth** and **young person** together, because these terms are used interchangeably and are also synonymous with terms like adolescent and teenager. The age definition in the NYP was adopted, because this study is conducted in South Africa. It made sense to adopt the age bracket of 14-35, because it is broad and more inclusive compared to

the age ranges specified by both the AYC and the UN. The South African age definition also resonates well with the definition of youth as the period from puberty till attainment of full growth, with the age of 14 years marking the onset of puberty and the age 35 years marking attainment of full growth (*Random House Webster Dictionary*, 1992:1548).

1.12.2 Development:

Development is defined as a creative and/or purposive comprehensive and gradual growth, unfolding or maturation of a young person or a phenomenon (Osei-Hwedi & Ndulo, 1989:355).

According to the *Random House Webster Dictionary* (1992:370), *development* is defined as the act or process of developing through expansion of activities or opportunities.

Based on the above-stated definitions, **development** is herein defined as a process geared towards changing people by bringing opportunities that can change them, so that they reach the state of realising their maximum potential and consequently utilise that potential to function effectively within their social environment.

1.12.3 Youth development:

According to Charles (2006:45), *youth development*:

encompasses dynamic and sustainable patterns of programme development and delivery that reflects the needs and aspirations of young people. It is about providing young people with knowledge, skills and tools to help them to contribute to a politically stable, economically viable, and legally supportive environment that ensures their full participation as active citizens in their countries.

The National Youth Development Strategy for Australia (in Peteru, 2008:28) defines *youth development* as:

a process which prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive, series of activities and experiences which help them to become morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent.

Youth development is an on-going growth process that prepares all young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood, such as meeting their basic personal and social needs through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences, which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically and cognitively competent by promoting their assets such as improvement of skills, talents and abilities to enable them to function and contribute to their daily lives (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:328; Villaruel et al., 2003:7).

Benson and Pittman (2001:94) define *youth development* as a process that mobilises programmes, organisation systems and communities to build developmental strengths in order to promote the health and well-being, thus addressing and advancing the positive development of children and youth.

The NYP (The Presidency, 2009b:10) defines *youth development* as:

an intentional comprehensive approach that provides space, opportunities, and support for young people to maximise their individual and collective creative energies for personal development as well as development of the broader society of which they are an integral part.

In the context of this study, **youth development** refers to a process whereby young people, regardless of their situation, are equipped with necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies for their overall development to enable them to attain responsibility towards adulthood and to function effectively within their environment. This is a well-orchestrated approach whereby service providers design and implement interventions, and/or create opportunities aimed at bringing sustained development as well as improvement in the quality of young people's lives, so that they can make positive contributions to their communities and society.

1.12.4 Youth work:

Youth work is a professional service concerned with interaction between the youth and the social environment which affects their circumstances of living, and it is intended to assist youth to achieve their social development through encouragement of social, political and economic change involving them and their environment (Obbo, 1989 as cited in Osei-Hwedie, Mwansa & Mufune, 1990:7).

Merton and Payne (2000:8-9) define *Youth work* as a practice that is informal in approach and committed to: (i) supporting young people's personal, social and political development; (ii) making links between the local and global; and (iii) empowering young people to engage in critical analysis and taking action to bring about change.

Professional *Youth work* is a vocational practice undertaken by other professionals and groups who work with youth as well as specifically trained Youth workers (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:17).

The South African National Youth Policy (2009-2018), defines *Youth work* as a field of practice that focuses on the holistic development of young people (The Presidency, 2009b:31).

In this study, **Youth work** means an occupation or a field of practice, acknowledged as a potential social service profession by the SACSSP; is being practiced by Youth workers and service providers in other disciplines; and has the purpose of building skills and competencies of young people to enable them to positively address their physical, social, psychological, economic, cultural, spiritual and political conditions in order to improve the quality of their lives as well as that of their communities and society.

1.12.5 Occupation:

The Oxford English Minidictionary (1999:351) defines an *occupation* as a job or profession, a way of spending time.

Random House Webster College Dictionary (1992:936) refers to *occupation* as a person's usual or principal work, especially in earning a living. Any activity in which a person is engaged.

Occupation is a meaningful, purposeful principal activity (e.g., job or employment) that earns money (Department of Social Development, 2007:3).

Even though the above authors appear to use the term occupation and profession interchangeably, for the purpose of this study and in order to differentiate the terms occupation and profession, the researcher concluded that an **occupation** is the employment/ job/ work not registered by any statutory regulating body and for which a person is earning a living.

1.12.6 Profession:

The term *profession* refers to an occupation that involves liberal education or its equivalent, and is mental rather than manual labour (*Webster Comprehensive Dictionary*, 1998:1006 as cited in De Vos, Strydom, Schulze & Patel, 2011:14).

According to *Oxford English Minidictionary* (1999:407), a *profession* is an occupation requiring advanced learning.

A *profession* involves complex tasks, which are performed by skilful application of major principles and concepts rather than by routine operation of skills (Ralph Tyler, 1952 as cited in De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8).

However, in the context of this study, a **profession** refers to an occupation or a field of practice that requires advanced learning, involves complex mental application of scientific knowledge, skills, techniques, competencies, values and principles of that specific field and is recognised by a regulatory body as such.

1.12.7 Professional:

A *professional* is a person who requires extensive training to study and master specialised knowledge (Barker, 2003:341-342; Corney, 2004:7; *Webster Comprehensive Dictionary* in De Vos, Schulze & Patel, 2005:8) so that they can eventually be qualified and regarded as members in a specific profession.

A *professional* is a person belonging to a profession and therefore associated with control of entry to a particular profession (Leathard, 1994:6; *Oxford English Minidictionary*, 1999:407).

Contextualising these definitions to this study, the concept **professional** provides a description of personnel who are formally trained, qualified as experts, and whose practice is recognised by a regulatory body. In this study, professionals refer to Social workers and Child and youth care workers. This term even extends to other professionals such as Teachers, Nurses, Doctors and Lawyers.

1.12.8 Professional practice:

The term *professional practice* denotes the practice situation or the performance of a professional practitioner which is based on a scientific knowledge base (Delpont & De Vos, 2005:45).

When defining the term *professional practice*, reference is made to practitioners such as doctors or lawyers, whose performance of professional work is regarded as professional practice (*Oxford English Minidictionary*, 1999:399).

In this study, reference to **professional practice** is in relation to practices of recognised professionals such as Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Teachers, Nurses, Doctors and Lawyers.

1.12.9 Professionalisation:

The following are definitions of *professionalisation*:

“Professionalisation is a positive and progressive force which promotes general health of the social body that fosters social change in ways that minimise social conflict and disintegration” (Durkheim, 1933 as cited in Department of Social Development, 2007:6).

“The process of professionalisation implies the extent to which an occupation has developed towards the ideal model of the fully fledged profession” (De Vos, Schulze & Patel, 2005:8).

In this study, the process of **professionalisation** is the extent to which Youth work has advanced towards meeting the criteria of professionalisation and seeking to be recognised as a profession.

1.12.10 Specialisation:

Specialisation is the ability to adapt to a particular purpose and a *specialist* is an expert in a particular branch of a subject (*Oxford English Minidictionary*, 1999:496). *Random House Webster College Dictionary* (1992:1284) refers to *specialisation* as pursuit or devotion of a particular branch of study or line of work.

In this study, **specialisation** is pursuit of Youth work as a branch or component of the existing recognised social service professions, i.e., Social work and/or Child and youth care.

1.12.11 Social service:

The concept “*social service*” is defined broadly as well as narrowly as follows:

The *New Dictionary for Social Work* (1995:59) defines *social services* as “*programmes designed to help people to solve social problems and promote their social functioning.*”

According to Barker (2003:407), *social services* are the activities of human service personnel that seek to promote the health and well-being of people in order to help them become more self-sufficient by preventing dependency, strengthening family relationships and enhancing the social functioning of communities.

The Integrated Service Delivery Model defines *social services* as broader and comprehensive range of services relating to social welfare services and community development provided on a continuum to ensure the integration and sustainability of intervention efforts (Department of Social Development, 2005:13). In essence, social service professionals refer to the personnel rendering such services, i.e., Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Community development workers, Probation officers and Youth workers.

The Children’s Act No. 38 (2005:26) identifies *social service professionals* as Social workers, Probation officers, Community development workers, Child and youth care workers, Youth workers, Social auxiliary workers and Social security workers who are registered in terms of the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978.

In terms of the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978 and the South African Council for Social Service Professions (2006:3):

“social service professionals refer to categories of personnel registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professions and in terms of which professional boards have been established.”

In the context of this study, **social service professionals** refer to professional practitioners acknowledged or recognised by the SACSSP and these are Social workers and Child and youth care workers.

1.12.12 Child and youth care work:

According to the Department of Social Development (2007:48):

Child and youth care work is the professional practice which focuses on the holistic development of the infant, child and adolescent, capturing their root of caring as an underlying factor and force vital to their psychological, social, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being.

De Kock (1991) in Department of Social Development (2007:49), defines Child and youth care as:

Care that includes the physical, emotional and educational care of the child within the life space of the child, in various situations, whether in school, community or institution relationship. This care must contribute to the sound development of the child as a balanced adult.

The definition adopted by the Academy for Child and Youth Care Professionals, Child and Youth Care Education Consortium, International Leadership, Coalition for Professional Child and Youth Care and the South African Chapter of the National Association of Child and Youth Care Workers cited in the study by the Department of Social Development (2007:48) mentions that:

Child and youth care practice includes assessing client and program needs, designing and implementing programs and planned environments, integrating developmental preventative and therapeutic requirements into the life space, contributing to the development of knowledge and practice, and participating in systems interventions through direct care, supervision, administration, teaching, research, consultation and advocacy.

In this study, **Child and youth care work** refers to a field of practice which is recognised as a social service profession by the SACSSP and has a purpose of developing children and youth holistically in variety of settings through direct care and supervision that responds to their physical, emotional, educational and spiritual needs.

1.12.13 Social work:

Social work is an art, a science, a profession with activities that can be grouped into three functions: restoration of impaired capacity; provision of individual, family, group and community resources; and prevention of social dysfunction (Department of Social Development, 2007:23).

Pincus and Minahan (1973) cited in the Department of Social Development (2007:23) state that:

Social Work is concerned with the interactions between people and their social environment which affects the ability of people to accomplish their life tasks, alleviate distress and realise their aspirations and values. The purpose of Social work, therefore, is to (1) enhance the problem solving and coping capacities of people, (2) link people with systems that provide them with resources, services and opportunities, (3) promote the effective and humane operation of these systems, and (4) contribute to the development and improvement of social policy.

The International Federation of Social Workers as cited in the Department of Social Development (2007:24) mentions that “*Social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance their well-being.*”

In the context of this study, **Social work** means a professional practice recognised and regulated by the SACSSP and has the purpose of promoting social change, problem solving and enhancing the well-being of individuals, groups and communities to ensure better adjustment.

1.12.14 Educator:

An Educator refers to a person who imparts information/ knowledge/ skills to another person or group (*Random House Webster College Dictionary*, 1992:425).

In this study, an **Educator** means a person who teaches Social work and/or Child and youth care work.

1.13 OUTLINE OF THE CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This research report is structured and organised into seven (7) chapters. In Chapters 1 to 4, the researcher conducted a review of literature in order to place the phenomenon under investigation in the context of the general body of scientific knowledge (Strydom & Delport, 2011:288; Mouton, 2003:48). Chapter 5 on the research methodology follows, Chapter 6 presents the empirical findings and Chapter 7 highlights the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

The Chapters are unpacked below as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Overview of the study** - This is an introductory chapter that forms the basis of discussion for all other chapters (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:xxviii; Strydom & Delport, 2011:287). It introduces the study; analyses the situation; outlines the background; describes the motivation or significance of the study; mentions statement of the problem, specifies research goal and objectives, indicates underlying research questions that the study seeks to answer; provides a brief summary of the research methodology followed; stipulates ethical considerations; and concludes by defining the key concepts used in the study.
- **Chapters 2: Theoretical frameworks**- This chapter provides information concerning theoretical frameworks used in the study and the discipline from which they originated (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:xxviii; Mouton, 2003:48). The researcher discusses the various key theories underpinning Youth work to provide a better understanding of the context through explaining the reasons behind the origin of the selected theories and highlighting the manner in which they are connected to Youth work and/or youth development. This review is important as it constitutes the theoretical framework within which this study is situated.
- **Chapter 3: The current status of Youth work**- The researcher analyses the current situation of Youth work by looking at what is happening across the

world (international level), in the continent (regional level), and within the country (national level). The focus is on how the field of Youth work emerged as well as the current status, thus pointing to Youth work as an occupation. The national discussion further focuses on prioritised target groups, institutional arrangements, Youth workers' roles, and intervention strategies.

- **Chapter 4: The future status of Youth work-** This chapter is forward looking, because it looks at the future of Youth work. The researcher presents and analyses different scenarios or options. These options are, namely: maintaining the current status quo of leaving Youth work as an occupation; having Youth work as an autonomous professional field of practice; or having it as an area of specialisation within Social work and/or Child and youth care. The discussion goes further to look at the background of professionalising Youth work in the country, the status in meeting the required criteria, and the challenges that are experienced. The analysis of each of the scenarios concludes by specifying the pros and cons of following each course of action.
- **Chapter 5: Research methodology** – In line with what is proposed by Strydom and Delport (2011:289), in this chapter the researcher presents, in detail, the research methods and procedures followed (i.e., approach, design, sampling and sampling methods, data collection process, measurement issues, statistical procedures, data analysis). It is through this chapter that the researcher reveals the plan on how the research is conducted.
- **Chapter 6: Empirical findings** – This is where the researcher presents the findings, including analysed and interpreted data (Strydom & Delport, 2011:289).
- **Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations** – In light of the preceding discussion, in this final chapter the researcher summarises the conclusions reached based on a review of literature and empirical findings; highlights the consistencies and inconsistencies of the findings with the literature; indicates the implications for the study; and then finalises with recommendations (Strydom & Delport, 2011:289-290).

1.14 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter provided an overview of the study by looking at various aspects such as the background, motivation, goals and objectives, summary of research methodology and the outline of the research report. The information on these aspects provided the basis for the researcher's decision on the research topic and also specified its relevance and importance through preliminary review of literature on the subject matter (Mouton, 2003:122). The key concepts referred to in this study were also defined and a conclusion was reached on the definition of each within the context of this study.

Relevance of the situation of youth in South Africa, is the effect of *youth bulge*". The implication is to reposition youth development service delivery channel to respond to this demographic trend. By approving the policy that has Youth work as one of its policy imperatives (the Presidency, 2009b:31), the South African government has moved an inch towards the right direction. Implementation of this practice, which has a two-pronged to youth development is important since, because (i) service providers in the youth development space will be equipped with skills; (ii) mainstreaming efforts could improve; and (iii) service delivery for the youth will be enhanced. In the next chapter, the researcher lays out a vision by identifying, selecting and discussing the more relevant ideologies and theories that underpin Youth work practice. This requires acceleration of implementation.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having discussed an overview of the study and a summary of the research methodology followed in this study, the researcher now presents theoretical frameworks underpinning Youth work. Each theory/ ideology/ approach/ paradigm/ perspective (broadly referred to as ideology and specifically as theory) is a system of ideas, beliefs and values which are a perspective of looking at and explaining a phenomenon or predicting something (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:5; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:8; Delpont, Fouché & Schurink, 2011:301-302).

It is essential that the researcher discusses these theories, because they are of utmost importance, particularly to members of the applied research community since they provide organised, interconnected explanations and predictions by placing the purpose and content of the phenomenon being studied in context; presenting the current state of knowledge regarding the research problem; and playing an invaluable role in unearthing the unexpected (Bergman, 2008:48; May & Powell, 2008:1). According to these authors, this is achieved through determining the policy environment; highlighting how the phenomenon is perceived; what is known about it; what aspects should be emphasised; and what actions or decisions ought to be taken.

It is in the light of preceding discussion, that theories/ ideologies are also seen to be analysing experiences and issues from different levels of analysis. They reveal the connection, provide a better understanding of what influenced development of interventions, and indicate what we are trying to achieve (Bergman, 2008:48; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:4; May & Powell, 2008:1; Neuman, 2006:110). They will, therefore, offer better insight into the phenomenon under study.

Furthermore, the significance of studying theories is also due to the fact that various authors (Ricks & Garfat, 1989 as cited in Garfat, 2003:24; Turner, 1986:11, 12) support the view that theories/ ideologies provide frameworks for understanding the process of intervention and assist professional workers to be effective in their work. On that basis, some of the reasons for undertaking research include devising new theories and/or adapting existing ones to allow for changing circumstances and testing the continued applicability of particular theories to specific situations (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:2). These make theory presentation and analysis an important feature for this study.

In unpacking theories in this study, Youth workers and other service providers utilising a youth development approach would know what guides Youth work practice, anticipate future outcomes of their interventions, decide what to do next in each stage of the process, and explain why they acted the way they did when working with youth. These arrays of theories/ ideologies that arise out of, or are constructed by the attempts of others to describe practice, could assist workers to organise their interventions in a clear manner (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:18).

This chapter familiarises the researcher and the readers with important relevant selected theories/ ideologies that reveal how youth, youth development, and Youth work are seen. It recognises Youth work as a distinct practice underpinned by theory (Braodbent, 2006:54). The theories/ ideologies provide insight into dimensions and complexities of the problem, provide linkages to the current research, benefit from what others have done, integrate and summarise what is known, and stimulate ideas about the research subject (Neuman, 2006:111; Turner, 1986:3). In short, they allow the researcher and the readers to understand what is being studied and to see that in a different new light (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:xxvii; May & Powell, 2008:1). It is, however, important to note that, the examination of these theories will not result in a recipe book or a manual for Youth workers. They will in fact serve as a foundation that would enable Youth workers and other service providers responsible for youth development to understand and relate better.

Before the researcher considers in detail different theories/ ideologies that serve as frameworks for this study, it is worth commenting that by conducting this study, the

researcher seeks to contribute to theory development in this area. This is crucial given that there is a need for Youth workers to develop their own core models to justify why they do what they do and distinctly differentiate professionalism from non-professionalism through acquisition of skills that require prior or simultaneous mastery of the theory underlying that skill (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:4; Gilbert & Specht, 1981:243). Taking a cue from May and Powell (2008:2) that, “*theories vary according to their cultural and intellectual traditions under which they are conceived and from which they draw their inspiration.*”

On that basis the theories from the following three broad categories of ideologies relevant in studying society were selected (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:8):

- **The Functionalist or Structural Functionalist ideology** by Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) saw society like an organism and that it is structured into many parts, each with its own function. In this category, the researcher selected the ***Humanistic*** and ***Community Youth Development theories***.
- **The Interactionist ideology views** individuals and groups as actors in society and attaches social meaning and significance to their actions. Thus, through interaction with others we develop awareness and build concept of ourselves. In this category, the researcher selected the ***Positive Youth Development*** and ***Social Systems theories***. These theories focus on the way individuals and groups interact with each other in everyday life (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:17; Gilbert & Specht, 1981:228; May & Powell; 2008:3).
- **The Conflict or Marxist ideology** by Karl Marx (1818-1853) argues that there is inevitable change and conflict in society as individuals and groups struggle over scarce economic resources. Here, the researcher selected the ***Psychosocial*** and ***Advocacy theories***, both of which aim to create social change in the individual, evolving to and influencing groups in community and/or society. The intention is to bring about institutional reform through policy, social relations, and political action changes (Broadbent, 2006:53; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:3; Gilbert & Specht, 1981:228; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:7).

2.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Although these theories were originally developed to focus on different aspects of development, they have particular relevance for interventions in youth development settings, particularly in view of the fact that all professions are built on existing sciences (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2011:508).

Each of the above-selected theory is briefly discussed below.

2.2.1 Humanistic theory

In using this theory to gain an understanding of Youth work, the researcher focuses on Abraham Maslow's work that sees the capable intervention of individuals in the course of their life's events as shaping and influencing their own beings. This theory is premised from the point of view that, individuals have the capacity of taking action that will direct the course of their lives and enable them to cope with challenges. The assumption when applying this theory is to focus on the extent to which individuals utilised their abilities to respond to life's challenges in meeting their own needs (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; Vander Zanden, 1993:45).

According to Burger (2009:182); Vander Zanden (1993:45); as well as Chess and Norlin (1991:48), this theory perceives people as having within them an ability to take charge of their lives and foster their own development, thus being responsible for their actions. It also emphasises the individual's uniqueness and ability to foster healthy and positive ways through distinctively human qualities of choice, creativity, valuation and the ultimate development point: self-actualisation/ realisation.

Abraham Maslow (1968, 1970), as one of the leaders in humanistic psychology, identified a hierarchy of needs, which motivate people to attain the needs in the high level of the hierarchy symbolising full development (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; Vander Zanden, 1993:45). On the other hand Pittman, O'briel and Kimball (1993:8) as cited in Benson and Pittman (2001:94) as well as Hahn and Raley (1998:388) defined youth development as "*an on-going growth process in which all youth actively seek and are assisted to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, be spiritually grounded and to be build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute to their daily lives.*"

Abraham Maslow postulated that needs are arranged and ranked from lowest (bottom) to the highest level (top) in a hierarchical order (Burger, 2009:193-194; Chess & Norlin, 1991:49). He further maintained that it is essential for the needs at the bottom of the pyramid are satisfactorily met before going on to meet the needs at the next level.

Figure 2.1 below illustrates the hierarchy of needs, with the most survival and basic needs (physiological needs) appearing at the bottom of the pyramid and the growth needs at the top of the pyramid:



Figure 2.1: Pyramid depicting the hierarchy of needs

Each level of identified needs is discussed hereunder:

- **Physiological needs** – the need to satisfy physical needs such as hunger, thirst and sex drive. These needs have to do with the survival of an individual and are the most basic needs.
- **Safety and security needs** – the need to feel safe, secure and out of danger. Attainment of needs make an individual to have a sense of predictability including the measure of order in their world.
- **Social needs** – the need to belong, affiliate with others, to love, to be loved and accepted. If these needs are met, an individual will be able to form intimate relations in future.
- **Self-esteem needs** – the need to achieve, to be competent, gain approval and recognition, to respect others and self. When fulfilled, the self-esteem needs make people to feel confident, strong, useful and needed.

- **Self-actualisation needs** – It includes the need for beauty, order, simplicity and perfection, truth, justice and meaningfulness. At this level, an individual is encouraged to discover and realise his or her highest unique potential, and, in doing so, he or she becomes a fully functioning and goal oriented being or become everything he or she is more capable of becoming.

According to this theory, the needs at the bottom of the pyramid (first two levels) are the most basic and fundamental needs, whereas the ones on the third and fourth levels are the psychological needs, and finally at the top of the pyramid is the self-actualisation need (Burger, 2009:193; Vander Zanden, 1993:46). Of importance is that, even though Maslow said the needs at each level can be partially satisfied at any given moment, how well lower needs are satisfied determines how much those needs influence behaviour (Burger, 2009:196). Attainment of basic human needs at the top of the pyramid is consistent with “*positive youth development*”. This has been defined as, “*a process which prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically and cognitively competent*” (Chess & Norlin; 1991:49; Damon, 2004:12).

This perspective is a turnaround for the practice since Abraham Maslow did not relate the need to satisfy survival needs to any age level. It therefore means that the Youth worker’s role would be to involve, motivate and enable young people to participate in the process of meeting their needs as this could be of utmost importance to their individual development (Chess & Norlin, 1991:50). As the change agent, the Youth worker should strive to unleash young people’s yet to be tapped potential through meeting their basic human needs (Krauss & Strauss, 2008:8).

Against the above background, the researcher aligns herself with Du Toit (1986) in Meyer, Moore & Viljoen (1997:456) and concludes that the environment ought to provide opportunities and space in which self-actualisation can take place. Similarly, an enabling environment must be created for the youth to meet their needs in all these different levels, including attaining the ultimate development.

2.2.2 Community youth development theory

This theory highlights the importance of strengthening communities, so that they can be functional in nurturing and supporting young people, thus ensuring sustainable development (Benson & Pittman, 2001:9; Villaruel, Perkins, Borden & Keith, 2003:2; Wheeler, 2000:11). In this context, the emphasis is on empowering and developing youth, so that they will in turn contribute positively to the development of the communities that have built them (Lerner, Brentano, Dowling & Anderson, 2002:28). This will contribute to cohesive communities.

Various authors indicated that the way to improve the lives of individual young people is to improve communities in which they live and to make them better places (Jarvis, Sheer & Hughes, 1997:722; Villaruel et al., 2003:2). Therefore, this theory attempts to involve young people in improvement of their lives and their own development as well as that of their communities. In that regard, the asset-rich communities are seen to be giving young people the resources needed to build and pursue healthy lives that make a productive contribution to self, family, and community (Lerner et al., 2002:28).

Therefore, the assumption that “*healthy communities will nurture and support healthy families and individuals*” holds some truth (Villaruel et al., 2003:2). It is for these reasons that this study sees young people as underutilised resources in their communities (Wheeler, 2000:11). The community youth developmental theory attempts to highlight the importance of changing the environment (community) within which young people live. This could be achieved by significantly involving them to participate in the development process for their own good as well as that of their communities (Benson & Pittman, 2001:9; Hahn & Raley, 1998:389; Wheeler, 2000:11). The utilisation of the strengths of an individual and the community will lead to a direct process of change (Benson, 2002:124).

In addition, the community youth development theory views Youth work as part of community development and reform (Broadbent, 2006:52). Converging youth and community development is necessary, taking into account factors that have weakened the African value of interdependence once available to young people by

substituting them with the western value of individualism (Arnett, 2001 in African Union Commission, 2010:17). This change is attributed to factors such as changed community structures (e.g., nuclear versus extended family); changed cultural practices (e.g., collectivism versus individualism); changed family circumstances (e.g., working parents, disorganisation in families). According to Van Kampen, Beker and Wilbrink-Griffioen (1996:54), these changes have an impact on the nature and content of young people's development, how they react to available opportunities and services, and their position in society. Further again, the function of the community of reinforcing the socialization role of the family, could also be affected (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:15). The implication is that young people would no longer have the same support from their communities as they used to have in the past.

Evidently with these changes, the role of Youth worker could be that of ensuring that both changed structures and practices, respond to the needs of young people (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:12). In this case, the Youth workers' role could be that of creating an enabling environment within which young people could thrive by ensuring that they acquire personal and social assets to strengthen themselves, their community support structures, and to consequently assisting the them to adapt to the changing environment (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:10). The additional Youth workers' role would also be that of inculcating a sense of historical continuity by assisting youth to remain connected to their communities through understanding how they came to be who, what, and where they are now (Krauss & Suandi, 2008:12).

This emphasis of working with youth and communities as partners in effecting changes within the systems will empower both parties whilst fostering continuous engagements and connections which are supposed to be of mutual benefit (Broadbent, 2006:53; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:12; Krauss & Strauss, 2008:12). Therefore, communities must commit to making youth development a priority for their time, resources, and policy initiatives (Villaruel et al., 2003:389). Similarly, young people in communities must also have a moral orientation to sustain future generations as well as a society marked by social justice, equity, democracy and a world wherein all young people may thrive (Lerner et al., 2002:22).

As a result, the emphasis of this theory is on assisting young people to see value in a caring society; and for society to see value of investing in youth (Peteru, 2008:33).

2.2.3 Positive youth development theory

This theory contrasts those that have focused on problems experienced by youth as they grow up. It looks at the capabilities, developmental potentials, and in increasing thriving behaviours of youth rather than on their deficiencies (Damon, 2004:14; Peterson, 2004:14; Peteru, 2008:28). By enforcing these traits, an individual's assets are built thus protecting him or her from health compromising behaviours, enhancing the opportunity for positive developmental outcomes, and building his or her resiliency in an effort to counter problems that may affect them (Benson, 2002:125; Peteru, 2008:28).

In essence, this theory addresses young people from a balanced and positive perspective, as it views them as resources rather than problems. According to Lerner et al. (2002:11), it stresses that positive youth development emerges when the potential plasticity of human development is aligned with developmental assets. It conceives young people from a strength-based point by recognising that their unending potential is consistent with their strengths (Benson, 2002:125; Damon, 2004:14; Peterson, 2004:14; Villaruel et al., 2003:1).

Of importance is that, even though the positive youth development theory applauds involvement and participation of young people in development processes, it acknowledges this effort as being insufficient and that more effort should be made for youth to channel their energies to "*positive directions*" as this would make them to do things "*responsibly*" whilst encouraging institutional support (Peteru, 2008:28). This theory therefore motivates young people (regardless of their problems) to use their potential to the fullest and also encourages them to seek and receive support from the human environment (e.g., family, peer group, the school, community). The role of the Youth workers would be to create an enabling environment in order to produce positive youth who can contribute to their families, communities, and society (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:77).

The positive youth development theory is based on the five P's identified by Villaruel et al. (2003:353) and highlighted below as follows:

- **Possibilities and preparations** - what opportunities are available for youths in communities? This refers to creation of opportunities that will develop young people in every aspect of their lives e.g. physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually, socially, and emotionally (Merton & Payne, 2000:9). Pittman (1993:22) asserts that programs should provide opportunities for youth to develop in variety of ways and help them to avoid risk factors that interfere with good outcomes.
- **Participation** - do we know how youth are spending their out of school time? This approach aims to understand, educate and engage youth (Damon, 2004:15). It is essential that young people not only identify, but that they should accept their responsibilities as individuals, citizens, and group members. Youth participation gives a voice to young people by shaping the course of their development through encouraging them to take part in influencing processes, involved in collective decisions and outcomes in order to achieve justice, influencing outcomes, exposing abuses of power and realising their rights (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:12; United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child, 1989 as cited in Peteru, 2008:25).

By participating in decision making at local, national, and global level, young people are offered an opportunity to be part of the solutions rather than problems (Merton & Payne, 2000:9; Peterson, 2004:64-68). A situational analysis report of young people in the Netherlands revealed sensibility to young people's contribution as the starting point for coherent integrated approach of responding to their needs (Van Kampen, Beker & Wilbrink-Griffioen, 1996:1).

Merton and Payne (2000:6) further identified education for sustainable development as a vehicle to be used to equip the youth with knowledge, values and skills to participate in decision making that will improve the quality of their lives. Brown (2004:11) argues that decision making is part of an

individual's human capital and therefore engaging young people in decision making process will empower them and promote their livelihoods. In this context, the Youth workers and those responsible for development of youth, have a critical role to play when it comes to empowering and developing young people.

- **People** - who are the people interacting with youth daily? Who is in charge of youth programmes? Merton and Payne (2000:8) identified Youth workers to be in charge of youth programmes. On the other hand, Benson and Pittman (2001:4) highlighted investment and involvement of public and private sectors and the wider community as crucial for youth development (Benson, 2002:139). By defining youth development as what parents do for their children in a good day, the President of the National Urban League highlighted the importance of family in daily interaction with young people and the need to sustain these relationships (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94).
- **Places and pluralism** - what resources are available for young people? How can they be accessed? This involves evaluating the resources which young people can use to meet their needs and maximise their potential (Merton & Payne, 2000:10). This will entail, checking availability of opportunities, resources and support systems necessary for the development of young people (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94). The service providers in the youth development sector have a role to play in mobilising resources for the youth.
- **Partnership** - are youth included as partners in the planning and implementation processes of programmes that affect them? This view argues for involvement of young people in decision making structures which affect their own and other young people's lives. A sense of ownership could be fostered by engaging youth to become proactive in their development and also to involve them in decision-making processes (Benson, 2002:140).

From the above, it is evident that this theory is consistent with the definition of youth development, because it considers the underlying causes of problem behaviours and stresses positive outcomes for the youth. These outcomes are known as the five C's

and include competence, confidence, character, connection and contribution or caring (Lerner et al., 2002:24-23; Villaruel et al., 2003:7; Wheeler, 2000:11). The positive youth development theory is also compatible with both the right based approach and sustainable livelihood approaches. It focuses on knowledge and decision making as part of the capital base, personal and social development of young people, building the capacity of individuals and groups to develop a stronger sense of identity and belonging, putting young people and their concerns at the centre by recognising their current livelihood strategies, social environment and their adaptability as well as ensuring that young people contribute to the development of the community or society in which they live (Brown, 2004:11-12; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:6; Merton & Payne, 2000:10).

Of particular importance is the fact that this theory directly contributes towards achievement of the identified purposes of Youth work (Merton & Payne, 2000:9), namely:

- identification and development of young people's capacities – physical, moral, spiritual, social and emotional;
- identification and acceptance of young people's responsibilities as individuals, citizens and group members; and
- evaluation of the context within which young people live and act.

By implementing positive youth development theory, young people will see themselves and be perceived by others from a strength and positive perspective. They would be seen as resources, experts of their own development with capacities and potential, and as having abilities to make meaningful contributions rather than being perceived as problematic and having deficits or behaviours that need to be eliminated (Hahn & Raley, 1998:388; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:6). If interventions are strength-based, they will help young people to further develop an orientation to contribute to their communities and society (Lerner et al., 2002:23; Wheeler, 2000:13). The Youth workers' role in this regard would be to "*help the youth to attach positive social meaning and significance to their actions*" (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:17).

2.2.4 Social systems theory

The social systems theory is a holistic theory which is based on the basic assumption that “*the whole is more than the sum of its parts*” (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:96). It was developed largely in response to the need for different disciplines to analyse the complex interactive situations in which various system consists of smaller elements or subsystems and larger suprasystems, impinge upon the life of an individual (Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:430). How these systems interact must be understood.

In this context, development is seen as a product of interaction between the individual and various other systems of which an individual may be or may not be an active participant. The role played by these systems in shaping an individual’s behaviour must be scrutinised and analysed as a means towards ensuring adaptive process of reorganisation and growth. Importantly, the role played by the environment in the development process should equally be given attention (Benson, 2002:127; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:430; Garfat, 2003:71; Lerner et al., 2002:13).

This theory further views an individual as an organism and a member of society, because it immediately sees interaction between the individual and his or her situation or environment (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:55; Lerner et al., 2002:7). When the systems theory is applied to the field of Youth work, interaction between youth and their situations and the way the youth are affected by these interactions influence whether or not the individual youth will develop positively or negatively (Benson, 2002:138; Lerner et al., 2002:7). The effort to change outcomes will consequently not only be directed at young people themselves, but would also be better directed at the system in which young people are caught up.

In support of this view, Garfat (2003:71) stated that, “*when working with youth on particular behaviour, Youth workers can often get lost inside the immediate dynamics and ignore the much more powerful and pervasive influences that are really within their sphere of ability.*” It means that when Youth workers analyse the causal factors that hinder or advance young people, they should avoid the greater likelihood of focusing on influences that are on the surface as those could probably be symptoms. They must instead focus on the root causes of the conditions that take into consideration the full context of young people’s lives (Wheeler, 2000:11).

The social systems theory also takes into consideration the fact that young people are part of various systems that are dynamically connected to the environment of which they are part (Anfara & Mertz, 2006:96). They impact these systems and they are also impacted by them (Davies, 2004:380). Each of these systems is also interacting with others and being influenced by them and vice versa (Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:431). Therefore, effort to change should be better directed towards the systems in which young people are caught and also at young people themselves (Davies, 2004:380; Lerner et al., 2002:13). It means that, in as much as it is important to understand young people, the various types of systems that may have influence on them should equally be studied and clearly understood.

Various authors identified the following types of systems (Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:431-433; Garfat, 2003:71; Lerner et al., 2002:13):

- **Intrapersonal system** - refers to a system within the individual. It involves factors within a person that have an influence on them, e.g., attitude, perception, emotion, cognitive, competencies and skills. These factors develop gradually over time as a result of socialization and experience and have an influence on the individual person. At this level, changing the self to support the systems and/or altering the systems to support the self, requires skills on the part of the individual to regulate the relations in order for development to occur.

- **Interpersonal or micro or socio cultural systems** - refer to system/s between an individual and small other systems, e.g., dyads, family, friendship group, peer group, work group and church. It involves patterns of activities, roles, interpersonal relations which an individual, has with these systems. They emerge through constant exposure to informal interactions; are reinforced by a larger network of community institutions and have an impact on the individual's behaviour. Accordingly, developmental systems stresses the need to strengthen linkages between developing individuals and their changing family and community settings, hence Lerner et al., (2002:15) mentioned the significance of involving a young person in healthy, positive relations with these systems in order to lead to positive development.

- **Mesosystems** - refer to interrelations between two or more systems such as neighbourhood, educational and career opportunities, local political environments, public policy and economic systems. These factors encourage an individual to become an actor within the community and consequently being of value and useful within it. The presence or lack of these factors in the environment within which an individual lives, affect the way they turn out to be.
- **Socio-economic or macrosystems** - entail more broad systems that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, e.g., economic conditions, social conditions, political changes, national issues, and environmental concerns that have impact on the well-being of young people. Although these are external factors in the environment and are usually beyond the control of an individual, they have adverse effect on their development. For example, the socio-economic background of an individual youth may influence the availability of opportunities for education and in turn affect the employability of that individual.

From the beginning of existence, humans have been linked to these systems for survival and the state of these systems affects and influences the development of an individual (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:15). It is, therefore, critical that positive relations are fostered through ensuring that the systems in the social environment respond to the individual's needs whilst promoting their productive functioning and healthy development. According to Lerner et al. (2002:22) such development enables young people to become adults who would ideally, contribute to self and context in a way that maintains and perpetuates the social order and advances social justice.

From the above analysis, it is clear that all systems, from small to broader ones, have an influence on a person's behaviour or state. Change in one part of the system is likely to have an effect on the other parts (Jones & Pritchard, 1980:63), hence these systems, use feedback mechanisms to identify and respond to environmental changes and to maintain organisation of their parts when they constantly change to ensure adaptation (Chess & Norlin, 1991:40; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:432). The challenge for Youth workers would be to support the systems and settings that directly influence young people's lives and to ensure that the environment provides

necessary resources (input) for the survival of the system whenever possible by involving these systems in the treatment process (Benson & Pittman, 2001:187; Chess & Norlin, 1991:40).

Most importantly, systemic thinking assists the Youth worker to resist the urge to blame other people, especially parents for the past. It encourages various role players to interact, relate, and work together when participating in interventions (Jarvis, Sheer & Hughes, 1997:725). This theory goes even broader to include the contribution of various sectors as cited by Benson and Pittman (2001:120, 144) that youth development should be viewed as an investment whereby precedence is given to the interrelated role of different sectors in the wider community (e.g., private and public sectors). Additionally programmes, organisations, systems and communities should be mobilised to build development strengths in order to promote the health and well-being of young people since the onus for change is not on the client system alone (Turner, 1986:519).

This theory seems to be embracing the definition of youth development. It takes into consideration the full context of young people's lives, recognises that people grow up in several interconnecting and overlapping systems, and that they are integral parts of their social networks (Wheeler, 2000:11). In view of this, Turner (1986:486) highlighted the need for development and maintenance of healthy and fulfilling human living being a result of an influence of biological, psychological, interpersonal, significant environment and systems. This theory is thus relevant to this study as it gives an understanding of utilising young people in various settings whereby a multitude of factors that have a bearing influence on their development are examined to better help them achieve their potential in a satisfying and fulfilling way.

The researcher is therefore of the opinion that this approach can be effectively utilised in Youth work in order to identify and engage various systems in the process of development and allow each of them to play their role thus contributing maximally to development of the youth. The relevance of using this theory when dealing with young people cannot be ignored, especially since there is a need for collaboration across various systems that have common purpose of building the developmental strengths of young people (Benson as cited in Lerner et al., 2002:139).

2.2.5 Psychosocial theory

The Psychosocial theory asserts that, human life is produced by unique interaction and modification of the three major systems: the biological system, the psychological system, and the societal system (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:17; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:109; Erikson, 1963 as cited in Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:412). According to these authors, **biological system** includes all processes necessary for physical functioning of an organism (e.g. sensory capacities, motor responses and circulatory processes), **psychological system** includes mental processes central to the person's ability to make meaning of experiences and take action (perception and memory, emotion, problem solving ability and cognitive maturity), and **societal system** includes processes through which a person becomes integrated into society (shift in social roles of adolescence, rituals, social expectations and family organisation).

This theory further highlights the continuation of interaction between these systems and the fact that the meaning of a given behaviour pattern or change ought to be understood in the context of significant physical, psychological, cultural and social environment within which it occurs (Davies, 2004:161; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:413). The researcher selected this theory, because it focuses on the importance of early experience in personality growth. The psychosocial theory by Erik Erikson (1950) in Commonwealth Secretariat (2001d:15) provides a helpful frame of reference as it identifies and analyses the eight psychosocial stages of development determined by the human genes across the life span. It is built on the idea that emotional social growth progresses through different stages, each with its own unique ego accomplishments (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:16; Erikson, 1964 as cited in Osei-Hwedi, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:12).

This theory discovered that the process of living from birth to death consists of an individual working her way from one stage of development to the next (Erickson, 1964 in Osei-Hwedi, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:12). It argues that social problems are a result of unsuccessful negotiation of what happens in each stage. For example, South African Youth Workers Association (2001:30) asserted that young people negotiate a series of transitions including from primary to secondary education,

school to work and family home to independent living. The psychosocial theory provides an opportunity to explore the potential conflict that may arise in each developmental stage and determines the way in which that would significantly affect the manner in which an individual negotiates the crises (Davies, 2004:161; Erikson, 1963 as cited in Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:413). Of more relevance to this study is the effect of young people's early experiences on their current and future experiences.

The following psychosocial stages with specified approximate ages are applicable to this theory:

- Stage 1 - **Trust versus Mistrust** (Birth - 18 months): This stage is characterised by the need for regular, reliable, and loving care that may lead to the development of trust. Failure to provide such care may result in a sense of mistrust.
- Stage 2 - **Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt** (18 months - 3 years): This is where children develop a sense of separate identity and independence that may also lead to anxiety about separation, a sense of inadequacy, and/or feelings of shame and doubt.
- Stage 3 - **Initiative versus Guilt** (3 - 6 years): At this stage, children plan and act independently. If they are not allowed to initiate, experiment and implement their plans, they may feel guilty. This stage is critical for the development of the conscience.
- Stage 4 - **Industry versus Inferiority** (6 - 12 years): Interaction with peers and significant others is important in development of self-esteem, but the lack thereof may lead to inferiority.
- Stage 5 - **Identity versus Role confusion** (12 - 20 years): Identity formation is a critical task of youth development or the youth will remain confused about the role they ought to play as adults.
- Stage 6 - **Intimacy versus Isolation** (20 - 35 years): The emphasis is on achieving balance by forming close and intimate relations. The difficulty of engaging in such relationships may lead to isolation.

- Stage 7 - **Generativity versus Self-absorption or Stagnation** (35 years - retirement): This involves commitment to help and to provide for the next generation, care for other people, and the need to pass knowledge and traditions. If this need is not met, a feeling of stagnation or being obsessed with oneself could develop.
- Stage 8 - **Integrity versus Despair** (retirement): Integrity refers to realistic acceptance of one's life as it is (accepting successes/ strengths as well as failures/ weaknesses). In contrast, despair implies bitter regret and lack of acceptance of one's life. This stage involves looking back at one's life and then taking stock of one's failures and successes.

Of relevance to this study is that what happens in stages 5, 6, and 7. These stages were identified, because they cover the youth period which ranges between 14 - 35 years. In stage 5 (14 - 20 years), the youth experience identity versus identity confusion when they strive to establish their own separate identity through work, peer relationships and separation from parents by beginning to have their own views of themselves (Benson, 2002:13; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:18). In stage 6 (20 - 35 years), young people experience the need for intimacy and failure to attain that could lead to isolation. Finally, in stage 7 (35 years), older youth yearn to provide for the next generation and failure to do so could lead to obsession with oneself.

Since each stage, according to Hamacheck (1988:354) and Vander Zanden (1993:39, 40), is a critical building block for the next or subsequent stage, the manner in which it is negotiated can either enhance or hamper the ultimate personality development. The successful negotiation of each stage leads to development of new social capabilities and societal approval; whereas unsuccessful negotiation leads to a psychosocial crisis that may produces tension (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:16).

Whatever the outcome, the person's general orientation to the next succeeding stages could be influenced. Therefore, when working within this model, it would be important to help the youth to negotiate their current stages in preparation for the future, and to also help them deal with the barriers that developed as a result of their

early experiences (Hamacheck, 1988:354; Vander Zanden, 1993:39). This is unavoidable since, traditionally, families (to be more specific, adults) as the primary socialization agents, have the responsibility of supporting and assisting the younger members (Krauss & Suandi, 2008:4). However, with the increase in family breakdown, changes in community structures, and erosion of traditions, these traditional methods have become less effective in facilitating young people's successful transition to adult life (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:10; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:4). This is because the elders have now lost their once powerful influence on socialization.

In view of the above stated argument, the report by the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002:47), mentioned that progress from one stage to the other does not only depend on physical and cognitive assets of an individual, but also on the social support available for that individual. As a result, from the point of view of this theory, there is an undisputed need for young people to be supported throughout their developmental stages.

The Youth workers and other service providers, in undertaking their roles, would be supplementing the families by providing the much needed services to the youth such as developing and providing programmes, assisting them to negotiate the tasks applicable to their stage at a given point in time, and ensuring that they successfully pass through each stage and/or deal with the difficulties experienced in handling the tasks designated to them by previous stages of their development (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:10).

The above view is supported by Meyer, Moore & Viljoen (1997:203) as they confirmed that "*at each stage, people can rectify whatever problems that have arisen in the course of their development.*" It is, therefore, in the course of relating to significant others in their immediate communities, that they will receive feedback that assists them in making corrections whenever necessary. On that basis, all sectors of society most central to the young people and their families, productive and collaborative partners, must be active in promoting thriving behaviours of young people (Lerner et al., 2002:4).

2.2.6 Advocacy theory

This theory is cited as one of those underpinning Youth work. It is based on a pluralist view that sees society's social problems as emanating from inequitable distribution of power and resources (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:12). It is argued that the struggle for social resources is caused by groups that are more powerful than others. This theory sees young people as being involved in a struggle for and against equalising power relations and control exerted over young people by adults (Peteru, 2008:26). This struggle between generations manifests itself in problems such as lack of respect for young peoples' rights and society's failure in protecting young people's rights (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:12; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:13).

It is on this basis that Youth workers and other service providers in the youth development space, have to play the role of advocates who act on behalf of and with these youth to "*create conditions for them to discover themselves and give meaning to their lives*" (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:12; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:7). In South Africa, there is now emphasis placed on educating young people, thus preparing them for the workplace. However, it has been revealed that whereas schools play a crucial role in providing young people with general educational abilities on which everything else is built, services to young people, alongside schools, will help those youth to develop life, social, and workplace skills and attitudes (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:9).

2.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The above theories and perspectives seem to play an important role in the development of young people. They are useful in guiding Youth work practice. The researcher agrees with various authors that no single theory can be used to explain a specific phenomenon (Chauhan, 2001:49; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:408, 435; Park, 2004:50). It will, therefore, be essential that, even in this study, an "*eclectic*" approach that combines all these theories be used to develop intervention strategies that will respond to broad and varied needs of young people.

This chapter has therefore explored theoretical frameworks underpinning Youth work; an important step in the direction of building the theoretical body of knowledge as a foundation for Youth work practice. After describing ideologies/ theories of Youth work practice, the researcher now turns to look at how this practice evolved. The assessment of the history of Youth work would show how the various theories helped shape the current status of Youth work, thus further advancing two of the objectives of this research of (i) highlighting the factors that contributed to emergence of Youth work, and (ii) exploring the current scope and nature of Youth work services in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

THE CURRENT STATUS OF YOUTH WORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Although the main focus of this study is on the South African context, it comprises a detailed analysis of the situations at international and regional level. The researcher sees the aim of this study as also targeted at contributing to debates on Youth work in these contexts. In this chapter, the researcher looks at the current status of Youth work at international, regional and national levels. This is crucial to the achievement of one of the objectives of this study, namely: to identify, explore and analyse the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work as a new field of practice in South Africa and to describe the scope and nature of services involved.

In light of the foregoing, the factors that led to evolution of Youth work are described in order to: understand the origin, assess the current status in relation to the influences of the past, and examine tasks that still need to be carried out in the present in order to determine the future (Kelly, 1990:168, 175; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187). Understanding the local and regional situations of youth is important and has implications for social and economic development in the world today (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:9).

3.2 THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

In this section, the researcher looks at the origin as well as the current state of Youth work internationally to ensure that whatever action is taken in South Africa is aligned to global trends. The international outlook is a consequence of a “*borderless world*” and “*global village*” for which youth are poised than ever before to participate in and benefit from (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2; May & Powell, 2008:265).

The review of literature shows that, evolution of Youth work dates as far back as the nineteenth century and primarily came as a result of concerns over population trends

that illustrated an increase of youth population at an increasing rate as compared to other population groupings. This trend was supported by complexity and uniqueness of the various problems facing youth such as unemployment and poverty, industrial revolution, urbanisation, immigration work with street children, and the changing nature of family life (Broadbent, 2006:52; Maunders, 2003:14; Ryan, 2003:53-54). This led to a collapse of traditional roles played by young people. It was the lack of replacement roles that reflected in panics about problems such as juvenile delinquency.

Of further interest is that, even though young people aged between 15 and 24 make up 25% of the global working age population, their share in total unemployment is 43.7% (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:13). All these factors led to a further key concern about the time youth spent outside work (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:53; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:53).

Subsequent to that, there was a rise in the use of a youth development approach by professionals and volunteers working with young people on day to day basis in other settings and contexts other than schools. Those workers engaged young people in activities that focused on morality, welfare, recreation and leisure, thus causing a reaction amongst youth to debate and raise their voices at different fora (*Encyclopaedia of Social Work*, 1995:2561; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:xi; Ryan, 2003:52).

As the focus on youth development intensified, it resulted in evolution of youth development movements such as Salvation Army, Boys Brigade, Young Men's Christian Association, Girls guides, scouts; which derived their legitimacy from local communities (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:13; Maunders, 2006:31). Those movements introduced youth focused interventions and programmes which were intended to protect the poor deprived youth and to organise their leisure and recreation activities in order to assist them to cope with the problems they were experiencing. The interventions were also intended to support increased allocation of human and financial resources for youth development (Jefferies & Smith, 1990:16; Maunders, 2006:21; Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:38). The activities run by

the above stated movements were often informal and targeted children and youth who could not access formal education due to poverty. The increase in these movements saw intensive utilisation of a youth development approach by professionals in other disciplines as well as emergence of structured Youth work practice by workers dedicated to serving youth in a wide range of settings through individual and systemic change (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:20). This expansion from individuals to systems led workers to become involved with youth in settings such as:

- Community Based Organisations, where activities are offered to young people during gap periods such as before and after school and also in weekends; and
- institutions like schools, where activities are offered to young people during structured times or schedules.

By the 1960s and 1970s, most governments in developed countries and many youth serving non-profit organisations, particularly religious ones that are still active today, took greater responsibility for the development of young people and became used as vehicles through which activities for young people were delivered (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:5; Sercombe, 2010:31). The commitment and movement towards Youth work practice reached new heights when increasing emphasis was placed on activities such as organising the leisure and recreation activities of the working class adolescents by diverting them from the revolutionary politics (Jefferies & Smith, 1990:16; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:53; Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:53, 67).

To date, the Youth work field thus expanded to exist in a variety of settings and under different names, e.g., Youth work, Youth in development practice. The essential aspect is that, young people continue to be recipients of services rendered by wide range of service providers in variety of settings in government as well as civil society organisations and these youth are also being targeted exclusively by dedicated service providers (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94,135; Sercombe, 2010:10). This is necessary in view of world wide support and commitment to advance development of young people (Simmons, 2006:107). For example, the UN GA passed a Resolution that declared the year 1985 as International Year of Youth and also endorsed the guidelines for further planning and suitable follow up in the field of youth; the UN developed a World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) for the Year 2000 and

beyond; the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have youth as their main target; Youth work have since spread as a model of practice in places such as Australia, Europe, USA and United Kingdom (UK); and the UN GA passed Resolution 64/134 proclaiming the year which started on the 12th of August 2010 to 12th of August 2011 as the International Year of Youth in December 2009 (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1, 3; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15; Charles, 2006:55; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:1; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:18).

The above stated key developments illustrate the manner in which international communities are engaged in daily revolution to respond to the increasing needs of young people by facilitating change, often with limited resources, support and infrastructure (Krauss & Suandi, 2008:3). Of more relevance to this study is actions related to the future of Youth work such as introduction of training programmes that culminated into formal Youth work qualification, establishment of professional associations, determination of professional standards and industrial conditions, development of a code of ethics and final recognition of Youth work as a registered profession (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice & Child and Youth Care Certification Board, 2010:1; Barnes & Bourdon in Anglin, Delholm, Ferguson & Pence, 1990:304; Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray & Foster, 1998:425; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

At the moment, the education and training of Youth work at international level takes place in Europe, Asia, South America, Central America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, USA, and UK. The countries involved in Youth work in these regions include: Canada, Germany, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Netherlands, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, France, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Liechtenstein, Japan and China (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice & Child and Youth Care Certification Board, 2010:1; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15; South African Qualification Authority Act 58 of 1995). For example, in Europe, the University of Malta facilitated establishment of an Institute of Youth Studies to provide a broad based academic course for those interested in working with young people professionally, across the USA, Youth work qualification at a degree level is being

offered in universities such as Clemson University, Michigan State University, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Minnesota (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:81; Malta Ministry of Youth and the Arts, 2010:8). South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) - a structure established to formulate and publish policies for education and training standards or qualification and to accredit bodies responsible for monitoring of such standards or qualification - documented that, whereas Youth work programmes are mostly taught by universities, at certificate/ diploma/ degree level in some countries. However, there are still countries that do not have specific Youth work qualifications in countries such as Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland. In this case, workers with other related qualifications in areas such as Social pedagogy, Social work, and Cultural animation are employed to do Youth work (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

It is important to note that the model for Youth work service provision in most countries is two pronged i.e. it is rendered by service providers exclusively responsible for youth, and also by service providers who target youth as part of their target groups (Broadbent & Corney, 2008: 15; Sercombe, 2010:82). This two-pronged approach is evidenced by establishment of structures such as Youth Ministries and agencies primarily targeting young people as well as mainstreaming of youth development in structures of other professionals such as Police, Social workers, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Community development workers who target the youth and other client groups (Sercombe, 2010:82). For example, in countries such as the Netherlands and Malta, whereas there is evidence of close collaboration between service providers rendering youth services (e.g., Teachers, Sports coaches, and Counsellors), a separate Ministry and/or an agency that is only responsible for youth development is also in existence (Malta, Ministry of Youth and the Arts, 2010:8; Van Kampen, Beker & Wilbrink-Griffioen, 1996:14).

The adoption of this two-pronged approach is a profound reorientation of purpose and shows the seriousness with which youth development is viewed.

3.3 THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Available estimates show that in most African countries, including Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia, the youth and children constitute above or over 60% of the total population, with young people constituting about a third (30%) (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agenda, 2011:6; African Union Commission, 2010:2). The proportion of this youth population aged 15-35 is projected to peak at 35.6% of the total population by 2030 and despite sub-regional variations, the youth population in Africa will generally remain high by 2050 (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:8).

The demographics in the Africa region clearly indicate that the youth population would continue to grow in absolute numbers. Therefore, addressing youth issues should remain salient for the African governments, particularly considering the fact that the majority of these youth account for the large share of the working population, and the hurdles they experience need to be attended to during their youth period before they enter adulthood (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:15).

However, as a result of continuous challenges they experience, Africa's youth population does not have the opportunity to fully develop its potential and contribute effectively to the realisation of the declared vision and the mission of Africa's leaders as espoused by the African Union (AU). The AU mission aims '*inter alia*' to enhance Africa's leadership role in the promotion of peace, human security and good governance; and also to achieve the central goals of promoting positive change in our societies as espoused by the Commonwealth leaders (Shah, 2007:52).

The 2011 State of the African Youth Report revealed that, a new emergent and integrated Africa can be fully realised only if the bulging youth population is mobilised; equipped to help drive the integration, peace and development agenda; and recognised and utilised as an effective resource (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1). This vision and commitment to address the needs of an increasing youth population, particularly in developing countries, emanates from the conviction that, in addressing national and global challenges, young people as a key population segment of the population need to be

empowered, prioritised, and anchored to become strong and accountable leaders as well as an asset for development in the global arena (African Union Commission, 2010:2; Charles, 2006:46; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:7, 8). It was also on that basis that Charles (2006:45) and Ryan (2003:65) asserted that, the surest approach to developing the human race is to target the youth sector, because they represent the future and therefore ignoring their plight could result in economic, social, and political catastrophe.

As a result of the foregoing, Africa has for over fifty (50) years been involved in a variety of development interventions (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:24), some of which are youth specific. In the centre of the initiatives of both the AU and the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) lies the priority to empower and develop the youth in an effort to address the challenges they experience through development and implementation of policies and programmes, as well as mobilisation and allocation of resources for the same purpose (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:1, 3; African Union Commission, 2010:1; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:8-10; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:17-19).

Some of the key youth development interventions include the following:

- **African Youth Charter (AYC)**, adopted and approved by the Heads of States and governments in 2006. The AYC is a comprehensive framework that provides important guidelines and responsibilities for member states in development and empowerment of youth. It addresses amongst other things, the rights and obligations of young people. It also constitutes the social contract of the State to mainstream youth issues in all development policies and programmes;
- **Declaration of the years 2009-2018 as the decade for Youth Development** and approval of a **Plan of Action for the Decade** aimed at implementing the identified youth development priority activities;
- **Declaration of the 1st of November each year as Africa Youth day** to celebrate the achievements and contributions of young people to the continent's development;

- **Revitalisation of the Pan African Youth Union (PYU)** as a vibrant continental youth body that would serve as a focal point for youth engagement and for conveying youth perspectives for integration into national, regional and continental policies, strategies, and programmes;
- **2011 June-July African Union Heads of States and Governments Summit** held under the theme: *“Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”*, affirming commitment to youth development.
- **New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Strategic Framework for Youth Programme of 2004**, serving as a tool for mainstreaming youth issues;
- **Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP)**, developed to engage and empower young people and enhance their contribution to development processes;
- **Introduction of a qualification in Youth work**, currently offered in more than twenty universities and colleges across the Commonwealth member states dedicated to professionalising Youth work by building a body of specialist knowledge, code of ethics, getting competency standards recognised, and organising Youth workers into professional associations.

The above positive initiatives illustrate the manner in which youth development is prioritised within the African region (African Union Commission, 2010:2; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:2). The provision of Youth work qualifications in particular, supports the building of capacity within the sector to enhance effective service provision and practice (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18). Through the CYP, the Commonwealth Secretariat introduced a Diploma in Youth Development Work, currently offered in more than twenty universities and colleges across the member states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; Charles, 2006:45; Maunders, 2006:26).

Table 3.1 below highlights the countries and Institutions offering Commonwealth Youth work qualification in the Commonwealth Africa region:

Table 3.1: Countries and institutions of higher learning offering the Commonwealth Youth work qualification in the Africa region of the Commonwealth

Countries	Institutions of Higher Learning offering Commonwealth qualification in Youth work	Programme Status
Botswana	University of Botswana	2 nd Intake
Ghana	University of Ghana	5 th Intake
Kenya	University of Nairobi	3 rd Intake
Lesotho	National University of Lesotho	3 rd Intake
Malawi	University of Malawi	2 nd Intake
Namibia	Namibia College of Open Learning	3 rd Intake
Nigeria	University of Abuja	2 nd Intake
Seychelles	Adult Learning and Distance Education Centre	1 st Intake
Sierra Leone	University of Sierra Leone	2 nd Intake
South Africa	University of South Africa	7 th Intake
Tanzania	Open University of Tanzania	5 th Intake
The Gambia	Management Development Institute	3 rd Intake
Uganda	Makerere University	4 th Intake
Zambia	Zambia Insurance Business College Trust	3 rd Intake

Source: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010a:18

In addition to the above, countries such as Cameroon, Cyprus, Malta, Mauritius, Mozambique, and Swaziland have also been confirmed to be offering a Commonwealth Diploma in Youth work (South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). It is clear that there is greater interest to provide educational opportunities for Youth workers (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:78).

Against the foregoing and in light of the great potential, dynamism, resourcefulness, resiliency, and aspiration of African youth; the majority of the countries in Africa are institutionalising, reforming and repositioning youth development by introducing proactive policies and strategies which provide for establishment of fully fledged structures in the form of youth affairs ministries, youth agencies, youth departments, youth parliaments, and youth councils; thereby increasing interventions aimed at advancing the development and empowerment of young people (Charles, 2006: 51; Shah, 2007:62). These structures prioritise youth development at national level through coordination of youth development interventions aimed at increasing impact.

It is essential that investment in young people is maximised, in order to ensure broad development of the continent, because there is overwhelming evidence which suggests that inadequate investment in youth results in despair, hopelessness, lack of creativity, and poor productivity among the youth (Charles, 2006:45). On the other hand, there is also evidence of the reverse of this process, where increased investments in youth result in social harmony and progress (United Nations Population Fund Agency & African Youth Policy Forum, 2006:10).

In spite of the conducive legislative and policy environment created at national and regional levels, there is overwhelming evidence that major challenges still persist (African Union Commission, 2010:4; United Nations Population Fund Agency & African Youth Policy Forum, 2006:3). These challenges are a result of multiple factors and they manifest themselves in the form of poverty; unemployment; overpopulation; inequalities; lack of skills and relevant education, fragmentation, poor health care services, problems of natural environment, emerging problems such as HIV and AIDS, different levels of development between most African countries; gaps in existing policies, strategies and their lack of effective implementation; and inadequate budgetary allocation to youth programming (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:4). In response to the identified challenges, the regional and national structures continue to push for advancement of the youth development agenda in a manner that addresses the identified challenges.

Having looked back at the journey travelled globally and regionally regarding Youth work, the researcher now examines the situation locally. It is within this context that the next section looks at the status of Youth work in South Africa.

3.4 THE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK AT NATIONAL LEVEL

In this section the researcher starts off by looking at the emergence of Youth work as an occupation and explores the history behind that including changes in institutional and coordinating mechanisms that which were in place over time to advance youth development. This is done in recognition of initiatives taken by the South African government to advance empowerment and development of young people. This chapter is then concluded by highlighting the different targeted youth groups serviced by the current institutions and the nature of service offerings available for them.

3.4.1 Emergence of Youth work as an occupation

As the years of the Apartheid regime rolled on in South Africa around the 1930s, Blacks attempted to foster unity among themselves by acting against it (*South African Year Book*, 2009:8, 9, 10). That change was marked by evolution of youth formations which inspired the struggle for years that followed. In the 1940s, young people played a central and crucial role in rejecting the white domination when they made a call for action in the form of protests, strikes and demonstrations. This depicted young people as problematic, delinquent, and violent. This picture was further aggravated by the media reports which, even today, continue to stereotype the public by predominantly covering stories which show youth in a negative light (Damon, 2004:14; Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2).

Those years were followed by a decade of turbulent mass action in resistance to the imposition of still harsher forms of segregation and oppression. In the early 1950's, the black political organisations were banned and their leaders and followers, predominantly young, were arrested whilst some went into exile under the armed struggle (Carter, 2010; *South African Year Book*, 2009: 10). The *South African Year Book* further highlights that the 1960s was a decade of overwhelming repression and relative political disarray in the country, because, a wave of strikes reflected a new militancy that involved better organisation and drew new sectors, in particular, intellectuals and the student movements, thus illustrating the key role played by the youth of that era.

During the decade that followed the 1960s, the year 1976 marked the beginning of a sustained anti-Apartheid revolt. In June of that year, the school pupils of Soweto (one of the largest townships in South Africa) rose up against Apartheid education in retaliation against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction (Carter, 2010). This led to youth uprisings all around the country. Many young people, at least – Black, male, urban - put their future on hold in pursuit of the struggle against the Apartheid government that violated their rights, denied them of opportunities to develop, and prohibited them from realising their potential (Everatt, 2000:1; The Presidency, 2009b:7). It was during this period that many organisations started

targeting the youth as their clients. Those rendering services to the youth assumed the role of Youth workers.

The youth continued to leave the country in large numbers as they fled from being arrested. Those who went into exile were further deprived of informal support which was once available to them, because of the changed family and community structures (Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:39). It was only in 1989, that the then President of South Africa, FW de Klerk, announced at the opening of Parliament about the unbanning of the liberation movements and the release of political prisoners, including the former President, Mr Nelson Mandela. (Carter, 2010; *South African Year Book*, 2009:11). The Nelson Mandela years saw resistance giving way to, amongst others, youth development efforts geared towards addressing the problems which made youth to be vulnerable to ill conditions such as violence, crime, drug abuse, poverty, unemployment and generally bad tendencies created by the apartheid government (Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:10; The Presidency, 2002:2). Around that time, youth were considered “*marginalised*” and/or a “*lost generation*”, because they were often excluded and alienated from society in both social and economic spheres as a result of the country’s history of oppression and violence (National Youth Commission, 1997:10; Moeler, Mthembu & Richards, 1994:6). The youth NGOs played an important role in dispelling these negative labels (Everatt, 2000:1).

In pursuit of democratisation and socio-economic change, as well as reconciliation and the building of consensus founded on the commitment to improve the lives of young South Africans, the organisations such as churches as well as youth serving and youth led non-government organisations at national and local level, intensified the youth development agenda and ensured that it secured national prominence (Charles, 2006: 25; *South African Year Book*,2009:12; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:4; Youth Development Network, 2008:7, 8). Those organisations became a common reference group for a substantial proportion of South African youth, because they designed and implemented programmes aimed at developing young people (Moeler, Mthembu & Richards, 1994:24). They succeeded in executing their agenda due to support they received predominantly from international agencies

and foreign countries which strengthened their support for the anti-apartheid cause (Maunder, 2006:17; *South African Year Book*, 2009:15).

However, despite their vulnerabilities to exploitation, the youth had also proved that they can be a dynamic force for good when society is searching for answers. It was on that basis that efforts were made to involve them in meaningful activities that will not only benefit them, but will also benefit their immediate communities (The Presidency, 2009b:10).

Finally, the emergence, expansion, and focus on Youth work as an occupation all over the world and in South Africa, appears to have been largely influenced by political and economic climate aimed at empowering, developing and responding to the concerns and problems experienced by young people, thus ensuring positive contribution to the future growth of the country whilst curbing the potential explosive problems that may emanate as a result of failure to invest in them (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:2; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:1).

It is on that basis that there is a call for involvement and participation of young people in development processes as well as the need for future human resource planning to acknowledge the role of Youth workers in both public and private sectors (Department of Social Development, 2007:1; The Presidency, 2002:71). These would ensure that interventions focus on responding to the needs of youth as the main target group.

3.4.2 The institutional mechanisms

Between 1990 and 1993, the national negotiations in South Africa also focused on organising the youth sector. These resulted in the launch of the National Youth Development Forum (NYDF), a non-partisan body that was intended to coordinate and implement youth development interventions such as the National Youth Service, to cohere the fractious youth sector around development rather than political goals as well as to build on the growing sympathy for the youth (Everatt, 2000:8). The author further mentions how the NYDF failed to achieve its mandate, thus resulting in disillusionment of the youth and fragmentation of their sector.

Everatt (2000:11) observed that the years that followed also saw youth being the forgotten group and less prioritised in key policy documents such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). “The gains of the early part of the decade had been lost” with most of the youth led and youth serving organisations loosing sponsorship from donors.

In the context of the above, a significant milestone was reached when the National Youth Commission (NYC) Act No. 19 of 1996 was passed in 1996 as a basis for establishment of the National Youth Commission, a primary statutory institution for youth development in the country (Everatt, 2000:11; National Youth Commission, 1997:2). The NYC was responsible for policy development, coordination, and advocacy and lobbying. In order to ensure accessibility, each of the nine provinces developed and passed a legislation which culminated into establishment of Provincial Youth Commissions (PYCs) in terms of provincial legislation. The PYCs performed a mandate similar to that of NYC, but at provincial level (The Presidency, 2009b:8). In 1997, the South African Youth Council (SAYC) was also set up as an umbrella body for youth serving and youth led civil society organisations aimed at fostering political and civic participation of youth from a variety of formations (Community and Youth Workers Union, 2008; Everatt, 2000:16; The Presidency, 2009b:32).

After the second democratic national election in 1999, when the former President Thabo Mbeki was elected, youth development efforts continued to be intensified. During the Thabo Mbeki era, the South African Higher Education sector also responded to the challenge of youth development by introducing a formal education and training qualification in some of its Institutions of Higher Learning (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2010:18; Maunders, 2006:25; Mkandawire, 1999:29). Some qualifications are purely focusing on youth development, whereas others are focusing on youth care.

Table 3.2 below gives a summary of South Africa’s Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work and closely related qualifications:

Table 3.2: South African institutions of higher learning offering Youth work qualification

Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work qualification	Nature of qualification offered	Intake	Location of the Programme	Programme Status
Huguenot College	Bachelor Degree in Youth work	26 th Intake: offered from 1981-2007	Department of Social Work	This institution no longer offers Youth work qualification. The programme has been moved to Stellenbosch University in 2008.
Durban University of Technology (DUT)	Diploma in Child and Youth Development	10 th Intake, 3-year qualification offered since 2000	Department of Community Health Studies	The qualification started as a Diploma in Residential Child Care in 1996 and became a National Diploma in 2000. It is only offered on full time basis. This qualification is more Child and youth care oriented.
	Bachelor of Technology Degree in Child and Youth Development	10 th Intake, 4 years full time or 5 years part-time qualification offered since 2000	Department of Community Health Studies	The BTech is still being offered and is also more Child and youth care oriented.
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	Bachelor Degree in Youth work	1 st Intake was in 2000 where 3 students graduated. There will be no further intake of students in 2011.	Department of Social Development Professions	The qualification is being phased out and the last class attended in 2010.
University of Monasch South Africa	Course in Child and Youth Development	1 st Intake: there were 52 and 117 students in the 1 st and 2 nd semesters of 2010 respectively	School of Arts	This course is in preparation for a formal qualification in child and youth development. The structure of the curriculum currently focuses on child care work although it was expressed that if the need arise a youth development focused curriculum could be introduced
Technikon South Africa (TSA)	BTech in Child and Youth Development	9 th Intake (offered from 1999-2008)	Department of Public Management	The qualification was phased out after the merger of TSA with Unisa
University of South Africa (UNISA)	Diploma in Youth in Development	7 th Intake	Adult and Basic Education Department (ABET)	The programme is being moved from one faculty to another creating lack of stability

Institutions of Higher Learning offering Youth work qualification	Nature of qualification offered	Intake	Location of the Programme	Programme Status
University of Stellenbosch	3 year Bachelor, Master's and Doctorate Degrees in Theological Studies (Youth work specialisation)	29 th intake (started in 1981)	Department of Theology	The programme is being Offered
University of Stellenbosch	Masters Degree (MPhil) in Youth Development and Policy	7 th Intake (offered from 2001-2008)	School of Sociology and Anthropology	The programme was terminated in 2000 due to low intake and retirement of convenors
University of Venda for Science and Technology	4 year Bachelor of Arts Degree in Youth Development	11 th Intake (started in 1999)	Institute for Gender and Youth Studies in the School of Human and Social Sciences	The programme is being offered, but moved from one faculty to another thus creating lack of stability

From Table 3.2 above, in South Africa, Youth work qualification is currently being offered by UNISA, University of Venda, and University of Stellenbosch at Diploma, Degree, Masters and PhD levels. Of importance to note is that, there is at times little distinction between Youth work and Child and youth care qualification. For example, the former Technikon South Africa offered a dual degree with the option of specialising in Youth work or Child care work.

However, like Child and youth care work which has been phased out from some institutions such as Huguenot College and UNISA, Youth work qualification was also phased out in Institutions of Higher Learning such as Stellenbosch and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University with the last class of graduates being in 2008 and 2011 respectively (Calitz, 2011; Fortuin, 2010; Mudau, 2011; Raselekoane, 2011). The reasons for this are mainly due to among others lack of employment opportunities; lack of direction regarding professionalisation; and inadequate student intake.

Furthermore, the Youth work education and training in different learning institutions does not only vary in type, but also in focus (Borden, Craig & Villaruel 2004:82). In South Africa, there is no stability in terms of the location of the Youth work programme. For example, at UNISA, the programme was first located in the School

for Continuing Education and it has recently been moved to the Department of Education under Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Division (Raselekoane, 2011), whereas at the University of Venda, it was initially located in an independent Institute for Youth Studies in the School of Post Graduate Studies, and the Institute has now been merged with Gender Studies with the programme located within the School of Human and Social Sciences (Mudau, 2011).

In 2001, another key milestone was reached when Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) was established. This was in recognition of rampant youth unemployment which is in part due to inadequate education and skills which continued to haunt young people due to their previously disadvantaged backgrounds. This institution was established with a view to promote job creation and skills development through implementation of interventions such as micro finance-lending, enterprise development, Small Micro and Medium Enterprise support and job placement initiatives. The UYF also served as the operational centre of the National Youth Service (NYS), a programme which promotes voluntary service to communities by the youth (Center for the Development and Enterprise, 2008:38; The Presidency, 2009a:79; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

In 2004 when South Africa celebrated the ten (10) years of freedom, it took stock of the First Decade of Freedom and conducted “Towards a Ten Year Review”(The Presidency, 2009a:79). It was through this review and various other studies commissioned by the Presidency and broadly by government, that it became apparent that the issue of integrating and coordinating youth development from the highest office in the Republic of South Africa – The Presidency – was crucial to achieving greater impact. The Youth Desk was then established to support and provide advisory services to political principals on youth matters (The Presidency, 2009b:33).

After its establishment, the Youth Desk in The Presidency monitored the implementation of youth development priorities on the Government’s Programme of Action; ensured approval of the NYP; facilitated the signing and ratification of the AYC; coordinated activities intended at fostering international relations and cooperation; ensured that youth policies and programmes are taken through the cluster systems; completed national research studies, e.g., Towards Fifteen Year

Review; Towards a Youth Responsive Budget by CASE; 2006 Status of the Youth Report in South Africa in collaboration with the Human Sciences Research Council; and supported political principals on youth matters (Mohapi, 2008).

In 2006, the South African Cabinet took a decision to have youth directorates/ desks/ units/ focal points established across different government departments at national, provincial, and local levels. That decision further stated that these structures have to be located in such a manner that the Heads of the Departments or Municipal managers take direct responsibility (The Presidency, 2009b:33). This decision was taken to affirm South Africa's two-pronged approach to youth development. The aim was to ensure that youth directorates/ desks/ units/ focal points facilitate mainstreaming by deliberately including youth development in all departmental planning, budgetary and procurement processes.

Although notable strides such as development and approval of the NYP (2009-2014), ratification and signing of the AYC, creation of job opportunities particularly through initiatives such as enterprise promotion, introduction of apprenticeship and learnership programmes; the impact of the services rendered by these institutions as well as achievement of desired outcomes continue to be questioned (The Presidency, 2009b:19; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:22, 28, 52). The South African youth remain underserved due to lack of coordination among the service providers. Additionally, the non-government sector which used to be in the fore front regarding pursuit of youth development agenda, also faces challenges such as brain drain, high staff turnover, drying of funds, and the changing role of civil society organisations; thus weakening and collapsing the sector (Youth Development Network, 2008:9, 25).

In response to these challenges, the 52nd National Conference of the Mandating Party resolved that rather than establishing a youth Ministry, the government should set up an agency that will ensure seamless integration, sustainability and responsiveness to the demands of South Africa's youth by coordinating youth development efforts. In 2008, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) was then established through the merger of UYF and the NYC as a statutory body in terms of the NYDA Act No. 54 of 2008. It was launched in June 2009 (Mohapi, 2008;

National Youth Development Agency Act No. 54 of 2008, RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

In that same year, President Jacob Zuma as the Executing Authority for the NYDA delegated the youth development role to the Minister in the Presidency responsible for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, currently - Mr Collins Chabane. The Minister oversees youth matters in the country and this role resonates well with that of monitoring and evaluation (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009). As a result of establishment of the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) and the National Planning Commission (NPC) in 2009, the Presidency was positioned to perform a different mandate in advancing youth development (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2009; The Presidency, 2009:1).

In 2010, the restructuring process in The Presidency led to amongst others, dissolution of the Policy Coordination and Advisory Services (PCAS) unit and consequently disestablishment of the Youth Desk in the Presidency (Mohapi, 2010). The personnel in the Youth Desk were instead transferred to the newly established unit called Public Entities Oversight. The function of this unit is to perform an oversight role to some of the public entities reporting to The Presidency including the NYDA by providing advice on strategy and legislation, ensuring policy alignment, monitoring the operations, and advising on programme performance.

The analysis of the above structural changes is an illustration of youth development landscape being changed to respond to politics, policy developments, demands, and aspirations of young people. At present, the key role players in the youth development space continue to be government, civil society organisations, and the private sector (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011; The Presidency, 2009b:33). All these players consider youth development as an important focus due to the past political, social and economic oppression of young people created by the apartheid system (Everatt & Jennings, 1996:2; National Youth Commission, 1997:19; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011). The only shift in approach is that, in addition to mainstreaming youth development, there is now the NYDA which is dedicated to youth development and is charged with the responsibility of coordinating service delivery rendered by different role players (National Youth Commission, 1997:12;

National Youth Development Agency Act No. 54 of 2008; The Presidency, 2009b:32). Table 3.3 below illustrates South Africa's key role players currently providing a leading role in the field of youth development and stipulates the role that is played by each (Department of Social Development, 2006b:7; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:20; The Presidency, 2009b:33).

Table 3.3: South African key structures that focus on youth development

Name of the structure	Focus of interventions
The Presidency	The highest office in the government administration responsible for long term planning, monitoring, evaluation, and administration of services rendered by the three spheres of government. As the accounting department for youth development in the country, The Presidency is responsible for NYDA oversight, providing advice on strategy and departmental programme performance, legislation, ensuring policy alignment, monitoring and evaluation.
The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)	A statutory agency of government, classified as a schedule 3 (A) and established in terms of the National Youth Development Agency Act, 54 of 2008. The NYDA is mandated to initiate, coordinate, implement, facilitate, and monitor youth development interventions and to develop appropriate policies, lobby and advocate.
Government departments at national level	All government departments at national level are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates, responsible for planning and coordination, policy making and management, monitoring and evaluation.
Government departments at provincial level	All government departments at provincial level are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates, responsible for programme design, implementation, facilitation, monitoring and evaluation.
Government departments at local level	The local government department as well as district and local municipalities are expected to have youth focal points/ directorates/ units/ desks, responsible for implementation and service provision.
Community Based Organisations (CBOs)	Non-government entities initiated by communities and located within the same communities to address young people's specific needs.
Faith Based Organisations (FBOs)	Organisations initiated by a religious group to address young people's specific needs. They often meet the spiritual needs of youth.
Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)	Established and emerging national/ provincial non-government entities which are either youth led or youth serving intended to address the identified needs of young people by complementing the work of government.
Private sector	Profit making organisations with interventions that respond to various needs of young people.
Parastatals	Government owned (in part or as a whole) institutions responsible for delivery of a wide range of services to youth, youth led and youth serving organisations e.g. research institutions, universities, state owned agencies.

The conclusion that can be drawn from analysing the information contained in Table 3.3 above is that provision of Youth work services still remain two-pronged. Firstly, Youth work services are offered by different professionals as part of their mainstream interventions and secondly, Youth work is an institutionalised function performed by personnel who are employed by youth-focused institutions. As a result, Youth work seems to be a joint responsibility of various key players, since there is no single institution which is considered a panacea for youth development. What remains unchanged, valid and relevant, is the commitment to advance youth development as these sectors work together in responding to the needs of the youth (Department of Welfare, Population and Development, 2000:40; Sercombe, 2010:82).

Having looked at the history of Youth work and the factors that influenced its emergence, it is important to describe for whom this practice is intended. In the following section, the researcher indicates the various target youth groups which are currently prioritised.

3.4.3 Youth Target Groups

In acknowledging this reality that reflects that young people are not a homogenous group due to their different experiences and circumstances, there has been an attempt to broadly single out and prioritise certain youth groups for planning purposes in view of scarcity of resources, unique situations they face and different stages of development (The Presidency, 2009b:12-13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). The efforts to disaggregate data according to various groupings is geared towards ensuring that there is development of appropriate policies and programmes to respond to the needs of each group (Osei-Hwedie, Mwanza & Mufune, 1990:20).

The priority youth groups for the period 2009-2014 in terms of the NYP (The Presidency, 2009b:12-14) are the following:

- (i) Young women** – Gender equality, equity, and empowerment remains one of the cornerstones of the South African government's Programme of Action (Department of Social Development, 2010:49). This is due to the fact that, inequality along gender lines is manifested in different forms: ranging from

gender and role stereotypes, access to information, decision making powers and rights. All this makes gender inequality one of the key social determinants that limit girls and young women to be at the same level with their male counterparts, thus compromising their overall development (African Union Commission, 2009:1).

The young women in particular face problems, because they are primarily disadvantaged on the basis of gender and age (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:67). For example, owing to cultural practices such as early marriages where young women tend to give birth to a first child at an average age of 17.9, the youth face a life-time risk of dying from pregnancy and delivery related complications during the child bearing process; they are at risk of HIV infection due to having unprotected sex and, unlike their male counterparts, they may consequently drop out of school, be excluded from participating in labour markets or end up in jobs with low pay (African Union Commission, 2010:26-27; Department of Health, Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:8; Department of Social Development, 2010:51; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14).

Of importance, is the link that exists between HIV and AIDS, school drop-out, and poverty - a situation that will further trap young women in the cycle of vulnerability (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:63). This was even evidenced by the fact that, between 2008 and 2009, unemployment rates remained higher among female youth than that of their male counterparts by an increasingly larger margin despite the narrowing gap, thus resulting in higher poverty levels for the female youth (Department of Social Development, 2010:28; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:5). Furthermore, there is higher proportion of men in skilled occupations (54.9%) as compared to women (45.1%).

The examples illustrated above show that there are gender specific prejudices and challenges which young women face, hence they are considered a priority target group whose unique situation has to be addressed (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). In response to all these, the South African government has taken measures to mainstream gender in all its

development processes by amongst others: establishing a Parliamentary Portfolio Committee to perform oversight function; developing a range of legislation, policies and strategies aimed at protecting and promoting the rights of women; and establishing a fully fleshed Department of Women, Children, and People with Disabilities, responsible for coordinating interventions for women empowerment and development and a gender machinery for delivery of those interventions (The Presidency, 2009a:78; The Presidency, 2009b:13).

The gender disparities and discriminatory practices could be effectively reversed if transformation of unequal class and gender relations, empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups that include men, and design and implementation of gender sensitive interventions are realised (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:8; The Presidency, 2009b:13).

- (ii) **Young people with disabilities** – The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the National Disability Strategy reaffirms disability as a human rights and developmental issue (The Presidency, 2009b:13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:32). Like, young women, young people with disabilities require specific support strategies, because they are disadvantaged on the basis of their ability and age. The interventions tailored to address their needs should be geared to ensuring access to fundamental social, political and economic rights and opportunities that would enable them to participate fully in the mainstream of society (Statistics South Africa, 2001:170; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14).

In Africa, many people are reportedly becoming impaired due to conditions such as malnutrition, diseases, environmental hazards, natural disasters, traffic and industrial accidents, injuries, civil conflicts and wars (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:27). A closer inspection of these conditions shows that some are preventable whereas some are not. Therefore addressing the needs of people who have fallen victims of these conditions is crucial. On that basis, in South Africa, there has been particular focus on young learners with disabilities, in particular, girls who continue to face challenges in the form of inaccessibility of resources in

mainstream public schools, inaccessible jobs, violence, sexual violence, HIV and AIDS (Department of Social Development, 2010:10; Department of Welfare, Population and Development, 2000:40; The Presidency, 2009a:71-72). These challenges are being addressed through mainstreaming disability and gender.

Furthermore, the youth with disabilities are afforded opportunities to compete alongside their “*able bodied*” peers through introduction of interventions in the form of policies, international instruments, structures such as disability machinery as well as social integration programmes geared towards increasing their potential for productivity, creating wealth, reducing dependency and consequently benefiting the whole society (The Presidency, 2009a:71, The Presidency, 2009b:13; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:32).

- (iii) **Unemployed youth** – In South Africa, “*persons are considered to be employed if they have engaged in any kind of economic activity for at least one hour in the reference period. Also included are persons who, during the reference period, were temporarily absent from work or business, but definitely had a job or business to return to*” (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:46). In this regard, employment refers to work which performed by a person in exchange for pay or income (Mufune, 1999:358). Unemployment is therefore the opposite of this description.

In South Africa, the only individuals considered to be employed, are those engaged in market production activities (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:49). There is, as a result, a conclusion that has been made that, every year in each African country, there are more and more unemployed youth graduating in the school system and generally a higher unemployment rate for young people than older ones (Mufune, 1999:358).

The above stated African situation is also reflected in South Africa, where youth unemployment is increasing, in some cases, despite the positive economic growth (Center for the Development and Enterprise, 2008:18; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:7; The Presidency, 2009a:72). The Fifteen

Year Review report indicates that even of those who are employed, about a third below the age of 25 are in elementary and unskilled occupations (The Presidency, 2009b:32). The implication is that more younger workers between the ages of 15 and 24 years are underemployed than employed individuals in other age-group categories (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:15; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:65; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:14). Overall, unemployment is reported to be twice as high among the youth population as it is for adult population with its effect felt by a significant number of youth who are living in poverty and extreme poverty (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:17; Morrow, 2005 as cited in The Presidency, 2009b:14).

Table 3.4 reflects the unemployment trends in South Africa for the period 2008-2010:

Table 3.4: South Africa's unemployment trends for the period 2008-2010

Ages	2008	2009	2010
15–24 years	44.9%	48.2%	49.4%
25–34 years	25.0%	28.4%	28.4%
35–44 years	14.4%	17.0%	16.6%
45–54 years	9.6%	10.8%	11.3%
55–64 years	5.1%	6.8%	6.3%
Total	21.8%	24.2%	24.0%

Source: Statistics South Africa, 2011b

The information contained in Table 3.4 above illustrates that there is on average an increasing problem of unemployment. Calculation of unemployment rate took into consideration, the employed, unemployed, discouraged work seekers and other persons not economically active. There was 49.4% unemployment rate for persons aged 15-24 in 2010 compared to 44.9% and 48.2% for 2008 and 2009 respectively. In 2010, unemployment rate for those aged 25-34 was 28.4% compared to 25.0% for 2008 and 28.4% for 2009. For persons between the ages of 35-44, there was a recorded 16.6% unemployment rate in 2010 compared to 14.4% and 17.0%

for 2008 and 2009 respectively. In the latter group, the unemployment rate for 2010 was slightly lower than in 2009 by 0.4%.

This trend of increasing unemployment rate amongst the youth in the country is worrying, considering that, employment is regarded as the most valued survival activity (Mufune, 1999:358; Statistics South Africa, 2011b). Overall, joblessness, lack of income, and poverty have proven to be having broader consequences for the future prosperity and development of societies and for social cohesion, because owing to idleness, unemployed youth are predisposed to risky behaviours such as crime, violence, drug abuse, vandalism and prostitution (General Assembly for Economic and Social Council, 2007:13; South African Police Service, 2010:21). Furthermore, underemployment may be associated with feelings of powerlessness which could manifest in depression or despair (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:17).

It is on the basis of the above stated reasons, that in the State of the Nation Address, President Zuma pronounced job creation as a national priority for 2011 and called for need to tackle this problem head on, by developing and implementing radical strategies to deal with the problem of unemployment, particularly among the youth, whilst at the same time providing lasting solutions which strengthen human capabilities and promote self-sufficiency (The Presidency, 2009a:85; RSA, Presidency's Budget vote; 2011; RSA, State of the Nation Address; 2011). It was proposed that the government and its relevant partners need to agree to scale up existing positive youth employment programmes and projects, and put in place permanent unemployment reduction measures. These would include strategies and interventions such as macro-economic strategies, job preparedness interventions, business opportunities and support programmes, internships, learnerships, entrepreneurial skills development and support, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the Joint Initiative for Priority Skills (JIPSA) and the NYS Programme (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:37; The Presidency, 2009a:77; The Presidency, 2009:14b). All these

programmes have been introduced to address the question of youth unemployment.

- (iv) **School aged-out-of-school youth** – Section 3 (1) of the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, provides for compulsory attendance of school by children between the ages of seven and fifteen. The Act specifies measures to be taken if there is non-compliance and further emphasises the critical and primary role which parents have to play in that regard. This is essential since the educational attainments of youth have proven to be laying the foundation for post school attainments, thus having an impact on improving their general quality of life through influencing type of work the youth can undertake, the type of lifestyle they consequently live, creation of employment opportunities available for them, and finally increasing their share in the labour market (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:11; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:22).

Although reliable statistics for out of school youth are unavailable due to their fluid nature, The Presidency (2009b:15) as well as Statistics South Africa (2010:120) highlight a share increase of 1 percentage point to 30% and 1.1 percentage points to 15.4% for those with matric and tertiary education respectively. Of the 14 year olds, 6% were not attending school, and of the 24 years old, 86% were also not attending school. As a result of the drop out and failure rate, less than 30% of youth complete secondary school education (Department of Social Development, 2010:70).

Those who drop out of school form part of the unemployed cohort, hence young people aged 15–24 years, constitutes a higher proportion of persons without work and not seeking work, as compared to those aged between 54 and 64 years (Statistics South Africa, 2009:120). This then translates into high inactivity rate among this group (23.6% in 2008 and 26% in 2009) and these youth are unlikely to be selected for employment, since they have become discouraged work seekers (Statistics South Africa, 2009:120; Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:19). This is evidenced by 17.2% contraction in the employment of those in the formal sector and 21.8% for

those in the informal sector (RSA, Budget speech, 2010:9; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:79).

These youth leave school due to numerous situations ranging from social, political, economic, academic and specific problems which include, but are not limited to social change, prior poor school performance, poverty, teenage pregnancy, domestic responsibilities, heading households as primary care giver, illness (including HIV and AIDS), child abuse, overcrowding, family disintegration, violence, poor performance, and bad experiences at school (Department of Health Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:2; Department of Social Development, 2010:70).

As a consequence, those who drop out of school remain uneducated, unskilled and their opportunities of becoming absorbed by the labour market narrows, social status is lowered, they become the greatest casualty for unemployment and underemployment, and are eventually trapped in poverty, a condition which hinders their capacity to make successful transition to adulthood since their economic potential of contributing to their own development and that of their societies is reduced (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:36; Department of Social Development, 2010:71; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:44; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:17).

The government is taking steps to retain learners in schools whilst offering second chance opportunities to those who have already fallen prey to school dropout, albeit on a smaller scale (The Presidency, 2009b:15). This is done in view of the fact that education plays a critical role in the life of a young person and accumulation of human capital in the form of knowledge and skills is obtained primarily from school, i.e., through basic and higher education, including technical and vocational training (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10). It then becomes important that measures are taken to keep the youth in school and assist those who are out-of-school to return or be integrated into society through alternative measures such as accredited and youth-focused structured skills and work

experience programmes (Department of Health, Rhodes University & World Health Organisation, 2009:8; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; The Presidency, 2009b:21).

- (v) **Youth in rural areas** - *“The most difficult aspects of the legacy of apartheid to unwind, arise from its deliberately irrational patterns of population settlement arising from many sources – some of which relate directly to the different economic circumstances facing each province”* (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:22, 36). The recent establishment of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, reflects the government’s thinking on internal spatial issues to reduce amongst others, the disparities brought by geographic disadvantage and showing commitment through prioritising and allocating resources for rural development (Department of Social Development, 2010:23; RSA, Budget speech, 2010:16; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011).

As a result of underdevelopment, the youth from rural areas are disadvantaged on the basis of their age and the geographic location where they have been brought up (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001d:7). For example, unemployment, inactivity rates and consequently poverty are higher than the national average in predominantly rural provinces such as Limpopo, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal as compared to lower rates in one of the urban provinces, the Western Cape (Department of Social Development, 2010:27; Statistics South Africa, 2010b:36). This low job influx is attributed to, among others, lack of job creation and training programmes, as well as inadequate diversified industrial structures.

The impact of economic exclusion will also continuously be felt as the youth from rural areas become trapped in the cycle of poverty and end up being predisposed to social ills such as crime, the burden of diseases and drug abuse (The Presidency, 2009b:15). The result is a large pool of youth who are mostly found in rural areas where they are cared for by their older relatives as well as those who are in informal settlement due to shortage of housing and migration (Everatt, 2000:21). With regard to migration, it is

estimated that between 1999 and 2004, three million (3 000 000) youth aged 15-39 migrated to urban cities in search for better prospects and then become detached from their original communities, family structures, and ultimately became displaced and vulnerable to violence, abuse and exploitation (Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:22; Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:27; Department of Social Development, 2010:36; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:15; The Presidency, 2009a:109).

Although it seems clear that there is a need for rural development, there are those who still argue that resources should follow people and investments must focus on where the returns are best (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:27). This only justifies the tendency of excluding rural areas from development processes by further depleting them of the most essential human resource capacity in the form of “*youth*” who will certainly move elsewhere to make money. Such economic exclusion has far-reaching implications for a dynamic labour market in the country’s goal of building a socially inclusive society, because inclusion is a necessary condition for social cohesion.

- (vi) **Youth at risk** - Accredited qualification in South Africa has been designed to impact on at risk young people (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). The needs of youth at risk rise due increasing concerns over young people who engage in risky behaviours. The consequence of having such youth is that society generally overlooks the good deeds of young people such as their participation in community service, but instead, focuses on their bad deeds such as their involvement in service delivery protests.

The positive contributions of youth are then often overshadowed by a gloomy picture, thus resulting in formulation of more controlling intervention strategies to respond to their needs. In response to all these, the NYP specified and prioritised the following groups considered to be at risk: youth

living with HIV and/or AIDS, youth heading households, youth in conflict with the law, and youth abusing dependency creating substances (The Presidency, 2009b:16).

Each of the group categorising youth at risk is briefly discussed below:

- ✓ Firstly, **Youth living with HIV and/or AIDS** are rightfully being given attention, because HIV and AIDS is one of the key identified priorities for health intervention in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2010:62; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011). Across the world including in Africa, the majority of new HIV infections are for young people between the ages of 15 and 24 or even younger (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001c:14; United Nations Children's Fund, 2011 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:29). In South Africa, the prevalence peak age for HIV infection in women is 25-29 years and 30-39 years for men, with higher levels for the former group (Department of Social Development, 2010:62; The Presidency, 2009b:27). This makes youth an important target group since they are still in their productive years and once infected, it may affect their livelihood prospects, thus reducing consumer base and pushing the economy into decline (Germann, 2003:81).

In South Africa, there is a commitment towards finding lasting solutions to this problem; hence the HIV and AIDS programme is being championed by the Deputy President, currently Mr Kgalema Motlanthe (RSA, Presidency's Budget vote, 2011). In this regard, the Minister of Finance, Mr Pravin Gordhan, announced an increase of R5.4 billion in spending for the HIV and AIDS programme in the 2010 budget speech (RSA, Budget speech, 2010). This cash injection is aimed at improving access to treatment for all those who are infected including the youth.

- ✓ Secondly, **Youth heading households** are also considered an at risk group since they prematurely assume adult roles rather than assume their age appropriate roles as youth. Their situation is caused by

problems such as fragmentation of the family, working parents as well as deterioration and disorganisation of families, HIV and AIDS, death or illness of parent/s. These situations force the youth to be primary caregivers for their ailing parents as well as their siblings (Germann, 2003:78). There is a need to support young people heading households, because they are often alone, are without proper support from adults and structured support systems, and are less likely to attend school (Germann, 2003:81). It is, therefore, critical that extended families and communities are strengthened to support these youth

- ✓ Thirdly, the **youth in conflict with the law** are on the increase as a result of a rapidly growing youth population, often ending up in high unemployment rates and largely dissatisfied youth (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:6). For example, in South Africa, there are numerous service delivery protests while across Africa, particularly in the Middle East, there are civil conflicts. All this led to political instability, ethnic wars, revolutions and anti-government activities (African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:6). These youth are sometimes removed from society and sentenced for the crimes they have committed, thus further being excluded from development processes.

On the basis of this reality, the consequence for those who are in conflict with the law is that they are usually arrested and removed from society to alternative places of care as a rehabilitation mechanism. It is, however, essential to note that the stigma associated with the offence committed usually lasts beyond rehabilitation, and makes reconstruction and reintegration difficult to achieve. Strategies such as restorative justice, anger management programmes, social crime awareness programmes which foster good values among youth have become more significant.

- ✓ Finally, the **young people abusing dependency creating substances** are those who willingly or unwillingly become dependent on alcohol

and/or other drugs. According to Peltzer and Phaswana (1999 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:31), whereas in the past, alcohol has always been popularly used in highly ritualised and ceremonial contexts of positive societal meanings, but it is now worrying that it is consumed widely by young people worldwide. There was also a recent report of a Grade R pupil found sniffing glue (*The Times*, 11 March 2011:1).

The study published in *The Lancet Medical Journal* as cited in *The Times* (16 March 2011:7), revealed that alcohol, if used excessively, is more dangerous; is connected to higher death rates; and is involved in a greater percentage of crime than other recreational drugs, yet society remain tolerant of “*alcohol use*”. For example, the released report on the situation of crime in South Africa reveals that, “*drug-related crimes (these cover both the use, possession of and dealing in drugs)*” as well as “*driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs*”, are not usually reported to the police by members of the public, but often come to their attention primarily as a result of police actions such as roadblocks, searches and intelligence (South African Police Service, 2010:21).

As a result of all these, the current Minister of Social Development, Ms Bathabile Dlamini, is heading to the President’s call to “intensify the fight” against abuse of alcohol and drugs (*The Times*, 11 March 2011:1). The government is trying its best by discouraging the use of alcohol and drugs through proposing measures such as tax increases, nation-wide campaigns, stricter legislation including raising the legal age for alcohol consumption from 18 to 21 and prohibiting access to those who are below restricted age (The Presidency, 2009b:17; *The Times*, 11 March 2011:1; RSA, Budget speech, 2011:14). Furthermore, at the opening of the 2nd Biennial Summit on Substance Abuse held on the 15th of March 2011 in Durban, President Jacob Zuma outlined the plan for the liquor industry to pay a higher price for the harm inflicted to society including by restricting alcohol distribution and advertising. The President said, “...we must not make it easy for the people to get to

taverns and shebeens. When we look at these businesses, it is not good business if it affects the nation" (*The Times*, 16 March 2011:1). In response to that, the Government had also set up a 10-member team of experts to develop concrete policy proposals and strategies to address the problem of substance abuse.

In addition to the direct fight against alcohol and drug abuse, various interventions are also directed at curbing alcohol and drug related incidences such as sexual violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, unsafe sex, schoolyard violence, recurring patterns of violence, accidents, murders, social displacements and exploitation by others (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001c:10; *The Times*, 11 March 2011:7). There is a need to raise awareness on the abuse of drugs and alcohol, so that the use of dependency creating substance is not used as admissible excuses for unacceptable behaviour including breaking the law.

The above discussion of the prioritised youth groups highlighted that the most productive population group in South Africa is faced with a set of challenges which unquestionably affect their development and that of their country. The discussion further spells out the urgency with which interventions should be developed and implemented if the country's human capital is to be attended to. The need for skilled personnel, who are experts in the field of youth development to provide leadership in conceptualisation, design, and implementation of interventions aimed at addressing the needs of young people, remains paramount. In this case, the Youth workers seem to be appropriately qualified as experts in the field of Youth work. It is on that basis that the next section describes the Youth workers' roles and relevant interventions.

3.4.4 The Youth workers' roles

In this section, the researcher looks broadly at the key roles of Youth workers in South Africa. These roles have been deduced from the definitions of youth development and Youth work as stated in Chapter 1 of this study. The analyses of those definitions reveal that the Youth workers in South Africa are involved in

performing the following roles:

- **Empowerment** – in this context, the Youth workers are developing and strengthening youth on an on-going basis with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to promote their total or overall development, so that they can have control of their current and future destinies, including influencing the decisions that affect them and their communities (Benson & Pittman, 2001:94; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:7; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:10). The Youth workers help young people to define their own problem, and to explore and decide on solutions to the problem, thus becoming an important community resource (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a).

A wide range of structured empowerment programmes that assist young people include: building confidence, developing knowledge and skills, counselling, service provision, information and advice, financial support, community development, participation, self-help groups, providing discipline, forming campaigns and pressure groups (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:16-17; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:113; Edington et al., 2005 as cited in Krauss & Suandi, 2008:7). The acquisition of these skills will provide youth with necessary competence to participate fully in South Africa's development processes (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

- **Enabling** – the Youth workers create the conditions for youth to be engaged in activities that enable would assist them to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel grounded and to build skills and competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:3; Maunders, 2003:10; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).
- **Ensuring** – young people are assisted to express their needs and ideas to those with power and acquire ways of making themselves valuable and contributing members of the community (Commonwealth Secretariat,

2001a:5). By so doing, Maunders (2003:10) believe Youth workers will be instilling in young people, a sense of meaning, moral and social purpose. Furthermore, opportunities are created for youth to encourage them to mature and develop on their own unique manner and unleash their God-given human potential (Kawaiski & Randall, 2005 as cited in Krauss & Suandi, 2008:3).

- **Coordinating:** One of the key outcomes for Youth work is coordination of youth development interventions in order to meet identified needs and ensure greater impact. This is important, especially since youth development services are rendered by variety of service providers (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:13; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; The Presidency, 2009b:32). There is, therefore, a need to pull the efforts of various key players together so that they can form partnerships intended to benefit young people by responding to their needs (Sercombe, 2010:82).

In the next section, the researcher outlines the key interventions that seek to advance youth development to determine if South Africa is on course in meeting their needs.

3.4.5 Youth work interventions

To conclude the discussion on the current status in a proper context, there must be a common understanding on how the history, demographics, prioritised target groups, and workers' roles helped shape the nature of interventions designed.

The premise of this discussion is therefore influenced by the view of the Commonwealth Secretariat (2001a:5), which highlighted that Youth work activities are influenced by variety of factors such as the work situation, work focus, availability of resources, and the type of youth they service. The South Africa's National Youth Policy (The Presidency, 2009b:19-32) which is aligned to the AYC (African Union Commission, 2006:8-19), reflects the following policy imperatives and interventions tailored to address the challenges faced by the youth:

- **Education** – It is widely accepted that quality education both inside and outside school creates human capital, and is a driving force for economic, social, and political development and prosperity (Department of Social Development, 2010:49). It prepares young people to live invaluable lives of contributing to their own development and that of their present and future nations, hence countries are spending more on education than ever before (Department of Social Development, 2010:70; General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:11;The Presidency, 2009b:19; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10).

South Africa, has as a result, also pronounced in many of its policy discourses including the NYP, that education is the key indicator for youth development and also number one national priority with R165 billion allocated to formal education in 2011/12 financial year (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:6; RSA, Budget Speech, 2010). It is envisaged that education will unlock the future of the youth whilst making them competitive at national, regional and global level, hence the government is bolstering education and skills development through expanding further education and training colleges, increasing promoting access to student financial assistance and implementing school building programmes. (RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011;United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:10).

However, even though there is a marked improvement in access to education in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2010:50), there is, however, a need to pay equal attention to non-formal education in support of life-long learning and skills development and also as a measure of reaching out to youth who have been left out of the formal education system (General Assembly Economic and Social Council, 2007:11). Many educational opportunities are still leaving out young people who have dropped out of school in lower grades. This is a gap that could be closed by establishment of talent academies and vocational training centres. Furthermore, lack of linkage between education and jobs that are in demand also leave most young graduates without hope for employment.

- **Economic participation** – A Report on Labour Dynamics shows that whereas participation in labour market is being complicated by factors such as inequalities brought by race, age, gender, low levels of educational attainment as well as geographic location; there are persons who reach the working age, but are not necessarily economically active either voluntarily or involuntarily (Statistics South Africa, 2010b:17-22). Of importance to this study is that, on the basis of their age and energy levels, if the youth are equipped with relevant skills and knowledge, they can contribute productively to the country's economy and development of the region (The Presidency, 2009b:21; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:12).

Unlike in other African countries such as Angola, Zambia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, and the Central African Republic with the labour participation rate being higher than 70%, South Africa has youth labour force participation rate at 50% (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; 2011:13). In response to this, South Africa's President, Mr Jacob Zuma, announced in the 2011 State of the Nation Address, that there should be priority measures of creating jobs through agriculture, mining beneficiation, manufacturing, green economy and tourism aimed at denting unemployment, particularly amongst the youth. These could also increase the ability of the economy to cope with the large numbers of the economically active people who constitute a majority of the unemployed through preparing them for the labour market and increasing their employability (Department of Social Development, 2010:71; RSA, State of the Nation Address, 2011; *Sunday Times*, 23 January 2011; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:13).

- **Health and well-being** – Health also enjoys the largest share of the overall budget of the country, because it is linked to the “*ability to receive education, engage in income generating activities and participating in other structures of society*” (RSA, Budget speech, 2010; Richter & Panday, 2005 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:25). The health of young people is also linked to the situation they grow into, including levels of deprivation and poverty, hence the need to adopt a multi-sectoral approach in improving the conditions of youth to ensure that they enjoy the best

attainable state of physical, mental, and spiritual health (African Union Commission, 2006:12; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:51; The Presidency, 2009b:24). The youth should also be provided with relevant and youth appropriate health information (Simmons, 2006:105).

The deterioration of the young people's health influences their situation in the global economy and is caused by amongst others vulnerability to a range of diseases and injuries such as HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis, Sexual Transmitted Diseases, injuries, and nutritional deficiencies, of which the budget makes provision for (Department of Social Development, 2010:72; RSA, Budget speech, 2010; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:52). In addition, there are numerous efforts being made to improve the health conditions of young people through health promotion, reduction of risky behaviours and development of an inter-cluster health plan for the youth (The Presidency, 2009b:24, 25). The overall health and well-being of young people continue to be critical to the country's growth and cannot be ignored.

- **Social cohesion and civic participation** – Social cohesion has assumed greater focus since 2004, hence it is also at the centre of the NYP and the government's priorities for action. It entails inculcating a sense of togetherness, national identity, solidarity, responsible citizenship, and patriotism as a contribution to building a true developmental state (RSA, Budget speech, 2010; The Presidency, 2009a:29; The Presidency, 2009b:26). According to the NYP, these tenets allow young people to build their capital and networks, whilst strengthening the relations that bind people together. As already stated in Chapter 3, the outcome of being involved in community activities and keeping society together is the ability to form intimate relationships, foster a sense of belonging, increase self-esteem, look back and accept life with integrity (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; Vander Zanden, 1993:46).

As one of the government's key priorities, what is crucial when fostering social cohesion, is ensuring effective participation of young people in development and governance processes - a move towards diverting their attention from self destructive and risky behaviours to constructive activities such as monitoring government effectiveness and holding it accountable (United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa, 2009:79-83; The Presidency, 2009b:26). Like other citizens, the South African youth are also given an opportunity to be involved directly in decision making processes through participating in various existing political, faith-based, issue-based and umbrella youth formations such as the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League, Democratic Alliance (DA) Youth League, Students' Christian Organisations, South African Youth for International Diplomacy (SAYID), Youth in Business, and South African Youth Council (SAYC).

The above mentioned structures are organised on the basis of their shared interests. Although there is a need to increase youths' participation in these structures and to recognise them as credible voice for their constituencies, the challenge is that of participation being voluntary and of overlapping and duplicated mandates.

- **National Youth Service (NYS)** – Adopted as part of interventions for youth development, the NYS is aimed at engaging youth in community service activities whilst providing them an opportunity to gain structured skills necessary to access sustainable livelihoods (Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:47; Mulaudzi, 2000:132; The Presidency, 2009b:29). This programme, although primarily coordinated by the NYDA, is offered by all key stakeholders. and serves as an opportunity for youth to express their civic responsibility. According to Mulaudzi (2000:132), the NYS is not yet legislated in South Africa despite the White Paper that was submitted to Cabinet in 1999 and this presents implementation challenge since the bulk of service providers are outsourced and financial resources are limited.

The long term vision of the NYS is to have it expanded as a compulsory rather than voluntary service (The Presidency, 2009b:30). In this regard, the role of youth organisations ought to be broadened, to accommodate and accord the youth the opportunity of doing voluntary and/or community service. It is through programmes such as these that young people's energies, solidarity, creativity and optimism are constructively used to facilitate smooth transition from school to work and preferential access to employment opportunities

(Center for Development and Enterprise, 2008:37; Mulaudzi, 2000:133; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:43).

At the continental level, there are successes reaped from the NYS and the AUC, where the latter launched the Youth Volunteer Corps in 2010 in order to harness the skills of young people for development purposes (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011:45). On that note, it would be important for South Africa to learn best practice NYS models from the neighbouring African countries such as Namibia, where the NYS is legislated and championed vigorously. The South African NYS model is failing to inculcate patriotism amongst the youth and the programme is also not reaching many young people in a manner that their contribution to the national agenda is felt.

- **Youth work** – This practice is listed as one of the key youth development interventions in the NYP (The Presidency, 2009b:31) and is also the core area of investigation for this study. It has already been evidently illustrated throughout this report, that Youth work is committed to total development and support of young people as primary clients (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:17; Sercombe, 2010: 82; The Presidency, 2009b:31).

However, despite the benefits reaped through this practice, there are still challenges some of which propelled the researcher to do this study. Taking the background that led to evolution of Youth work into cognisance, the researcher now examines the tasks which still need to be carried out in order to determine its future (Kelly, 1990:168, 175; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187). It is important to note that even though Youth work is mentioned to be a possible profession in the NYP, it would be important that there is determination of what ought to happen in the social service sector.

In the next chapter, the researcher takes a closer look at the professionalisation process and how it unfolded in South Africa. The analysis is intended to enable the researcher to unearth the challenges faced in this regard, since professionalisation is one of the options being explored in this study as the future of Youth work. The aim would be to answer some of the key research questions raised in this study, namely: Should Youth work remains an occupation? Should it be recognised as an area of

specialisation? Should it be recognised as an autonomous profession? What are the benefits and non-benefits of specialising and/or professionalising?

By answering all these questions, the researcher may hopefully be in the position to assist policy makers and various key stakeholders in determining policy direction that could shape the future of Youth work practice in the country. This discussion comes at a time when there is lack of balance between high demand for social service professionals to respond to increasing social development challenges and shortage of social services professionals to meet those demands. It is due to all this that there is a need to understand the current and future status of Youth work practice.

3.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The discussion on the status of Youth work at international, regional and national levels has provided a substantial amount of useful information which provided background to the emergence of Youth work whilst giving indication of the direction to be followed in the future. It is clear that all these developments have been influenced by a range of political, social and economic factors that ought to be taken into consideration when interventions are being designed. Furthermore, given the similarities of experiences between what is happening at international, regional and national levels, as well as the impact of globalisation across the world, it is required that different countries define relevant national situations that contextually reflect what is happening on the ground, whilst aligned to trends at regional and international levels.

Again, even though there is overall commitment to the advancement of youth development, evidenced by development of policies and programmes intended to promote the well-being of young people, there is no coordinated effort to bring all this together in some form of a career ladder (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:84). This challenge and others are reflective of the need to define the future of Youth work. To this end, this study seeks to provide evidence that will guide the current debate on the future status of Youth work at national level and hopefully guide policy decision taking at regional and global levels. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses in detail the future of Youth work practice.

CHAPTER 4

THE FUTURE STATUS OF YOUTH WORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided a glimpse of the past and present status of Youth work in South Africa. As outlined at the end of Chapter 1, this chapter has a futurist outlook and is forward looking, because it looks closely at the policy options which might determine the future of Youth work. It is intended to analyse different policy scenarios or options regarding the future status of Youth work. They entail, maintaining the current status quo and leaving Youth work as an occupation; or having Youth work recognised as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work; or having Youth work as an autonomous professional field of practice. On this basis, the researcher reviews the literature to understand how things ought to be handled going forward, if the identified challenges impacting on emergence of Youth work are to be overcome.

Taking the background that led to evolution of Youth work and youth development into cognisance, it is clear that the field of Youth work is evolving with more attention being paid to professional development of those working with the youth (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:77). It is in that context that the researcher had identified the other alternative policy options, so that they can be analysed together with professionalisation in order to guide policy direction. In undertaking this analysis, even prior to scientific findings, it will be crucial that the researcher analyses the pros and cons of following each course of action as a means to inform the decision that would be taken in the end.

4.2 YOUTH WORK AS AN OCCUPATION

In Chapter 1, the researcher concluded that an occupation refers to employment/ job/ work not registered by any statutory regulating body and for which a person is earning a living. This description fits the current status of Youth work in South Africa as described in Chapter 3. By discussing the history of Youth work, the researcher alluded to its origin, how it emerged and its present status as an occupation.

From that description, it is clear that when Youth work evolved it was out of concern to respond to challenges facing young people. However, as problems of young people become many and varied, the pursuit of the youth development agenda, particularly derived from the prominent role played by the youth in politics of the day, led to a further attempt by service providers to attend to young people's political, social, economic and cultural needs (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002:10; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:13). They achieved that by including young people in planning and developmental processes, thus making youth development a focus of their organisations and government by introducing interventions in the form of legislation, institutional structures, policies, strategies, programmes, and projects dedicated to empowering and developing youth (The Presidency, 2009a:71; Youth Development Network, 2008:9).

Youth work then became a job performed by many in youth-focused work places. This was a result of what Gilbert and Specht (1981:226) identified as an influence of emergence of the occupation as a private and voluntary enterprise in the philanthropic movements. It is therefore not surprising that this Youth work emerged from this background. This was essential as youth were considered a critical vulnerable grouping, yet, if developed could become an investment and resource to the nation (Jefferies & Smith, 1990:94; National Research and Technology Project, 1999:13; Verna & Saraswathi in Maunders, 2006:13).

Even though Youth work is an occupation presently, the study conducted by Makofane mentions that there are national efforts to facilitate that this field be recognised as a profession (Department of Social Development, 2007:57). This would result in Youth work becoming either an area of specialisation within other identified profession/s and/or an autonomous profession. However, if Youth work is classified as an occupation, it would mean that it will remain as is and there will currently be no efforts made to have it specialised and/or professionalised.

In the section that follows, the researcher discusses thus the second possible option regarding the future status of Youth work in South Africa, namely, Youth work as an area of specialisation.

4.3 YOUTH WORK AS AN AREA OF SPECIALISATION

Reference to the definition of specialisation in Chapter 1, section 1.12.11, highlights specialisation as recognition of line of work within an existing profession. In this context, it would mean having youth development recognised as speciality or a special branch of focus within an identified existing profession. The implication would be that those already qualified as professionals will have an opportunity to concentrate on youth development as a special branch of their work and be recognised as experts in this area (*Oxford English Minidictionary*, 1999:496; *Random House Webster College Dictionary*, 1992:1284). This would imply that the professionals for whom youth development is a speciality would be charged with the responsibility of acquiring relevant and specialised knowledge and skills to enable them to perform functions that target youth (Department of Social Development, 2007:28).

In the South African context, Youth work is being practiced by other professionals such as Social workers, Teachers, Nurses, Psychologists and ordinary youth who are passionate about this field (Department of Social Development, 2007:56). Although having Youth work as a specialisation may apply to all these various professions, this study only looks at the possibility of specialisation in the field of Social work and/or Child and youth care work.

In ascertaining the feasibility of Youth work as an area of specialisation for the purpose of this study, the researcher checked the curricula of Social work and Child and youth care work offered by various South African universities. It showed that Youth work is currently not an area of specialisation for any of these professions. The recent debate on areas of specialisation within Social work profession did not identify Youth work as an area of specialisation (Smith, 2010). Given all these, it is essential that this study explores specialisation as one of the policy options regarding the future status of Youth work.

In the following section, the researcher looks at the option of having Youth work as a profession including analysing the extent to which the criteria for professionalisation is being met.

4.4 YOUTH WORK AS A PROFESSION

In Chapter 1, the researcher defined a profession as an occupation or a field of practice that requires advanced learning, involves complex mental application of scientific knowledge, skills, techniques, competencies, values and principles of that specific field and is recognised by a regulatory body as such.

In general, it is worth noting that the debate on professionalising Youth work is heavily influenced by the traditional cultural setting that regard young people as minors who are depended on adults. This notion implies that, by virtue of serving young people, Youth workers might also be perceived and treated like minors who have to be monitored and supervised, thus being denied the professional status. In borrowing from Stewart (in Gibelman, 1995:11), this is similar to the notion of Social workers being associated with the “*unwanted population*” they are serving.

The process of professionalising Youth work is further influenced by an ever increasing number of young people as clients or consumers who want services and also by an understanding of the value of professionally developing the service providers involved (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:7). Even though the researcher is analysing the option of professionalising Youth work, readers should be aware that Sercombe (2010:7) argues that Youth work is a profession, regardless of whether it is recognised or not. However, the researcher is of the view that the opinions of other professionals and the public, in the quest for professionalisation, are important and ought to be known and understood.

In South Africa, professionalisation is being supported by the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Act No. 67 of 2008 and SAQA Act No. 58 of 1995 (National Qualification Framework Act No. 67 of 2008; Richards, 2011:15; South African Qualification Authority Act No. 58 of 1995). These legislations promote provision of professional services by the body of practitioners in order to hold them morally accountable for their performance and behaviour. At international level, professionalisation of Youth work is given prominence by the Commonwealth through its popular youth focused intervention – the CYP (Charles, 2006:44; Maunders, 2006:21, 25). The CYP programme mandates all member countries to establish Youth work education and training programmes and further encourages that Youth

work practice be recognised as a profession (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:18; Maunders, 2006:23). Internationally, regionally, and nationally, there are notable strides made in this regard, because the CYP has developed a Diploma in Youth Development Work that is available in more than forty (40) Commonwealth countries, via its regional centres, namely: Africa; Asia; the Caribbean; and the South Pacific.

Table 3.1 in the previous chapter showed the Commonwealth countries and institutions in the African region offering Commonwealth Diploma in Youth work. Of relevance is that, South Africa is one of the first countries in the African region to offer Youth work qualification. In addition to this, there are Commonwealth member states in other regions such as Europe, USA and Australia which have recognised Youth work as a profession (Beker, 2001b:364; Maunders, 2003:9; Sercombe, 2004:70).

Like South Africa, even though some of these countries have initiated the professionalisation process, most of them are still struggling to get Youth work recognised as a profession. However, it is important to note that the struggle for professionalisation is not a new phenomenon, because other comparable professions such as Social work also faced similar struggles and threats in their journey towards a profession, but survived (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1). A significant and relevant question to this study is whether professionalisation is the correct route being pursued. If it is found to be, there would be a need to fast track the complex process of professionalisation (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1; Maunders, 2003:26).

Having the above in mind, this study notes that recognising Youth work as a profession implies that it can be an autonomous or independent professional field of practice. In the next sections, the researcher assesses the extent to which Youth work is ready to become a profession and the manner in which challenges that hinder achievement of this goal are being addressed.

4.4.1 Background of professionalising Youth work in South Africa

According to Community and Youth Workers Union (2008) and South African Youth Workers Association (2001), the process of lobbying for professionalisation of Youth work in South Africa started in the late 1980s. This work ultimately led to

establishment of an association for Youth workers in 1994, the Youth Practitioners Advocacy Group (YPAG). In its lobbying efforts, the YPAG consulted the youth sector widely as a key stakeholder in this process. This led to a Youth workers' conference which was held in 1996. The conference produced a document called the *Hunter Rest Declaration* (henceforth referred to as Declaration) which made provision for clear Youth work objectives, career paths, education framework, outcomes for Youth work, and a professional code of ethics. The Declaration was submitted to the national Department of Welfare, now known as the national Department of Social Development (Thabethe, 2008).

In 1998 the YPAG became known as South African Youth Workers Association (SAYWA) with its own constitution, code of ethics, and standards. This association became the collective voice for Youth workers and was involved in facilitating the professionalisation process (Community and Youth Workers Union, 2008; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001; Thabethe, 2008).

The following milestones regarding professional recognition of Youth work were reported (Pruis, 2006; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001; Smith, 2006):

- in 1996, YPAG developed the first draft Youth work policy which was presented to the Inter-Ministerial Committee on youth at risk.
- this was followed by a Youth work practitioners' conference held in 1996.
- the consultations between SACSSP and SAYWA regarding recognition of Youth work then started in August 2001 with a view to establish a professional board for Youth workers;
- in November 2001, an application for the establishment of a professional board was received on behalf of two organisations, SAYWA and the PRODYWOC. The spokesperson was Rev. Dan Thabethe, the then Director of SAYWA;
- the second draft Youth work policy was developed by SAYWA with the support from the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the Commonwealth Youth Programme.
- the application for professional recognition was then considered during a meeting of the SACSSP held on 27 and 28 March 2002, where collaboration

and the possibility of combining Youth workers with Child and youth care workers in one professional board was raised and debated;

- the matter was then referred back to SAYWA, PRODYWOC and the National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW), suggesting that the two associations should either merge or collaborate;
- it was suggested that members of these associations should discuss the possibilities of merging or collaborating amongst themselves and that they should weigh the pros and cons thereof;
- in July 2003, communication was received from SAYWA and it was agreed at an Annual General Meeting of 2002, that there should be discussions between SAYWA and NACCW on possible combination of Youth workers with Child and youth care workers under one professional board;
- due to lack of progress on the proposed discussion, the NACCW as the applicant for the Child and youth care profession then approached the SACSSP to request processing of their application, thus resulting in establishment of a Professional Board for Child and youth care workers and its formal inauguration in April 2004;
- the Youth workers continued to attend to professionalisation of Youth work field by having workshops and consultative meetings. In that regard, SAYWA, PRODYWOC, national Department of Social Development, NYC, UYF as well as SAYC continued playing the advocacy role;
- in 2006, the National Department of Social Development commissioned a research on “demarcation of social services”. The findings revealed that Youth work should be considered as a profession;
- in 2007 and 2009, the national Department of Social Development hosted the Youth Work Policy Conference that confirmed the need to have Youth work professionalised and led to subsequent development of the third draft Youth work policy;
- in 2010, the national Department of Social Development transferred the function of facilitating the professionalisation process to the NYDA. That decision was taken in view of NYDA’s role as the primary custodian for youth development in the country;
- in 2010, the national Department of Social Development and SACSSP consulted the youth sector regarding developing a policy for employers of

- Youth workers as input into the draft social service professions policy; and
- in 2011, the NYDA held a National Youth Convention and one of the commissions was on Youth work. At that convention, the participants, most of whom were Youth workers, were in consensus about Youth work being recognised as a profession.

From the above, it can be deduced that the professionalisation process is driven from any direction (Sercombe, 2004:71). In South Africa, it is driven by Youth workers and Social workers. Even though this function has been moved to the NYDA, social service professionals continue to play an important role as key stakeholders because they still render youth development services and are currently involved in reviewing the Social Service Professions Act (Mmutle, 2011).

One of the reasons which appear to be the cause for delay in having this process concluded is the inability to meet the set criteria for professionalisation, as the researcher will discuss in the next section. Furthermore, in order to gain recognition as a profession the SACSSP has the following clear procedures which has to be followed (Pruis, 2006; Smith, 2006):

- a) a written application should be forwarded to the SACSSP by an applicant (individual, group or organisation applying);
- b) an application form is issued for completion and then submitted to the SACSSP with supporting documents;
- c) the SACSSP's committee on Education and Training to consider the application and make recommendation to the Council regarding establishment of a profession;
- d) on approval of establishment of the profession, the Council will draft Regulations in terms of section 28 (1) (g) (b) (c) and (d) of the Social Service Professions Act, Act No 110 of 1978, relating to the requirements to be complied by an applicant for the establishment of a professional board for the specific occupation which has been approved to be professionalised;
- e) the draft Regulations will then be consulted with all stakeholders before being submitted to the national Department of Social Development for approval by the Minister of Social Development and publication in the Government Gazette; and

- f) on publication of the said Regulations, a register will be opened and an occupation will be registered as a profession.

Of importance is the fact that the procedure of the SACSSP outlined above is consistent with what various authors considered as essential criteria or characteristics of a profession (De Vos, Schulze & Patel, 2011:25-26; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; Sercombe, 2004:64; Social Services Professions Act, No. 110 of 1978). Therefore, in order to check progress towards professionalising Youth work in South Africa, it is important that an assessment is conducted on where South Africa is in relation to meeting the identified procedure and criteria or characteristics.

However, it is important to note that in assessing progress towards professionalising Youth work in South Africa, there is an assumption that professionalisation is an evolving process consisting of stages. The aim is then to look at the internal and external factors which facilitate or impede the professionalisation process (Greenwood as cited in Gilbert & Specht, 1981:257). On that basis, in the next section, the researcher assesses the extent to which Youth work is ready to become a profession. This is done by analysing progress that has been made to meet the set criteria and identifying tasks that still need to be performed.

4.4.2 Progress in meeting the criteria of a profession

Based on the views of different authors (De Vos, Schulze & Patel, 2005:25; Greenwood, 1957 in Sercombe, 2010:8; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; Kelly, 1990:167; Social Services Professions Act, No. 110 of 1997), the following identified professionalisation criteria are discussed in detail with specific reference to progress made by Youth work in South Africa towards meeting each criterion:

- Name of the profession;
- Estimate number of practitioners in the field;
- Functions of the profession;
- Role specification in comparison with other related professions;
- Body of knowledge;
- Formal education and training (admission requirements, educational standards with clear curriculum);

- Public service and acceptance of authority;
 - Professional autonomy and self-regulation;
 - Professional identity;
 - A code of ethics;
 - Research activity,
 - Professional association;
 - Long term commitment to the field;
 - Employment organisations;
 - International recognition of the profession; and
 - The financial status as well as management systems.
- (i) **Name of the profession:** Those who work with youth are at times referred to as Youth development workers or Youth development practitioners/ Youth workers/ Child and youth care work practitioners/ Outreach worker/ Prevention specialist/ Youth leaders (Association for Child and Youth Care Practice & Child and Youth Care Certification Board, 2010:1; Garfat, 2003:3; Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:80). This is also the case in South Africa, because there is still no consensus on uniform utilisation of the occupational title.
- (ii) **Estimate number of practitioners in the field:** In South Africa, there is no appropriate job market and a national register for Youth workers. Some of these workers, although qualified, use different titles depending on their employment settings. For example, the Youth workers employed in Child and youth care settings such as Places of Safety identify themselves as Child and youth care workers. Therefore, it is difficult to estimate the number of practitioners in the Youth work field due the fluidity of Youth workers.
- (iii) **Functions of the profession:** The following can be considered functions of Youth work (SAYWA, 2001:11; The Presidency, 2009b:31):
- ✓ conducting developmental assessments of young people;
 - ✓ engaging in developmental and therapeutic work with youth;
 - ✓ promoting youth development through organising and implementing individual and group activities;

- ✓ assisting young people to realise desired developmental objectives and outcomes;
- ✓ facilitating young people's access to developmental resources;
- ✓ developing and implementing policies, principles and philosophies;
- ✓ tackling systemic challenges that may hinder development of youth; and
- ✓ enhancing young people's contribution to nation building.

(iv) **Role specification in comparison with other related professions/practices:** For the purpose of this study, it is important to compare the roles of Youth workers with that of other related social service professions. In Table 4.1, the researcher adapted information on comparison among helping professions as described by Bloom (1990:94), and compared the roles of various social service providers with regard to youth service provision:

Table 4.1: Summary of role comparison among social service providers

PROFESSION OR FIELD OF PRACTICE	CLIENT SERVED	MAJOR EMPHASIS OR GOAL	WORKER'S ROLES
Social worker	All individuals (children, youth, adults, and elderly persons) groups and communities	Promoting social change, problem solving in human relationships, and enhancing social functioning	Problem solver, Counsellor, Therapist, Caseworker, Advisor, Enabler, Teacher, Mediator, Negotiator, Broker, Advocate, Researcher, Administrator and Planner
Child and youth care worker	Children and youth in difficulty or at risk	Providing assistance, care and treatment for children and young people	Counsellor, Care giver, Problem solver, Therapist, Advocate, Enabler, Homemaker, Administrator, Planner and Researcher
Community development worker	Communities, neighbourhoods, and groups including young people	Enhancing the capacities of communities to respond to their needs by improving their capacity for development	Facilitator, Catalyst, Enabler, Teacher, Guide, Broker, Advocate, and Researcher
Youth worker	Youth	Promoting the total or overall development of all young people, troubled or not, to enable them to handle current and future challenges in different spheres of their lives	Teacher, Enabler, Advocate, Guide, Planner, Problem solver, Mediator, Negotiator, and Coordinator

Source: adapted from Table 5.1 in Bloom (1990:94) on comparison among helping professions

It can be deduced from Table 4.1 that the functions performed by Youth workers overlap with those performed by other helping social service providers. This could be attributed to the fact that Youth workers do not have monopoly over young people as the target group since there are other identified social service providers who also service young people. However, despite the overlapping roles, each discipline has a clear emphasis in terms of service delivery, thus making different social service providers to play slightly different roles. For instance, although young people are the target clients of all social service professionals, they can only be regarded as the primary clients in respect of Youth workers (Sercombe, 2010:26, 88). Furthermore, Stewart (1984) as cited in Gibelman (1995:xxi), highlighted that the “*claim is not on monopoly of functions, but to uniqueness and distinctiveness about human problems and their solutions and in particular value and practice orientation*”. Of importance is that this “*uniqueness and distinctiveness about human problems*” underpins the nature of interventions in respect of service providers.

It is in this context that social service providers have to work as a team and coordinate their services in an effort to provide a comprehensive integrated service to youth (Department of Social Development, 2005:16). “*Designation of roles within the team needs attention if a team approach is an objective*” (Botha, 1995:212). Unpacking these roles and functions will pave way for determination of job descriptions, capacities as well as skills and training requirements for Youth workers and other social service practitioners. This include service planning and goal orientation by different service providers who uses interlinked and diverse professional skills to provide more effective and supportive services for users (Lumsden & Lumsden, 2000:9).

Extensive review of literature revealed the tremendous popularity enjoyed by teamwork. It creates an atmosphere in which service providers divides labour, cooperate, e.g., sharing and rationalising resources as well as putting together different abilities needed to accomplish tasks and deliver effective services, exchange ideas and experiences, and consistently recommend change (Botha, 1995:214; Skidmore & Thackeray, 1994:114). This leads to a more satisfying work environment that increases the morale and job satisfaction for

service providers, changes attitudes, reduces conflict, forges problem solving, increases performance, and consequently leads to quality services (Krueger, 1990:74; Lumsden & Lumsden, 2000:9, 13).

- (v) **Body of knowledge:** Various authors (Corney, 2004:7; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1; De Vos & Delport, 2005:46; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; Houle, 1980 as cited in Department of Social Development, 2007:8; Richards, 2011:16) acknowledge the ability to develop knowledge base and skills as well as mastery of several relevant bodies of theory as critical elements and foundation of all professions. According to these authors, this body of knowledge should be unique, specialised, organised and have theoretical underpinnings, minimum competencies as well as practical objectives, and eventually form a model of practice. Barker (2003:341) further confirms that availability of knowledge enhances the public credibility and should be used as a basis for provision of services to clients. It further underpins the use of skills, methods, and interventions (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:9).

In analysing the curricula of Youth work practice, it is therefore critical to note that some of the courses are based on specialised knowledge, whereas some have drawn ideas, strategies and practices from an array of relevant disciplines. Those disciplines include, but are not limited to: Child and youth care, Social work, Community work, Teaching, Psychology and Health (Benson & Pittman, 2001:10; Lyon & Canning, 1990:194; Spence, 2004:266). It is evident that integration of knowledge brings with it variety of perspectives and will consequently guide Youth workers on how to provide services. It is, therefore, critical that a unique body of knowledge is created in the Youth work field to guide intervention of practitioners and ensure that it is not lost in other paradigms and priorities (Baksh, 2004:31-32; Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:79; Gilbert & Specht, 1981:293).

The challenge for the Youth work is that, there is currently a mismatch that exists between knowledge base and practice (Deschenes, MacDonald & McLaughlin as cited in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:27). This is to a larger extent as a result of lack of employment setting for these personnel as there is no

linkage between theory and field practice. This should be prioritised, because as aspiring professionals, Youth workers are expected to act from a particular knowledge and value stance (Ryan & Hawkins, 2000 as cited in Krauss & Saundi; 2008:4).

Another challenge is that, although research is being conducted on youth issues, it is limited, particularly in South Africa as compared to places such as the USA and Sweden where Youth work is well developed (Benson & Pittman, 2001:116; Mufune, 1999:366). The implication of this statement is that, even though the body of knowledge is somewhat developed, there is a need for more knowledge contribution. This orientation can best be acquired through formal education in academic setting (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:243).

The fact that some of South African institutions of higher learning as well as training centres are offering Youth work training as a means of creating capacity for those already in the field and for production of newly qualified Youth workers is a positive step in the creation of a theoretical body of knowledge (Mkandawire, 1999:3). Furthermore, the registration of an accredited Youth work qualification by SAQA further strengthens this point (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). This then implies that, there is availability of knowledge base to some extent and the fact that field practical forms part of Youth work training, will also close the gap between theory and practice. There is, however, a need to have the knowledge base increased and synergised. In comparing youth development and gender movement, Baksh (2004:32) asserts that the challenge for the youth development field is to go beyond leaflets, brochures and how-to guides, but to begin interrogating theories, analysing texts from a youth development perspective and then coming up with scientific research and evidence based practice.

- (vi) **Formal education and training:** The first step towards addressing the growth needs of clients is for Youth workers to address their own growth and education needs in order to perform highly skilled tasks (National Research and Technology Project, 1999:16; Richards, 2011:16; Wilkins, 1997:2).

According to Richards (2011:16) and The Presidency (2009b:31), entry into the profession is controlled through selecting admission requirements to education and training programmes, designing curricula, and setting graduation standards.

It is clear from the above that provision of skills, knowledge, values, attitudes and competencies are a key to Youth work being a profession (Krauss & Suandi, 2008:6; Maunders, 2003:18; Richards, 2011:16). This therefore implies that Youth workers ought to have been trained in mentoring, group facilitation, community development, youth development principles, understanding the systems of youth development broadly, financing, acquiring resources and marketing. They should be educated in relevant Youth work training and be driven by Youth work values (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:18).

In this sense, as a prerequisite for entering professional practice, there is a need to what constitute Youth work qualification or credentials and then obtaining relevant formal education and training with theoretical and practical components (Gibelman, 1995:xxiv; Maunders, 2003:18). At the end of that training and education, the practitioner must demonstrate that they have acquired high levels of knowledge, skills, and self-development, and that they are well prepared for their professional role by acting from a particular knowledge and value stance through the medium of their job, and being recognised as having expertise which legitimises their actions (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:77; Broadbent & Corney, 2008:18; Christian, 2007:91; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:4; Leathard, 1994:199; Lyon & Canning, 1990:193; Wilkins, 1997:7). Over and above the initial education and training, the practitioner may obtain additional education to enhance his knowledge and take discretionary decisions in an ever changing environment (Richards, 2011:16).

The outcome of implementing formal education and training is a body of skilled workers who should transmit that value to young people (Christian, 2007:91). It is, therefore, clear that education and training would benefit the practitioners and the client by ensuring competence, professional development and provision of quality professional service (Richards, 2011:16). The employment

organisations that employ skilled workforce prevent the weakening and probably the collapse of their organisations (Youth Development Network, 2008:25).

The education and training of Youth workers must be of high standard (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:19). In South Africa, the quality and standard of education and training is formally recognised by the SAQA Act No. 58 of 1995. It was on that basis that in 2009, the SAQA listed registration of National and Further Education and Training certificates as qualifications in Youth work, under the subfield: Adult Learning aimed at improving learners' access not only to Higher Education, but also to career progression (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). Additionally, as illustrated in Chapter 3: Table 3.2, South Africa's institutions of higher learning are also offering education and training of Youth workers at degree, masters and PhD levels (Fortuin, 2010, Monene, 2006; Mudau, 2011; Raselekoane, 2011).

Other forms of training include on-the-job training or workplace learning, continuous professional development or lifelong learning, professional supervision, workshops, and mentoring aimed at upgrading skills of practitioners already in the field and those whose schedules will not permit them to study full time by keeping them updated with the latest developments, thus alleviating their fears of thinking that they are under-qualified and may lose their jobs (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:18; Department of Social Development, 2007:8; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; Sercombe, 2004:64). These would benefit Youth workers who are unable to leave their work to attend training on a full time basis by teaching theory and/or practice, thus leading to increased numbers of skilled workers (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:19; Merton & Payne, 2000:22). It will further benefit the majority of workers who have long service in the youth development sector, but do not have the appropriate or related educational background and training (Ream & Witt in Hamilton & Hamilton, 2004:67).

The experience of practitioners already in the field can also be recognised through shortening the length of their training or ensuring that they gain credit for appropriate courses where recognition and validation of their experience and achievements is made (Broadbent & Corney, 2008: 19). This entails specifying standards and evaluation criteria, and creating an infrastructure of assessment, moderation and verification (Merton & Payne, 2000:22). This is termed, RPL and recognises the worker's prior experience and enables access to further learning (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

The South African Institutions offering Youth work qualification are highlighted in Table 3.2. The analysis of these qualifications shows that there are differences between them in terms of core competencies and curricula content. For example, when the researcher compared the curriculum offered in different institutions, she noticed that there are differences depending on the location of that field as well as the credentials of instructors. Whereas the University of Venda and University of South Africa (UNISA) based their curricula on the Commonwealth Youth Diploma, Huguenot College and University of Port Elizabeth based their curricula on Social work. There is a need to agree on common core knowledge and skills to be uniformly applied across the Youth work training (Mudau, 2011; Monene, 2006; Raselekoane, 2011). This could be achieved through setting minimum norms and standards for education and training of Youth workers, thus ensuring uniformity in qualification, improving the quality of education, and enhancing the status of the occupation by providing recognition of Youth work as a profession.

- (vii) **Public service and acceptance of authority:** Extensive review of literature reveals that being a professional require experience to deliver complex services, formal acceptance, recognition, support of the authority, and integrity of the profession by those responsible for offering services to the public, community, and individual clientele being served (Barker, 2003:341; Maunders, 2006:25; Richards, 2011:15). Since *“youth development is a broad field with many constituencies in grassroots community organisations, in state and national youth-serving organisations, and at colleges and universities”*

(Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:75), it is constituencies such as those who have to show acceptance of Youth work.

In addition to the general public, it is argued that even in instances where a qualification or credential exists; there could be problems, because Youth work is not yet accepted by others. Therefore, being accepted by clients and sanctioned by community is not sufficient; there should also be acceptance by the peers in other disciplines (Skidmore & Thackeray, 1994:8). In this regard, the role of Youth workers or youth development practitioners is to educate and inform fellow workers on their roles, skills, professional expertise and value by raising their status in the society (Ferguson in Anglin et al., 1990:280). The workers, students, and trainers should also act as advocates by marketing and promote Youth work field, so that society can begin to recognise its value.

Since Youth work services have been previously infused in traditional disciplines such as Social work and Psychology (Lyon & Canning, 1990:194; Osei-Hwedi & Ndulo, 1989:304), it is imperative that Youth workers are primarily involved in educating young people as well as the general public about their role as well as the benefits that the community will have if Youth work is granted exclusive professional monopoly (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:226).

Youth workers can make use of public platforms such as workshops, conferences, seminars, public meetings, media, and publications in books, journals, newspapers, newsletters, career exhibitions and guidance. Of particular importance is the fact that efforts to inform and educate the public about youth development should not be confined to times when major problems have arisen, but also to positive developments, thus making people to listen when there is emotional appeal (Baksh, 2004:30).

Lyon and Canning (1990:197) asserted that students must be given the opportunity to develop “meta awareness” of the field so that they can serve as ambassadors when they are in public. It is clear that learners in the field of Youth work could be utilised as human resource if they can prove themselves to be credible in the eyes of their local communities and may also serve as

mentors among their peers. Mkandawire (1999) asserts that, learners in the field of Youth work have skills and should as a result be involved in marketing their own field.

Another important dimension is the need for public regulation. This implies registration with a statutory body as an indication of a profession having received the sanction and mandate of the public and then recognised by the authority of peer judgements within the structure of that specific body (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:433). The current lack of recognition of Youth work as a profession deprives the Youth workers of the peer judgements and makes service recipients vulnerable since there is no statutory body to protect their interests. However, recognition of Youth work will put it on the same level and status as other social service professions, thus enhancing its public credibility and acceptance (Barker, 2003:341).

- (viii) Professional autonomy and self-regulation:** This characteristic of autonomy “include not only the financial aspect of independence, but also the comprehensive concept of functioning” that would allow the professionals to exercise discretion on how to produce the required outcomes or results for service recipients (De Vos & Schulze, 2002:9; Richards, 2011:16). Richards further stated that the professionals are granted autonomy by the society.

The sanctioning of the profession is awarded through registration, certification and licensing. It grants the degree of autonomy and authority in the form of privileged communication and set the right standards for what is considered professional (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:226). This is essential for the definition of professional boundaries, self-regulation, control as well as development of systems and procedures to determine the minimum academic requirements for entering such a profession, continuing education, membership to the profession and ethical guidelines (De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; Leathard, 1994:199).

Since “*the responsibility of many professional activities falls on statutory bodies and professional associations*” (Richards, 2011:16), in South Africa, different professional groups register with their respective statutory bodies in

order to control a particular profession. For example, Nurses register with the South African Nursing Council (SANC), Teachers register with the South African Council for Educators (SACE), and social service professionals register with the SACSSP. These statutory bodies are formally registered and use legal sanction, e.g., in disciplining unprofessional and incompetent behaviour (Richards, 2011:18).

Youth workers in South Africa are not yet recognised nor registered by any statutory body. The NYP advocates that, these cadres of workers have to be registered and recognised as professionals in order to have their interests and that of their clients protected (The Presidency, 2009b:31-32). Even though the SACSSP is taking the lead as the potential body to recognise this field as a profession, there is a need to have evidence that it is indeed the appropriate and relevant authority to do this. The researcher is intending to have that determined through this study.

- (ix) Professional identity:** Identity is defined as the state of remaining the same or unchanged under varying aspects, conditions or circumstances (*Random House Webster Dictionary*, 1992:668). Professional identity refers to the extent to which a member of a profession or the profession itself, remains the same or unchanged even under different or varied circumstances. It comes in the form of professional culture represented by values, norms, and symbols (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:226).

Even though professional identity is imparted during the training, “*the professional must live the life and mind of his profession throughout his career*” (Richards, 2011:16). As a result, important aspects of profession such as the language as well as the conceptual framework are shared by people in the same discipline and become part of their professional identity. In South Africa, the identity of Youth work seems to be weak as is reflected through lack of a universal title for the Youth workers, lack of professional recognition and poor direction for those involved in the field (SAYWA, 2001:15).

As illustrated in Table 3.2 in Chapter 3, there are still structural differences with regard to location of the academic programs for Youth work and differences regarding academic qualification. For example, at the University of Venda the programme is located within the school for Post Graduate Studies, and the qualification is known as Youth in Development; at the Stellenbosch University the programme is located within the School of Theology under the Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, and the qualification is referred to as Youth work (Fortuin, 2011; Mudau, 2011). These differences also show signs of weak identities (Lyon & Canning, 1990:194). It is on that basis that Spence (2004:267) noted that it is critical for a profession to have its own language so that it can be able to withstand a climate of tight political control. The researcher has further observed that those qualified in this field are employed in different settings in both government and NGO sectors. This then implies that they will be remunerated differently depending on the employing organisation. This is yet another sign of a weak identity for those practicing in this field.

The structure of an organisation also proved to be contributing to interprofessional struggles (Temkin-Greener, 1983 as cited in Nandan, 1997:250). For example, Wilson and Setturland (1986) as cited in Nandan (1997:250) mentioned that, if different health care professionals were working under the same administrative umbrella, were tolerant of each other's difference, they would accomplish team goals. On the same note, this would be applicable for social service professionals if the same conditions could be applied to them uniformly.

By professionalising Youth work, there will hopefully be greater uniformity even in terms of language usage. Furthermore, the profession will also convince outsiders not to wear the title without it being conventionally conferred by a professional school (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:246). At present, those qualified and not qualified have access to usage of the title. The challenge is for Youth workers to demonstrate professional identity through debate and consensus on uniformity regarding aspects of professional identity. In South Africa, there is also a great need to define the difference between a

Youth worker and a Child and youth care worker as well as other professionals such as Social workers. This exercise will translate into identity and role clarification, key elements which have been specified as inhibitors for development of Youth work as profession if they are not attended to (Barwick, 2006 in Sercombe, 2010:55).

- (x) **A code of ethics:** According to Sercombe (2010:22, 23), code of ethics has always been linked to professionalisation and the agenda to have a code of ethics for Youth work started as far back as the 1970s. Professional ethics refer to a set of widely accepted moral principles, rules, behavioural expectations, conventions and customary practices that informs the professional's standard of conduct and are used to guide practitioners in making ethical choices (Davies, 2004:272; Garfat, 2003:119; Richards, 2011:17; Strydom, 2005a:69). A code of ethics is used to: regulate and protect the relationships of professionals with clients and colleague; bind members of the profession to a set of professional values above those of income, power and prestige; reflect the importance of the roles and tasks performed; protect society from general malpractice include restricting abuses that might arise from powers of monopoly, as well as faulty or negligent behaviour; serve as a basis for investigating misconduct (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1; Greenwood, 1957 as cited in Department of Social Development, 2007:11; Richards, 2011:18; Sercombe, 2010:57). It embodies what is meant by serving the welfare of society or the public (Tyler, 1952, as cited in De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8). This is achieved through "dedication to the truth, equity, and service that cuts across political and cultural boundaries" (Richards, 2011:16).

In South Africa, there is presently no code of ethics which has been developed for and/or by the Youth workers for Youth work (Pruis, 2006; Sercombe, 2010: 54; Smith, 2006). However, even though there is a code of ethics for Youth work in some countries in the UK, there are also failed attempts by the youth sector in some countries in Australia to get same (Hoiles & Corney, 2007:2). However, other established professions such as Social work and Psychology have a code of ethics, and reference can be made to them to be used as a

benchmark when developing a code of ethics for Youth work practice (De Vos & Schulze, 2000:74; Hoiles & Corney, 2007:7).

The development of a code of ethics is important, since it recognises that service users (young people) deserve high quality practitioners who not only have skills informed by theory, but are also committed to core values (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1; Sercombe, 2010:55). It further ensures safety and protection of young people and Youth workers, fosters agreement to commonly held philosophical principles among Youth workers, underpins education and training with agreed values for the sector, and provides reference for workers in creating awareness and discussing ethical issues (Hoiles & Corney, 2007:2).

It is clear that for Youth work practice to be given a professional status, like other professions, a code of ethics should be developed by Youth workers for Youth work to give some guarantee of standards of practice or at least some recourse if standards are breached (Hoiles & Corney, 2007:7; Sercombe, 2004:55; Skidmore & Thackeray, 1994:316).

- (xi) Research activity:** According to Greenwood (in Gilbert & Specht, 1981:255), “*the only permanent feature of social phenomena is their impermanence*”, hence the need for periodic reviews, testing, and/or investigations to determine if the phenomenon has changed since observed over time. It is with this consideration in mind, that research is seen as an essential component of all professions, because it is used to inform and evaluate current knowledge and practices; generate new ones; and continually renew and upgrade professional literature (Coulshed & Orme, 2006:10; De Vos & Delpont, 2005:54; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:12). Research is therefore an “*evidence-based approach*”, described in criminal justice as “*what works approach*” (McGuirie as cited in Coulshed & Orme, 2006:10).

Maunder (2006:29) and Charles (2006:53) emphasised the need for research evidence within Youth work field in order to inform programmes and strategies, rather than relying on myths, impressions, stereotypes or passion. These

authors further suggested inclusion of research as part of Youth work training curriculum to increase the knowledge base and improve practice. This is important, given that an observation was made on the relative lack of people and places doing credible research on issues germane to youth development (Benson & Pittman, 2001:116; Charles, 2006:53). In particular, there is evidence to suggest that research and information systems on youth in Africa are not well developed as compared to other countries such as Australia, Germany, Sweden and Norway (Charles, 2006:53).

It can be concluded that the benefit of research is to legitimise the body of knowledge that will consequently have long lasting influence on the workers and to solve pressing social problems (Krueger, 1986:91; Mufune, 1999:327). The consequences of limited or poor research activity are weak theoretical framework, inadequate policy formulation, inadequate resources allocation, and poorly informed strategies and programmes (Charles, 2006:51). The author further supported promotion of research in this field, because it will portray youth reality based on empirical data.

Since research and practice are complementary, Pence as cited in Anglin et al., (1990:238) mentioned that it is essential for instruction to integrate this concept from the earliest coursework as part of the training curriculum. When reviewing the curricular of various institutions and South Africa's registered qualifications, the researcher observed that a research course has been factored within the coursework, especially from the third year level of study (Mudau, 2011; Raselekoane, 2011; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

All of the above factors, therefore, highlight the importance of engaging in research activities thus building a strong business case for professionalisation of Youth work. Baksh (2004:31) sees participatory research where young people will also articulate their own concerns as being very instructive.

(xii) Professional association: Establishment of a professional association or organisation which unifies the field and safeguards the public is considered one of the attributes of a profession (Flexner, 1915 as cited in De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8; Maunders, 2006:23). The professional organisations or associations are used as platforms for engagement in activities such as conferences, workshops, publications, advocacy to update skills and knowledge (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:20; Kelly, 1990:180). All these activities support long term commitment to the occupation, contribute to the workers' personal and professional development, and maintains workers' fitness to practice (Wilkins, 1997:141).

These organisations or associations promote and sustain the professional culture by fostering strong group consciousness, creating professional contacts, especially among members who share similar concerns, engaging workers in industry-based discussions about the quality and benchmarks of good practice, convening regularly to learn and evaluate innovations in theory, and providing exposure to the professional world outside (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:20; Flexner, 1915 as cited in De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8; Krueger, 1986:95). Owing to the voluntary nature of their membership, they use collegiality to establish common goals and encourage members' commitment (Richards, 2011:18).

In South Africa, social service professions have professional organisations or associations. For example, the following first four organisations exist for Social workers, and the fifth and the sixth ones are for Child and youth care workers and the final one is for Youth workers (Mmutle, 2011):

- ✓ South African Black Social Workers Association (SABSWA);
- ✓ Social Workers Association of South Africa (SWASWA);
- ✓ South African Association for Social Workers in Private Practice (SAASWIPP);
- ✓ Association of South African Social Work Education Institution (ASASWEI);
- ✓ National Association for Child and Youth Care Workers (NACCW); and
- ✓ South African Youth Workers Association (SAYWA).

Of the above mentioned associations; SAASWIPP, ASASWEI and NACCW are the most active ones. The associations are playing an instrumental role in facilitating processes such as professionalisation. It is also due to all this, that SAYWA is the primary applicant for recognition of Youth work as a profession by the SACSSP (De Kock, 1999:4; Pruis, 2006). This illustrates the important role of an association in influencing the public's perception about the profession (Gibelman, 1995:11).

The challenge is for the Youth workers to strengthen their existing association or to form a new one if need be (Villaruel et al., 2003:382). The Youth workers' professional endorsement through membership will provide them with credibility as professionals, they will stay informed, maintain needed contact with colleagues, demonstrate to consumers that they have high quality controls in place and adhere to ethical code of practice and use the association as a platform for continuing professional development (Sercombe, 2010:159).

The establishment of a unified association for Social workers (Department of Social Development, 2005:1) through amalgamation of currently existing four professional associations for Social workers into one unified professional association could serve as a guide for Youth workers to consider the proposal of merging with the NACCW. The establishment of a strong association is essential, since Broadbent and Corney (2008:20) highlighted that "*professional Youth work can only be advocated through a strong collective voice of a professional association*".

- (xiii) **Long term commitment to the field:** According to Richards (2011:15), professions "require a life span". This is corroborated by Gilbert and Specht (1981:267) as they singled out this criterion and the one on specialised knowledge as two areas which an aspiring occupation has to build a case around to persuade the public of its worthiness to be recognised as a profession. The conditions of service such as salaries, fringe benefits, career advancement opportunities, status of the profession, friendly working environment, and desirable working conditions are among indicators identified

to be enhancing the professional's long term commitment to the field (Kelly, 1990:173). These indicators illustrate the quality of Youth work service and determine the workers' commitment to the field.

In contrast, role ambiguity, role conflict, age of the organisation, leadership within the organisation, nature of services rendered, and educational levels influences the worker commitment to organisations (Glisson & Durick, 1988 as cited in Nandan, 1987:251). It is therefore clear that if Youth workers' commitment to the field is to be fostered, the conditions of service listed in paragraph one of this section should be given attention. The researcher had observed that for South Africa's Youth workers, the employment market has not yet been clearly determined. Those who have already graduated are employed within other fields of practice such as Social work and Child and youth care environments.

This implies lack of standardisation of their salaries, fringe benefits as well as the general working conditions, thus making them vulnerable to exploitation by potential employers. This state increases uncertainties among workers and negatively impacts on their long term commitment to the field, because they question the value of their work to society (Lyon & Canning, 1990:196). This also translates into high turnover and brain drain, particularly from non-government organisations with relatively poor working conditions as compared to government organisations (Youth Development Network, 2008:25).

(xiv) Employment organisations: In South Africa, those who already have a qualification in Youth work as well as those who are still studying towards obtaining it, are struggling to get employment in their practice areas. According to South African Qualification Authority (2009a); South African Qualification Authority (2009b), those who are qualified, are working as volunteers in government departments such as Social Development, Correctional Services, Health, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Education. Others are employed in academic institutions, state-owned entities such as the NYDA and also in non-government, Faith Based, and Community Based Organisations.

There has been marked improvement in services for young people without significant upgrading of the professional status and recognising those working in the youth development field (Krueger, 1986:453; Lyon & Canning, 1990:197; Maunders, 2003:26). This commitment that Youth workers have to the young person as the primary client and the fact that the impact of their service is felt by all individual youth and the communities of which they are part, justifies that, through recognition of Youth work as a profession, its status would be raised and Youth workers' employment opportunities would be created (Baksh, 2004:32; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; Sercombe, 2004:73).

It is important to note that there are still challenges pertaining to employment of these workers since there is no structured labour market opportunities for them. For example, the researcher noted that Directorate: Youth Development in the national Department of Social Development, advertised positions for Social workers who are registered with the SACSSP as a requirement for the advertised positions of youth development practitioners. This is done regardless of the fact that those with youth development qualifications are not yet registered or recognised as professionals. They therefore, remain excluded from competing for these jobs. This observation revealed that the high turnover of Youth workers from employment organisations is amongst others due to low salaries, lack of career pathway and opportunities for advancement as well as lack of recognition and rewards (Youth Development Network, 2008:9).

Furthermore, even though there are universities accredited by the SAQA to offer a qualification in Youth work; in practice, there is still lack of standardisation for those practicing Youth work as they range from: having no qualifications; having qualifications in other disciplines; having in-service training on Youth work; having qualifications in Youth work either at diploma/ degree/ post-graduate degree level (De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8; Hahn & Raley, 1998: 393; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African

Qualification Authority, 2009b). As already stated, this lack of uniformity reflects lack of weak identity for the field.

In pursuing professionalisation, it would be imperative that employment opportunities for persons qualified in Youth work are created so that they could be absorbed in relevant job vacancies and are remunerated in accordance with the value of work that they do. The key role players identified in Table 3.3 in Chapter 3 are better positioned to advocate for employment of personnel with appropriate work experience and/or training background. The posts could be created in the labour market in recognition of the service that they render (Ryan, 2003:26). This would require lobbying various potential employment agencies for creation of work opportunities for Youth workers.

As a starting point, although not yet fully implemented, the South African Cabinet resolved in 2006 that youth directorates should be established across different departments in all spheres of government and be located in such a manner that the Directors General/ Heads of Departments/ Municipal managers takes full responsibility (The Presidency, 2009b:33). This Cabinet resolution is a starting point towards creation of employment opportunities for personnel rendering youth development services.

(xv) International recognition of the profession: The researcher has, in Chapter 3, presented extensive evidence from the literature of the overwhelming interest and existence of Youth work practice across the globe. The evidence also shows existence of education and training of Youth workers in countries such as USA and Canada (Sercombe, 2010:160). The following identified countries in the specified Commonwealth regions are offering a qualification in Youth work (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b):

- ✓ African: Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Malta, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, and Zambia;
- ✓ Asia: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Singapore;

- ✓ the Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, and Turks & Caicos Islands; and
- ✓ the South Pacific: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tavalu, Vanatau.

From the above, it is clear that even though most of the listed countries offer education and training that leads to Youth work qualification, the fact that South Africa is offering accredited qualifications in youth development, benchmarked against existing international qualifications, illustrates that the national education and training is comparable with international qualifications of equal notional hours (South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b).

Furthermore, the assessment of the status of Youth work internationally, regionally, and nationally also showed that there are countries where Youth work practice has already been recognised as a profession whereas in some countries, the process is still underway (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:75). This is reassuring, since “*the development of profession may be sustained by international identity, collaboration, and support*” (Maunder, 2006:31). The fact that South Africa is facing challenges which are encountered by some countries that already won the battle of having the occupation recognised as a profession is an important lesson that proves existence of areas from which policy decisions on the possibility of professionalising Youth work could be benchmarked.

- (xvi) The financial status as well as management systems:** Meeting this criterion involves being in good financial standing and having proper management systems in place. The establishment of the NYDA in 2009 illustrates commitment by government to strengthen the youth sector’s management systems. The fact that the agency has, as part of its mandate, advocacy and lobbying, and had since championed professionalising Youth

work as one of its strategic objectives, further illustrates that financial resources for professionalisation may be allocated for this activity through the NYDA's budgeting processes.

In the next section, the researcher discusses the benefits and non-benefits of specialisation and professionalisation.

4.5 BENEFITS AND NON-BENEFITS OF AN OCCUPATION, AREA OF SPECIALISATION AND A PROFESSION

In this section, the questions to be answered are: what are the benefits and non-benefits of retaining Youth work as an occupation, recognising it as an area of specialisation or as an autonomous profession? Each of these identified policy options has advantages and disadvantages. The exercise on cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken in order to have a clear understanding of whatever course of action would be followed regarding the future status of Youth work.

Does Youth work meet the above identified characteristics or criteria of a profession? (Sercombe, 2004:64). Like in other countries where the debates on professionalisation were held, whereas progress regarding professionalisation of Youth work has been made, it is acknowledged that there are still outstanding tasks which should be attended to if Youth work field is to attain the professional status as an autonomous profession or an area of specialisation. Although, in its current form, the practice is still regarded as an occupation, the current debate on professionalisation means that it may, in the near future, be recognised either as a profession and/or an area of specialisation.

It is suggested that, if the professional standing of Youth work is not recognised by other professionals, they could be marginalised in professional teams, professional consultations, and case management panels (Sercombe, 2004:66). Furthermore, as a result of lack of body of knowledge and formal training, there will be no formal way of entering the field and those working with youth would not have credible basis for making decisions (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:79). Therefore, the need to identify and recognise Youth work as an autonomous profession or an area of specialty, becomes paramount for overall effective functioning including proper coordination

and integration of Youth work with comparable and similar service offerings. This would improve and promote quality of services to consumers, ensure standardisation of practice, increase competitiveness and worthiness of Youth work.

On the other hand, if recognised as a profession or an area of specialisation, Youth work will lead to emergence of higher education programmes in the field; introduction of formal educational structures; and education and training of Youth workers in areas such as program development, implementation, management and evaluation (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:75).

Further again, professionalisation represents the highest level of competence in a society; may open up the possibilities of financial and career incentives; affords Youth workers with an opportunity to have equal status and connection with other comparable professions; improves the position in the social hierarchy; ensures that the capacity of Youth workers is built through professional training; enables Youth work to have its own identity; elevates the status of the field in the eyes of the employer; brings with it an increased sense of accountability for program outcomes for young people; ensures that Youth work operates as an independent profession; implies proficiency; commits to high standards; and leads to meaningful integration of young people in development process (Chubb & Thomson, 2000 as cited in Department of Social Development, 2007:15; Richards, 2011:15; Ryan, 2003:54; Villaruel et al., 2003:370, 382, 389). The added benefit for the country is the fact that Youth work will augment the current shortage of human resource capacity in the social service sector (Department of Social Development, 2006a:13).

Finally, a review of literature revealed that there are positive and negative connotations of the term “professional” and whereas we are supposed to be inspired by its positive meaning, we should equally be cognisant of its negative implications. Therefore, in contrast to the benefits identified in the above paragraph; professionalisation can equally lead to elitism, failure to identify with clients from different social background or class and keeping the clients in subservient positions (Department of Social Development, 2007:15; Illich 1977 in Sercombe, 2010:7, 8).

4.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In reviewing the future status of Youth work in terms of whether Youth work should remain as an occupation or recognised as an area specialisation or an autonomous profession, the researcher is of the view that the Youth work field seems to be an occupation that prioritises young people. The specialisation route would offer other professionals in the youth development space an opportunity to concentrate on targeting and prioritising young people as part of their duty. The professionalisation route would offer service providers an opportunity to dedicate their duties to young people as their only priority group. The last two options would enable the personnel involved in Youth work to become more skilled in addressing the complex needs of young people. It therefore seems appropriate that this study has started the process of exploring these policy options.

The above discussion also illustrated that the youth sector appears to have made progress to some extent towards meeting the criteria of a profession compared to exploring the specialisation route. It implies that work has to be done to facilitate attainment of Youth work as an area of specialisation, if it is found that is a more feasible option. In relation to professionalisation, it is equally important to note that, *“while still evolving, an occupation can have sufficient points to warrant its classification as a profession”* (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:271). It implies that even though meeting the above stated criteria qualifies an occupation to become a profession, there should be concerted effort and commitment on the part of relevant key stakeholders of the aspiring profession, to accelerate the process by continuously making improvements (Roth et al., 1998:440), in order to ensure greater achievement in areas where progress has not been made.

For example, some of the tasks associated with meeting the criteria of a profession that have to be overcome for Youth work to be able to compete with other professions successfully for resources and support include: low wages; scarcity of jobs; and lack of comprehensive career path (Borden, Craig & Villaruel, 2004:75). In line with the assertion by various authors (Kelly, 1990:168; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:17; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:1; Kelly, 1990:175; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187), this would be a challenge that cannot be ignored or postponed, particularly if the findings suggest the need for professionalisation.

Furthermore, it is important to note that professionalisation and specialisation always leads to greater interdependence on others to render desired services. There is as a result a need to examine an interdisciplinary team approach as it applies to the field of Youth work. This would be aimed at identifying the team players by analysing their contribution to Youth work and assessing how Youth workers can attain the same status, power and prestige in order to realise team outcomes successfully and to focus on a common goal of improving the quality of people's lives through appropriate collaborative intervention strategies (Department of Social Development, 2007:33; Kruger, 1987:448). It is, however, essential to note that, for an effective team work to take place, the team members are supposed to have the same professional status (Krueger, 1988:14; Lyon & Canning, 1990:187).

Therefore, this chapter had presented evidence strong enough to suggest that interdisciplinary team is not only desirable, but essential, since no profession can stand or work alone (*Encyclopaedia of Social Work*, 1995:360); it seems it is in the best interest of Youth workers to have teams and utilise an interdisciplinary team approach (Krueger, 1987:457). In line with the identified goal of this study of exploring and describing the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa regarding emergence of Youth work practice and its future status, the next chapter thus continues this discussion by presenting a description of research methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As alluded to in Chapter 1, the goal of this research study is to explore and describe the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa to the emergence of Youth work practice and its future status. The researcher explored the factors that led to emergence of Youth work, analysed its current status, and analysed whether this field of practice should remain as an occupation or recognised as an area of specialisation or an autonomous profession. The analysis was concluded by looking at the benefits of specialisation and/or professionalisation.

In an attempt to achieve the above-stated research goal and in order to provide more insight into the problem, the researcher conducted a mixed-methods research study. That entailed mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches, methods and procedures in sequence with the aim of exploring and describing the research problem (Bergman, 2008:53; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:6, 32; Delport & Fouché, 2011:434; Flick, 2008:42; Singh, 2007:63). This was done by obtaining information on the ideas, perceptions, feelings, attitudes, knowledge, and experiences of the research respondents on the research topic.

The researcher identified the following objectives as a means towards attainment of the goal for this study:

- To identify, explore, and analyse the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa;
- To explore the current scope and nature of Youth work services in South Africa;
- To determine whether Youth work should remain as an occupation, or recognised as an area of specialisation or an autonomous professional field of practice; and
- To analyse the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or an autonomous profession.

In the end, this research study sought to answer the following questions:

- What are the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa?
- What is the current status of Youth work in South Africa?
- What is the extent of involvement of South Africa's social service professionals in Youth work?
- What are the perspectives of South Africa's social service professionals regarding the future status of Youth work?
- What are the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or an autonomous profession?

Before conducting the study, the researcher developed a research proposal that was approved by the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria (refer to Ethical Clearance letter attached as *Annexure A*). The proposal included the research methodology to be followed. It was forwarded to the national Department of Social Development to obtain permission to conduct research and approval was granted. The permission letter and the letter of support addressed to the provincial Heads of the Departments of Social Development are attached as *Annexure B*.

Below is a detailed description of research methodology followed in this study.

5.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

Various authors (Bergman, 2008:53; Singh, 2007:63) identified qualitative and quantitative as methods/ approaches/ orientations to research (herein referred to as approaches). Although these approaches differ, they each have strengths and weaknesses. In this study, the researcher used mixed methods research approach that mixes elements of qualitative and quantitative methods within one study (Bergman, 2008:53; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:6, 32, 255).

The chosen research approach was appropriate, because it allowed initial qualitative exploration of the research topic on a small scale, in order to gain insight of the research situation; gathering of information for development of a measuring instrument, and consequent comprehensive analysis of the research phenomenon

through two methods that complemented rather than competed with each other (Bergman, 2008:53; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:4; Flick, 2008:42).

5.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH

The type of the study can either be basic or applied (Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:105; Neuman, 2006:28). Whereas basic or pure researchers seek to provide an understanding of social reality by developing theory and increasing or expanding the knowledge base, applied researchers apply and tailor the knowledge to address specific practical issues (Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:105; Grinnell, 1993:14).

This is an applied research study that develops or expands the knowledge base to address specific practical issues (Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:105; Grinnell, 1993:14; Neuman, 2006:28). The study would help attain the goal of this research, namely, to explore and describe the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa towards the emergence of Youth work and its future status. By doing so, this study will be stimulating thought and action in practice (Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:105; Neuman, 2006:28). The knowledge generated from this study is intended to improve the manner in which Youth work is practised in South Africa and possibly across the globe.

5.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Whereas a research design is a plan or a blue print of how the research is to be conducted, research methodology refers to systematic methodological and accurate execution of that design (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:74; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005: 52), specified that the research design guides the researcher on how to obtain data about the research phenomenon from the focus group participants or respondents.

In the context of the “*mixed methods research*” approach adopted in this study, the researcher used an exploratory mixed methods research design where qualitative and quantitative phases occurred one after the other in a sequential manner (Delpont & Fouché, 2011:439, 441). The mixed methods design was used to explore the research phenomenon using qualitative data before attempting to measure it

quantitatively (Delpont & Fouché, 2011:441). In the first phase of the study, qualitative data was collected from the four focus groups, based in each of South Africa's selected four provinces. The focus groups were constituted by recognised and unrecognised social service professionals (i.e., Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Youth workers and Community development workers). Qualitative data collected from the focus group participants helped develop a quantitative data collection tool – a measuring instrument, the findings of which were used to elaborate and/or explain quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:6).

In the second phase of the study, the researcher explored the topic with a larger sample of research respondents constituted by recognised social service professionals (i.e., Educators, Social workers, and Child and youth care workers). The respondents completed a measuring instrument that was developed in the first phase of the study, to collect quantitative data aimed at exploring and describing the experiences, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions that Educators, Social workers, and Child and youth care workers have regarding the emergence of Youth work and its future status.

Overall, analysis of the above stated design revealed the use of “*exploratory mixed methods sequential research design*”. This design allowed exploration of the research topic by identifying qualitative themes, generating theories, and then using that exploration to guide the subsequent quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:411; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:265). The results of the first qualitative method informed the development of a quantitative measuring instrument used to gather quantitative data, which culminated into quantitative results. In line with one of the distinction made by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) in Delpont and Fouché (2011:441), the notation system adopted for this study is: qual+QUAN oriented. The lower cases in the diagram indicate that the qualitative method was less dominant and capital letters in the diagram indicates that the quantitative method was dominant.

The schematic representation of the notation for this study is illustrated in Figure 5.1 below:

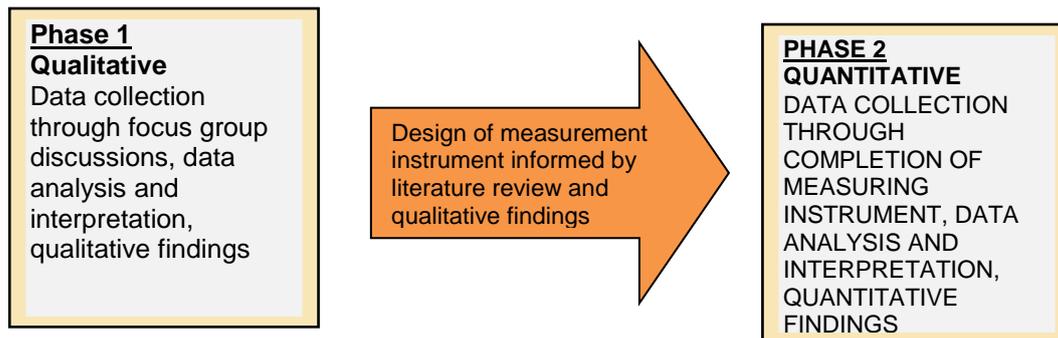


Figure 5.1: Notation for exploratory mixed methods sequential research design

5.5 POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHODS

The following description spells out the population and sample for this study, as well as the sampling methods used.

5.5.1 Population

A population is described as a group of individuals who possess specific characteristics and from which a sample is drawn to determine the parameters or characteristics (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:112; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172; Singh, 2007:8).

The researcher firstly identified all social service professionals as the population in this study, because in South Africa, Youth work, although not yet recognised as a social service profession, is, however, regarded as a potential social service profession by the SACSSP. It is therefore professionals already recognised by this professional body as well as those who have the potential to be recognised as such, who are regarded as the population for this research study. In this regard, the population for this study consisted of occupational and professional groups, namely: Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Youth workers, and Community development workers (Department of Social Development, 2005:13). Although categorised as a separate group for the purpose of this research, the Educators involved in education and training of social service professionals also formed part of the identified professional groups.

For the first **qualitative phase** of the study, the population consisted of recognised and unrecognised social service professionals (i.e., Social workers, Child and youth

care workers, Youth workers, and Community development workers). The total number of the population could not be determined due to unavailability of contact details for unrecognised social service professionals.

For the second **quantitative phase** of the study, only recognised social service professionals were targeted as the population for the study. The total population consisted of 16 886 social service professionals (i.e., 154 Educators, 9071 Social workers and 7661 Child and youth care workers). The breakdown of the population for the quantitative part of this study is contained in the attached *Annexure D*.

5.5.2 Sample selection

As it would not have been feasible to study the entire population, evidence from various sources supports that a portion of the population known as a sample must be selected to participate in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:164; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:54; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172; Strydom, 2011b:223-224). The benefits of using a sample, according to Bergman (2008:70) as well as Mitchell and Jolley (2007:531), is to save costs and time.

In selecting the samples for the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study, the researcher conformed to the mixed methods research procedures by mixing the probability sampling techniques, that are based on randomisation with the non-probability sampling techniques, based on non-randomisation (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172; Strydom, 2005b:198). These techniques were used to select the samples of focus group participants who participated in discussions for the qualitative part of the study and respondents who participated in completing a measuring instrument for the quantitative part of the study (Neuman, 2003:211, 223).

To be specific, the research samples were selected as follows for these two phases:

- (i) **Qualitative sample selection:** For the qualitative part of the study, the researcher purposively selected the following four (4) of South Africa's nine (9) provinces as the research sites: KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, North West, and Gauteng. In making the site selection, the researcher ensured representation of various characteristics differentiating the provinces.

According to information on South Africa's population in the Midyear population estimates report, (a) KwaZulu-Natal is the third smallest of the nine provinces, second most populated province, predominantly rural, with highest contribution to Growth Domestic Product (GDP) and English and IsiZulu are the most spoken languages; (b) Northern Cape is the largest province with smallest population, smallest contribution to GDP and Afrikaans and Setswana are the predominant languages; (c) North West has the third smallest population, is amongst the provinces with the smallest contribution to GDP and Setswana is the mostly spoken language; (d) Gauteng is the smallest province yet it is densely populated with the highest population, more urbanised, highest contributor to GDP and one of the two provinces that is linguistically heterogeneous (Statistics South Africa, 2010a).

Figure 5.2 below shows the nine provinces of South Africa from which the four research sites were selected, i.e., Eastern Cape; Free State; Gauteng; Limpopo; KwaZulu-Natal; Mpumalanga; Northern Cape; North West; Western Cape:

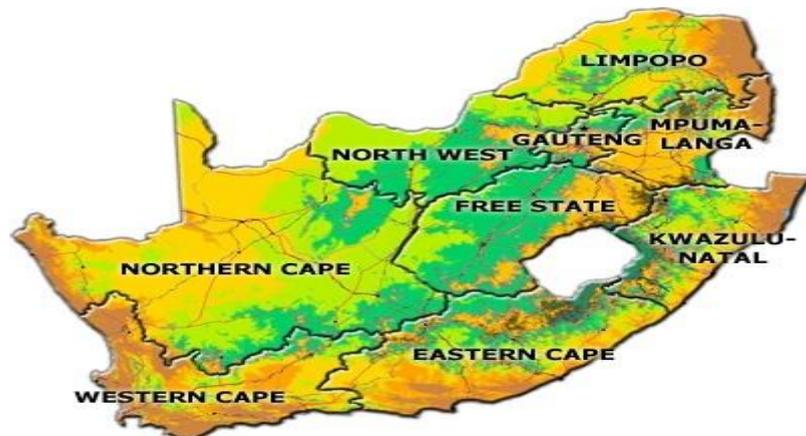


Figure 5.2: South Africa's nine provinces

One of the key features of South Africa's provinces is that, even though there are eleven (11) official languages, the 2001 Census reveals considerable variation in languages between the provinces despite the fact that English is the lingua franca of the country. There are vast differences in language distribution and the numbers of people who speak a particular language at home.

The next Figure 5.3 shows the language/s predominantly spoken in different provinces:

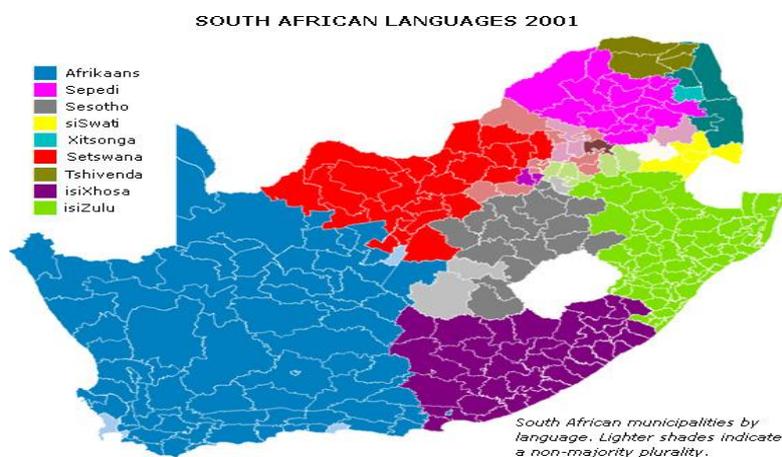


Figure 5.3: South African provinces by language

After selection of the research sites, the researcher selected a sample of focus group participants. They were selected from an unknown number of a population of registered and unregistered social service professionals in the areas of Social work, Child and youth care work, Youth work, and Community development work.

Each focus group was based in one of the four purposively selected research sites. The focus group participants from each site were selected to participate in the qualitative study through purposive and convenience sampling techniques (Babbie, 2010:192-193; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:112; Strydom & Delport, 2011:392). With regard to purposive sampling, the researcher intentionally selected the focus group participants from the various social service professional categories, thus ensuring representation. With convenience sampling, the researcher took the availability of selected focus group participants into consideration by requesting their participation during attendance of a meeting convened by the national Department of Social Development.

As already stated that the total number of the population was unknown, emphasis was therefore not put on quantity, but quality. The qualitative sample consisted of an average of 9 focus group members per focus group, i.e., there

were 11 focus group members in Gauteng, 9 in Northern Cape, 8 in KwaZulu-Natal and 7 in the North West province. There was representation from all categories of social service professionals, i.e., 14 Social workers, 10 Child and youth care workers, 7 Community development workers and 4 Youth workers. In total, there were 35 focus group participants in all the 4 groups combined. A detailed illustration of how the qualitative sample was selected is attached to this report as *Annexure C*.

In choosing the focus group members, the researcher employed “maximum variation strategy”, a strategy which entails selecting group members with similar, but different training backgrounds from different research sites with the aim of eliciting rich information from the members’ diverse experiences and knowledge (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:166; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:112). Therefore, the sample reflected focus group participants with different characteristics or qualities, because they belonged to different social service professional categories.

- (ii) **Quantitative sample selection:** To select a representative sample of respondents for the dominant quantitative part of the study, the researcher used the stratified random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling to divide the population into various categories/ subgroups/ segments/ strata containing different distinguishing indicators (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:191; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:175).

The quantitative sample was selected from a population of recognised social service professionals, i.e., Social workers, Child and youth care workers, and Educators. The total population consisted of 16 887 registered social service professionals. The unrecognised social service professionals (i.e., Youth workers and Community development workers) did not participate in the quantitative part of this study, because their contact details were unknown and it would have been difficult to trace them.

The researcher used stratified random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling to select a sample (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:199; Maree &

Pietersen, 2007:175; Strydom, 2011b:230). The total population of 16 886 recognised social service professionals was divided into three strata, which consisted of 154 Educators, 9071 Social workers, and 7661 Child and youth care workers.

Each of the above stated main strata was sampled separately as follows:

- ✓ **Educators** – For this stratum, the researcher obtained the list of Educators from the South African Institutions of Higher Learning offering Social work and Child and youth care education and training. The list contained a population of 154 Educators. No sampling was used for this category, because the entire population was targeted to participate in the research. The researcher took that decision given that the population was small and the respondents are experts with demonstrable knowledge and experience on the research subject (Greeff, 2005:287-288; Strydom, 2005b:202).

Furthermore, the Educators work in Institutions of Higher Learning, which are considered to be working in an environment of national rather than provincial competency. They could thus not be divided according to geographical areas or provinces. The aim was to collect rich and invaluable data from these Educators who were expected to give their opinions on the research subject.

- ✓ **Social workers** – For this stratum, the researcher obtained a list of registered Social workers from the SACSSP. The list contained the population of 9071 Social workers. The researcher used stratified random sampling technique - a probability form of sampling to ensure sufficient proportional representation in the sample; to give each individual an equal and independent chance of being selected to participate in the study; and to make comparison between different areas possible (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:191; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172, 175; Strydom, 2011b:230).

The stratified proportional sampling technique was used to further divide the population in this stratum into nine sub-strata, aligned to the nine

provinces of South Africa, i.e., Limpopo, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West, Free State, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal (*Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996:65). The list of Social workers containing the names and addresses of potential respondents was then sorted out according to the geographic areas where they reside, guided by the postal codes. The difficulty with this method which was the only available method to sort the data was that, provincial post codes did not fully correspond with the current provincial boundaries (Lombaard, 2004:1). The researcher used own knowledge and some instance made enquiries from personal contacts in provinces about the location of questionable areas. In cases where the addresses were invalid or incomplete, the names of such professionals were taken off the list. Finally, the list was segmented into nine (9) sub-strata of Social workers.

By dividing the sample according to provinces or geographic areas, the researcher employed an “*area sampling*” technique to make it possible to select a sample proportionally and to compare the results between different areas (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:175; Singh, 2007:104). The names of respondents in each sample were numbered separately to provide unique identification for each of them (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:31; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:333). With the help of the Statistician, it is important to note that in an effort to avoid overlaps, the researcher removed the names of the Educators appearing on the Social work and Child and youth care work lists and similarly removed the names of Social workers appearing on the Child and youth care workers’ list.

Out of the total population in each of the nine (9) sub strata (provincial list), the researcher selected a proportional sample of twelve percent (12%) using simple random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling that gives each individual research respondent an equal and independent chance of being selected to participate in the study (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172; Singh, 2007:108). In total, the sample consisted of 1085 Social workers (i.e., a sample of 12% of the total population within each province

was selected). Of the 9071 Social workers, 1085 were randomly selected to participate in the study.

- ✓ **Child and youth care workers** – For this stratum, since individual Child and youth care workers are not yet registered with the SACSSP despite the occupation being recognised as a social service profession, a list of the personnel in this category was obtained from the NACCW. The list contained the population consisting of 7661 Child and youth care workers. Like the Social workers, a stratified random sampling technique, a probability form of sampling was used to select a sample from the population (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:199; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172, 175; Strydom, 2011b:230). The same procedure of proportionally and randomly selecting respondents was followed, thus resulting in 9 sub strata for Child and youth care workers.

The names of respondents in each of the sub strata were also numbered separately to provide unique identification (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:333). A proportional sample of twelve percent (12%) was then constituted. Of 7661 Child and youth care workers, 915 were randomly selected to participate in the study.

For the quantitative part of the study there was low response rate, because out of 2154 measuring instruments administered to research respondents, only 151 were returned (equals to 7% response rate). Since the researcher made provision of selecting additional respondent in anticipation of possible low response rate, convenience sampling method was then used as an alternative sampling method to recruit additional, nearest and available respondents to participate in the study through explaining the purpose and value of the research to them (Babbie, 2010:192; De Vos, 2005:198, 199; Singh, 2007:103, 107). In this regard, the researcher posted or emailed or faxed or physically hand delivered the measuring instrument using personal and/or professional contacts in different research sites (Delpont, 2005:168-169). In the end, a total of 593 respondents completed the measuring instrument.

A detailed breakdown of quantitative samples for various strata is illustrated in the attached *Annexure D*.

5.6 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The planning for data collection started when the researcher selected the methods to be used for collecting data. As part of the research design, the researcher planned how data would be collected and recorded in order to keep it intact, complete, organised and accessible (Creswell as cited in De Vos, 2005:334; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:51; Singh, 2007: 82).

The decision of the chosen data collection methods was based on the fact that this study is mixed methods research and mixes both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods (Creswell, 2007:119; Singh, 2007:68). The researcher started off by collecting qualitative data, analysed it, used the findings to design a quantitative data collection measuring instrument for the dominant quantitative part of the study, and then concluded by collecting quantitative data. Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:113) referred to this process as “*sequential data collection*.”

After obtaining the ethical clearance to conduct the study, the researcher then obtained consent from the focus group participants regarding their willingness to serve as data sources for this study. A sample of the consent letter given to the focus group participants for the qualitative part of the study is attached hereto as *Annexure E*.

In the next sub-sections, the researcher specifies in detail how qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analysed.

5.6.1 Qualitative data collection

The focus group discussions were used to collect qualitative data. The choice of this method was influenced by the fact that the researcher was studying a new topic which was not widely researched. The focus group discussions were therefore intended to enable the focus group participants an opportunity to describe their experiences, opinions, attitudes, and perceptions on the subject matter, thus providing a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon. This would in turn afford the researcher an opportunity to harness the insight of the focus group participants by exploring their thoughts and feelings and not just behaviour (Flick, 2008:16; Greeff, 2005:300). The focus group participants would further be able to

understand each other's perspectives, disagree openly, and to reach consensus on some of the issues. However, it is important to note that the use of the focus groups in this study was basically to serve as a supplementary source of data for the quantitative method and also to facilitate comparison of data (Greeff, 2011:361).

The researcher began the process by conducting one pilot focus group (Greeff, 2011:370). The group consisted of four (4) group members (i.e., a Social worker, Community development worker, Youth worker, and Child and youth care worker). The information obtained from the pilot focus group discussion assisted the researcher to develop a focus group interview schedule and to cluster the areas to be discussed into manageable themes. The researcher used that interview schedule, attached hereto as *Annexure G*, to facilitate each of the focus group discussion.

There were in total, four focus groups (one group per selected province). Each focus group participant was given a profile form (*Annexure F*), which contained standard demographic questions. The focus group interview schedule consisted mainly of open-ended questions and themes that covered the research agenda (Alasuutari et al., 2008:358; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011: 414). The researcher was flexible in following the focus group interview schedule, since the discussion at times provided the direction to be taken.

Each focus group discussion was recorded in an audiotape and the researcher also took notes of the most immediate observations (Alasuutari et al., 2008:360; Flick, 2008:77; Greeff, 2011:371). The researcher then transcribed the collected data into a word processing file in order to prepare for the next stage of analysing data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:130; Flick, 2008:10; Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:247). The fact that the audio tapes were self transcribed familiarised the researcher with the discussions and made her to appreciate the complex skills that the audio typists are supposed to have (Flick, 2008:96). The transcription was reduced to verbatim report, i.e., a report written in the exact same words of the focus group participant. The researcher also used own notes as a backup.

It is essential to highlight that the focus groups were used as qualitative data collection tool aimed at collecting qualitative data, which was predominantly verbal.

The ultimate focus was to use qualitative information to inform the design of a measuring instrument and also to elaborate on or explain the quantitative results (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:358; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:6; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:15, 261).

5.6.2 Qualitative data analysis

The process of analysing qualitative data began early after conclusion of the focus group discussions. The researcher followed the process described by Babbie and Mouton (2010:493, 494, 495); Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:129); Schurink, Fouché & De Vos (2011:403-404); Singh (2007:82); Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:211) and did the following:

- ***managed or organised data*** – the researcher closely read the collected qualitative data, that was organised and transformed into a transcript form to make it understandable, easily retrievable and managed;
- ***analysed, described, and classified data*** – data was conceptualised, sorted and classified into different categories that were structured in the form of themes and sub-themes containing essential features of the phenomenon being studied. The intention was to find patterns and to produce explanations for the purpose of interpretation. The researcher checked the transcriptions for accuracy;
- ***represented and visualised data*** – data was labelled and represented into identified themes and sub-themes and were interpreted to give it meaning. Data were further presented and placed in the form of themes and statements.
- ***validated and interpreted data*** - the researcher checked the quality of data, analysed their content, used own reasoning to make sense of them, reached conclusions, identified patterns, created a data bank of themes and statements that informed formulation of contextually relevant structured research questions, and included all the information in developing the main quantitative data collection instrument - a measuring instrument (Alasuutari et al., 2008:362, 363; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:35; Flick, 2008:16; Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:417).

5.6.3 Trustworthiness of qualitative data

Trustworthiness refers to the manner in which qualitative data is dependable, consistent, stable, predictable and reliable, thus producing the same results or outcomes in the future as it had in the past (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:177). The researcher enhanced trustworthiness through the following verification techniques outlined by Babbie and Mouton (2010:277); Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:416); Creswell (in Glesne, 2006:37, 38); Delpont and Roestenburg (2011:177):

- **Peer review and debriefing** – this entailed external reflection and input into the study. The pilot focus group conducted before the main study gave the researcher invaluable input into the research process. For example, with the results of the pilot, the researcher revised the sampling procedures and the focus group interview schedule. Of importance, the researcher enlisted the assistance and support of the promoter, statistician and data analyst as peer debriefers in this study. The team received regular feedback and meetings were held to scrutinise data collected and other research issues.
- **Triangulation** – this involved the use of multiple sources. By using focus groups consisting of members from different professional categories based in different provinces, the researcher allowed multiple perspectives on the research topic. The different viewpoints and experiences of focus group participants were verified against each other's views, thus leading to convergence of ideas and comprehensive understanding of the situation. In this context, the researcher relied on multiple rather than single sources of data.
- **Reflexivity** – as a Social worker, the researcher has been trained in group facilitation and interviewing. Moreover, the researcher also has working experience of facilitating groups. As a result of this background, the focus groups were professionally facilitated and any undue influence associated with researcher incompetence was minimised. The researcher also used a number of strategies to minimise biasness. For example, the fact that she acknowledged upfront by specifying her previous involvement and interest in conducting the investigation assisted her to continuously keep her subjective judgement on check and to consciously make judgements on the basis of facts. Other strategies included involving the research team, constantly

referring to literature, using complementary mixed methods research, and using random sampling technique in selection of respondents.

- **Member checking** – The accuracy of the responses received from the focus group members was checked by the researcher on the spot through paraphrasing questions and seeking clarity where possible. The use of a tape recorder made it possible for the researcher to reflect on what the members actually said and to think more deeply about their responses. Reference to field notes also highlighted the observations made by the researcher during the discussions.

It was through the above-stated process and based on evidence collected that the trustworthiness and reliability of qualitative data was established.

5.7 QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The following process was followed to collect quantitative data:

5.7.1 Construction of a quantitative data collection tool

As mentioned in 5.6.2 above, a quantitative data collection tool – a measuring instrument was constructed based on the qualitative findings and literature review (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:35, 83; Flick, 2008:4, 16). This self designed measuring instrument was constructed to gather quantitative data based on research objectives.

5.7.2 Pilot Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study on a small scale prior to the main study. The intention was to determine the feasibility of conducting the study; suitability of the sampling frame; suitability of the measuring instrument to the actual field conditions; identification of any difficulty or unforeseen problems with the method or instrument; investigation of the accuracy and appropriateness of the instrument; and establishment of the adequacy and appropriateness of the methodology. This was done with a view to effect modifications at little cost before the main investigation (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:244; Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:195; Singh, 2007:72; Strydom, 2011a:237-243; Welman, Kruger & Mitchell; 2005:147).

When conducting the pilot study, the researcher administered the measuring instrument to twelve (12) research respondents, i.e., six (6) Educators, four (4) Social workers, and three (3) Child and youth care workers. The researcher targeted a larger number of Educators, since they are experts and could help delineate the problem more sharply.

A series of consultative meetings were then held with the research team members, i.e., the promoter, statistician, and the data analyst (Bergman, 2008:57; Delpont, 2005:166). The aim was to process data collected during the pilot study and to refine the measuring instrument by looking at its layout, structure, relevancy, suitability, appropriateness, validity, and reliability (Alasuutari et al., 2008:358; Delpont, 2005:160, 162, 163; Singh, 2007:72; Strydom, 2011a:246). There were eleven (11) draft versions of the measuring instrument prior to the final one.

All focus group participants who took part in the pilot project were not included when the study was conducted on a large scale. Their views and opinions on the measuring instrument were used to modify it, rectify the mistakes, and changes were consolidated into the final measuring instrument (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995: 43; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:530). The measuring instrument was approved by the research team and then subsequently administered to the full research sample.

5.7.3 Measurement

The modified measuring instrument was used to collect numerical data for the quantitative part of this study. It consisted of different types of questions, i.e., biographical, closed ended, dichotomous, multiple response, scaled, filter and follow up questions (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:233, 240-242; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:47; Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:196-201. Maree & Pietersen, 2007:161-167; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:224, 225). The researcher numbered and coded the boxes adjacent to each response and in instances where the response does not fall within the pre-coded category, an additional code box marked “*other*” was allocated (Fouché & Bratley, 2011:254; Singh, 2007:82). The use of numbered pre-coded boxes made the process of data capturing easier.

On page 1 of the measuring instrument, the researcher explained the purpose of the research, the procedures involved and assurance for confidentiality and anonymity. The explanation was provided in advance, so that the choice made by the respondents is an informed one (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:99; De Vos, 2005:25). The respondents were guaranteed confidentiality and assured of their privacy as a basic right (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:36; Strydom, 2005a:61). On page 2, a consent form to be signed when participating in the study was included. The instructions on how to complete the measuring instrument are stipulated on page 3. On page 4 of the measuring instrument, the researcher explained two of the key concepts, i.e., “*Youth work*” and “*Social service professionals*”. This was aimed at ensuring common understanding and interpretation. From page 5 to page 9, the measuring instrument was divided into four sections, namely: sections A (pages 5-6) focusing on demographic information requesting the respondents to complete personal particulars related to gender, race, home language, level of education, professional position, sphere and region of employment.

In sections B to D (pages 7-9); there are statements that measure the respondents’ perspectives towards the research phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:233; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:47; Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:186; Flick, 2008:4). In this case, the respondents were required to complete the scales measuring various dimensions of the research phenomenon by identifying, describing and explaining their experiences, opinions, attitudes and perceptions they have on the emergence of Youth work and its future status.

The sub-scales measuring various dimensions of the study were developed due to unavailability of existing standardised scales (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:214). Those sub-scales were used to measure the following:

- **Contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work practice in South Africa:** to measure this dimension, ten (10) items were formulated on a four-point Likert rating scale with the following response categories: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly disagree).
- **Current status of Youth work in South Africa:** to measure this dimension, thirteen (13) items were formulated on a dichotomous scale. The measuring instrument contained two choice response categories of “yes” or “no”.

- **Involvement in Youth work:** to measure this dimension, six (6) items were formulated on a four-point Likert rating scale with the following response categories: 1 (no extent), 2 (less extent), 3 (medium extent), and 4 (high extent).
- **Perceptions on the future status of Youth work:** the items measuring this dimension were divided into four. Firstly, there were items used to measure the respondents' opinions on classification of Youth work. This consisted of five options, from which the respondents were expected to select one. Secondly, the respondents' opinions on the body that is supposed to regulate Youth work practice were obtained. This dimension had five options, but was open to additional responses of which the respondents were requested to specify their appropriate answers. Thirdly, there was an item enquiring about the respondents' views on minimum qualification requirements for practicing Youth work and it required the respondents to select one option from the list of six of those provided. The final fourth dimension was measured through thirteen (13) items on a four-point rating Likert scale with the following response categories, i.e., 1 (*strongly disagree*), 2 (*disagree*), 3 (*agree*), and 4 (*strongly disagree*). This sub scale was used to measure the benefits of recognising Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or a profession.

The combination of the above items resulted in the measuring instrument used to measure the respondents' opinions, experiences and attitudes towards emergence of Youth work and its future status. The final measuring instrument used to collect quantitative data is attached hereto as *Annexure H* and consists of a covering letter, consent form, statements on demographic profile of the respondents as well as statements and questions regarding the research topic. Further details on how the measuring instrument was administered are provided in the next section.

5.7.4 Administration of the measuring instrument

Subsequently, packages containing the covering letter, consent form, definition of key concepts and a measuring instrument were mailed by post or mailed electronically or delivered by hand (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:186-189). The measuring instrument was distributed to 2154 respondents selected from a total

population of 16 886 recognised social service professionals comprised of 154 Educators, 1085 Social workers, and 915 Child and youth care workers. Of importance is that the Social workers as well as Child and youth care workers who formed part of the focus groups were excluded from participating in the quantitative phase. The respondents who completed the measuring instrument did that with little or no assistance from the researcher, thus making quantitative data collection process less intrusive (Alasuutari et al., 2008:323; Delpont, 2005:168).

Initially, 151 measuring instruments were returned. This response was low, because it amounted to 7% response rate. This was anticipated during the sample selection process as already explained in section 5.5.2 above. As a result of that poor response rate, the researcher employed alternative strategy of a convenience sampling technique to recruit additional nearest and available respondents to take part in the study through making follow up, posting, emailing, faxing, physically delivering and using personal and professional contacts in different research sites to deliver the measuring instrument (Babbie, 2010:192; Delpont, 2005:168-169; Singh, 2007:103, 107).

In the end, out of a sample of 2154 (13% of the population), the total number of 593 (28%) research respondents completed the measuring instrument. The responses per professional group show that there were 62 Educators (10% response rate), 354 Social workers (60% response rate), 176 Child and youth care workers (30% response rate), and 1 missing value.

Quantitative data collected were electronically captured (in a computer) in order to keep them intact, complete, organised and accessible (Creswell as cited in De Vos, 2005:334; Neuman, 2006:14; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:51). To ensure accuracy, the researcher cleaned the data by verifying the mismatches between the original and captured data (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:417; Singh, 2007:225). The identified errors and records of mistakes were brought to the attention of the statistician, raw data was captured, and a report was produced and then used for analysis (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:163).

5.7.5 Quantitative data analysis

Data analysis refers to the way data was captured, analysed, and the statistical procedures used in order to bring meaning to and measure its (De Vos, 2005:333; Neuman, 2006:16). The quantitative data analysis was supported and complemented by the use of Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) and *IBM SPSS Statistics 19* (Singh, 2007:83). In this regard, the researcher was assisted by the statistician and data analyst who were part of the research core team.

The researcher used descriptive methods to describe, analyse, and summarise numerical data into major characteristics of the study without distorting or losing too much of valuable information, so that it is simple, manageable, and more understandable (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:459; Fouché & Bratley, 2011:251). To facilitate eventual processing of data, the researcher analysed quantitative data according to different themes of the measuring instrument (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:196). Data was presented and displayed in table and graphic form (Fouché & Bratley, 2011:257).

5.7.6 Quantitative data interpretation

This refers to a process when the results of analysis are taken, inference and conclusions on the meaning and implications of the findings are made (Kerlinger as cited in De Vos, 2005:203). The researcher firstly attached meaning to data and established relations between the findings and theory in a manner that supports or disputes the researcher's expectations. The findings obtained from different research samples were also compared to establish between groups differences or to validate the results obtained.

5.7.7 Reliability and validity of quantitative data

Like all other researchers, the researcher also strived to ensure reliability and validity of quantitative data by ascertaining its dependability, consistency, truthfulness or correctness thereof (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:47; Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:177; Neuman, 2003:178-182). The researcher equates reliability to dependability or consistency whilst validity is equated to truthfulness or correctness.

The following strategies outlined by Delpont and Roestenburg (2011:177), as well as Neuman (2003:180-181), were used to improve reliability of quantitative data:

- **clear conceptualisation of constructs** – the researcher defined the key constructs to minimise ambiguity and eliminate confusion (Delpont, 2005:188), thus increasing the reliability of the measuring instrument.
- **use of a precise level of measurement** – in this study, the researcher combined nominal and ordinal levels of measurement. With regard to the latter; summated, numerical, itemised and self-anchored rating scales were used (Delpont, 2005:181-183).
- **use of multiple indicators** - the researcher used several different indicators to measure the same construct with the intention of improving equivalence reliability. In order to test the reliability of the measuring instrument and ensure “*representative reliability*”, in analysing quantitative data, the researcher compared the results across different professional categories and also conducted analysis within a specific professional category. The researcher performed the internal consistency test to determine the reliability and validity of the scales for the target population.
- **use of pilot test** – the researcher conducted a pilot test before the main study. There were eleven (11) drafts of a measuring instrument before the final version which was developed through incorporating ideas from the pilot test focus group and the research team. This process was important and necessary, given that the measuring instrument was designed and used for the first time in this study (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell; 2005:147).

Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure in a consistent and accurate manner (Babbie, 2004 as cited in Delpont, 2005:160). To check face and content validity of the measurement, the researcher relied on the pilot test and research team, with the latter providing “*jury opinion*” (Monette et al., 2002 as cited in Delpont, 2005:161). Furthermore, when analysing data, the researcher determined fit between indicators and also conducted statistical correlation between variables. The internal validity of the scales of different measurements was tested. The interpretation of the results made through reference to the literature review, thus testing the instrument for construct validity (Delpont, 2005:162).

5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter documented the research methodology followed in conducting this study. In conducting the investigation, the researcher followed various stages of research as identified by numerous authors in research methodology literature. A mixed method research approach, which entailed mixing qualitative and quantitative methods in one study was adopted to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon (Bergman, 2008:53; Flick, 2008:42; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:255; Fouché & De Vos, 2005b:133).

Of interest to note is that, there is evidence that illustrates how various qualitative and quantitative aspects of this research were mixed in various stages of the study (Bergman, 2008:90; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:6). The reasons for mixing these methods were to: *“use qualitative data to develop new measuring instrument or theory that is subsequently tested and explain or elaborate on quantitative results with subsequent qualitative data”* (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:15). However, it is also important to note that, even though the researcher mixed these methods, the quantitative method was more dominant than the qualitative one (Bergman, 2008:57). The quantitative method was therefore considered primary whereas the qualitative one was secondary.

The mixing of these methods, although lengthy, expensive and time consuming, complemented rather than competed with each other, and consequently produced parallel, complementary, rich and comprehensive datasets, which added value to this study (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:114; Bergman, 2008:27; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:10; Flick, 2008:16, 48).

Based on the research methodology followed, the next chapter documents the empirical findings/ results of this study.



EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher motivated the purpose of this study by specifying the goal and objectives. It was highlighted that, on investigating the emergence of Youth work and its future status, the researcher would establish the perspectives of the currently recognised social service professionals, i.e., Educators, Social workers, and Child and youth care workers in South Africa by describing their perceptions, opinions, and experiences. To this end, the study was intended to: (i) identify and describe factors that contributed to emergence of Youth work practice; (ii) explore and analyse the current status of Youth work practice; (iii) determine the extent of South Africa's social service professionals' involvement in Youth work; and (iv) determine the future status of Youth work, including the benefits of recognising it as an area of specialisation and/or a profession.

From Chapters 2 to 4, relevant literature was reviewed and in Chapter 5, the research methodology followed in conducting the investigation was outlined. In this chapter, the empirical findings are presented and analysed. Since the researcher followed mixed-methods research, the empirical findings are presented in two parts, namely, qualitative and quantitative findings (Delpont & Fouché, 2011:435; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:15; Vogt, 1999:176). For both parts of the study, the researcher begins by presenting demographic information, followed by presentation and analysis of variables related to the research topic. The reporting is based on the responses received pertaining to each of the variables, i.e., observable cases. Data and findings are presented according to themes specified in the interviewing schedule and the measuring instrument for the qualitative and quantitative parts of the study respectively.

6.2 QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

As already mentioned in Chapter 5, data on which qualitative findings are based was collected from four focus group discussions consisting of recognised and

unrecognised social service professionals, i.e., Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Youth workers, and Community development workers. The focus groups provided insight into the study through exploring the participants' multitude of perceptions on the research topic. The researcher used the findings to develop a measuring instrument and to explain and elaborate quantitative evidence (Flick, 2008:16; Nyamathi & Schuler, 1990 in Greeff, 2011:361).

The focus group participants were purposively selected from four (4) of South Africa's nine (9) provinces, namely: KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, North West, and Gauteng. The researcher served as a facilitator for all focus groups. As mentioned by Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen (2008:358); Creswell and Plano Clark (2011:414); Nieuwenhuis (2007:91), the interviewing schedule included in this report as *Annexure G*, was used as reference to guide the researcher in facilitating focus groups.

The researcher identified the following five themes as a basis for qualitative discussion:

- Theme 1: Factors contributing to emergence of Youth work practice;
- Theme 2: The nature of activities and scope of Youth work practice;
- Theme 3: The benefits and non-benefits of Youth work;
- Theme 4: The challenges faced by different social service professions as a result of emergence of Youth work; and
- Theme 5: Strategies to address the identified challenges.

Qualitative data was then gathered through focus group discussions that were tape recorded and later transcribed. Transcribed data, including the researcher's field notes, were then analysed (Argyrous, 2011:261; Flick, 2008:77; Greeff, 2011:359, 371; Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:410-411).

Below is a detailed presentation and discussion of qualitative research findings.

6.2.1 Demographic profile of focus group participants

Each focus group participant was asked to complete a profile form (*Annexure F*) consisting of standard demographic questions on gender, race, age range,

education, home language, employment status, professional position, sphere of employment, employment sector, employment region as well as duration of service in own field of service and also in youth development field.

Table 6.1 below summarises the findings on the demographic characteristics of the focus group participants:

Table 6.1: Summary of demographic characteristics of focus group participants

Variables	Frequency (%=100)	Frequency (N=35)
Gender:		
Female	71	25
Male	29	10
Race:		
Black	69	24
White	11	4
Coloured	11	4
Indian	9	3
Age Range:		
22-25	3	1
26-29	8	3
30-33	17	6
34-37	29	10
38-41	6	2
42-45	17	6
46-49	3	1
50-53	8	3
54-57	6	2
58-60	3	1
Home Language:		
Tswana	34	12
Afrikaans	20	7
English	14	5
Xhosa	11	4
Zulu	11	4
S. Sotho	9	3
Region:		
North West	20	7
Gauteng	31	11
KwaZulu-Natal	23	8
Northern Cape	26	9
Professional position:		
Social Worker	37	13
Child and youth care worker	26	9
Community development worker	26	9
Youth worker	11	4

Variables	Frequency (%=100)	Frequency (N=35)
Level of Education:		
Post-graduate degree	57	20
Undergraduate degree	17	6
Post-graduate diploma	11	4
Undergraduate diploma	9	3
Undergraduate certificate	3	1
Matric	3	1
Employment status:		
Full Time	94	33
Part Time	6	2
Sphere of employment:		
National	31	11
Local/ District	29	10
Provincial	23	8
Regional	17	6
Employment sector:		
Government	83	29
Non- Government	17	6
Number of years in own field of service:		
1-3 years	11	4
3-5 years	14	5
5-7 years	9	3
7-9 years	17	6
9-12 years	11	4
12-15 years	9	3
15 years and above	29	10
Number of years in youth development field:		
0-1 year	17	6
1-3 years	14	5
3-5 years	14	5
5-7 years	9	3
7-9 years	14	5
9-12 years	20	7
12-15 years	3	1
15 years and above	9	3

The following selected demographic characteristics are described:

(i) Gender division:

Of the 35 focus group participants, the majority of them (71%) were females and the remainder (29%) were males. The following figure shows gender composition of the focus group participants:

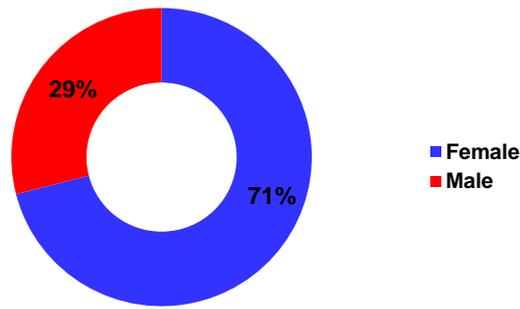


Figure 6.1: Focus group participants by gender

(ii) Racial composition and Region:

On racial characteristics and geographic region from which the focus group participants reside, 69% of them were Blacks, followed by same percentage, i.e., 11% of Whites and 11% of Coloureds and then followed by Indians at 9%. Most focus group participants (31%) were from Gauteng, followed by Northern Cape at 26%, and then KwaZulu-Natal and North West at 23% and 20% respectively. The home language of focus group participants was predominantly Tswana at 34%, Afrikaans at 20%, English at 14%, Zulu and Xhosa at 11% each, and South Sotho at 9%.

(iii) Professional position:

The social service professionals represented in the sample were Social workers at 37%, Child and youth care workers at 26%, Community development workers also 26%, and Youth workers at 11%.

The figure below highlights the breakdown of the focus group participants' responses by their professional positions:

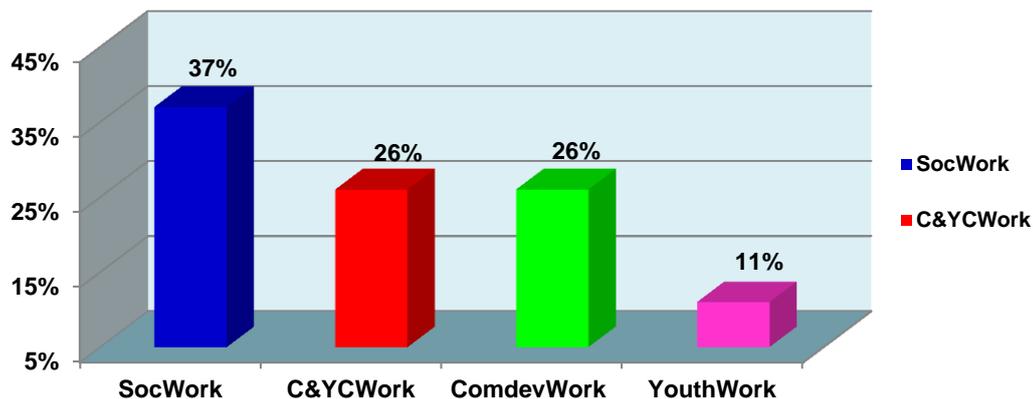


Figure 6.2: Focus group participants by professional group

(iv) Nature and sphere of employment:

A large percentage (94%) of focus group participants reported to be full-time employees, whilst 6% mentioned that they are employed on a part time basis. Many focus group participants (31%) reported to be employed at national level, followed by 29% at local or district level, 23% at provincial level, and 17% at regional level.

Further analysis showed that there was an overwhelming majority of focus group participants (83%) in government and only 17% reported to be employed by the non-government sector.

(v) Experience of focus group participants:

The focus group participants' duration of service in their own field of practice was on average 5 years whilst their duration of service in youth development was on average 4 years and 4 months. With regard to the latter, 20% of the focus group participants indicated to be having 9-12 years of service, 17% reported that they had 0-1 year of service, 14% indicated that they had 1-3 years of service, another 14% said they had 3-5 years of service, followed by 14% who indicated to be having 7-9 years of service, followed by 9% who said they have 5-7 years of service, another 9% reported to be having more than 15 years of service, and finally only 3% said they had 12-15 years of service.

(vi) Level of education:

The other striking characteristic that was important to this study was the level of education. In this case, 57% of the focus group participants have post graduate degree and 17% has undergraduate degree. This was followed by post graduate diploma at 11%, undergraduate diploma at 9%, and then both undergraduate certificate and matric at 3% each. The graph presented below reveals the level of education for the focus group participants:

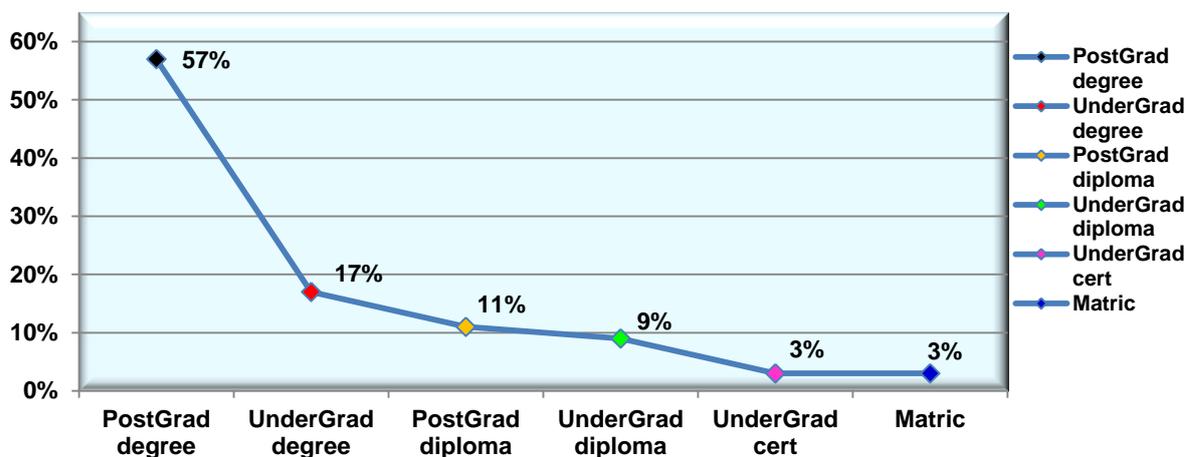


Figure 6.3: Level of education for the focus group participants

6.2.2 Themes

In presenting qualitative findings, the researcher firstly presents descriptive profile of the focus group participants, followed by summary of empirical findings on each of the research themes. In doing that, not all variables were analysed, because the researcher focused only on key measures useful in answering the research questions.

The qualitative findings are presented in accordance with the following identified themes that were based on research objectives and questions of the study:

6.2.2.1 Theme 1: Factors contributing to emergence of Youth work practice

The focus group participants were asked to give their opinions about factors that contributed to emergence of Youth work in South Africa. The majority of focus group participants linked the emergence of Youth work to the history of Apartheid in the

country and perceived it to have been an effort to address the problem of neglected youth. In this case, a Community development focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal echoed that:

...as far back as the past regime is concerned, youth were neglected and they were considered as people that will have to go to the streets and fight...as a result, we have this programme today that is called youth development. Something has to be done to ensure that youth do not go back to where they were, to past regime, to actually give them time to rehabilitate themselves and stuff, to changing their mind set towards development.

Also supporting this view another focus group participant in the same group mentioned that:

Understanding back from the times when there was oppression that. A lot of young people seem astray and there was a lot of disadvantages in term of them being kept in places of detention...and if you consider our country now, it prioritises and sees their needs as being of paramount importance.

There was consensus among focus group participants and between groups that another contributory factor behind evolution of Youth work in South Africa was related to the need to address social problems such as crime, child-headed households, unemployment, substance abuse, violence and HIV and AIDS. One focus group participant from the Northern Cape said:

The world we live in has so many challenges for youth and they are not being able to face these challenges, because they don't have the necessary life skills. That is why I think the youth development thing came about, because people realised that we are going to lose the whole generation. So we must focus on youth development programmes to teach them skills on how to survive in the current situation that they are faced with.

Another viewpoint of a Youth work focus group participant in Northern Cape was related to Youth work's emergence as a response to exclusion of young people from decision making processes and their discrimination on the basis of age. That focus group participant's view was that: *"Youngsters are facing challenges and are discriminated against on the basis of their age with so many decisions being taken for them by adults."* It was further suggested that Youth work emerged as a *"platform"* to get youth more organised and provide them an opportunity to vent their frustrations, occupy them with constructive activities, enable them to come up with solutions, and provide them with opportunities. Supporting this notion, another focus group

participant in Northern Cape mentioned that: *“Young people are very much disorganised...you go to them today...they are red, tomorrow you go there...they are green. So, you need to create a platform with the resources that you are having, when they get organised, they raise their challenges, their frustrations and they also provide resolutions.”* A focus group participant from the Northwest added that Youth work is crucial given that *“the youth are confused”*.

Additionally, most of the focus group participants in North West agreed that young people *“need guidance and support system”*. This was corroborated by focus group participants in Gauteng and Northern Cape when they specified that young people would require guidance and support when they transit from childhood to adulthood and also when they deal with crisis situations. Advice in the form of accurate information provision would also be needed to offset misinformation by, amongst others, the media.

The focus group participants from the North West and Northern Cape highlighted that Youth workers are deemed as an important support system for young people, especially in the absence of traditional support systems such as extended families and churches which previously existed in communities. The reason is that some of these structures have become irrelevant since they no longer address the pressing concerns of young people such as sexuality and also due to changed family structures that now include child headed households.

In relation to that, a focus group participant in the Northern Cape asserted that:

...most of us grew up in a house, a home where you at least have one parent who was responsible and now you have child headed households and all this kind of things where a child is responsible to take care of other children, but they are still only a child and they don't necessarily have the support that we had. They are expected to go and get the job sooner, because they have to take care of their siblings, they leave school at an earlier age, so the whole support is not there anymore...,so there is a whole vacuum and it must be filled by someone.

Social work and Community development work focus group participants in Northern Cape, North West and Gauteng saw emergence of Youth work practice as a commitment to young people who are regarded as leaders of tomorrow and future

procreators. According to a focus group participant in North West, “...one thing is that: youth are the future, so if you do not develop the youth you will end up not having the future, because we are hoping that they are our future leaders.” Another focus group participant in the Northern Cape supported this assertion by linking it to enhancement of community life and said: “If youngsters are better prepared for the future, you’ll have solid families within communities. So I think that also solves in the future a lot of our problems. If we can sort them, prepare them now; build them before the future...”

Slightly different, was the view that Youth work emerged to increase the literacy level of young people. In that regard, a focus group participant in North West said: “I mean if the youth have a programme or people who encourage them, they will be more interested in learning. So, the literacy level of society or the country will be high.”

6.2.2.2 Theme 2: Nature of activities and scope of Youth work practice

The focus group participants from KwaZulu-Natal acknowledged having difficulties in differentiating between Child and youth care work and Youth work. The following statement clearly described the sentiment: “I always had a challenge ukuthi, how does it (referring to Youth work) differ from the existing professions that are already on the ground?” Similar question was also raised by a Community development work focus group participant in North West who said: “As youth developers, what are they doing exactly, their core functions?”

The challenge of role confusion seems to be stemming from serving the same target group, because a Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal said: “I think the area of concern is that ... in terms of age category, children above 18 or those below 18 are considered youth and small (the latter implying children)”. Another similar sentiment illustrating role confusion was echoed by a Child and youth care work focus group participant who said: “We have just received a funding proposal from NACCW. Youth is falling on Radesh and Nokulunga (Social worker and Child and youth care worker respectively). Now I am children (a Social work participant referring to the fact that she is dealing with children), it also touches on me you know.”

In what seems to be a response to the question raised above, a Child and youth care work focus group participant in North West responded that the differences between Child and youth care work and Youth work is in target groups they serve. She said: *“I think what differentiates us, is that Youth workers focus on adolescents from 13 years up to ...I think 23 or 24 years.”* Others were of the view that Youth work is not only an intervention for young people, but it was also seen as an intervention that will lead to special focus of children.

Another difference between Child and youth care work and Youth work cited by a focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal is that: *“Child and youth care work is mainly referring to children at risk or youth at risk and those in residential facilities, but for the youth, you are referring mainly to the communities, churches and those in schools looking at equipping them economically and socially.”* A focus group participant from KwaZulu-Natal was of the view that: *“At the moment youth is divided in terms of development and social crime prevention.”*

On Youth workers' roles, data gathered pointed the roles of Youth workers being that of a: problem solver, supporter, educator, advocate, lobbyist, catalyst, broker, coordinator, facilitator, mentor, role model, financial manager and programme evaluator. In summarising most of the above stated roles, a Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal said:

I think they (referring to Youth workers) should be able to act as change agents, they should be catalysts, to identify essential services...there is a lot of young people left in the cold, they cannot go to school. What do you do with their needs? The Youth worker is the one who will identify that this is a problem and to actually maybe network with other resources, lobbying for money, lobbying with stakeholders to make that happen...initiation, coordinating and networking...so you know there's a whole lot of things that's coming to play, I don't think there is only one thing. Youth work is further intended to provide youth with developmental opportunities and encourage them to be independent and self-reliant.

Furthermore, a focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal suggested that *“We have got to clarify really what they (referring to Youth workers) are going to be doing, to know as youth development workers, what is their responsibility, because as I mentioned early that youth development cut across all of us in terms of our*

responsibilities.” Additionally, another focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal also expressed the need for a coordinator due to overlapping ages of children and youth. Supporting this view, another focus group participant indicated that: “*Youth development is not the only objective that I do, it is just part of my job description, but I never gave it full attention.*”

The overemphasis of the Youth worker’s role as the coordinator was further echoed clearly in KwaZulu-Natal when a focus group participant said: “*Even though other professionals service youth, the Youth workers have an added responsibility of coordinating the efforts of all service providers.*” Again, justification for performance of this role was highlighted by a Social work focus group participant in Northern Cape who said:

...because you will have a child, maybe involved in conflict with a Development worker and a regular Social worker and now here comes the Youth development worker. It means there’s another person that needs to be included in that multi-disciplinary team. Who must decide what services are going to be in the best interest of the child?

The role of financial manager was raised in the context of a concern on funds regularly being spent on awareness programmes rather than on interventions with direct visible impact. In this regard, a focus group participant in Northern Cape said:

...because most funds are expected to be used for big functions and for great big events. In the end you have most children who don’t even know who the speakers are. They just came for the T-shirts and food parcels. We can have impact if we can use money to nurture discussions in camps, life skills training where you have a smaller group that would really change these children’s lives.

There was general agreement that the following are activities performed by Youth workers: encouraging and guiding youth to be responsible and independent, skills development, life skills programmes, income generating projects, career guidance in communities, information giving, awareness programmes (e.g., on rights), crime prevention programmes, after care services for children and youth, intergenerational activities, self-development, moral regeneration.

Backing some of the above listed activities, a focus group participant in Northern Cape said: “*We must focus on youth development programmes to teach them*

(referring to youth) *skills on how to survive in the current situation that they are faced with.*” Another focus group participant from the same group said: *“...people smoking, people drinking, people not having the right information. I think that makes youth development necessary.”* Other activities that were mentioned, but not backed up included: *“care services”, “spiritual development”, and “wilderness programmes.”*

The focus group participants saw the outcome of youth development being empowered and skilled youth, personal growth as well as job satisfaction for the Youth workers. Other issues raised were related to the views of focus group participants on characteristics of a Youth worker. In this regard, consistency and flexibility were identified as the main characteristics. A Child and youth care work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal identified additional characteristics when saying: *“It is important as a Youth worker to be somebody who is able to communicate and listen to the youth”.* Over and above that, another Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal also highlighted that *“some of the Youth development workers are gambling with the children they are supposed to guide and that could not be acceptable.”*

6.2.2.3 Theme 3: The benefits and non-benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or an autonomous profession

There was a discussion on the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and or a profession. Most focus group participants mentioned that having Youth work professionalised will result in accountability, coordinated youth services, adequate funding for youth development initiatives, sustainability and continuity of services, elimination and/or reduction of social problems such as crime, increased youth literacy, employment opportunities for those who are trained in the field, reduction of staff turnover, increased work force, commitment to youth service delivery, and increased self-esteem.

The discussion further highlighted that professional recognition would provide an opportunity for registration, development of a curriculum, and Youth work formal education and training. With regard to this, a Child and youth care work focus group participant in Gauteng indicated that: *“The benefit will be that if we are recognised*

and they know that they there is a body that they can register with, then it would even go as far as universities being prepared to offer training to Youth workers.”

Other benefits included diversifying social service professions, facilitating its transformation from being an informal work run by volunteers to formal one run by qualified personnel, augmentation of skills in view of shortage of Social workers, promoting commitment to youth service, and regulating the practice. A view from a Youth work focus group participant in Gauteng highlighted the latter by eloquently saying that: *“When you professionalise you create a gate for people to enter and if they don’t have a key, they will not enter.”*

Another contrary view on skills shortage was mentioned by a Social work focus group participant in Gauteng who saw the benefit of professionalising Youth work as also benefiting institutions of higher learning offering Social work education and training, because there is a threat of closing Social work departments due to shortage of students. Instead of closing Social work departments, this focus group participant suggested that: *“Youth development workers can be trained to try to create a balance between variety of professionals and the emerging”*. Another opinion by a focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal was expressed as follows: *“...it is unfair to even mention that Youth work should be a Para-profession, since they have already been trained and have a four year degree.”*

In full support of professionalisation was also a Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal expressed who shock at the suggestion of this topic. The comment by that focus group participant by saying that: *“We cannot be debating on whether Youth work must be a profession or not, we already have qualified Youth workers in the country, what must they be doing with their degrees?”* Another strong view was: *“if you are saying at this point, should it be a standalone profession? What does the person with a four year degree do at the moment if we are now asking should it be a standalone profession? I am a little bit puzzled by that question!”*

Overall, there was support for Youth work to be recognised as a profession. The reason advanced by most focus group participants was the fact that there are already qualified Youth workers.

At the same time, it was observed that some focus group participants had doubts regarding having Youth work as a profession. A focus group participant in Northern Cape suggested that:

We need to introduce this new youth development thing, so that people have an opportunity to clarify things, overcome fears, and have an understanding of what is coming our way. I think sometimes people reject and refuse things, not because they want to, but because there's not enough information on it...and I think if this development in terms of Youth work can be communicated, can be clarified, I think we will be able to overcome the fears.

Supporting the need for awareness creation of this field another focus group participant in North West group also suggested “*the need to communicate the developments regarding emergence of Youth work to other existing social service professions in order to allay fears.*” It was further mentioned that rejection of Youth work as an emerging field of practice may be due to lack of information.

There was another divergent view which suggested that professionalisation was not a priority. Instead, research on the needs of youth as well as Youth work service coordination were seen to be priorities with the former serving as a basis for conceptualisation of Youth work activities. This view was echoed by a Youth work focus group participant who said: “*there should be coordination rather than professionalisation*”. That participant was supported by a Social work participant who stressed that: “*There is no need to professionalise, instead we need coordination.*”

Lack of accountability was cited as a non-benefit of lack of professionalisation. In this case, a Youth work focus group participant in Gauteng said: “*It is quite difficult, but now if we go for professionalisation I think it will be quite easier. Now these youth organisations are not professionalised they just operate as they please, they get other opportunities they quit.*” On the other hand, a Child and youth care work focus group participant in North West made her strong views known when she said: “*I don't see any disadvantages of professionalising, because there are a lot of advantages which will benefit the community at large. The chances of having disadvantages are unknown.*”

Closely related to professionalisation, was a discussion about another option on recognising Youth work as an area of specialisation. The motivation for having Youth work as an area of specialisation was given by a focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal who said: *“There is no way or it won’t be possible that Social workers and Probation officers cannot work with youth, because their nature of work is that they do work for youth.”* This assertion was corroborated further by a focus group participant who stated that, *“Social workers need to be multi-skilled and have the ability to work with a wide range of clients including youth and professionalisation will disempower them as the youth as a target group will be taken away from them.”*

To confirm the foregoing assertion, the view from the KwaZulu-Natal Child and youth care workers’ group argued that: *“Yes, we (referring to Child and youth care workers) want to do everything, because we don’t want to lose them after we have done so much work with them (referring to young people).”* This concern was also backed by Community development work focus group participants in North West who mentioned that the existing competition between Community development workers and Youth workers is another negative effect of professionalising.

Despite the concerns raised, there was also support for specialisation. A Social work focus group participant in Gauteng felt that Youth work should become an area of specialisation, because *“rather than sticking to traditional professions in the field of humanities, people should be offered a choice in terms of whatever specialisation they want to do.”* In support of this view, some focus group participants specified that it should be an area of specialisation for Community development or Child and youth care work or Social work or all of these social service professions. In all these cases, it was argued that Youth work will provide a career path for the professionals involved. Interestingly a Youth work focus group participant said: *“For me the other broader discussion is reconfiguring the whole social services kind of professions ... just streamlining all professions and making them Community development work and the specialisation would either be in Social work, or Youth work, or Child and youth care work.”*

In what appeared to be doubt over specialisation and also a non-benefit, a Community development focus group participant in Gauteng asked: *“I just want to*

know what will happen in this case ... stuck in the one area of specialisation? Or will they have to change then their specialisation to Social work profession if they want to go to the next level?" In response to that, other focus group participants argued that there are possibilities of a specialist reverting back to become a generalist. Another non-benefit of specialisation mentioned was lack of career path for Youth workers.

6.2.2.4 Theme 4: The challenges faced by different social service professionals

There was general agreement that Youth work is not being prioritised by government. This was said in the context of inadequate resource allocation, lack of budget structure for youth development, and inadequacy of Youth workers in the employ of government structures such as municipalities. A Youth work focus group participant in Northern Cape said:

...there's the Municipal Structures Act that provides in the Constitution that municipalities have the obligation towards young people, women and the disabled in terms of the leadership programmes. You will find that there are few municipalities within the country that have appointed Youth development officers and what about the others?

Another challenge was that the focus group participants in all groups acknowledged that they are not prioritising youth development. In one of the groups, a comment was made that, *"even though Social workers deal with youth they are not so focused (referring to delivery of services to youth)."* This statement was supported in other discussion sessions by a Social work focus group participant who confirmed that, their focus was on children and not youth. Another view which appeared to be downplaying role difference was primarily from the Social work participants who acknowledged that youth development is not a priority of Social work. They indicated that their only interface with youth is only when rendering statutory services.

Closely related to the above was the challenge of overlapping roles. A Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal mentioned that *"Social workers must be multi-skilled including in rendering services to the youth,"* whilst another said: *"there is no way in which Social workers cannot work with youth."* A Community development work focus group participant in North West strongly felt that other professionals may think Youth workers are *"taking over their work."*

A focus group participant in North West identified another challenge being “*that people tend to be too independent. They like to do their own things without collaborating or consulting with other stakeholders who can bring about maybe better service delivery.*” A Youth work focus group participant also raised a challenge regarding employment of Youth workers and suggested that there is a need to conduct research on Youth work employment opportunities. In response to that, other focus group participants identified government, communities, churches, Youth Commissions; youth focused structures such as the UYF, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), and municipalities as possible employment settings for Youth workers.

Another challenge raised was lack of supervision of Youth workers. A Social work participant voiced this out and said:

If you are a Social worker like I am, and you’ve got different kinds of people on board, Social workers, Youth care, Child and youth care. In terms of supervision, I am supervising social auxiliary workers, but the youth and child care workers; I don’t really know who is supervising them.

Furthermore, most of the focus group participants appeared to be having limited knowledge about Youth work or youth development. Some Social work focus group participants acknowledged not to have worked with Youth workers, but indicated to be having knowledge of youth structures such as the Youth Commission. Regarding the latter, it is worth noting and was interesting that a Youth work focus group participant demonstrated lack of knowledge when he said: “*What is the role of South African Youth Commission in terms of development?*”

The researcher observed that some focus group participants were confusing youth and Youth workers. There was a tendency of diverting the discussions to focus on young people even in instances where the discussion was supposed to be about Youth workers. For example, when discussing the role of Youth workers, a focus group participant in Northern Cape responded that “*youth development workers should be role models, you can’t just take any youth from the community.*”

6.2.2.5 Theme 5: Strategies to address the identified challenges

The focus group participants suggested that the following strategies would deal with problems and challenges identified on Youth work. On the cross cutting nature of Youth work, a focus group participant said that: *“There is a need for many qualified people in the field of development in the country”*. Another in Gauteng focus group specifically suggested that *“there is a need to harmonise whatever it is that we are doing as professionals dealing with one family, focusing on a child”*. Regarding the latter, a focus group participant in North West specifically mentioned that: *“The important thing is that there should be role clarification, because we have community liaison officers working with youth and we also have people like sister Mpopi (referring to Child and youth care workers), even Probation officers ... so that we don’t get our youth confused.”*

Emphasising the foregoing, a focus group participant in the same group and others in KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape echoed the following sentiments respectively, *“I think what can assist us if there is proper role clarification, so that we do not confuse our communities”*; another said *“I think the only real challenge will be role clarification and definition. If that’s sorted out, I don’t think we will have real problems.”* It was then emphasised that *“...demarcation is very important.”* Finally, in an effort to clarify roles pertaining to the target group, it was suggested that: *“If Youth work is professionalised ... we will be able to give support and after care to those young people that live in places like children’s homes after 18 years of age.”*

Related to the above, was the strategy to resolve the problem of duplication of services. This was mentioned by a focus group participant in North West who said: *“I think if there is proper communication between all other people who are offering services ... there must be communication at the end, because Mmadineo should not say I cannot go to the municipality, because the community liaison officers are there.”* The importance of communication amongst professionals and in particular with Youth workers was *“because the Youth development worker has more expert knowledge on youth.”* The other strategy that was emphasised as part of addressing the challenges experiences was coordination of services. In this instance the Youth workers’ role was seen as being that of a coordinator. This was clearly articulated by a KwaZulu-Natal focus group participant who motivated the coordinating role of a Youth workers

by saying that: *“Someone must coordinate, because if you leave it to all these people, it is not your primary responsibility.”*

Responding to the view on possible loss of experienced Youth workers in the short term owing to lack of required qualifications, another Social work focus group participant in the same group refuted this by saying that: *“RPL will be applicable to the ones with experience.”* This will be used as a strategy to give credit to workers who are already in the field, but are without formal qualifications.

Other proposals made included the need to: conduct research on youth development. The proposed areas of investigation included determination of the needs of youth, creation of Youth work qualification levels including up to PhD level and impact studies on Youth work. With regard to the former, a Social work focus group participant in Gauteng saw the need for *“having several qualification levels of Youth work as a strategy to beef up Youth work as a discipline whilst limiting the movements of professionals.”* On the latter, a Youth work focus group participant in Northern Cape emphasised that: *“There need to be systems in place to evaluate and assess the impact and/or the difference that these type of programmes have made on the youngsters themselves.”* According to this focus group participant, this would improve the quality of programmes and serve to inform further planning of interventions.

Critically, a focus group participant in the Northern Cape acknowledged to be having limited knowledge about Youth work and said: *“What impacts on Youth work? Why working with youngsters?”* Another Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal said: *“I wasn’t aware that there is a youth development degree. If we can see what is the content of the degree, what is the curriculum, and compare it to our curricula in terms of Community development, Social workers....”* On the question of regulation of Youth work, there was an expressed view by a Social work focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal that the Youth Commission is already a recognised regulatory body. On the basis of these views another focus group participant said: *“Yes, they will face the challenges because truly communities do not know them presently. So, some people will ask themselves, who are they?”*

6.2.3 Discussion of qualitative findings

The researcher followed the process described by Babbie and Mouton (2010:493-495); Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:129); Flick (2008:1); Schurink, Fouché and De Vos (2011:403-404) in Chapter 5, section 5.6.2 when analysing qualitative data. Of importance to note is that the researcher predominantly followed content analysis approach when validating and interpreting qualitative data.

A closer look at the demographic characteristics of the focus group participants showed that even though all social service professions (i.e., Social work, Child and youth care, Community development work, and Youth work) were represented, the qualitative sample was dominated by female focus group participants. The Social workers were the most represented whilst Youth workers were the least represented. The concern of non-participation of Youth workers was also raised in an earlier research conducted by Makofane in 2007, where the Youth workers did not participate in a research on demarcation of social service professions (Department of Social Development, 2007:58).

The level of qualification for the focus group participants revealed that the majority of them (83%) have at least a degree as the minimum qualification (i.e., postgraduate degree–57%, postgraduate diploma–17%, and degree–9%). Of interest is that almost all focus group participants were employed on full time basis by government and non-government sectors. Those in government were in majority at 83% compared to 17% of those in non-government sector. Additionally, as a value add on to this study, the findings showed that the focus group participants have experience in their own profession and also in youth development, thus making their contribution to this study to also be based on their practical experience.

Like historical evolution of Youth work in developed and developing countries, which was preceded by events such as industrial revolution, colonial rule and breakdown of neo-colonial structures, the findings of this study confirmed that emergence of Youth work in South Africa was preceded by the struggle against Apartheid (Carter, 2010; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:5; Richter et al., 2005 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:39; Sercombe,

2010:21; Wilkins, 1997). As alluded to in a review of literature, qualitative evidence also indicated that Youth work emerged to address the problem of neglected, marginalised, vulnerable, uncontrolled, deviant and socially excluded youth (Charles, 2006:8; Jack, 2006:80; Sercombe, 2010:24). A focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal confirmed these views and said:

Coming to the reason why there has to be a programme that talks to youth development, I am dating back as the past regime is concerned...you know youth were neglected and they were considered as people that will have to go to the streets and fight. Through all those discrepancies of the past, youth got into social crime, substance abuse and all these other things that are not socially acceptable.

The above analysis links the image of young people as a positive and a negative concept. Positively, young people inspire hope and change and negatively, they are problematic and cause instability (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:6). The findings confirmed the presence of both scenarios since emergence of Youth work was positively seen as a “reward” for the contribution made by the youth in liberating their country and therefore geared towards addressing the problems of young people who have been robbed of their youth due to their participation and involvement in the struggle. On the negative side, the youth were seen as being “confused and loose”, thus requiring to be organised, guided, and supported so that they do not get out of control. The Youth workers will continue addressing the emerging problems of young people on the basis of their own conception of young people (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:30; Sercombe, 2010:24).

Another key contributory factor is the one that sees Youth work “as an adjunct to home, school, work in facilitating young people’s transition” into adulthood and preparing them for future leadership roles (Alexis, 2007:88; Charles, 2006:48; Sercombe, 2010:24). In this regard, the findings showed Youth workers to be playing the role which was traditionally played by socialization agents such as families, schools, communities. That role entailed, supporting the youth through the transition period and guiding them into the adult world of independence, so that they can become socially responsible citizens who contribute meaningfully to their own development and that of their communities (Charles, 2006:48; Christian, 2007:91; Wheeler, 2000:11). The role of Youth workers as possible agents of socialization was

justified in this study to be emanating from the lack of support traditionally offered to individuals due to changed family structures, which now include child headed households and irrelevant role played by institutions such as churches in addressing young people's concerns (Christian, 2007:93; Jack, 2006:85; Sercombe, 2010:20).

In line with the theories such as the social systems and community youth development, it is clear from the above that there is a need to close the gap caused by lack of support from traditional socialization agents. This is important since young people cannot be divorced from their social situations (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:23). As the future leaders and key decision makers, there must be deliberate efforts to invest in them (Alexis, 2007:81-82; Shah 2007:62; Youth Development Network, 2008:7-8).

On the scope of Youth work practice, qualitative findings revealed consensus among focus group participants that the youth are the primary target clients for Youth workers (Jack, 2006:81; Merton & Payne, 2000:8-9; Sercombe, 2010:26), because as a vulnerable group, the youth need "*special attention*". However, there was also confusion over the age of target population being served owing to overlapping age categories. This attested to the fact that although a necessary characteristic, age cannot be regarded as a sufficient characteristic for defining young people. In South Africa, there is overlapping age between children and youth with children being defined as those aged between 0 - 18 years, whilst the youth are defined in the National Youth Policy as those aged between 14 and 35 years (Children's Act 38 of 2005; The Presidency, 2009b:11). It was on this basis that the focus group participants in other groups highlighted the need for Youth workers to focus on both children and youth.

There was also general agreement on the diverse range of activities and roles performed by Youth workers. The activities identified by focus group participants fit the description of those identified by numerous studies. They cover amongst others, counselling, information giving, crisis intervention, education, discipline, community development and skills development (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:18-19; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:113; Sercombe, 2010:18). It is essential to mention that all these activities target young people in different circumstances such as priority youth

groups specified in the NYP. Those include: young women, youth in rural area, youth abusing dependency creating substances, unemployed and out of school youth (The Presidency, 2009b:13-27).

A closer look at the identified activities of Youth work, show that they are informed by values and practices implicit in a wide range of theories and ideologies within which the practice operates (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:22). The theories and ideologies discussed in Chapter 2 have relevance for identified activities (Chess & Norlin, 1991:49; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2011:508). Therefore, in contrast with a concern raised by the CYP suggesting that Youth work is centred on a social welfare approach (Joseph, 2006:93), the researcher argues that it is not the nature of problems which the intervention seeks to address that defines its approach, but it is the manner in which such problems are addressed that defines the nature of the approach.

The focus group participants also highlighted that Youth work activities predominantly target youth groups in communities as opposed to individual young people, thus confirming the assertion by Wong (in Maunders, 2006:30) where an argument for a move from individually based to structurally based Youth work is made. Emphasising the point mentioned earlier, a focus group participant in Gauteng said: *“I presume that youth development in that sense of the word that people would be less individual and more community based. I don’t think they will be able to handle it if they go with the person.”*

This study also helped identify alignment of the roles and responsibilities of Youth workers as cited by several authors such as enabler, catalyst, coordinator, problem solver (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:3-7; Coulshed & Orme, 2006:113; Kawaiski & Randall, 2005 in Krauss & Suandi, 2008:3). In the context of youth development being a cross cutting area and a responsibility of various professionals as evidenced by this study and confirmed by literature (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:13; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b; The Presidency, 2009b:32), there is a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities in order to avoid service duplication and to ensure provision of coordinated services.

Explaining the above stated view, a focus group participant in North West said:

I think what can assist us, is if there is proper role clarification, so that we do not confuse communities. They will see a Community liaison officer coming to the community today, a Child care worker, then a Social worker. I mean there must be role clarification.

The analysis of qualitative findings further demonstrated that whilst it is important to have youth development services primarily rendered by Youth workers committed to servicing young people, it is equally essential that there is realisation of the significance of other service providers as contributors towards youth development, albeit at a secondary level (Sercombe, 2010:18). In this regard, the qualitative findings emphasised the importance of Youth workers as coordinators of youth services and there was also suggestion of having them as leaders of the team. This is important in light of the assertion by Sercombe (2010:83) that by virtue of their working relationship with young people “*Youth workers have a responsibility for the on-going efficacy of the now broader set of relationships.*” Therefore, in acknowledging the difficulties surrounding liaison and interaction between different orientations, the role played by each team member becomes crucial since it would contribute to teamwork by making referral and interaction possible (Jones & Pritchardt, 1980:3; Nandan, 1997:250).

On the benefits and non-benefits of Youth work as a profession, the researcher observed strong support for professionalisation demonstrated by easy identification of benefits as opposed to non-benefits. The benefits of Youth work specified by focus group participants included, but were not limited to: registration of Youth workers, standardised practice, formal education and training, and regulation of practice. On the other hand, non-benefits included lack of accountability. The identified benefits resonate with those previously identified by other authors and “*represent the highest level of competence in a society*” whereas non-benefits are different.

Like reviews of literature that show supportive and opposing views to professionalisation (Beker, 2001a:345), the qualitative findings also showed focus group participants who were in support of Youth work as a profession and those who were opposed to it. Those in support cited commitment to young people and recognition of already qualified Youth workers as their reasons. In this case, a focus

group participant in North West said: *“I feel that if they do have that four year degree qualification...I think they have every right to request to be recognised.”* On the other hand, lack of support was illustrated when some Social work and Child and youth care work focus group participants appeared reluctant to accept Youth work as an emerging field of practice, because they regarded Youth work as a threat to their professions.

A Social work focus group participant in Gauteng responded to another participant who said: *“Youth work will lead to diversification of humanities, thereby offering professionals an opportunity of specialising”* by saying that: *“How do we not contribute to the death of other disciplines and professions, but diversify?”* Since the confrontation was between two Social work focus group participants in the same professional category, it was possibly an indication of tension (Grossman, 2002 in Department of Social Development, 2007:15). It is, therefore, important in the interest of Youth work that the tension which is perceived to be existing between Youth workers and other closely related social service professionals is well managed (Department of Social Development, 2007:59; Singh, 2007:63). This could be achieved by measuring the value which is added by Youth work to the lives of young people as service recipients.

The benefits and non-benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation were also discussed. Like professionalisation, there were also strong views supporting this course of action. As mentioned in Chapter 1, specialisation is defined as a special branch of focus within existing professions such as Teaching, Nursing, Social work (*Oxford English Minidictionary*, 1999:496; *Random House Webster Dictionary*, 1992:1284). The findings suggested that Youth work should become an area of specialisation for Social work or Child and Youth care work or Community Development work.

The reason given by the focus group participants for the choice of specialisation included: provision of career path opportunity for professionals involved. Interestingly as a non-benefit of specialisation is what casted doubt in the mind of one focus group participant - of a specialist becoming *“stuck”* in Youth work practice. This confirmed what Grossman (2002) cited in Department of Social Development (2007:15) as

“jurisdictional tensions within and between professions.” The researcher sensed the tension when one focus group participant strongly said: *“We don’t want to lose them (referring to working with youth).”*

Another challenge identified included: lack of service integration. This amounted to many service providers rendering services to youth, with the impact of such services being minimal. According to the South African Youth Workers Association (2001:22), true client-centred services should be delivered in an integrated manner in such a way that service providers involved are in contact with each other, information is shared, and links between services are maintained. This assertion was confirmed by qualitative evidence where one focus group participant in North West said: *“There must be...I feel integration. I mean we are working for the same government and we are serving the South African community...”*

Lack of permanent employment opportunities evidenced by predominant employment of Youth workers as activists, volunteers, and part time workers in temporary jobs such as the NYS and EPWP was also cited as another problem. The discussion in Northern Cape revealed an assertion by a focus group participant who spoke in support of a well-resourced youth development machinery when suggesting that:

South Africa needs to move to a level where we employ experts or rather qualified people in whatever we do. Sometimes you get someone deployed to a position, only to find the person is negligent or doesn’t know how to go about doing the work, because he is so active in political manner, they’ll say go and take the youth position. At the end of the day he doesn’t have the necessary qualifications, the necessary ideas, ending up doing not what he is supposed to do or he is being sort of bullied by his own peers, diverting this thing into another angle.

The finding above supports the continuous call by various multilateral systems such as the Commonwealth, AU and UN where governments are expected to accord youth development greater priority in their national agenda by creating an environment which harness and encourage development and empowerment of young people (Alexis, 2007:86-88; Charles, 2006:49).

In relation to the finding on lack of prioritisation of Youth work by government, was a concern regarding allocation of financial resources. The findings showed that there

was lack of adequate financial resources allocated to Youth work. This translates into lack of political and administrative commitment in support of Youth workers and youth development initiatives. This does not adhere to the suggestion by previous authors highlighting the support of increased allocation of resources for Youth work (Jefferies & Smith, 1990:16; Maunders, 2006:21). Coupled with financial resource allocation, was the need to hire personnel who will be in a position to manage allocated funds effectively and efficiently rather than using them mainly for awareness programmes with minimal impact. This requires that there be Youth workers at management level employed to render supervision services to their subordinates and management services.

In relation to what has been alluded to above, a focus group participant that:

If someone is working as a Youth worker, they should be properly qualified and working under proper supervision ... they must be properly trained to ensure that they don't do any more harm to this task, because sometimes people have the greatest of the intentions, but they miss the issue.

Another point to note is the general lack of knowledge by focus group participants of Youth work as a field of practice. This is essential, given that the public's knowledge of the expertise of workers and the clients' belief of their superior knowledge makes them to have monopoly of judgement over their clients and to do intellectual work requiring a high standard of responsibility (De Vos & Schulze, 2002:8; Hahn & Raley, 1998:393). As part of the public, it is worrying that social service professionals have limited knowledge about Youth work. Limited knowledge of this field was also evidenced by confusion of Youth work and youth. This could hinder acceptance of Youth work and consequently delay its recognition as a profession.

When the researcher asked the focus group participants to mention the challenges faced by Youth workers, a focus group participant in North West irrelevantly answered as if the question being asked was regarding the challenges faced by the youth. That focus group participant said: "*Reluctance of the youth to participate in projects.*" Another focus group participant in KwaZulu-Natal also demonstrated similar lack of understanding when asked the same question and responded that: "*...there was this understanding that let us capacitate these people, especially youth,*

give them capacity, technical skills especially so that they can increase their level of employability.” As mentioned above, given the fact that social service professionals are also part of the public, their general knowledge about Youth work field is also important, particularly in the professionalisation process.

Having broadly discussed the past and present status of Youth work, the focus group participants in all groups proposed strategies to help address the identified challenges. The proposed strategies included: the need to have qualified people rendering Youth work services, determining the qualification levels for Youth work education and training, using the RPL method to credit Youth workers with experience, clarifying the roles and specifying the target client served, fostering communication between various professionals rendering services for the youth, coordinating youth development services, and conducting research to determine the impact of Youth work. It is worth noting that the strategies mentioned, although linked to the challenges identified; they do not address them all. It is therefore, safe to conclude that thorough analysis of all the challenges will have to be done and proposed strategies should be informed by research.

6.3 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The researcher created themes in the form of variables/ items/ statements measuring the following dimensions of the research phenomenon:

- Factors contributing to emergence of Youth work practice;
- The nature of activities and scope of Youth work practice;
- Involvement in Youth work;
- Perceptions on the future of Youth work; and
- Benefits and non-benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or a profession.

The identified variables were grouped under each theme to form a scale and then coded in a measuring instrument constructed to collect quantitative data. Consistent with the literature, the measuring instrument was finalised in consultation with the research team (Greeff, 2011:359; Singh, 2007:68, 82). The analysis of the variables

and construction of the scales mainly included theoretical provisions as none of the scales have ever been used as a composite measure within the target population.

Quantitative data was gathered from a completed measuring instrument and then captured using Microsoft Word. The preliminary analyses were then performed with Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) and *IBM SPSS Statistics 19* as recommended by Singh (2007:83).

Finally, the researcher presented the quantitative findings, analysed, discussed, and made conclusions as well as recommendations based on a thorough review of literature and on qualitative evidence produced earlier by this study. As supported by many authors, the researcher further used own reasoning to make sense of the data by identifying recurring patterns and then reaching conclusions (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:362-363; Argyrous, 2011:261; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:35; Flick, 2008:16; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:111; Schurink, Fouché & De Vos, 2011:417). The most recurring and emphasised variables and those that warranted to be explored further were selected.

6.3.1 Descriptive analysis of quantitative results

The researcher computed descriptive statistics of the following:

- Factors contributing to the emergence of Youth work;
- The current status of Youth work;
- Involvement in Youth work; and
- Perceptions regarding the future status of Youth work.

A full analysis of the descriptive statistics of the above stated dimensions was conducted and only took into account observed data. The analysis comprises of the presentation of quantitative descriptive findings in narrative, table, as well as in graphic forms and the interpretation thereof. However, it should be noted that like in qualitative analysis, not all measures included in the measuring instrument were analysed. The researcher focused only on key measures, particularly the ones that were useful in answering the research questions.

The first part of the results comprised of summaries obtained through calculation of the frequencies, means and the modes in respect of each of the measures within the scales (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006:211-212; Vogt, 1999:177). To obtain the frequencies, a new binary scale was developed through collapsing the original four-point rating scale into a new binary coding system that used only two digits, thus overwriting the original scale (Argyrous, 2011:518; Vogt, 1999:25). The calculation for the modes was included to identify the level of frequencies in the original four-point rating scale. The means were also calculated on the original four-point rating scale as the “*centre of gravity*” to enable the researcher to rank the responses in order of their magnitude.

The second part of the results focused on assessing the reliability and validity of the scales used to measure various dimensions of the research phenomenon. The analysis of the variables within the scales was conducted by way of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The aim of EFA was to explore and summarise data on the scales of measures that can be ranked by exploring the underlying structure of a collection of observed variables and also identifying group of items or variables which are relatively correlated (Argyrous, 2011:175; Vogt, 1999:197; Wikiversity, 2011).

The researcher then determined the feasibility of factor analysis using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s test of sphericity. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy tests whether the partial correlations among variables are small and should be greater than 0.5 for a satisfactory factor analysis solution. Bartlett’s test of sphericity as a statistical test for the overall significance of all correlations within a correlation matrix (Wikiversity, 2011) was used as a measure of sampling adequacy to test whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix that would indicate if the factor model is inappropriate (cf. SPSS Help function). The factors in each of the EFAs were then rotated to facilitate interpretation using the oblique Harris-Kaiser rotation, because the original factors were believed to be oblique or correlated (Vogt, 1999:109).

The tests of internal consistency were also performed in all the scales, because they were new and the researcher had to determine their reliability and validity. This was achieved by evaluating each item in relation to the overall scale, thus determining the extent to which each of the measures within the scale were correlated with one

another and thus measuring the same construct (Vogt, 1999:142; Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:147). It was aimed at determining the degree to which the results can be generalised across the items within the measurement or test.

Given the fact that all the measurements performed in this study have never been used before, an EFA was further conducted to estimate the factor loadings of selected data items. In the EFA, the researcher proceeded without stating any hypothesis about the number of factors and the relationship between them. The factor loadings are the correlation coefficients between the variables (Wikiversity, 2011). Finally, the researcher compiled and analysed descriptive statistics where a summary of each of the identified factors was highlighted. In this regard, the means and modes of the factors identified after rotation were specified, interpreted and then analysed.

It is important to note that the same process outlined above was applied and conducted with all appropriate measurements in the study. Below is a presentation and analysis of quantitative results.

6.3.1.1 Demographic profile of respondents

The respondents were asked standard demographic questions about their gender, race, professional position, region, level of education, and sphere of employment. Below is a summary describing the sample's demographic characteristics depicted in Table 6.2:

Table 6.2: Summary of demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables	Frequency (%)	Frequency (N)
Gender		
Female	78	464
Male	22	129
Race		
Black	75	445
White	18	107
Coloured	3	20
Indian	3	19

Variables	Frequency (%)	Frequency (N)
Professional position		
Social Worker	60	354
Child and youth care worker	30	176
Educator	10	62
Level of Education		
Degree	35	202
Post graduate degree	29	177
Matric	19	109
Post graduate diploma	6	33
Post graduate certificate	4	24
Under graduate diploma	4	22
Undergraduate certificate	3	18
Region		
Limpopo	32	188
Gauteng	14	85
KwaZulu-Natal	13	74
Western Cape	12	70
Mpumalanga	9	53
North West	6	38
National	6	38
Eastern Cape	5	31
Northern Cape	2	11
Free State	1	4
Sphere of Employment		
Provincial	64	373
National	23	133
National Institution of Higher Learning	13	77

The following selected demographic characteristics of the respondents are described:

(i) Gender division:

Of the 593 respondents who completed the measuring instrument, the majority (78%) of them were females and the remainder (22%) were males. Figure 6.4 below displays composition of the respondents by gender:

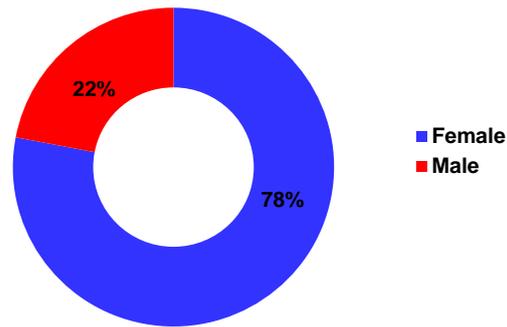


Figure 6.4: Respondents by gender

(ii) Racial characteristic and Home language spoken:

On racial characteristics and geographic region from which the respondents reside, 75% of the respondents were Blacks, followed by Whites at 18% and then Coloureds and Indians at 3% each. The majority of the respondents (32%) were from Limpopo with Sepedi being the most dominant language spoken at home. Of interest was that, less than 1% of the respondents speak at least two languages at home, e.g., English and Afrikaans, IsiNdebele and English, and Sepedi and Xhosa. In addition, less than 1% of the respondents specified foreign languages such as German, Gujarati and Shona as their home language.

(iii) Professional position:

The next characteristic which was crucial in sample selection was the professional position of the respondents. Almost two thirds (60%) of the respondents in the study indicated Social work as their current professional position, 30% reported to be currently employed as Child and youth care workers, and only few (10%) reported to be employed as Educators.

Figure 6.5 below illustrates the breakdown of respondents by professional positions:

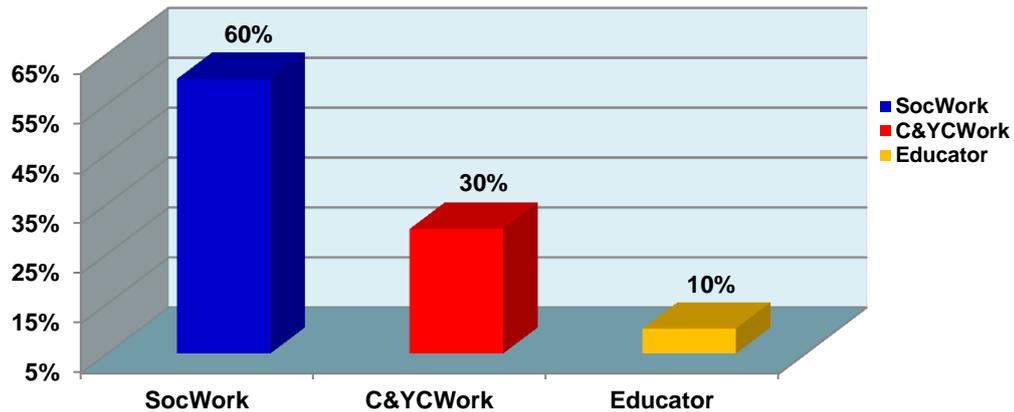


Figure 6.5: Respondents by professional group

(iv) Sphere of employment and Region:

Further analysis showed that at national level, 14% of the respondents were Social workers, 9% were Child and youth care workers and there were no Educators. At provincial level, 45% were Social workers, followed by Child and youth care workers at 18% and then Educators at 1%. Finally, at institutions of higher learning, there was an equal percentage (2%) of Social workers and Child and youth care workers, followed by 9% of Educators. Overall, there were 23% of respondents employed at national level, slightly over two thirds of them (64%) at provincial level and 13% at institutions of higher learning.

Figure 6.6 below highlights the respondents by professional position and sphere of their employment:

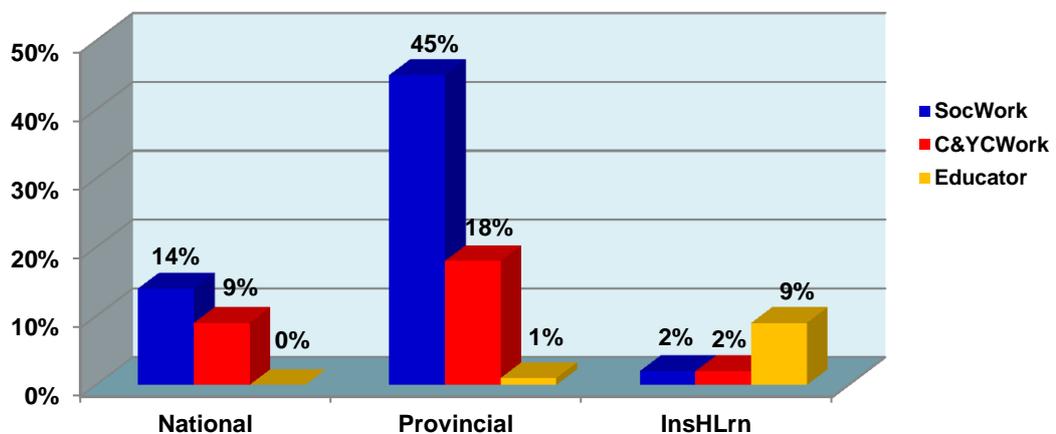


Figure 6.6 Respondents by professional group and sphere of employment

Additionally, the respondents came from nine of South Africa's provinces with Limpopo and Free State as the most and least represented, at 32% and 1% respectively.

(v) Level of education:

Another striking feature was noticed regarding the respondents' level of education analysed per professional group. Data represented in Figure 6.7 below revealed that over a third of the respondents (35%) have a degree and of that percentage, 33% were Social workers and 2% were Child and youth care workers. Another 29% of these respondents have a post-graduate degree and 19% of these respondents were Social workers, 9% Educators and 1% Child and youth care workers.

Additionally, the respondents with matric constituted 19% of which 1% were Social workers, 17% were Child and youth care workers and another 1% were Educators. Of those with a post graduate diploma, 4% were Social workers and 2% were Child and youth care workers. Of the respondents with post graduate certificate, 3% were Social workers and 1% were Child and youth care workers. The respondents with undergraduate diploma constituted 4%, with Social workers at 1%, and Child and youth care workers at 3%. Those with undergraduate certificate were all Child and youth care workers at 3%.

Figure 6.7 below shows the respondents' level of education per professional group:

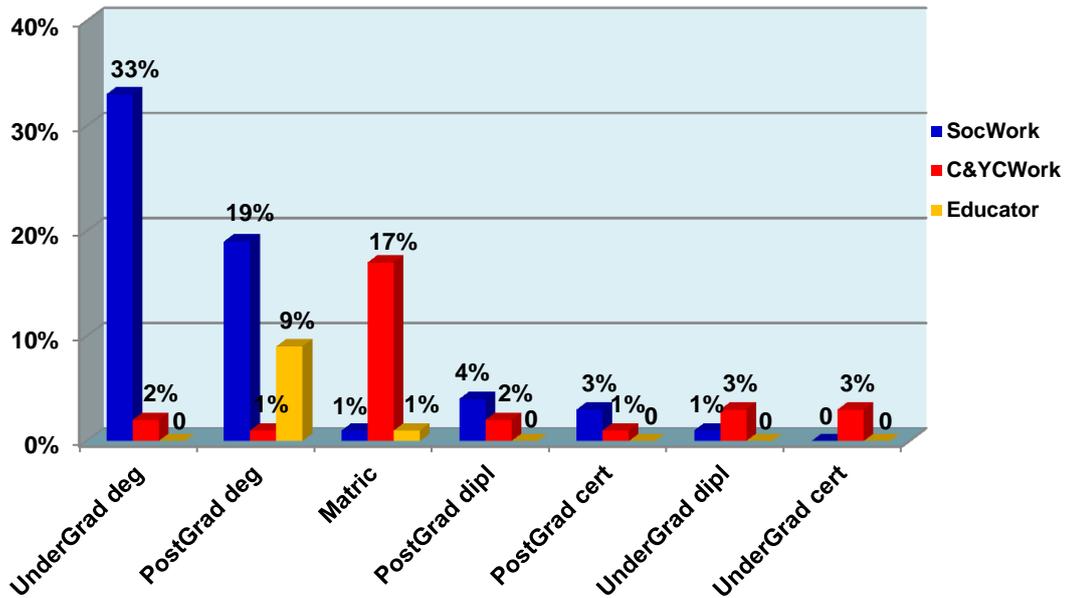


Figure 6.7: Respondents by level of education and professional group

In a nutshell, 74% of the respondents reported to have at least a degree as the minimum qualification (i.e., undergraduate degree, post graduate degree, post graduate diploma and post graduate certificate) whilst slightly above a quarter of the respondents (26%) have qualifications below a degree level (i.e., matric, undergraduate certificate and undergraduate diploma).

6.3.1.2 Contributory factors to emergence of Youth work practice

The respondents were asked to complete a 10 item, four point-Likert rating scale. In this study, the scale assessing factors contributing to emergence of Youth work practice had indices ranging from 1 to 4 with 1 representing “*strongly disagree*”, 2 representing “*disagree*”, 3 representing “*agree*” and 4 representing “*strongly agree*”. An item analysis of the components of the factors identified was conducted. The ratings of 1 and 2 representing strongly disagree and disagree respectively were combined into a new rating of 1 (representing disagree) and the ratings of 3 and 4 were combined into a new rating of 2 (representing agree).

Table 6.3 below reflects the respondents’ responses to statements measuring contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work practice in South Africa:

Table 6.3: Contributory factors to emergence of Youth work practice

Factors/ Statements/ Items/ Variables	Frequencies (%)		Modes	Means
	Agree	Disagree		
Addressing new challenges facing youth such as HIV and AIDS, substance abuse etc.	97	3	4	3.749
Guiding youth to become responsible adults	97	3	4	3.730
Involving youth in their own development	97	3	4	3.705
Developing young people holistically	96	4	4	3.672
Introducing youth focused interventions	95	5	4	3.578
Addressing the problem of “marginalised” youth	91	9	3	3.304
Keeping youth preoccupied with extra-mural activities	79	21	4	3.081
Increasing the number of social service professionals	73	27	4	3.056
Creating jobs for Youth work practitioners	75	25	4	3.015
Diverting youth from politics	41	59	2	2.295

The analysis of the ratings represented in Table 6.3 above shows that an equal percentage of the respondents (97%) in the study attribute the emergence of Youth work practice to be driven by the need to address new challenges facing young people such as HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, the need to guide youth to become responsible adults, and involving youth in their own development. Even though these variables had the same frequency of 97%, their means of 3.749, 3.730 and 3.705 respectively vary, albeit by a small margin.

Of those who strongly agreed with the first variable (i.e., addressing new challenges facing young people such as HIV and AIDS and substance abuse), 58% were Social workers, 29% were Child and youth care workers, and 10% were Educators. On the other hand, of those who disagreed with the statement, 2% of them were Social workers, followed by Child and youth care workers and Educators, both constituting less than 1%. Figure 6.8 below highlights a breakdown of the responses to the statement on addressing new challenges facing the youth by professional group:

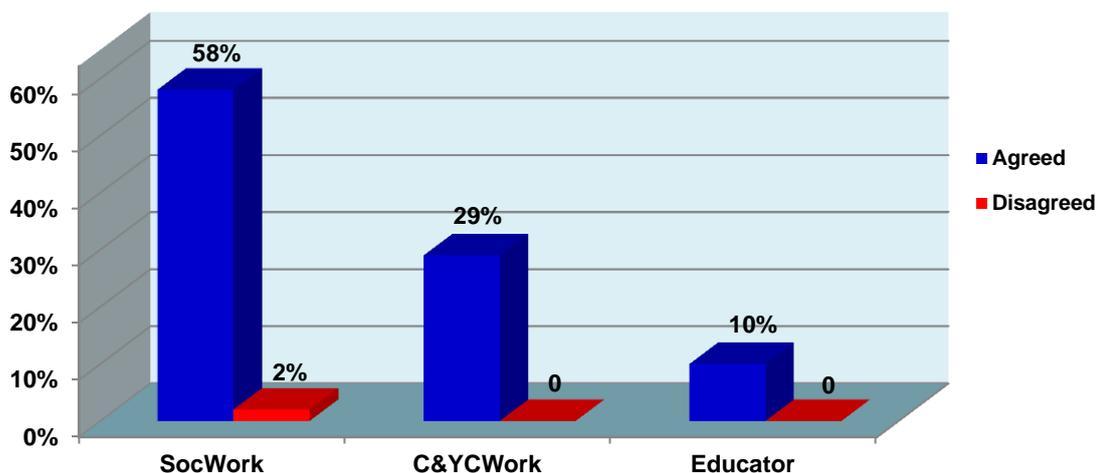


Figure 6.8: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on addressing new challenges facing young people

Other key contributory factors included the need to develop youth holistically at 96%; followed by introducing youth focused interventions at 95%; and then addressing the needs of marginalised youth at 91%. It is worth mentioning that the respondents strongly agreed that the need to develop the youth holistically and introducing youth focused interventions were some of the key contributory factors, because the mode was 4. However, they only sufficiently agreed that addressing the needs of marginalised youth was a contributory factor, because the mode was 3.

A relatively lower percentage of respondents (79%) considered the emergence of Youth work to be a result of the need to keep the youth preoccupied with extra-mural activities; 75% said it was due to creation of jobs for Youth workers; and 73% related it to increasing the number of social service professionals. Regarding the latter variable, it is important to note that despite its lower frequency of 73%, this variable (i.e., increasing the number of social service professionals) ranked higher, because of its mean of 3.056 compared to the former variable (i.e., creation of jobs for Youth workers) which ranked lower, i.e., despite its higher frequency of 75%, but due to its lower mean of 3.015.

The last contributory factor was diverting the youth from politics with the lowest frequency (41%) and lowest mean of 2.295 implying that this factor contributed less than all of the above listed factors measuring this dimension. The modal category for

this factor was 2, showing that the respondents sufficiently disagreed rather than strongly disagreed with the statement.

A breakdown of the responses per professional group show that, out of 41% of the total respondents who agreed with the statement, 23% were Social workers, followed by 16% of Child and youth care workers, and 2% were Educators. On the other hand, out of 59% of respondents who disagreed with the statement, 37% were Social workers, 13% were Child and youth care workers, and 9% were Educators. Overall, 41% of the respondents disagreed with the statement whilst 59% of the respondents agreed.

Figure 6.9 below shows the responses of different professional groups to the statement on diverting the youth from politics:

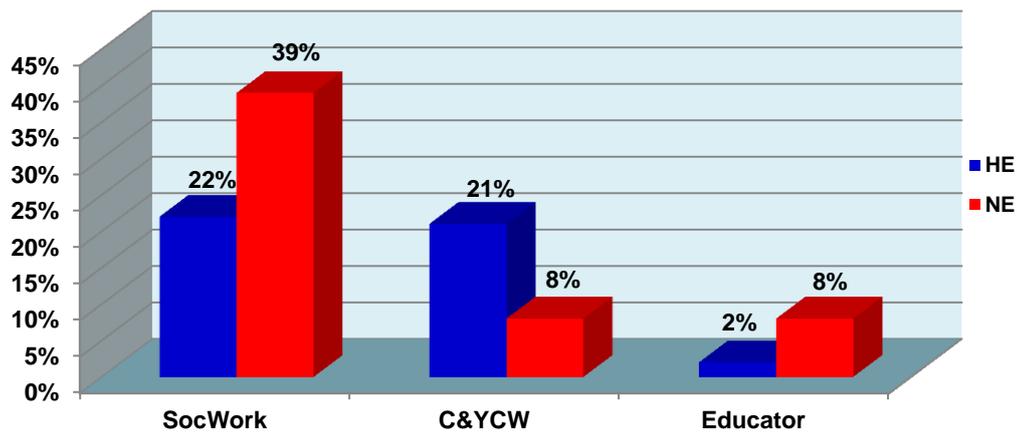


Figure 6.9: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on diverting youth from politics

A further breakdown of the responses by the various professional group and sphere of employment show that 9% of Social workers at national level disagreed with the statement, followed by 27% at provincial level and then 1% at institutions of higher learning. With regard to Child and youth care workers who disagreed with the statement, 3% of those respondents were at national level, 9% at provincial level and 1% at institutions of higher learning. An assessment of the Educators showed that there was no one at national level, but 1% and 8% of those respondents were at provincial level and institutions of higher learning respectively.

On the other hand, of those who agreed with the statement, there were 4% of the Social workers at national level, followed by 19% of Social workers at provincial level and then 1% at institution of higher learning. With regard to Child and youth care workers, there was 6% at national level, 9% at provincial level and then 1% at institutions of higher learning. An assessment of the Educators showed that there was no one at both the national and provincial levels, but 1% of those respondents were at institutions of higher learning. Figure 6.9 below shows the responses of different professional groups to the statement on diverting the youth from politics by the various professional groups and by the sphere of their employment.

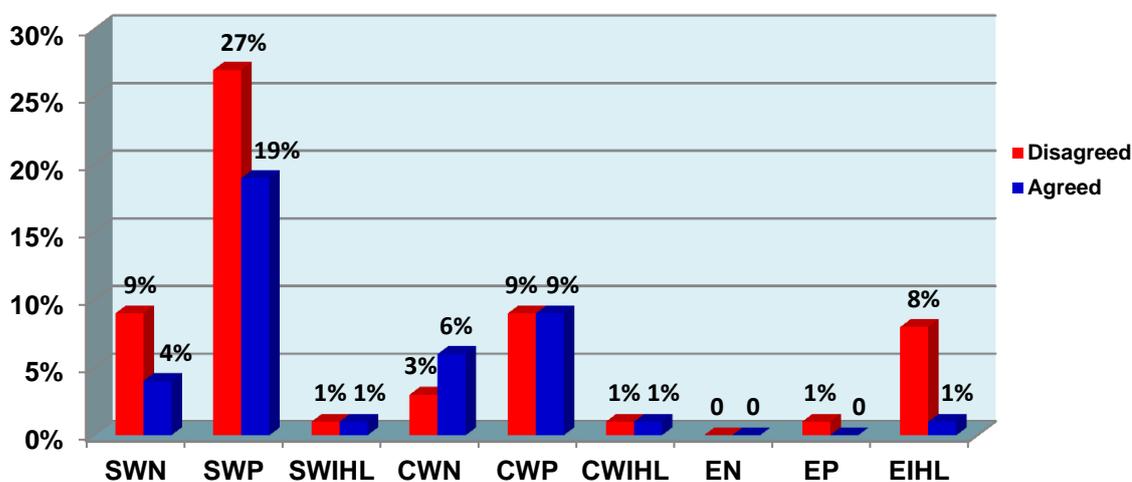


Figure 6.10: Responses of respondents by professional group and sphere of employment to the statement on diverting youth from politics

A closer look of the responses given in Figure 6.10 above reveals that, in total, of those who disagreed, 12% were at national level, 37% were at provincial level, and 10% were at institutions of higher learning. On the other hand, of those who agreed, 10% were at national level, followed by 28% at provincial level and then 3% were at institutions of higher learning.

6.3.1.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis of factors contributing to emergence of Youth work practice

The first EFA was conducted on the 10 items measuring contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work practice. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was calculated and Bartlett's test was performed to assess the feasibility of the factor analysis. The relatively high KMO measure of sampling adequacy (0.794) and

Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 1212.548$, $df = 45$, $p < 0.001$), confirmed that the factor analysis was appropriate. The two factors were identified using the eigenvalue criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1. Factor 1 accounted for 32.50% of the variance and factor 2 for a further 17.53%, combined explaining 50% of the variance.

Therefore, the two factor-solution yielded by the exploratory analysis was regarded as an adequate representation of the data. Inspection of the two rotated factors resulted in factor 1 being labelled, Social development contributory factor and factor 2 being labelled, Human resources and diversion contributory factor. The results of the internal consistency test of items within the scale measuring contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work are represented in Table 6.4 below:

Table 6.4: Reliability analysis of items within the scale measuring contributory factors to the emergence of Youth work practice

Factors and Items/ Variables/ Statements	Loadings of Factor 1	Loadings of Factor 2	Cronbach' Alpha (α)
Factor 1: Social development contributory factor			0.73
Involving youth in their own development	0.769		
Developing young people holistically	0.736		
Guiding youth to become responsible adults	0.710		
Introducing youth focused interventions	0.704		
Addressing new challenges facing youth such as HIV and AIDS, substance abuse etc.	0.497		
Addressing the problem of "marginalised" youth	0.410		
Factor 2: Human resources and diversion contributory factor			0.75
Creating jobs for Youth work practitioners		0.818	
Increasing the number of social service professionals		0.815	
Diverting youth from politics		0.712	
Keeping youth preoccupied with extra-mural activities		0.661	

The analysis of data represented in Table 6.4 above illustrates that the results of an internal consistency test of the sub scale measuring Social development contributory factor had an acceptable Cronbach's alpha of 0.73 ($\alpha = 0.73$). Similarly, the results of

an internal consistency test of another sub-scale measuring Human resources and diversion contributory factor also had an acceptable Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 ($\alpha = 0.75$). The item-total correlations of Social development contributory factor and that of Human resources and diversion contributory factor are attached hereto as *Annexures I* and *J* respectively. It is necessary to note that even though the measurement properties of these two sub scales were not established prior to this study, an acceptable Chronbach's alpha for both factors confirmed reliability of the sub scales for the target population.

Further analysis showed that the first factor (i.e., Social development contributory factor) contained six items. Four of the six items had the factor loadings above 0.70 and the other two items had the factor loading above 0.40. This factor was mostly saturated with items that referred to social development of young people (i.e., involving youth in their own development; developing young people holistically; guiding youth to become responsible adults; introducing youth focused interventions; addressing new challenges facing young people such as HIV and AIDS, substance abuse, and addressing the problem of "*marginalised*" youth).

The second factor (i.e., Human resources and diversion contributory factor) was saturated with items that referred to human resources capacity and diversion of young people's attention. This factor contained four items with factor loadings above 0.65 (i.e., creating jobs for Youth work practitioners; increasing the number of social service professionals; diverting youth's attention from politics; and keeping youth preoccupied with extra-mural activities).

6.3.1.4 Current status of Youth work

A 13 item, two-choice scale measuring the respondents' opinions on the current status of Youth work in South Africa was administered to the respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agree with each statement by circling 1 (representing "yes") or circling 0 (representing "no") as an indication of disagreeing with the statement.

The responses obtained on individual items within the scale used to measure the current status of Youth work in South Africa are reported in Table 6.5 below:

Table 6.5: Current status of Youth work practice

Items/ Statements/ Variables	Frequencies (%)	
	Yes	No
Youth work is a responsibility of a multi-disciplinary team (Teachers, Nurses, Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Religious leaders)	94	6
Youth work is an occupation focusing on young people	93	7
The roles and functions of Youth work practitioners and Child and youth care workers overlap	79	21
Youth work practitioners are largely employed by Non-government organisations, Community based organisations and churches	78	22
Items/ Statements/ Variables	Frequencies (%)	
	Yes	No
The roles and functions of Youth work practitioners and social workers overlap	73	27
There are Institutions of Higher Learning offering youth work training in South Africa	71	29
Youth work practitioners are sufficiently skilled to render youth work services	71	29
Child and youth care workers are sufficiently skilled to render youth work services	63	37
Social workers are sufficiently skilled to render youth work services	60	40
There is extensive research on youth issues in South Africa	49	51
There is competition between Child and youth care workers and Youth workers in delivery of youth services	43	57
There is competition between Social workers and Youth workers in delivery of youth services	41	59
Youth work practitioners are largely employed by government	28	72

The analysis of the responses received shown in Table 6.5 above reveal that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (94%) agreed that Youth work is a responsibility of a multi-disciplinary team (Teachers, Nurses, Social workers, Child and youth care workers, Religious leaders). Of those who agreed with the previous statement, 56% were Social workers, 29% were Child and youth care workers and 9% were Educators. On the other hand, of those who disagreed with it, 4% were Social workers and an equal percentage (1%) was Child and youth care workers and Educators.

The responses to this statement by each professional group are represented in Figure 6.11 below:

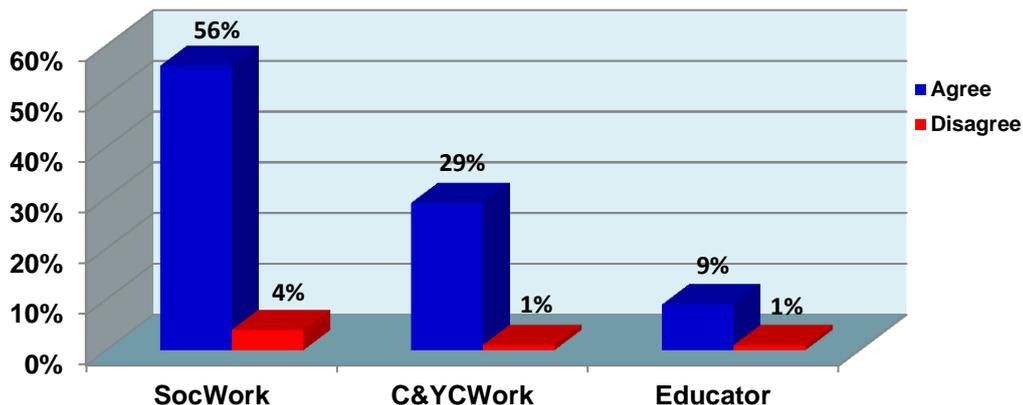


Figure 6.11: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on Youth work being the responsibility of the multi-disciplinary team

The analysis of other variables show that 93% of respondents indicated that Youth work is an occupation focusing on young people. This was then followed by 79% of the respondents who mentioned that the roles and functions of Youth work practitioners and Child and youth care workers overlap, 78% of the respondents also agreed that Youth work practitioners are largely employed by non-government organisations, community based organisations and churches. Of those who agreed with this previous statement, 45% were Social workers, 27% were Child and youth care workers, and 7% were Educators. Of those disagreeing with the statement, 16% were Social workers, followed by 3% of Child and youth care workers and then another 3% of Educators.

Further analysis revealed that 73% of respondents mentioned that the roles and functions of Youth workers and Social workers overlap. This was followed by 71% of respondents who mentioned their knowledge of South Africa's institutions of higher learning offering Youth work education and training. Interestingly, another 71% of respondents specified that Youth work practitioners are sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services. Of those who agreed with this statement, 41% were Social workers, 26% were Child and youth care workers and 5% were Educators. Of those who disagreed with this statement, 19% were Social workers, 4% were Child and youth care workers and 5% were Educators.

Figure 6.12 below specifies the responses to a statement on Youth work practitioners being sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services:

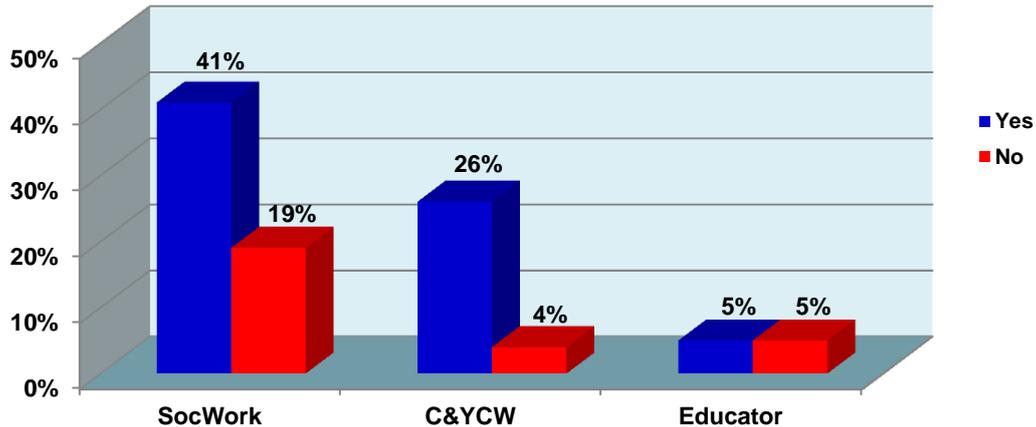


Figure 6.12: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on Youth work practitioners being sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services

The analysis show that 63% of the respondents said Child and youth care workers were sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services whilst 60% of the respondents believed that Social workers were sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services. Additionally, less than half of the respondents (49%) said that there is extensive research on important issues about the youth in South Africa, 43% said there is competition between Child and youth care workers and Youth workers in delivery of youth services; 41% said there is competition between Social workers and Youth workers in delivery of youth services. Finally, very few respondents (28%) believed that Youth work practitioners were largely employed by government.

Of those who agreed that Youth workers are sufficiently skilled to render Youth work services, 19% were Social workers, 7% were Child and youth care workers, and 2% were Educators. On the other hand, of those who disagreed with it, 42% were Social workers, 23% were Child and youth care workers, and 7% were Educators.

Figure 6.13 shows the responses of various professional groups to this statement:

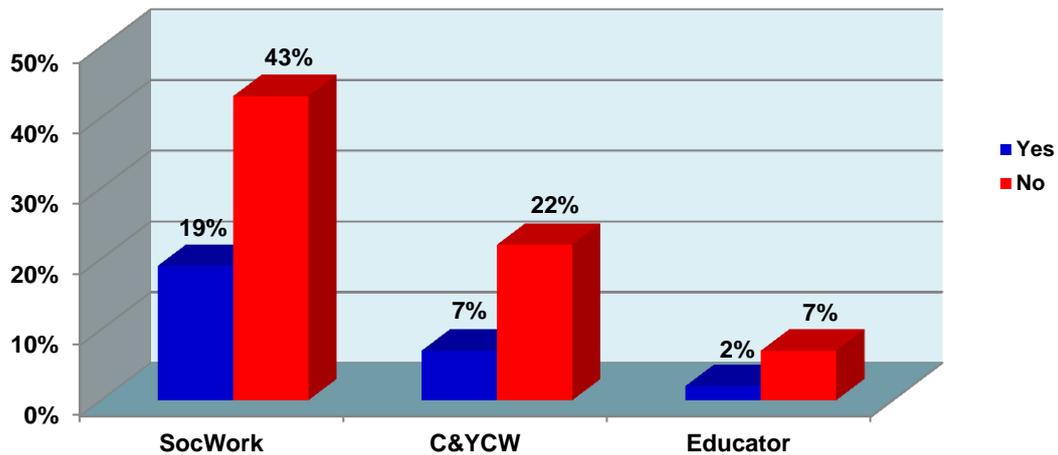


Figure 6.13: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on Youth workers being largely employed by government

The responses of various professional groups by sphere of employment indicates that of those who agreed that Youth workers were largely employed by government, there was 4% Social workers at national level, 15% at provincial level and there was none at institutions of higher learning. In the case of Child and youth care workers, there was 2% at national level, 5% at provincial level, and 1% at institutions of higher learning. Finally, there were no responses from Educators at national and provincial levels, but there was 2% at institutions of higher learning.

On the hand, of those who disagreed with the statement, 10% were Social workers based at national level, followed by 31% at provincial level and 2% at institutions of higher learning. Regarding the Child and youth care workers, there was 7% at national level, 5% at provincial level and 2% at institutions of higher learning. There were no responses from Educators at national level, but there was 1% at provincial level and 6% at institutions of higher learning.

Below is Figure 6.14 illustrating the respondents' responses by professional group and the sphere of employment:

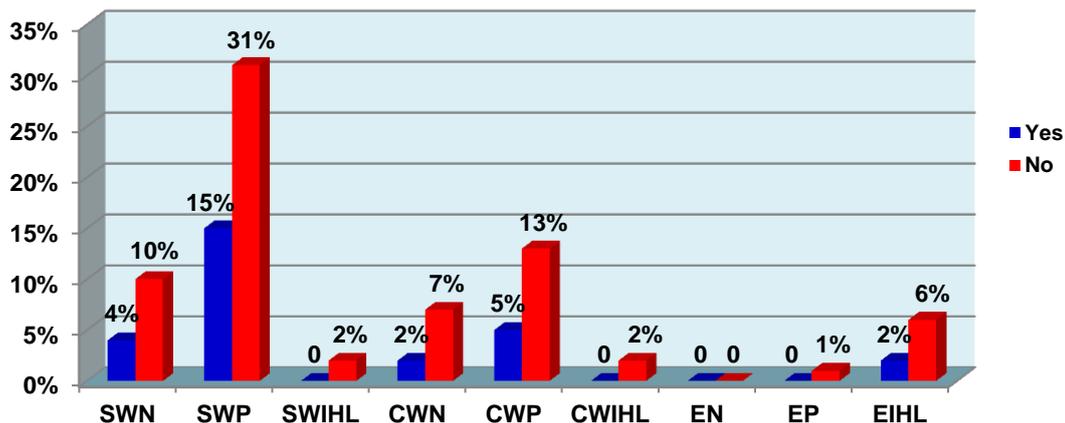


Figure 6.14: Responses of respondents by professional group and sphere of employment to the statement on Youth workers being largely employed by government

6.3.1.5 Involvement in Youth Work

The researcher included in the measuring instrument, 6 items on the scale used to assess the extent of the respondents' involvement in Youth work. The assessment was conducted through completion of the four-point Likert rating scale with indices ranging from 1, representing "no extent" to 4, representing "higher extent". When analysing, the researcher converted the original four-point rating scale into a binary scale through combining the ratings of 1 (no extent) with that of 2 (lesser extent) to become a new rating of 1 or "no extent" and combining the rating of 3 or medium extent with that of 4 or higher extent to become a new rating of 2 or "higher extent".

The responses on the extent of social service professionals' involvement in specified areas of Youth work are illustrated in Table 6.6 below:

Table 6.6: Involvement of social service professionals in Youth work

Items/ Variables/ Statements	Frequencies (%)		Modes	Means
	Higher Extent	No Extent		
Collaboration with other professionals in the social service sector when rendering youth work services	76	24	3	3.027
Direct delivery of youth work services	70	30	4	2.955
Collaboration with other professionals in the social service sector when teaching youth work	56	44	4	2.637
Research on youth issues	55	45	3	2.592
Teaching youth work	54	46	4	2.544
Policy development that promote youth work	45	55	1	2.364

A quick glance at the information represented in Table 6.6 above shows that over two thirds of the respondents (76%) mentioned they are involved to a higher extent in collaborating with other professionals within the social service sector when rendering Youth work services, whilst 24% of the respondents said they are involved to no extent. Of those involved, their involvement was to a medium rather than higher extent, because the mode is 3. It is important to indicate that the extent of the respondents' involvement in collaboration with other professionals within the social service sector when rendering Youth work services was the highest in relation to all areas listed in Table 6.6 above, because this item had the highest mean of 3.027. In order of magnitude of the responses, this variable was therefore ranked the highest.

A further analysis of the responses by various professional groups shows that of those who said they were involved to a higher extent, 44% were Social workers, 27% were Child and youth care workers and 5% were Educators. On the other hand, of those who said they were involved to no extent, 15% were Social workers, 3% were Child and youth care workers and 6% were Educators. Figure 6.15 below illustrates the responses given to this statement by various professional groups:

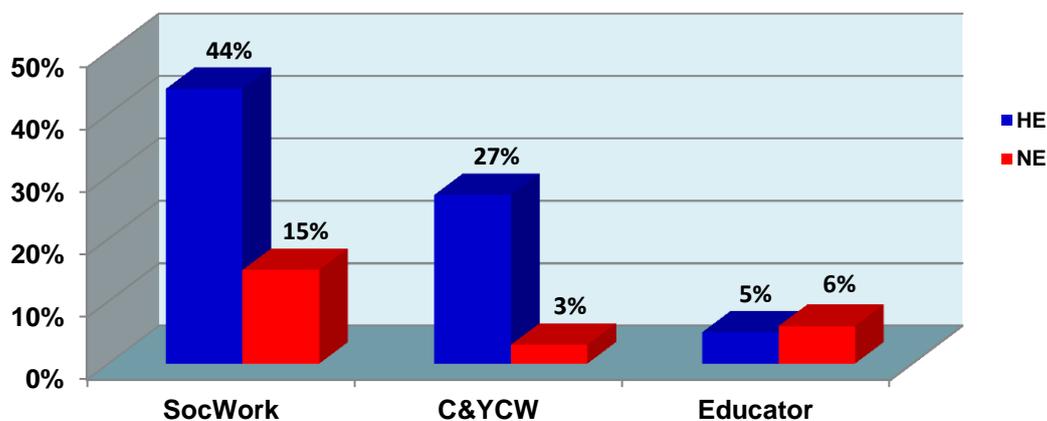


Figure 6.15: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on collaboration with other professionals within the social service sector when rendering Youth work services

The analysis of the responses for those who agreed with the previous statement by sphere of employment showed that 18% of the respondents were at national level, 51% were at provincial level and 7% were at institutions of higher learning. On the other hand, of those who disagreed, 6% were at national level, 12% were at provincial level and another 6% were at institutions of higher learning.

Additionally, 70% of respondents indicated that they are directly involved in the delivery of Youth work services; 56% said they were in collaboration with other professionals when teaching Youth work; 55% are involved in conducting research on important youth issues; 54% mentioned that they are involved in teaching Youth work. Looking at the means of all these variables listed in Table 6.6, the researcher observed that they follow the same pattern and sequence of frequencies. Perusal of the modes for these items indicated that all the variables had the modal scores of 3 and 4, implying that the respondents were involved to a higher and medium extent in these areas.

A relatively small percentage of the respondents constituting less than half of the respondents (45%), mentioned that they were involved in policy development promoting Youth work to a higher extent whilst 55% said they were involved in policy development to no extent. Interestingly, this was the only variable with 1 as the modal score, implying that the most frequent score was to no extent. Of those involved to a higher extent, 22% were Social workers, 21% were Child and youth care workers, and 2% were Educators. However, of those involved to no extent in policy development, 39% were Social workers, 8% were Child and youth care workers, and another 8% were Educators. Figure 6.16 below displays a breakdown of the respondents by various professional groups:

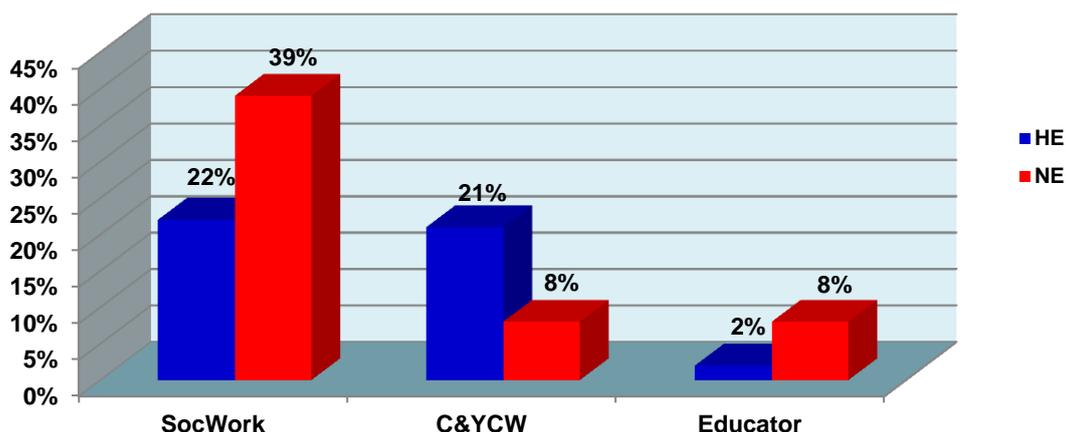


Figure 6.16: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on involvement in policy development

A further breakdown of the responses by various professional groups and sphere of employment indicate that out of the total 45% of the respondents who said they were involved in policy development to a higher extent, 4% of Social workers were at

national level, 17% were at provincial level and 1% at institutions of higher learning. With regard to Child and youth care workers, 8% were at national level, 11% at provincial level and 2% at institutions of higher learning.

Of the Educators involved in policy development, there were no respondents based at national level, there was 1% at provincial and 2% at institutions of higher learning. Again, out of 55% of the respondents who said their involvement is to no extent, 10% were Social workers at national level, 28% were Social workers employed at provincial level, followed by 1% of Social workers at institutions of higher learning. With regard to Child and youth care workers, there was 1% at national level, 7% at provincial level and there was none at institutions of higher learning. Of the Educators involved to no extent in policy development, there were no respondents based at national level, but there was 1% at provincial and 8% based at institutions of higher learning.

Figure 6.17 below illustrates a breakdown of the responses by professional category and sphere of employment:

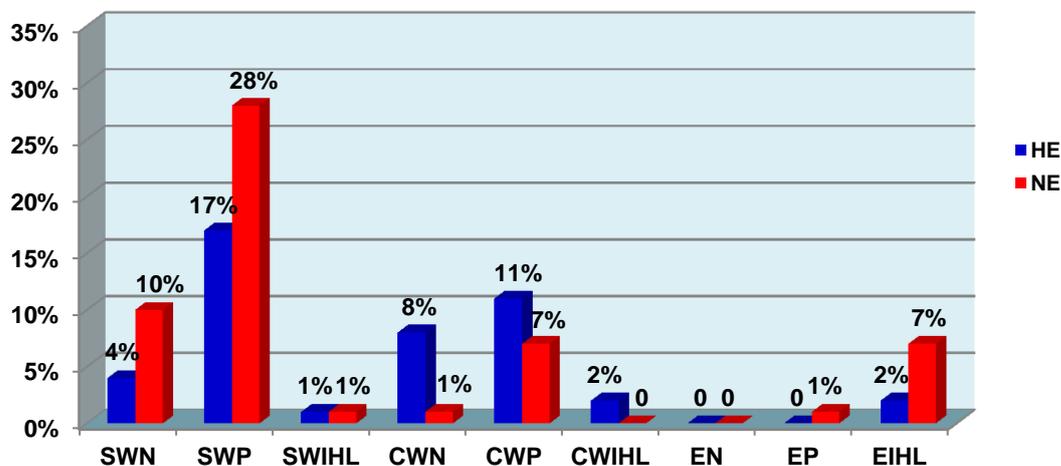


Figure 6.17: Responses of respondents by professional group and sphere of employment to the statement on involvement in policy development

6.3.1.6 Exploratory Factor Analysis on involvement in Youth work

The second EFA was conducted on the 6 item scale measuring involvement in Youth work. In this regard, the KMO measure of sampling adequacy was also calculated and Bartlett's Test was performed to assess feasibility of the factor analysis. All items

had a relatively high KMO measure of sampling adequacy (0.831) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 1796.256$, $df = 15$, $p < 0.001$) confirming that the factor analysis was appropriate.

There was only one factor with eigenvalue greater than 1 identified and it accounted for 63% of the variance. Therefore, with the exploratory analysis being most interpretable, the one factor solution was regarded as an adequate representation of the data. The identified factor was labelled, Involvement in Youth work.

The analysis to assess the internal consistency of items within the scale measuring the respondents’ involvement in Youth work is reported below in Table 6.7:

Table 6.7: Reliability analysis of items on the scale measuring involvement in Youth Work

Factor and Items/ Variables/ Statements	Factor loadings	Cronbach’s Alpha (α)
Factor: Involvement in Youth work		0.88
Teaching Youth work	0.836	
Collaboration with other professionals in the social service sector when teaching Youth work	0.826	
Policy development that promote Youth work	0.797	
Research on youth issues	0.786	
Collaboration with other professionals in the social service sector when rendering Youth work services	0.782	
Direct delivery of Youth work services	0.751	

Table 6.7 shows the factor loadings of individual items on the scale measuring the involvement of social service professionals in Youth work. The internal consistency for the scale measuring Involvement in Youth work was very high with Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.88$. The item-total correlations for the factor on Involvement in Youth work are displayed in the attached *Annexure K*. Even with this particular scale, the measurement properties were not established prior to this study. Therefore, the high Chronbach’s α confirmed reliability of this scale for the target population. It is also worth mentioning that rotation was not possible, since only one factor emerged.

A further analysis showed that all the items contained in this scale had the factor loadings above 0.75. This factor was saturated with items that referred to areas of involvement in Youth work, i.e., teaching Youth work; collaborating with other professionals in the social service sector when teaching Youth work; policy development to promote Youth work; research on youth issues; collaborating with other professionals in the social service sector when rendering Youth work services; and direct delivery of Youth work services.

6.3.1.7 Perceptions on the future status of Youth work

In this section, the researcher divided the questions regarding the future status of Youth work into four sub-sections. Firstly, the researcher conducted an investigation on the respondents' opinions regarding the classification of Youth work. The respondents were asked to select the category classifying Youth work by selecting one of the options provided.

Table 6.8 shows the five (5) options from which they were requested to make a choice:

Table 6.8: Classification of Youth work

Items	Frequencies	
	Percentage (%)	Number (N)
Area of Specialisation in Social Work and Child and youth care work	32	184
Area of Specialisation in Child and youth care work	22	130
Area of Specialisation in Social work	21	121
Occupation	17	100
Autonomous Profession	8	47
Total:	100	582

The message conveyed by data illustrated in Table 6.8 above is that, a total of 32% of the respondents classified Youth work as an area of specialisation for both Social work and Child and youth care work, 22% said it should be an area of specialisation for Child and youth care work, 21% indicated that it should be an area of

specialisation for Social work, 17% stated that it should remain as an occupation, and only 8% said it should be an autonomous profession.

The graphic presentation of the responses is displayed in Figure 6.18 below:

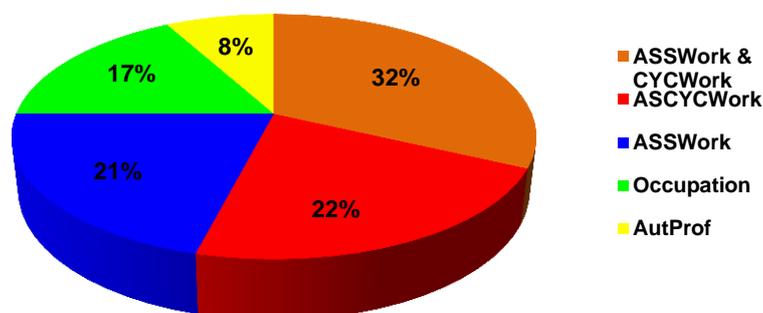


Figure 6.18: Classification of Youth work

A further analysis was also conducted by way of analysing the responses of various professional groups regarding classification of Youth work. In this regard, of those who said Youth work should be an area of specialisation for both Social work and Child and youth care work, 21% were Social workers, 8% were Child and youth care workers, and 3% were Educators. Of those who said it should be an area of specialisation for Child and youth care work, 10% were Social workers, 11% were Child and youth care workers, and 1% was Educators.

Additionally, of those who said it should be an area of specialisation for Social work, 17% were Social workers, 1% of the respondents were Child and youth care workers, and 3% were Educators. For those who stated that it should remain as an occupation, 9% were Social workers, 7% were Child and youth care workers and 1% was Educators. Finally, of those who said it should be an autonomous profession, 3% were Social workers, 4% were Child and youth care workers and 1% was Educators. The responses per professional group are graphically presented in Figure 6.19:

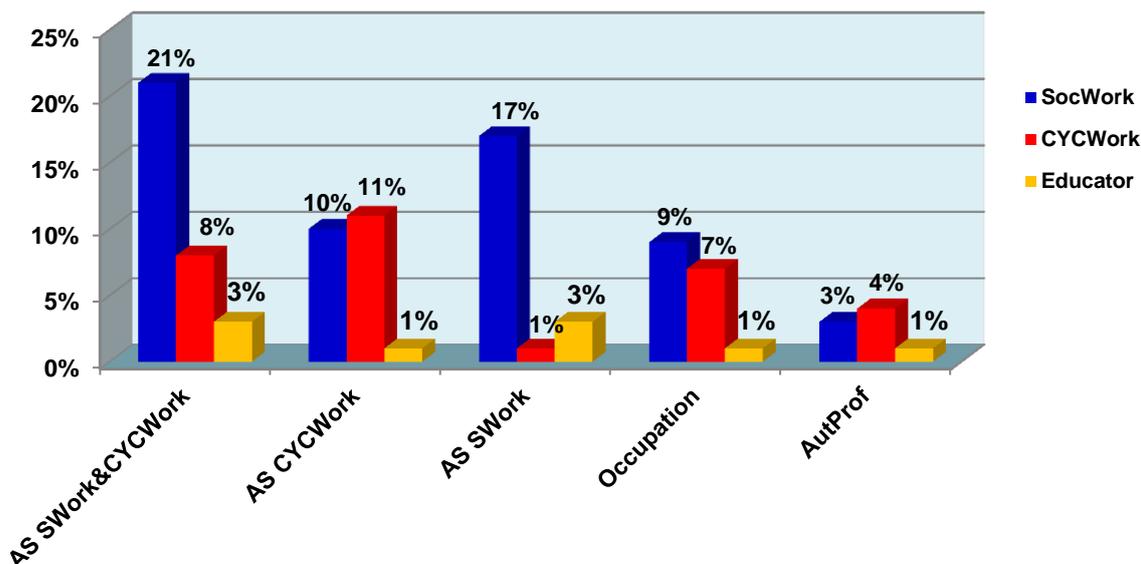


Figure 6.19: Classification of Youth work by professional group

The researcher then re-coded the responses into three categories, namely: an occupation, area of specialisation and an autonomous profession. The category classifying Youth work as an area of specialisation was reconceptualised by collapsing the first three classifications on the areas of specialisation specified in Table 6.10 into a new variable labelled, Area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work.

The results of the re-coded variables used to measure future classification of Youth work are shown in Figure 6.20 below:

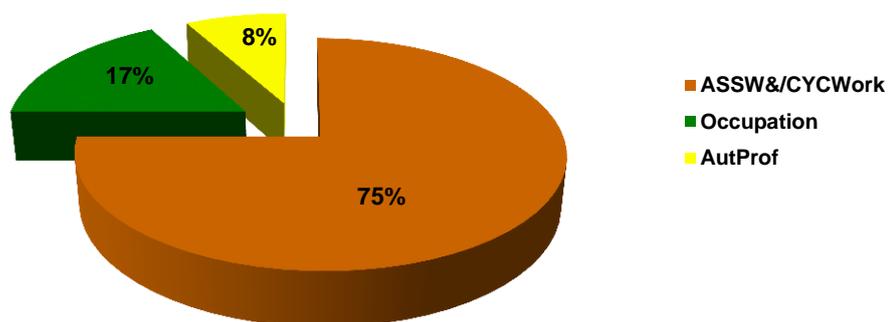


Figure 6.20: Re-coded values on classification of Youth work

The analysis of the responses of the re-coded combined values show that 75% of the respondents believed that Youth work should become an area of specialisation, followed by 17% who had the opinion that it should remain as an occupation and only 8% said it should become an autonomous profession. Of those who said Youth work should be an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work, 48% were Social workers, 20% were Child and youth care workers and 7% were Educators. Of those who said Youth work should be an occupation, 9% were Social workers, 7% were Child and youth care workers and 1% was constituted by Educators. On the other hand, of those saying that Youth work should be an autonomous profession, 3% were Social workers, followed by 4% of Child and youth care workers, and then 1% of Educators.

Figure 6.21 below displays the re-coded values on classification of Youth work by professional group:

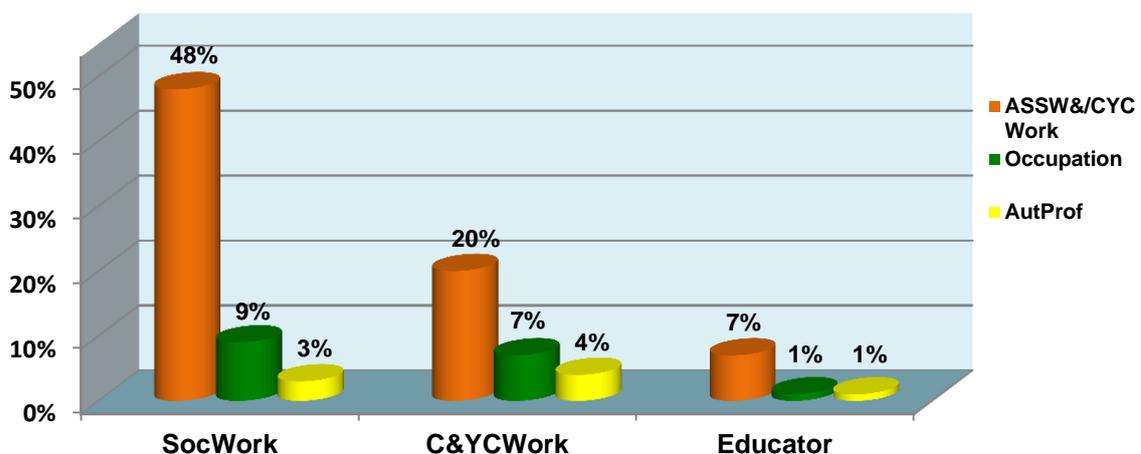


Figure 6.21: Re-coded values on classification of Youth work by professional group

In conclusion, it should be noted that all respondents who indicated that Youth work should remain as an occupation were asked to stop completing the measuring instrument, because it meant that the status quo will be retained. Those who said it should become an area of specialisation or a profession were asked to continue completing subsequent sections where further questions related to additional requirements of an area of specialisation or a profession were asked.

Secondly, the researcher enquired about the respondents' opinions on the statutory body that is supposed to recognise Youth work practice if it is recognised as an area of specialisation and/or a profession. The respondents were asked to select one option from a list of statutory bodies provided or to identify and specify any other additional option deemed appropriate. The respondents' responses on the statutory bodies deemed appropriate to recognise Youth work if it becomes an area of specialisation or a profession, are highlighted in Table 6.9 below:

Table 6.9: Statutory bodies that may recognise Youth work as a profession

Variables/ Items	Frequencies	
	Percentages (%)	Numbers (N)
South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP)	88	413
Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)	5	22
South African Law Society (SALS)	2	8
South African Nursing Council (SANC)	2	5
Own Regulatory body e.g. South African Council for Youth work practitioners	1	6
South African Council for Educators (SACE)	1	3
None	1	3
All predetermined bodies	0	2
Child and youth care professional council	0	2
Social work specialist council	0	1
Total:	100	465

An overwhelming majority of respondents (88%) indicated that the SACSSP is the statutory body which should recognise Youth work. This was followed by 5% of the respondents who saw HPCSA being the relevant body, and then an equal percentage of respondents (2%) who believed that Youth work should be recognised by SALS or SANC. Another equal percentage (1%) of the respondents cited a newly established regulatory body for Youth workers, which could be named the South African Council for Youth Work Practitioners or SACE as the relevant bodies. There was an insignificant less than 1% (rounded to 0 in Table 6.9 above) of the respondents who mentioned the yet to be established Child and Youth Care Professional Council, Social work specialist council, and all of the predetermined statutory bodies as their responses.

Thirdly, the researcher asked the respondents about their views on the minimum qualification requirements for practising Youth work. The respondents were asked to make a selection from the list of options provided. Table 6.10 shows the responses given in that regard:

Table 6.10: Minimum qualification requirements for practising Youth work

Items/ Variables	Frequencies	
	Percentages (%)	Numbers (N)
Undergraduate Degree	41	191
Undergraduate Diploma	24	111
Undergraduate Certificate	17	77
Post-graduate Degree	8	39
Post-graduate Diploma	6	26
Post-graduate Certificate	4	20
Total:	100	464

Of the 464 responses received, 41% of the respondents said an undergraduate degree is the appropriate minimum entry requirement, whereas 24% believed that an undergraduate diploma is the appropriate minimum requirement, 17% chose an undergraduate certificate as the appropriate requirement. A small percentage of respondents (8%) said that the minimum entry qualification for practising Youth work should be a post-graduate degree, followed by 6% of the respondents who selected a post-graduate diploma and then 4 % who said a post-graduate certificate should be the entry qualification.

The researcher then re-coded the levels of the minimum entry requirements for practicing Youth work into two categories, namely, degreed and non-degreed. The first category of degreed refers to qualifications equal to a degree and above, i.e., degree, post-graduate degree, post-graduate diploma and post-graduate certificate. The second category of non-degreed refers to qualifications below a degree level, i.e., undergraduate diploma and undergraduate certificate.

Figure 6.22 below shows a breakdown of qualification requirements in terms of the two recoded values:

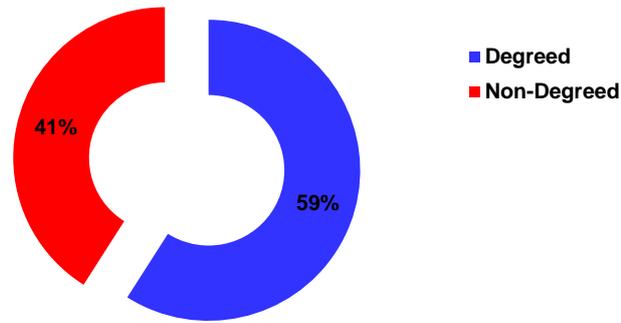


Figure 6.22: Re-coded categories displaying minimum required entry qualifications for practising Youth work

From Figure: 6.22 exhibited above, it is thus concluded that, 59% believed that the minimum qualification requirements must at least be a degree whilst 41% of the respondents were of the opinion that the minimum qualification requirements for Youth work must be below a degree level.

The breakdown of the re-coded values on minimum entry requirements for practicing Youth work by professional group show that of those who said a degree must be the minimum qualification, 37% were Social workers, 15% were Child and youth care workers, and 6% were Educators. On the other hand, of those who said qualifications below a degree should become minimum qualification, 23% were Social workers, 14% were Child and youth care workers, and 4% were Educators.

Figure: 6.23 below highlights the responses to a statement on minimum entry qualification for recoded values of degreed and non-degreed by professional group:

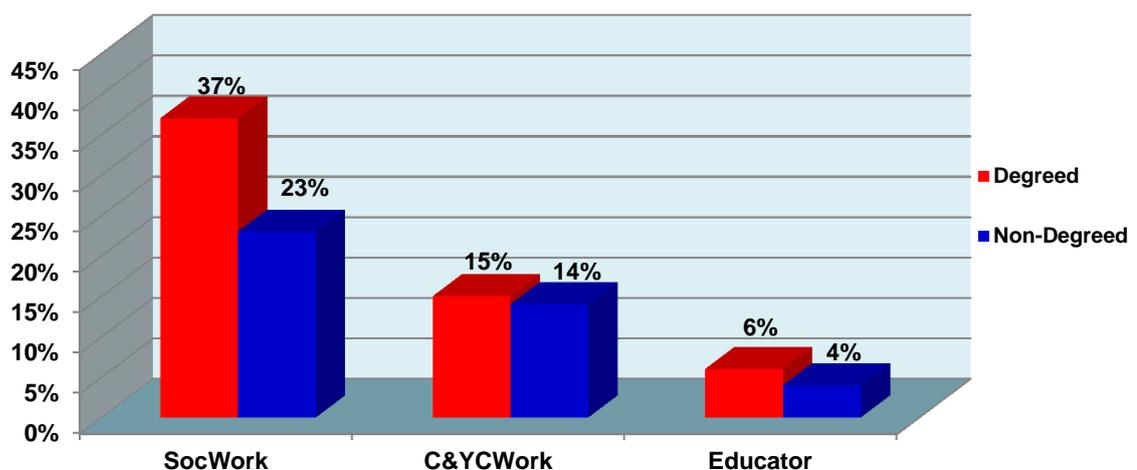


Figure: 6.23: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on minimum entry qualification for the coded values of degreed and non-degreed

Finally, the respondents were asked to complete a four point Likert rating scale with indices ranging from 1 (representing “*strongly agree*”) to 4 (representing “*strongly disagree*”). The items were used to measure the high and low benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession. The ratings of 1 and 2 which represented strongly disagree and disagree respectively, were combined into a new rating of 1 (representing “*disagree*”) and the ratings of 3 and 4 representing agree and strongly agree respectively, were combined into a new rating of 2 (representing “*agree*”). The high ranking of items was interpreted as high benefits and low ranking was interpreted as low benefits of recognising Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession.

Table 6.11 below contains the overall responses to each of the statements reflecting the respondents’ perceptions and opinions:

Table 6.11: Benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation or an autonomous profession

Items/ Variables/ Statements	Frequencies (%)		Modes	Means
	Agree	Disagree		
Increased involvement in development processes	95	5	4	3.559
Protect young people’s interests	95	5	4	3.532
Standardised Youth work education and training	96	4	4	3.525
Increased Youth work research activity	95	5	4	3.525
Regulated Youth work practice	96	4	4	3.508
Protect Youth work practitioners’ interests	96	4	4	3.451
Prioritisation of Youth work by policy makers	91	9	4	3.410
Greater sense of identity	92	8	3	3.369
Additional cadre of personnel	89	11	3	3.276
Dedicated financial resources	87	13	3	3.245
Reduced competition among service providers	82	18	4	3.211
Equal status with comparable professions	81	19	3	3.194
Reduced turnover of Youth workers	75	25	3	2.935

The responses to the statements measuring recognition of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession showed that an equal percentage (96%) of respondents believed that it will result in standardisation of Youth work education and training, regulated practice, and protection of Youth workers' interests. A slightly lower equal percentage (95%) of respondents said it will lead to increased involvement in development processes, protection of young people's interests, and increased research activity on youth issues. Additionally, 89% of respondents said it will lead to employment of Youth workers as an additional cadre of personnel and 87% said it will result in dedication of financial resources to Youth work practice. Almost equal percentages of respondents (81% and 82% respectively) said it will reduce competition among service providers rendering youth services and also lead to equal status with comparable professions. Finally, 75% of the respondents stated that it will lead to reduced turnover of Youth workers.

Of significance to note is that even though the majority of respondents (96%) mentioned that recognition of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession will result in standardisation of Youth work education and training, their ranking of this statement was lower with the mean of 3.525, compared to the higher rating of increased involvement in development processes and protection of young people's interests with the highest means of 3.559 and 3.532 respectively. Similarly, even though an equal majority of respondents (96%) said recognition of Youth work will lead to regulated practice and protection of Youth work practitioners' interests. The means for these variables were lower at 3.508 and 3.451 respectively.

On the other hand, an item on increased research activities on youth issues with a lower frequency of 95% ranked higher than regulated youth practice and protect Youth work practitioners' interests with higher frequencies of 96% each, because of its higher mean of 3.525 compared to the means for the two latter variables of 3.508 and 3.451 respectively. Finally, despite a lower frequency of 91%, prioritisation of Youth work by policy makers ranked higher than fostering a greater sense of identity, because the former had a higher mean of 3.410 whilst the latter had a lower mean of 3.369. It is interesting to note that, relative to other variables, recognition of Youth work was perceived to be least likely to help reduce high turn-over of Youth work practitioners, since only 75% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Out of

the 75% of the respondents, 47% were Social workers, 20% were Child and youth care workers and 8% were Educators. Figure 6.24 below displays responses to the statement regarding a high turnover of Youth work practitioners as the lowest benefit of Youth work as an area of specialisation and/or a profession:

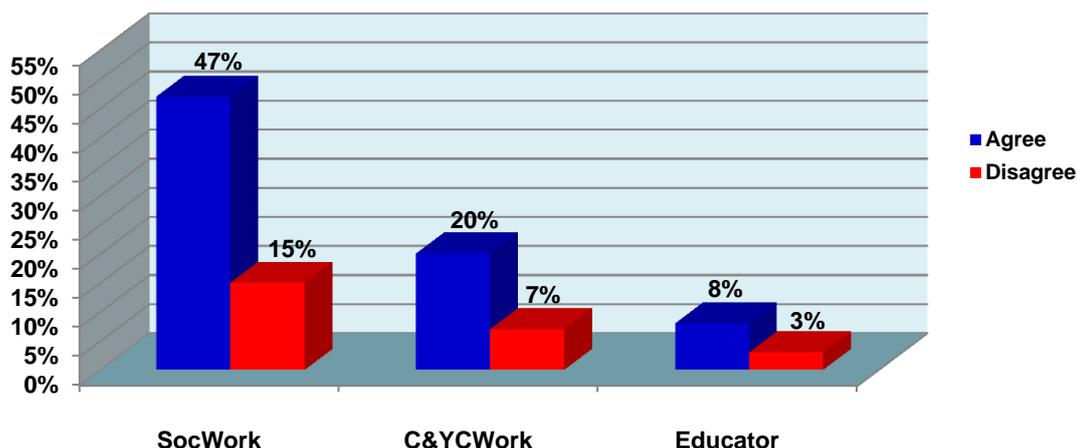


Figure 6.24: Responses of respondents by professional group to the statement on reducing the high turn-over of Youth work practitioners

A further analysis of the responses by various professional groups and the sphere of employment show that those agreeing that recognition of Youth work will help in reducing high turn-over of Youth work practitioners were constituted as follows: of the Social work group, 10% were at national level, 37% were at provincial level and 2% were at institutions of higher learning. Regarding the Child and youth care workers, 6% were at national level, 11% at provincial level and 2% at institutions of higher learning. There were, however, no responses from Educators at national and provincial levels, but there were 7% at institutions of higher learning. On the other hand, of those who disagreed with the statement, the Social work group had 5% at national level, 10% at provincial level and none at institutions of higher learning. Regarding the Child and youth care workers, 1% was at national level, 6% at provincial level and none at institutions of higher learning. Finally, there were no Educators at national and provincial levels, but 3% were at institutions of higher learning.

Figure 6.25 below shows the responses given to a statement indicating that recognition of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession will reduce a high turn-over of Youth work practitioners:

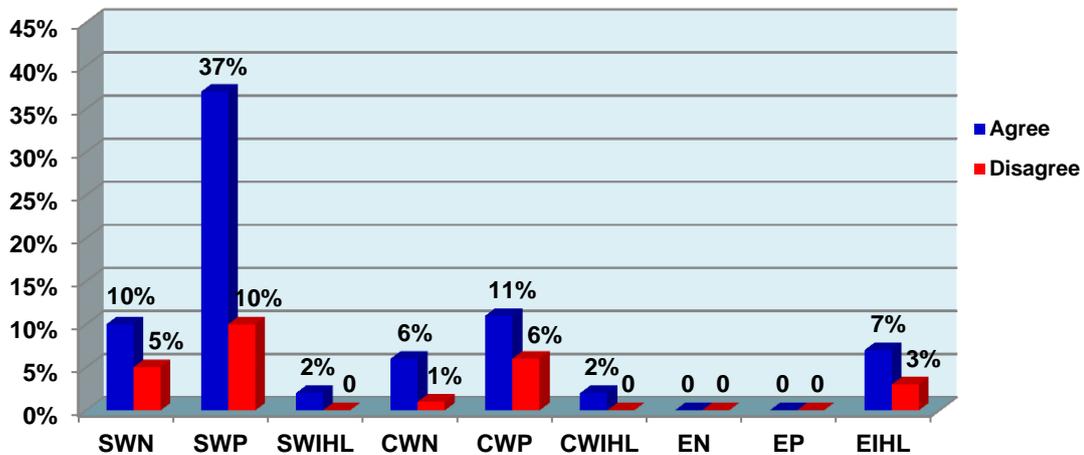


Figure 6.25: Responses of respondents by professional groups and sphere of employment to the statement on reducing the high turn-over of Youth work practitioners

Overall, it is also important to note that there were no respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with each of the statements specified in Table 6.12, because there was no modal score of either 1 or 2. A closer look at the modes for these measurements shows that they were bimodal, because the modes were 3 and 4. Given the fact that after recoding, 3 and 4 were merged into one category, it also showed that all respondents unanimously agreed with all the statements and that their responses tilted towards the strongly agree category.

6.3.1.8 Exploratory Factor Analysis on the benefits of recognising Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession

The third EFA was conducted on the 13 items measuring benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was calculated and Bartlett's test was also performed to assess the feasibility of the factor analysis. The very high KMO measure of sampling adequacy (0.90) and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 1783.47$, $df = 78$, $p < 0.000$) confirmed that the factor analysis was appropriate. The EFA using the eigenvalue criterion of eigenvalues greater than 1 yielded two factors. Factor 1 accounted for 39.52% of the variance and factor 2 accounting for a further 9.41%, combined explaining 49% of the

variance. Therefore, the two factor-solution yielded by the exploratory analysis was regarded as an adequate representation of the data.

Inspection of the two rotated factors resulted in factor 1 being labelled, Regulatory and quality promotion benefits and factor 2 being labelled, Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits. The outcomes of internal consistency tests of the items within the sub-scales measuring Regulatory and quality promotion benefits as well as Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits is reported next in Table 6.12:

Table 6.12: Reliability analysis of the items on a scale measuring the benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession

Factors/Items	Loadings of Factor 1	Loadings of Factor 2	Chronbach' Alpha (α)
Factor 1: Regulatory and quality promotion benefits			0.85
Protect youth' interests	0.890		
Regulated youth work practice	0.838		
Standardised youth work education and training	0.830		
Protect youth practitioners' interests	0.778		
Increased youth work research activity	0.613		
Prioritisation of youth work by policy makers	0.600		
Equal status with comparable professions	0.507		
Increased involvement in development processes	0.354		
Reduced competition among service providers	0.348		
Factor 2: Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits			0.62
Reduced high turnover of youth work practitioners		0.846	
Dedicated financial resources		0.629	
Greater sense of identity		0.611	
Additional cadre of personnel		0.599	

The internal consistency for the identified factors show that factor 1 (i.e. Regulatory and quality promotion benefits) had a high Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 ($\alpha = 0.85$) and factor 2 (i.e., Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits) had moderate Cronbach's alpha of 0.62 ($\alpha = 0.62$). Even though the measurement properties of these sub-scales were not established prior to this study, the high Chronbach's alpha for the sub-scale on Regulatory and quality promotion benefits confirms reliability of the scale for the target population, whereas the moderate Chronbach's alpha for the sub-scale on Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits confirms moderate reliability of the scale for the target population. The item-total correlations for factor 1 (i.e., Regulatory and quality promotion benefits) and factor 2 (i.e., Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits) are displayed and attached as *Annexures L and M* respectively.

A further analysis showed that the first factor (i.e., Regulatory and quality promotion benefits) contained nine items. Seven of those items have factor loadings above 0.50 whilst the other two items have the loadings above 0.30. The factor loadings above 0.50 implied strong correlation whereas the loadings below 0.30 implied weak correlation. This factor was mostly saturated with items referring to regulation and quality promotion of Youth work namely, protecting the youth' interests; regulating Youth work practice; standardising Youth work education and training; protecting youth practitioners' interests; increasing Youth work research activity; prioritisation of Youth work by policy makers; leading to equal status with comparable professions; increasing involvement of youth in development processes; and reducing competition among service providers.

On the other hand, analysis of the second factor (i.e., Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits) contained four items with factor loadings above 0.55. The correlation between these items was strong. This factor was mostly saturated with items that referred to creation of capacity as well as cohesion building and those items were: reducing a high turnover of Youth work practitioners; dedicating financial resources; fostering greater sense of identity; and leading to employment of additional cadre of personnel.

6.3.1.9 Descriptive statistics

Having conducted factor analysis, the researcher was interested in descriptive statistics illustrating the means and the modes of the identified factors.

Table 6.13 below displays data in that regard:

Table 6.13: The frequencies, means and modes of factors measuring the perspectives of social service professionals in South Africa on the emergence of Youth work

Factors	Frequencies (N)	Means	Modes
Social development contributory factor	591	3.623	4
Regulatory and quality promotion benefits factor	467	3.433	4
Capacity creation and cohesion building benefits factor	464	3.195	4
Human resources and diversion contributory factor	590	2.875	4
Involvement in Youth work factor	587	2.703	4

A quick glance at the data represented in Table 6.13 reveals that the mean score for the variables within the measure of social development contributory factor was the highest at 3.62; followed by the mean score for the measure of regulatory and quality promotion benefits at 3.43; and then the measure of capacity creation and cohesion building benefits at 3.19. Additionally, the two last factors had relatively low mean scores, i.e., Human resources and diversion contributory factor with the mean score of 2.875 and Involvement in Youth work factor with the mean score of 2.703.

Of further interest is the fact that all identified factors had the modal score of 4.

6.3.2 Discussion of quantitative results

The quantitative results showed that female respondents were in majority as compared to male respondents. This could be attributable to the fact that Social work and Child and youth care work are categorised under helping and caring professions which were traditionally performed by female workers. The same trend was also observed and confirmed by qualitative results which showed similar gender dispersion with female focus group participants being the dominant group.

Unlike the qualitative sample which consisted of all social service professions, i.e., those recognised and not yet recognised, the quantitative sample only had Social workers and Child and youth care workers. Like the qualitative sample, the quantitative sample group was also dominated by Social workers who represented 60% of the total sample. This meant that the findings of this study were more biased towards Social workers than any other sample group. The dominance of Social workers could also be related to the fact that Social work is one of the first recognised social service professions and it was, therefore, more feasible to study this group than any other, since they are organised and registered with the SACSSP. Therefore, the researcher exercised caution and only generalised the findings within and not across different professional groups.

The concentration of the majority (64%) of social service professionals at provincial level was due to the fact that service delivery which benefits most people directly happens at provincial level, hence the high concentration of personnel, whereas indirect services such as policy making, research and teaching are national competencies with lesser personnel. It was on that basis that the latter group of respondents at national level only constituted 23% of the total sample and institutions of higher learning had 13% of the sample. This finding resonated well with the nature of functions rendered by different spheres of government in South Africa.

On contributory factors, this study made it clear that evolution of Youth work practice is more heavily influenced by Social development contributory factors than Human resources and diversion contributory factor, thus confirming evidence from other studies suggesting the primary sphere of intervention in addressing young people's problems being the social context (Sercombe, 2010:27, 88). The need for social development of young people should therefore be seen as a response to conditions that make the youth vulnerable to conditions such as changes in family structures, changing role of socialization agents like churches, and lack of response by the state in addressing problems (Mauders, 2006:48). Therefore, Youth work evolved primarily in response to the social problems encountered by the youth (Charles, 2006:8; Jack, 2006:80; Sercombe, 2010:24) not due to human resources needs and the need to divert the attention of youth.

It is also worth noting that whereas political situations such as Apartheid and industrial revolution as suggested by the qualitative part of this study and several studies across the globe also contributed to emergence of Youth work, it is the social problems experienced as a consequence of all these which necessitated the emergence of Youth work (Carter, 2010; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:5; Richter et al., 2005 in African Union Commission & United Nations Population Fund Agency, 2011:39; Sercombe, 2010:21). On that basis, various service providers in the youth development space should first and foremost address young people's concerns and aspirations within their social contexts by applying a combination of social theories discussed in Chapter 2 as well as others relevant ones not discussed in this study.

There is undisputed evidence gathered on the current status of Youth work and a review of most studies showing that Youth work has the youth as the primary targeted clients (Sercombe, 2010:26). This sentiment was also reflected during the qualitative investigation where an explanation was made that other social service professionals target young people as part of their clientele population, but not primarily so. It implies that young people are not the only target group served by other social service professionals, but are the only target group for Youth workers. This is consistent with the review of literature where an observation has been made regarding service providers who proactively engage in a relationship with a young person as their primary client and not in response to their problems (Sercombe, 2010:16; Sercombe, 2004:12; Spence, 2004:265).

However, despite Youth workers' monopoly over young people as their client system, there was overwhelming quantitative evidence suggesting that youth development is the responsibility of a multi-disciplinary team. This was corroborated by qualitative evidence which also emphasised the contribution of different professionals in delivering youth service. Theoretically, this finding is linked to the social systems theory which identifies the impact of various systems on young people. By involving multidisciplinary team, the youth will be afforded an opportunity to utilise various support systems around him or her which include the family, different professional agencies, and other institutions of socialization (Gilbert & Specht, 1981:410). As an advantage, this study already revealed that there is little competition between

professionals in delivery of Youth work services. The fact that social service professionals collaborate rather than compete with each other when rendering youth services is also a reflection of a professional approach to service delivery (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:19).

However, as cautioned by Sercombe (2004:66), even though teamwork is important, it must not be done at the expense of professionally marginalising Youth workers. Therefore, one of the challenges which ought to be addressed to avoid marginalising Youth workers, would be to ensure that the working conditions of Youth workers including the incentives, are comparable to those of other team members (Krueger, 1987:452; Krueger, 1988:14; Spence, 2004:267). Qualitative evidence suggested that there is currently lack of comparable working conditions whilst quantitative evidence confirmed that recognising Youth work as a profession or an area of specialisation will lead to equal status with comparable professions.

Further evidence produced through this study acknowledged that Youth workers are sufficiently skilled to provide services to young people compared to Social workers and Child and youth care workers. This finding is important, given that one of the approaches to youth development includes recognition of Youth workers as knowledgeable partners rather than mere experts in their work with young people (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:19). This fact repositions Youth workers as important partners in youth development space and further confirms their role as coordinators or case managers charged with the responsibility of synchronising, harmonising and integrating services rendered by different professionals to the youth. This coordinating role has clearly been supported by qualitative evidence from this study where focus group participants mentioned the need for a Youth worker to play the role of a coordinator and team leader. This was also confirmed by a review of literature where the need to monitor or track progress on a wide range of youth development programmes and projects was emphasised (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:15; Sercombe, 2010:83; The Presidency, 2009b:32).

On the contrary, this evidence was not supported by the review of literature, because according to the study conducted by the South African Youth Workers Association (2001:14), one of the reasons Youth work is not taken seriously as a career or a

profession in South Africa is due to large numbers of unqualified and unskilled workers dominating this field. On that basis, other studies emphasised the importance of formal education and training of Youth workers as well as other service providers in the life space of the youth as a means to create required capacity to enable them to render services to the youth efficiently and effectively (Beker, 2001b:364; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:16, 19). By so doing, there could be an enabling environment for team work.

This study further showed that even though social service professionals are somewhat involved in youth development, their involvement is predominantly in collaborating with other professionals in rendering youth services and in direct service delivery. Other indirect services such as policy development appear not to be receiving enough attention. This is a concern especially since a review of literature showed that Youth workers have a role to play in both direct and indirect service provision with the latter including developing and influencing policies that affect young people (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:20). It is therefore of serious concern that social service professionals are not involved enough in policy making, especially given that the interventions used by proponents of the advocacy theory stressed the importance of the service providers being that of a compass that would help direct youth to gain control of their lives by creating opportunities for them, empowering them, advocating for responsive systems, and helping them to become socially responsible persons (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001b:13). Social service professionals would be in a better position of playing an advocacy role if they are involved in policy making.

The lack of social service professionals' involvement in policy development is again made worse by the finding from this study showing that there are only few Youth workers who are employed by the government and that many are in the employ of non-government organisations. This finding was confirmed by Maunders (2003:9) and South African Youth Workers Association (2001:17) where it is mentioned that most Youth workers in the employ of non-government sector are predominantly volunteers and activists. It therefore implies that social service professionals and Youth workers alike are not involved in policy making.

It was also interesting to note that in relation to all other identified factors of this study, involvement in Youth work was the lowest ranked factor. This finding further strengthens more, the case to have collaboration between service providers in non-government sector, business sector and organisational development agencies in rendering youth development services, thus according youth development even greater priority (Charles, 2006:52; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:17).

Additional convincing quantitative evidence gathered from this study on the future status of youth indicates that Youth work should be considered an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work. This finding is supported by earlier qualitative evidence obtained through this study and other studies that have established youth development as a cross cutting issue which requires attention of a multi-disciplinary team and is already practised by professionals such as Social workers, Teachers, Nurses, Child and youth care workers (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:19; Department of Social Development, 2007:56). In support of specialisation, a conclusion can therefore be reached that social service professionals as well as other professionals involved in rendering youth development services would benefit a great deal if Youth work is considered as an area of specialisation since they will be provided with “career path opportunities” as explained by qualitative evidence. Specialisation would also lead to provision of specialised services and afford social service professionals an opportunity to acquire additional knowledge and skills to discharge their youth development mandate skilfully.

Finally, specialisation also implies an opportunity to stimulate growth and development of Youth work as a field of practice. This could be seen as an acceptance by social service professionals to want to focus on Youth work as a special branch of their work - a move to embrace Youth work as one of their core functions. This finding may possibly be interpreted negatively as lack of support by social service professionals for Youth work as an autonomous profession, a symptom of possible tensions and/or power struggle between professional groups largely caused by “*protection of own turf*”, a human phenomenon which causes resistance (Airhihenbuwa, 2007 in Department of Social Development, 2007:12, 68). In this

regard, professionalisation could guarantee some control over the field of practice whilst specialisation could be perceived as loss of control. However, in this study, this claim has been refuted by an overwhelming support and overall positive ranking of the benefits for Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession.

On the option of having Youth work as an occupation, there was no backing from the qualitative part of the study yet this option was supported by a relatively small percentage of the quantitative part of this study. The lack of support for Youth work to remain as an occupation was supported in recent research conducted by Makofane (Department of Social Development, 2007:57).

The last option called for the classification of Youth work as a profession. Although qualitative evidence supported recognition of Youth work as a profession, quantitative evidence revealed minimal support in this regard. Even though extensive review of most studies showed consistency with the qualitative part of this study in supporting Youth work as a profession (Department of Social Development, 2007:56-57; Hahn & Raley; 1998:393; Maunders, 2006:24; Sercombe: 2010:7), the key reason advanced by those who are in support of professionalisation is that attention ought to be given to professional development of those working with the youth in order to accord them equal status with other comparable professionals in a team and thereby ensuring successful team work. The support for specialisation as shown in this study would in fact accord those specialising in the field, a status of experts compared to generalist practitioners.

The fact that majority of respondents said the SACSSP should be a regulatory body for Youth work can possibly be linked to the respondents' professional groups since all of the respondents are currently recognised as the social service professions by the SACSSP. It can also possibly be related to the choice of area of specialisation as future classification of Youth work, because if Youth work is to become an area of specialisation it should be recognised and regulated by the same body of which the existing profession is a member. Of interest, even though insignificant, is that there were responses suggesting establishment of a new regulatory body for Youth work.

Concerning the minimum entry requirements for practicing Youth work, both quantitative and qualitative evidence of this study suggested a degree as the minimum entry requirement for practicing Youth work. Further recoded values suggested that the entry points for practicing Youth work could be at a degree or non-degree levels. The finding, which suggests that undergraduate qualifications be considered as the minimum requirement for practicing Youth work does not seem to be supported by earlier evidence which purported Youth work being an area of specialisation. In this regard, only few respondents (17%) suggested post graduate qualifications as minimum entry requirements for practising Youth work. This does not correspond with the high proportion of responses (75%) received regarding Youth work becoming an area of specialisation.

However, in terms of the SAQA Act No. 58 of 1995 as well as the NQF Act No. 67 of 2008, it is possible that, if Youth work is recognised as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work, its educational structure could be such that it is offered at post-graduate qualification level (South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:14; South African Qualification Authority, 2009a; South African Qualification Authority, 2009b). However, the importance of having appropriate qualifications to practice will result in a “*professional Youth work force*” as highlighted by Shah (2007:61-62). This is essential in ensuring that Youth workers discharge their mandate skilfully and society has confidence in their ability to render services effectively. The value of education and training of Youth workers is given prominence as one of the strategic areas of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and there is diploma which is offered by many member states (Christian, 2007:93; Maunders, 2006:31).

Finally, analysis of the benefits showed that there was generally strong consensus among respondents of having Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession. The benefits which are regulatory and quality promoting ranked relatively higher than capacity building and cohesion building that ranked low. It showed commitment to young people as service recipients or clients and the need to render effective services. The implication produced by this evidence illustrates that the debate on the future status of Youth work should primarily be guided and directed

first and foremost by – the commitment to pursue what is in the best interest of the youth.

Therefore, as with the profession, the foundation upon which the pursuit for Youth work as an area of specialisation is made should primarily rest on commitment to improve the quality of life for the young person (Beker, 2001b:365; Charles, 2006:31; South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:17, 37; Sercombe, 2004:73).

6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The empirical findings provided essential information on the evolution of Youth work practice in the South African context by specifying the contributory factors, nature and scope of Youth work activities, the extent of social service professionals' involvement in Youth work and their opinions on the future status of Youth work.

The evidence gathered through this study revealed that Social development contributory factors have contributed more to the emergence of Youth work rather than Human resources and diversion contributory factors. Further explaining the influence of Social development contributory factors, a focus group participant in Northern Cape explained that "*the family of the young person must also be involved, so that they also understand the route that's going to be taken by the specific young person.*" It is also undisputed that in as much as Youth work practice primarily targets the youth as its clientele population, it must equally be seen as a practice which takes into account the impact of various factors affecting the youth.

Furthermore, the finding on collaboration between various professionals was positive, given that the other related evidence suggested that there was little competition between professionals despite their overlapping roles and functions. If implemented, team approach could lead to effective quality programmes and services as well as greater satisfaction and commitment among workers (Botha, 1995:205; Krueger, 1990:123).

Overwhelming evidence on the future status of Youth work, suggested that Youth work should become an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work. This assertion was made despite contrary evidence showing that Youth

workers are more skilled in rendering services to young people compared to Child and youth care workers and Social workers. This divergent interpretation was also reflected in the qualitative evidence where focus group members highlighted the need to have Youth work as an area of specialisation, but equally expressed strong views on having it recognised as an autonomous profession.

In light of developments towards professionalisation of Youth work, although not supported by the quantitative findings of this study, the move to have Youth recognised as a profession should be considered by future researchers through exploring the reasons for or against this option. This is necessary, given South Africa's two pronged approach to youth development with specialisation fully supporting the mainstreaming wing and professionalisation as an option that could possibly support the other wing of dedicated service provision.

The unanimous positive ranking of benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession is indicative of the benefits far outweighing non-benefits. This fact cannot be discounted because it was also explained by qualitative evidence where focus group members found it difficult to identify and mention non-benefits, even after the researcher repeatedly asked them to so.

Finally, the modal score of 4 on all factors illustrates strong and general consensus on views held regarding the emergence of Youth work practice in South Africa.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise empirical findings and make major conclusions based on the review of literature and empirical evidence. The conclusions are geared towards ascertaining achievement of the research goal of this study, namely: to explore and describe the perspectives of South Africa's social service professionals to the emergence of Youth work practice as well as its future status. To achieve this goal and gain more insight into the problem, the researcher conducted a mixed methods research study which mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches, methods and procedures in sequence (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen, 2008:114; Bergman, 2008:53; Delpont & Fouché, 2011:434; Flick, 2008:42; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:255; Singh, 2007:63). The aim was explore and describe the research problem by obtaining information on the ideas, perceptions, feelings, attitudes, knowledge, and experiences that the research participants have on the research topic.

In conclusion, the researcher deemed it crucial to conduct an evaluation of the extent to which utilisation of the above stated methods assisted in answering the identified core research questions that were highlighted in Chapters 1 and 5.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS

In evaluating the extent to which the research goal has been met, the researcher checked how research questions have been answered. The researcher also highlights how the answers to those questions helped in attainment of the research objectives.

- The first question explored **the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work in South Africa**. By answering this question, the researcher

provided background and historical analysis of how Youth work practice emerged in South Africa. This contributed to achievement of the first objective of this study, namely: **identifying, exploring, and analysing the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work.** The question on how Youth work evolved in South Africa was answered through revision of literature on the history of Youth work at national, regional and global context as well as the history of Youth work. The empirical investigation only focused on providing evidence at national level since the unit of analysis was South Africa.

The evidence gathered on the factors that contributed to the emergence of Youth work showed that the underlying contributory factors fall in two categories, namely: Social development contributory factor and Human resources and diversion contributory factor. Individually or combined, the Social development contributory factors contributed more to emergence of Youth work. This evidence refutes what has been mentioned in Chapter 3 of this study that the emergence of Youth work is chiefly due to political and economic climate. Instead, it seems to be a response to social problems that are caused by various circumstances including political ones.

In view of this empirical evidence, the researcher concludes that whereas a holistic approach that looks at young people in their social, economic, political, spiritual, and psychological contexts is important (The Presidency, 2009b:31; Merton & Payne, 2000:8-9), it is within the social context that Youth workers should engage young people as their primary clients (Foster, 2000 in Maunders, 2003:10; Sercombe, 2010:27, 88). This has implications for theoretical framework guiding youth development and Youth work, because in line with the assertion by Sercombe (2010:26), it means that the Youth worker-youth relationship is supposed to take place within the social context. Therefore, even though most theories are underpinned by an understanding of the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts within which young people live and operate (Broadbent & Corney, 2008:15; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2001a:4; Krauss & Suandi, 2008:12), the primary focus should be on translating that understanding towards resolution of young people's social problems.

- The second question assessed **the current status of Youth work in South Africa**. The aim of this question was to attain the second objective of **exploring the current scope and nature of Youth work services in South Africa**. In this regard, there was overwhelming quantitative and qualitative evidence that regarded young people as the primary client of a Youth worker. There was at the same time recognition of youth development as a cross cutting responsibility, that warrants intervention of a professional team. The implication of these findings is that, for other professionals who are rendering services to the youth, there would be a need to focus primarily on young people as the primary client. Although Youth workers primarily focus on young people as their primary client, it is not the case for professionals in other sectors. Therefore, evidence produced by this study on the respondents' opinion about Youth work being classified an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and Youth work is an opportunity for social service professionals and probably other professionals to make youth their primary client group. This evidence could be used as a benchmark by professionals in other sectors.

Furthermore, even though the contribution of Youth work to the development of young people is felt, it is important to also note the significance of the contributions of other professionals (Beker, 2001b:365). The fact that this study showed that social service professionals work collaboratively with other professionals in rendering services to the youth, would enable them to discuss and vent their feelings, encourage and support one another, maximise resource utilisation, improve coordination, maximise impact, promote accountability and give each other constant feedback in order to promote progress and positive learning experience for everyone involved (Anglin et al., 1990:127). This, according to Krueger (1990:76), could further assist different service providers to know and understand each other's area of expertise, enable them to constantly strive to place themselves in each other's shoes, minimise professional competition, maximise direct service as well as human resources exchange, and help them to successfully achieve more as a team than individual service providers could do alone, particularly because "*...young people need more than Youth workers*" (Sercombe, 2010:82).

- The third question investigated **the extent of involvement of South Africa's social service professionals in Youth work**. This question was asked to **gain an understanding of the current status of Youth work**. It assisted in achievement of the second objective, while setting the tone for the fourth one. The assumption made was that social service professionals are somewhat involved in provision of services to the youth. The quantitative evidence gathered backed this assumption and validated the need to respond to this question. The findings confirmed that social service professionals are involved in Youth work, particularly in collaborating with other professionals.
- It was further found that they are involved, more in direct service delivery than in indirect service delivery with specific evidence pointing poor involvement policy making. In relation to the advocacy theory that emphasises the role of service providers as being that of speaking and acting on behalf of the youth, non-involvement of social service professionals in policy making means that there would be no voice for the youth in policy making structures. This could further disadvantage the youth, hamper the ability to speak on behalf of them, and could also lead to futile mainstreaming efforts.
- The fourth question checked **the perspectives of South Africa's social service professionals regarding the future status of Youth work**. This question contributed towards attainment of objective 3, since it **determined whether Youth work should remain as an occupation, or recognised as a professional area of specialisation or an autonomous professional field of practice**. The researcher channelled the respondents towards focusing on these options, because of the on-going debate on professionalising Youth work and the need for evidence to guide policy direction in that regard.

In the qualitative part of the study, the evidence gathered was in support of Youth work as an area of specialisation, and also as a profession. The issue of Youth work remaining as an occupation did not arise. However, the quantitative findings showed overwhelming support (75%) for Youth work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work and limited support (8%) for Youth work as an autonomous profession.

In view of the quantitative findings that supported multi-disciplinary approach to youth development, whilst indicating that Youth workers are more skilled than the Social workers and Child and youth care workers in rendering services to the youth, the researcher concludes that social service professionals supports the option of Youth Work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the support for Youth work as an area of specialisation could positively be regarded as acceptance by social service professionals to focus on youth development as a special branch of their work and could also be seen as an acknowledgement that there is a need for specialised education and training in youth development to ensure quality service provision.

The evidence above validates the mainstreaming approach to youth development (Anglin et al., 1990:127; The Presidency, 2009b:33). Critically, the researcher concludes that, even though there was limited support for Youth work as a profession in the quantitative phase, qualitative evidence supporting this option should not be ignored especially given the fact that the findings of this study can only be generalised to social service professionals.

Other questions linked to specialisation and professionalisation related to a body responsible for recognition of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession. Whereas many respondents chose the SACSSP as the possible professional body, a small percentage of responses indicated the need for new regulatory body to be established for that purpose. Selection of the SACSSP is favourable for Youth work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and Youth work.

The other significant finding was on minimum entry requirement for Youth work. The responses show indicates the possibility of multiple entry points for Youth work qualification. The choice of a degree as minimum entry requirement (41%) supports the option of having Youth work as a profession, the choice of a qualification below the degree (41%) supports the Para professional route, and the choice of a post-graduate qualification (18%) supports the specialisation route. These responses are not consistent with the future classification of Youth work as an area of specialisation. The former two

responses could be an indication that the possibility of having Youth work as a profession could still be explored with the options of a profession and Para professional levels. This scenario is comparable to existing qualification levels of social service professions. However, in line with the findings of this study, efforts should be on introducing qualifications that supports the specialisation route. This would mean that the required minimum entry point for Youth work practice should be at post graduate level.

- The last question considered **the benefits of having Youth work as an autonomous profession and/or an area of specialisation**. This question was asked to contribute to achievement of objective 4 of **examining the benefits of Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession**. The high positive rating of responses is equated to high benefits whilst the low rating of responses equates to low benefits. It is essential to note that in line with qualitative evidence obtained from the focus group participants citing the absence of non-benefits for recognising Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession, quantitative evidence also supported this assertion, because all statements were ranked higher (above 70%), with most of the respondents strongly agreeing with the statements. It can thus be concluded that the benefits of having Youth work as an area of specialisation or a profession are high and therefore evidence suggesting retaining Youth work as an occupation should be refuted.

Overall, the researcher concludes that the findings truly reflect the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of social service professionals towards the emergence of Youth work.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

After analysing empirical evidence gathered, and in view of the implications of this study, the researcher makes the following specific recommendations:

- In addressing the needs of young people, service providers should realise that the primary sphere of intervention is the social context.

- ❑ Even though Youth work is considered as the only practice that focuses exclusively on young people, emphasis of the role of a multi-disciplinary team in provision of youth services should not be ignored, especially in view of the cross cutting nature of youth development.
- ❑ Collaboration amongst various service providers in government, non-government, and business sectors ought to be fostered and existing efforts should be applauded.
- ❑ The roles and responsibilities of Youth workers should be clarified, so that other multidisciplinary team members can understand how to relate them and to create awareness to the public.
- ❑ In multidisciplinary settings, Youth workers should assume the leadership role and be responsible for coordination of youth development services, to ensure that the youth ultimately receive a coordinated package of service. As coordinators, the Youth workers could play the role of a team leader.
- ❑ For successful teamwork to happen, there is a need for capacity in the form of personnel, skills, expertise and finances to be created and/or strengthened to enable the sectors involved to discharge effectively on their common youth development mandate.
- ❑ Given evidence produced by this study that most Youth workers are in the employ of non-government sector, predominantly as volunteers and activists, there should be concerted effort towards employing them in the public sector on a full-time basis. This would facilitate the mainstreaming of youth development and provide leadership in conceptualisation of policies and programmes.
- ❑ Advancement of youth development should be through translating political commitment to administrative actions including employment of Youth workers in government across all spheres (i.e., at national, provincial, local and district levels).

- The national Department of Social Development and the SACSSP in the context of reviewing the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978, should consider Youth work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work.
- The support for Youth work as an area of specialisation for Social work and/or Child and youth care work should be regarded as an opportunity by the social service professionals to acquire education and training, thus strengthening their capacity to deliver services to the youth effectively.
- The working conditions of those specialising in Youth work should be made to be attractive, competitive and comparable to other areas of specialisation in Social work and/or Child and youth care work by offering competitive and comparable incentives, preventing Youth workers from being looked down upon in multi-disciplinary teams, according them equal status, ensuring clarity and parity in roles, preventing high turnover of personnel, and recruiting people to study and select Youth work as an area of specialisation.
- The minimum entry requirements for practicing Youth work as an area of specialisation should be at post-graduate level.
- Future researchers should explore having Youth work as an area of specialisation for more helping professions in order to ensure horizontal integration of youth development in various domains.
- The findings of this study should not be generalised to other populations, in particular to service providers not yet recognised as social service professionals and other helping professionals involved in youth development space. They could be used as benchmark.
- There is also a need for future researchers to conduct a complementary study to explore the views of Youth workers on the same research phenomenon, because they are directly implicated.

- Measurement in this study deserve attention, because whereas the use of sub-scales with multiple items confirmed the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument, there were areas where some items did not belong to a particular sub-scale. It is recommended that future researchers load additional items on the sub-scales with few items (i.e., 1-2 items). This would ensure that the sub scales cover the content appropriately and achieve the required degree of internal consistency as argued by Huysamen (1990) in Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:147).
- Future research should concentrate on scale development as the area of focus for their research.
- Measuring the impact of Youth work practice as a youth development intervention should be considered as a possible area for research in the long term. That would require recruitment, involvement, and participation of young people and Youth workers as part of the research subjects. Based on such information, this field of practice could be strengthened and its benefit to the youth could also be increased.
- Youth workers need to be more involved and become the primary advocates for their own field of practice through creating awareness of the knowledge about their practice amongst comparable professions and society at large through taking charge of processes related to their work.

7.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Youth work practice emerged when there is an increase of the youth population in South Africa and the need to address their problems in preparing them as future leaders. Although the South African government has made strides through policy development and establishment of appropriate institutions for youth development, there is a need to have skilled human resources to drive effective implementation of interventions. This research attempted to underscore the centrality of Youth work as a means to build required capacity to providers of youth development services, whilst in that regard. It has generated new knowledge, much of which has practical implications that would truly benefit humanity (Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:406). Evidence

produced include confirming that the stance adopted by the researcher earlier in Chapter 2, of the need to understand development of young people and interventions of Youth workers from a holistic and interdependent view rather than from a segmented approach (Chauhan, 2001:49; Park, 2004:50; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009:408).

As South Africa joins the rest of the world and embarks on the journey that intensifies interventions that seek to develop young people, it is important for policy makers to focus on strengthening interventions that would bring long-lasting effects. Youth work as an intervention should be given space to respond to the mounting challenges facing young people. This practice has proven to have the potential of making a significant contribution to the lives of young people (Spence, 2004:270). The finding suggesting that Youth work should become an area of specialisation, should be used to help enrich discussions and future policy direction. Therefore, as Youth work continues to evolve, so will all opportunities, challenges, and obstacles that accompany evolution of a new discipline, and thus it has to seek its identity as a youth centred practice (Beker, 2001b:365, South African Youth Workers Association, 2001:17; Sercombe, 2004:73). This is possible given that Youth work has over many years shown resilience in rising from structure and integration despite its lack of support from authorities, because it is a commitment by those involved to provide a service to young people as their primary clientele population (Charles, 2006:31; Maunders, 2006:31).

With the argument in this study having been the determination of the past influences, evaluation of the current status and exploration of the future prospects of Youth work practice, it was important to conduct this investigation given a continuous call at global level to advance youth development and accelerate empowerment of the youth. In following whatever course of action, there is a need to have the interests of the youth in mind. The results of this study yielded important information and also shed some light on what social service professionals aspire Youth work practice to be. They also provided detailed insight that could be used to provide policy direction for the youth sector. This came at an opportune time when there is a process of reviewing the Social Service Professions Act No. 110 of 1978 and determining the areas of specialisation, particularly within Social work. The use of the findings of this study could also serve to guide decision making in that area.



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