# PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING SUPERVISION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, JOHANNESBURG

## BY

## MOTLOGELWA BERTHA MBONISWA

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## STUDY LEADER: Ms P.N.E MASANGO

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**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my independent investigation and that all the sources have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

I hereby certify that this dissertation has not been accepted in substance for any other degree and it is not submitted concurrently for any degree.

**Signature**

**M.B. Mboniswa**

**Candidate**

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mom who always wanted her children to be educated.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This dissertation is dedicated with much love and appreciation to the following people who made the completion of this study possible.

- God Almighty for giving me strength and love.

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## SUMMARY

Supervision is the process in which the supervisor helps supervisees to use their skills and knowledge to deliver effective services to the clients, thus achieving organisational objectives. For the organisation to render effective and efficient services to their clientele, supervision is necessary to all employees to ensure that they receive the relevant education and support for effective job performance.

This study was conducted to explore the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg.  The study was conducted amongst social workers working for the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg. The researcher's motivation for choice of study emanates from the observation and experience she had regarding supervision during her deployment as a Social worker in the Limpopo Department of Health and Welfare, and during her deployment in the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg. The researcher never received formal supervision, and this resulted in development of interest by the researcher in determining the viewpoints of other social workers regarding supervision within the Department.

In undertaking this research, a quantitative approach was utilised to understand the social worker's perspectives, with the intention of making practical recommendations to the Department of Social Development on how to offer quality supervision. In this context, an applied research method was used as the findings will directly benefit the Department in improving service delivery by social workers by offering them effective supervision. A quantitative-descriptive design was used whereby a questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. No sampling was done for this study as all the social workers were made part of the study because of the small population. Relevant ethical procedures were taken into account such as ensuring that the respondents complete a written consent form, Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, and no harm was posed to respondents whether emotionally or physically.

Literature review regarding the study of supervision focusing on the functions, methods, roles, phases and model of supervision was done. The researcher consulted various sources to obtain different viewpoints about social work supervision.

The study was conducted by distributing 90 questionnaires to the supervisors to give to social workers and only 45 respondents participated in the study. Returned questionnaires were analysed by means of a computer. Data was presented by means of tables, bar chart, graphs, and pie chart. The data was interpreted using the researcher's viewpoints and the views from the literature.

The research findings indicated that social workers regard supervision as necessary and important because they will receive guidance and support in performing their duties. Though the study confirmed that supervision within the Department of Social Development was not formalized, most social workers felt that the supervision they received was effective. This could be attributed to lack of knowledge by social workers on what supervision entails or it could be that the social workers are comfortable with the structure of supervision as it is currently in the Department.

It was also revealed by this study that the highest qualification of social workers was a four year B.A. (SW) degree. None of the social workers furthered their studies in MA Supervision. It was found that there was lack of knowledge on supervision process by the supervisee and supervisors. With this lack of knowledge on supervision, it is possible that the social worker's expectations of the supervisors have diminished, thus impacting on their views about supervision.

**KEY WORDS**

Contracting

Development

Functions

Methods

Perspectives

Process

Social worker

Supervision

Supervisee

Supervisors

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# CHAPTER 1

# GENERAL ORIENTATION

## 1.1    INTRODUCTION.

The social work profession has evolved as the needs of clients are changing.  Services rendered by social workers are becoming more structured, targeted, result orientated and time limited. There has been a transition from a residual and institutional work approach towards a developmental approach (Midgley, 1995:23).  The residual approach performs a safety net function in society focusing public resources on the neediest sections of the population. On the other hand, developmental approach is a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development (Midgley, 1995:25).

The developmental approach indicates that social workers must be empowered to render effective and goal-orientated social work services. There should be a formal structure for supervision that is made clear to the supervisees so that they could develop their skills. Morrison (1993:1) also indicates that the management of rapid change and the development of a skilled, confident and adaptable workforce, whose task is to deal daily with pain, poverty and powerlessness, will only be fully realised if staff are regularly and skilfully supervised. In the social work profession, it is general believed that supervision provides the medium and assistance for social workers to render services, the nature of which is mentioned above.

McKendrick (1990:208) and Kadushin (1992:31) state that the largest percentage of social workers perform their professional function within an agency; they find themselves in a bureaucratic structure in contact with the supervision that a bureaucracy requires. For an agency to operate effectively bureaucratic structures must be developed to ensure that the work is coordinated and integrated. The researcher believes that, in the organisation, supervision is a first level of management that is concerned with encouraging workers to contribute positively towards accomplishing the organisational goals and objectives. The agency needs to be accountable to the community that they serve, and to political bodies

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that draft policies for public welfare. The agency should be accountable for the delivery of an appropriate and quality service.  The supervisor's role is to make sure that the agency's goals and need for clientele are met by social workers. Morrison (1993:1) shares the viewpoint that managing the demand for both higher standards of accountable services and better value for money cannot be done without supervision of staff.

Supervision is an intersectional process in which a supervisor has been assigned or designated to assist in and direct the practice of supervisees in the area of teaching, administration and helping (Munson, 1992:10). The definition of supervision is focused on the three main functions of supervision, namely educational, administrative and supportive. The supervisor assumes several roles during supervision: those of teacher, administrator, enabler, and/or supporter.  Supervision is geared towards helping the social worker better understand social work philosophy and agency policy, becoming more self-aware, knowing the agency's and community's resources, establishing activity priorities, and refining knowledge and skills (Barker 1991:230 and Kadushin, 1992:31).  Munson (1993:3) observes that supervision must be viewed as a safe place to share and struggle with concerns, weaknesses, failures, and gaps in skills. Supervision should be viewed as a learning process in which both supervisor and supervisee develop new skills and become aware of their weaknesses and strengths, and also to build a relationship with the other workers.

According to Mathebula (2003:11), Mudau (1996:56) and Nqweniso, (1998:1), in their research studies for supervision in Limpopo Province, the findings showed that there is a lack of training in supervision for supervisors. Supervisors are not appointed in accordance with their merit, and their roles are not clearly defined, so as a result, supervision is not effective. The researcher agrees with the above-mentioned authors because she had the same experience while working in Limpopo Province Department of Health and Welfare.

Through the discussion with an expert on supervision, Ms Prodromou (2004), who is a supervisor in the Department of Social Development, she was of the opinion that there is a lack of formally-structured supervision practice in her Department. She reported that the supervisors in Johannesburg have now received formal supervision training for the first time since office inception in 2002. According to the manual on Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers in South Africa (2004:45), supervision functions that lead to

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development and growth of the professional aspects of the social workers are being neglected. It is indicated that some officials who currently have the responsibility of supervision do not have the capacity to effectively guide and support subordinates. The manual also states that the impact of no or poor supervision on professional service delivery and the development of social workers can be seen in the number of cases in which  social workers are being accused of misconduct and unprofessional practices.

To address the above problem, the Department of Social Development proposed that Departmental policy on supervision be developed and implemented.  It should include the following:

- ❖ Supervision and consultation must be readily available to all social workers.
- ❖ Professional specific models complying with accepted standards must be utilised.
- ❖ Social workers and / or managers who will be responsible for supervising responsibilities must be carefully selected and effectively trained.
- ❖ Standard setting must be put in place to ensure quality in supervision.

The researcher believes that if the Department can implement the proposed strategies, supervision in the province will improve and the social workers will render effective and efficient services to clients, to effectively achieve organisational goals and objectives. The researcher believes that the study will be of importance to the social work profession as it will add information and knowledge to supervision in social work. The study will also benefit the Department of Social Development because both the management and supervisors will be aware of the views of the social workers about supervision and be able to identify the training needs and developmental needs for supervision. It will also help the Department to draft a Departmental policy on supervision and to implement the strategies proposed above.

This chapter outlines the researcher's intention to study the perspectives of social workers regarding roles, functions, methods and models of supervision. The researcher will use social workers that are based at Department of Social Development, Johannesburg Regional office.

## 1.2    PROBLEM FORMULATION

In order for supervisees to render effective and efficient services, professional supervision is essential. Effective supervision assists supervisees to grow professionally, and to utilize their skills and knowledge in the process of service delivery. If there is no supervision, the agency will experience difficulty in determining if the social workers are rendering effective services, thus is achieving organisational goals, implementing policies, using limited resources effectively and being accountable for public funds.

Munson (1993:19) states that new graduates require assistance to integrate the many practice demands that are marginally covered in their academic programme. The researcher believes that supervision is necessary in order for workers to translate theory into practice. Munson (1993:24) further states that burnout and stress in many instances are associated with the lack of coping mechanisms, and that when practitioners can't cope with practice demands, they need to turn for help to a trustworthy source, who should be the supervisor. He adds that without supervision as a source, the supervisees will struggle on their own or turn to colleagues or in some cases draw on experiences from their therapy, and in some instances they can make the burnout worse. Therefore there is a need for structured supervision in government Departments to ensure that social workers render effective and quality services.

However, the challenge in most workplaces is the lack of trained supervisors to offer their support to social workers. Several authors (compare Legodi, 1993:2; Ngweniso, 1998:1; Mudau, 1996:56) agree that supervisors are assigned to their supervisory posts without proper orientation, and at the same time they are expected to provide efficient services and effective supervision. The researcher believes that supervisors are often appointed to supervisory positions because of their work experience and without proper training. As a result, no formal supervision is offered to social workers, and their work performance is affected.

The researcher has also observed that in the Limpopo Department of Health and Welfare and in the Gauteng Department of Social Development, most social workers who received supervision have expressed their dissatisfaction with the supervision they receive from supervisors, while others indicated a lack of clarity of supervision processes. Some of the

supervisors have been appointed because of their work experience and not because of their credibility in supervision. This view is supported by Cherniss (1982:119) who mentions that poor supervision may result in part from the supervisor's attitudes or lack of skill. He added that supervisors and administrators in the human services usually have had no training in supervision or personnel management, they have been trained as clinicians and promoted into their present positions without any additional training, and consequently they are not prepared for the complexities of the role.

Hawkins and Shohet (1989:17) also agree with the above authors by stating that teachers, probation officers, social workers, and doctors reported to them that they don't get support and supervision. They are expected to do their jobs without supervision, as their managers are either too busy or too inadequate to give them good supervision. Social workers often report that they know they are not getting what they should from supervision, but accept it because they understand that their supervisors are busy and overworked and because they do not wish to burden them further (Munson, 1993:31). He added that supervisees adopt perceptions of supervision that lead to a diminished expectation of the supervisor and it is at this point that the supervisory process has broken down and fragmentation of learning sets in.

Organisations rendering services without formal supervision may be putting themselves at risk of being sued for poor work performance of the social workers resulting from a lack of supervision. According to Saccuzo, 1997 (in Lynch and Versen, 2003:65) the supervisor's act may establish a claim based on the theory of negligent supervision. For example, if there was a negative outcome with the client of a social worker and evidence presented in court establish that the supervisor had a very busy schedule and kept postponing supervisory sessions with the social worker, then the supervisor may be seen by the court to have committed negligent supervision by an act of omission. This applies to one's supervision of professional staff and their behaviour as it falls within their employment or job description.

Based on the above discussions, the researcher can deduce that the problem in the Department of Social Development is the lack of formal supervision for social workers. Social workers in the Department seem to be unsure of what to expect of their supervisors in terms of the roles, functions and models of supervision. In addition, lack of well trained

supervisors impact on how supervision is done. As a result, social workers do their jobs without proper supervision, which impacts on quality service delivery.

## 1.3    GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY.

### 1.3.1 Purpose

The study is focused on understanding the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development within a descriptive research. According to Robson (1993:137) in descriptive research, the researcher begins with a well-defined subject and conducts research to describe it accurately. He further states that descriptive research presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting, or relationship. The study described the perspectives of social workers regarding the role, models and functions of supervision. This has helped the researcher to understand different thoughts and viewpoints of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development.

### 1.3.2 Goal

The aim of the study was to describe the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg.

### 1.3.3 Objectives

- To provide a theoretical framework of social work supervision by conducting a literature study.
- To explore the perspectives of social workers regarding the role, functions, and method of supervision through an empirical study.
- To make recommendations to improve supervision within the Department of Social Development (Johannesburg).

## 1.4    RESEARCH QUESTION.

Research questions refer to the relationship among a small number of variables, (Robson, 1993:121). According to De Vos and Fouché (1998:115) research questions are posed about the nature of real situations. The researcher in this study posed a question about the nature of perspectives of social workers regarding supervision. The research question for this study is:

**"What are the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg?"**

## 1.5    RESEARCH APPROACH.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used a quantitative approach. According to Creswell (1994) in Fouché and Delport (2002:79), quantitative study is an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalisation of the theory holds true. This approach was chosen as the researcher wanted to measure perspectives of social workers regarding supervision and to present the results using numerical information. In this research, the focus is not on sensitive issues about supervision, but on how social workers view the role, functions, and models of supervision.

The researcher's choice of this approach is also motivated by the following characteristics of quantitative approach as stated by Reid and Smith, 1981, (in Fouché and Delport, 2002:80):

- o Data collectors should avoid adding their own impressions or interpretations. They use questionnaires to collect data and analyse it using statistical methods unlike a qualitative approach where the researcher use interview and might add own impression or interpretations. The researcher will use questionnaires to collect data as compared to having an interview to avoid influencing the responses of the participants.

- o The researcher's role is that of an objective observer. In this study, the researcher will not be subjective since a neutral method of data collection (questionnaires) will be used, thus allowing no involvement with the responses of the participants.

o Analysis proceeds by obtaining the statistical breakdown of the distribution of variables. The researcher will analyse and present the findings by means of exact figures, which were gained from accurate measurements (questionnaire).

## 1.6    TYPE OF RESEARCH.

Applied research was used in this study. It was designed with the assumption that some group or society as a whole will gain specific benefits from the research (Monette, Sullivan and De Jong, 1994:6).  According to Fouché (2002:108), applied research is aimed at solving specific policy problems or at helping practitioners accomplish tasks.  It is focused on solving problems in practice.

In investigating the perspectives of social workers towards supervision, the researcher was trying to understand the supervisee's experience and the meaning they attach to supervision.  Therefore the study was aimed at using the findings to bring about change in how supervision should be conducted to achieve organisational goals.  From this research, recommendations will be made which will include training for all social workers on supervision to ensure that they understand  its significance in effective service delivery.

The researcher believes that the study will help to improve the agency's own service delivery, which is to meet the organisational goals and to render quality services to people. This is supported by Richard and Grinnell (1998:52) stating that applied research promotes good public relations; and improves agencies own service delivery.

## 1.7    RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:32), the research design is the arrangement of conditions for collecting and analysing data in a manner that aims to combine relevance of the research purpose with economy in procedure. The objective of the research design is to plan and structure a given research project in such a way that the eventual validity of the research finding is maximised.

For the purpose of this study, a quantitative-descriptive design was used. According to Fouché and De Vos (2002:142) in this design, respondents are ideally selected by means of randomised sampling methods.  This implies that every respondent has the same probability to be part of the sample.  In this study, randomised cross-sectional survey was

utilised. With randomised cross-sectional survey, the population of the study should be selected and a questionnaire should be used to collect the data (Fouché & De Vos, 2002:142). In this study, the population of the study were the social workers of the Department of Social Development, and a questionnaire was distributed to all social workers to collect data about their perspectives regarding supervision.

### 1.7.1  DATA COLLECTION

In this study the researcher used hand-delivered questionnaires to collect data reflecting the open-ended, close-ended, dichotomous and multiple-choice questions. This is a type of questionnaire which respondents can complete in their own time, and field workers can collect them afterwards (Delport, 2002:174). The author also states that such a questionnaire should be collected not more than 48 hours after delivery. The researcher gave questionnaires to supervisors to distribute to social workers. The researcher requested the respondents to drop the completed questionnaires in a box made available at the office.

### 1.7.2  DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.

Data analysis is defined by De Vos (2002:339) as the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. During interpretation and analysis of the data the researcher linked the findings to the objectives and aim of the study. The researcher also compared the results and inferences drawn from the data to theory, (De Vos, Fouché & Venter, 2002: 223).  The researcher linked the findings to theory, to prove or disprove what others authors or researchers are saying. The researcher used tables and graphs to present and analyse data.

### 1.8    PILOT STUDY.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:155) define a pilot study as a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate. The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire with three social workers at Alexandra office of the Department of Social Development. The respondents used in the pilot test did not take part in the empirical study.

## 1.8.1  FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY.

The study will be feasible, because the respondents are social workers working in the Department of Social Development in Gauteng Province in Johannesburg. The researcher worked for the Department and she still have contacts with the social workers. The researcher requested the Human Resource section to give her a list of the total number of social workers working for the Department.

The Department of Social Development granted the researcher permission to conduct the study with social workers working for the Department.  It was easy to collect data because the researcher is working next to the Department of Social Development and also worked for the Department until end of August 2004.  The researcher used her computer to type and print her work, thus no extra administrative costs were incurred.

## 1.9     THE RESEARCH POPULATION, SAMPLE AND SAMPLING METHOD.

### 1.9.1   Research population.

According to Grinnell (1993:134) a population is the totality of persons, events, organisational units, case records, or other sampling units with which one's research problem is concerned.

The population for this study comprised all social workers at the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg. The Department has a total of one hundred and twenty social workers composing of supervisees, supervisors, and assistant directors. Out of 120, only ±90 supervisees formed part of the study, as assistant directors and supervisors were not included in the study.

### 1.9.2  Boundary of sample and sampling method.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used all social workers as the sample of the study. Sampling was not done because the population was used as a sample. According to Grinnell and Williams (1990:127) the correct sample size depends on both one's population and the research question. He further states that we might include the whole population in our study.  If we are dealing with a limited population, then we would not take a sample. McKendrick (1990:268) also states that if the number of respondents is small

and accessible enough to the researcher, they may all be included in the investigation. The researcher distributed questionnaires to 90 respondents from different sections (Probation, Intake, Field Section, Welfare Planning, and Child Protection Unit).

**Figure 1**: The proposed sample/respondents for the research.

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                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │   120 Social Workers      │
                    │(Supervisors, Supervisees and│
                    │        Managers)          │
                    └──────────────────────────┘
                                 │
                                 ▼
                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │    +/- 90 Supervisees     │
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   ┌──────────┬──────────┬───────┴──────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
   ▼          ▼          ▼              ▼              ▼
┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│Probation│ │ Intake │ │ Field  │ │Child protection│ │Welfare Planning│
│Services │ │Section │ │Section │ │ Unit Section  │ │              │
│Section  │ │        │ │        │ │              │ │              │
└────────┘ └────────┘ └────────┘ └──────────────┘ └──────────────┘
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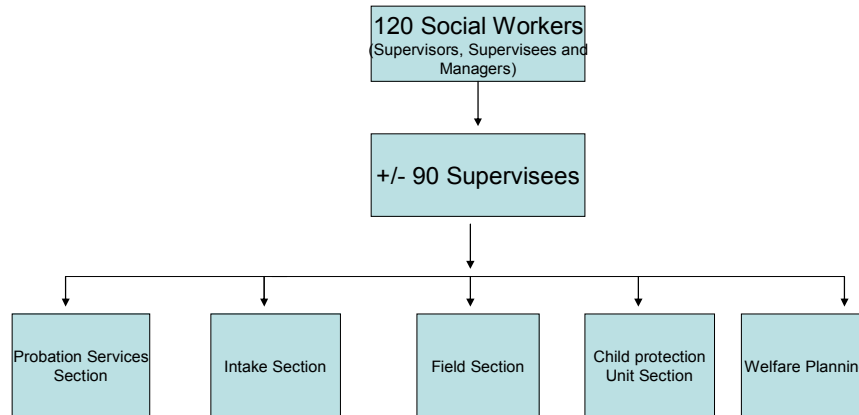
## 1.10   ETHICAL ISSUES.

Richard and Grinnell (1998:58) state that ethical acceptability is a primary issue in any research study. It is unethical for researchers to harm anyone in the course of research especially if it is without the person's knowledge and permission. In this study the following ethical issues were considered:

### 1.10.1        Harm to respondents.

Monette *et al* (1994:55) indicated that people should never be exposed to situations that might cause serious or lasting harm. Harm to subjects can be physical or emotional, and emotional harm to respondents is often more difficult to predict and to determine than physical discomfort (Strydom,2002:64). He further added that the responsibility to protect respondents against harm reaches further than mere efforts to repair harm or than mere attempts to minimise harm.  As a result, respondents must be thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact of the study.  This study is focused on general

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perspectives regarding supervision, therefore it did not pose any physical or emotional harm to the respondents.

### 1.10.2     Informed consent.

Informed consent refers to telling potential research participants about all aspects of the research that might reasonably influence their decision to participate (Monette *et al*. 1994:48). Strydom (2002:65) states that participants must be legally and psychologically competent to consent and that they would be at liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any time.

The respondents signed a written consent form indicating the purpose of the study and also the fact that participation is voluntary and that respondents may withdraw from the investigation if they so wished.

### 1.10.3     Confidentiality and Anonymity.

Confidentiality refers to agreements between persons that limit others' access to private information (de Vos, 2002:67). The information given by respondents will be kept private and will not be shared with other people. Both researcher and respondents signed a non - disclosure agreement to protect both parties from divulging confidential information. Anonymity means that no one, including the researcher, should be able to identify any subject afterwards (Strydom, 2002:68). The respondents did not complete any identifying particulars in the questionnaire.

### 1.10.4     Debriefing of respondents.

Debriefing sessions are sessions during which subjects get the opportunity to talk about and work through their experience of the study and its aftermath, providing possibly one way in which the researcher can assist the subject and minimise harm (Strydom, 2002:73). For the purpose of this study, no debriefing was done, as the study posed no emotional or physical harm to the respondents.

### 1.10.5     Deception of subjects

Deception is the misleading of subjects about the purpose of the investigation or other knowledge that might contaminate results; subjects who are unaware of the real purpose will behave more naturally (Burns, 2000:19). Deception includes withholding information, or offering incorrect information in order to ensure participation of subjects when they would otherwise possibly have refused it.  The researcher explained in writing what the aim of the study was.  This formed part of the consent form and cover page for the

questionnaire. In this way, respondents were informed of the purpose of the study before they even took part in the study.

### 1.10.6      Release or publication of the findings.

The researcher must ensure that the investigation proceeds correctly and that no one is deceived by the findings. Researchers should be open with their results, allowing disinterested colleagues to vet the research and its implications. Strydom (2002:71) states that findings should be released in such a manner that utilization by others is encouraged, since, after all that is what the ultimate goal of any research project is. The research result will be made available to the Department of Social Development and University of Pretoria trough a mini-dissertation or article which allows the respondents access to the results.

### 1.11    Limitations of the study

- The researcher distributed 90 questionnaires to social workers and only received back 45 completed questionnaires. The results received were therefore not adequate to make generalizations about the status of supervision in the whole Department of Social Development. A more extensive study focusing on the national level of the Department of Social Development is therefore recommended to ensure that adequate data will be collected to make proper conclusions.

- Collection of data using only a questionnaire also was a limitation in that the researcher did not have an opportunity to probe deeply into social workers' perspectives on supervision. The researcher also was also not in a position to follow up crucial comments in order to gain an in-depth understanding of their viewpoints. For future research, a quantitative-qualitative approach is recommended for collecting relevant data.

- The research was focused on perspectives of social workers but it turned out that there was a lack of knowledge about supervision, therefore it could have been good for the research to focus on knowledge and perspectives of social workers. In this study, it seemed that the perspectives of social workers were influenced by lack of knowledge about what supervision entails, so the answer that supervision was effective may not be valid.

- Few questions in the questionnaire expected the respondent to choose more than one answer and that had an influence on the interpretation of data and the making of meaningful conclusions.

- Not all respondents answered all the questions. In certain cases, the respondents who analysed data did not represent the sample size of 45.

## 1.12    DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS.

### 1.12.1    Supervision.

Skidmore (1995:246) defined supervision as an oversight, control and surveillance. Supervision in social work is used to describe the function of the supervisor in relation to the supervisee.

Supervision is an administrative and educational process used extensively in social agencies to help social workers further develop and refine their skills and to provide quality assurance for the clients (Barker, 1991:230).

The researcher defines supervision as the process in which the supervisor helps supervisees to use their skills and knowledge to deliver effective services to the client, and also to grow professionally and to meet organisational goals.

### 1.12.2    Perspective.

Perspective is the practice of regarding and analysing a situation or work of art from different point of view (South African Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2002:870).

A person's perspective means a particular way of thinking about, considering, viewing, or approaching something (Craig, Griesel & Witz, 1994:149).

In the researcher's opinion, perspective is one's own perception or opinion about any issue.

### 1.12.3    Social worker

Social workers are graduates of a school of social work (with either bachelor's or master's degrees) who use their knowledge and skills to provide social services for clients who may be individuals, families, groups, communities, organisations, or society in general (Barker, 1991:222).

A social worker can also be defined as a graduate of accredited school of social work who is engaged in practice that assists people to overcome physical, financial, social, or psychological disruptions in functioning, through individual, group, or family intervention methods  (Munson, 1993:10).

The researcher defines a social worker as a professional person who helps individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favourable to their needs.

## 1.13   CONTENTS OF RESEARCH REPORT.

The research report for this study consists of 4 chapters. The chapters are divided as follows:

Chapter 1:          Orientation of the study and research methodology.
                    This chapter consists of the general introduction, research question, and aim, goals, problem formulation, and methodology.

Chapter 2:          Literature study.
                    Chapter two outlines a literature review on role, functions, methods, and models of supervision.

Chapter 3:          Empirical results.
                    The chapter focuses on analysis and interpretation of data of the perspectives of supervisees towards supervision.

Chapter 4:          Summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## 1.14   Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter has indicated that supervision is a process of learning, developing, and refining skills of social workers so that they can render effective services to clients. The researcher undertook this study as a result of personal observation on how the social workers were allocated supervisors but did not receive formal supervision, and also the issue of supervisors who were appointed because of their years of experience but with no training in supervision. This resulted in the development of interest by the researcher in determining the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg.

# CHAPTER 2

# SUPERVISION IN SOCIAL WORK

## 2.1    INTRODUCTION.

Supervision is a process in which one worker is given the responsibility to work with other workers in order to meet certain organizational, professional and personal objectives, (Morrison, 1993:13). Supervision is critical to the quality of services delivered to vulnerable groups, to the development and sustaining of staff, and to the very life of the social care organization.  According to Mhango (1997:11) supervision is a practice of social work which strives for the betterment of the profession, with the ultimate goal of efficiency and effective service delivery.

The researcher agrees with the above-mentioned authors that social workers join the organization with the sole purpose of achieving organizational and personal goals. An organizational goal is to render effective and efficient services to the client or community, and a personal goal is to earn a salary and to grow professionally. Supervision is therefore necessary and significant in order to ensure that quality and excellent service is rendered to clients to enhance their social functioning. Based on the above discussion, the researcher defines supervision as the process whereby the person that is more skilled and knowledgeable is assigned to impart knowledge to less skilled and less knowledgeable persons with the intention of achieving organizational objectives.

This chapter will focus on the historical background of supervision, nature, function, methods, models, aids, and phenomena of supervision.

## 2.2    HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF SUPERVISION IN SOCIAL WORK

During the era from the 1850s to the 1890s, the concept of supervision was more general than it is today, because it dealt more with supervising institutions to ensure that clients or patients were being treated and that the institutions were being run effectively and efficiently (Munson, 2002:52). According to Kadushin (1992:2) the history of supervision had its origins in the Charity Organization Society movement in the nineteenth century, starting from Buffalo, New York, in 1878. The agencies granted financial assistance after a rigorous investigation, but such help was regarded as only one aspect of the service

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offered. Visitors worked as volunteers and were assigned to a limited number of families. A limited number of paid agents were assigned administrative tasks, vis-à-vis friendly visitors. In turn, the former were responsible to and supervised by, district committees, and were thereby placed in a middle-management position. An educational component emerged alongside administration, in that paid agents directed new volunteers in order to see if the work is satisfactory or if suggestions can make it so. According to Tsui (1997) some visitors did not know how to offer help to the needy, and there was a high turnover of volunteers, so consequently, training and job orientation were continually carried out by the experienced and permanent agency staff. He further stated that the major duty of the paid staff was still administrative, such as directing and assigning work to the volunteers, while the supervisors simultaneously also provided emotional support to those visitors who felt frustrated in their work.

Kadushin (1992) in Tsui (1997:193) stated that in 1911 the first course in supervision was offered under the support of the Charity Organisation Department of the Russell Sage Foundation, which was headed by Mary Richmond in the 1920s. The training of social workers was shifted from agency to university; supervision became an educational process for learning the required values, knowledge, and skills for social work practices.

In South Africa, the development of supervisory practices developed along similar lines as elsewhere.  It was rooted in a need for administrative practices along hierarchical lines in formal human services organisations since their establishment during the twentieth century.  On the other hand, it was rooted in education for the social work profession, which commenced in the Twenties and particularly in the Thirties when practitioners were called upon to participate in student training (McKendrick, 1990:221). McKendrick (1990:222) further states that the main thrust in further developing, improving and refining supervisory practices to meet the needs of South Africa's people does not lie with any major adaptation of theory, but rather with increased incorporation of theoretical tenets into supervisory practices.  He further states that it calls for a large-scale of educational programme on the theory and practice of this indirect method of social work, just as direct methods of social work practice are taught in formal courses at university level. An important long-range goal should be to include the indirect practice method of supervision in courses of social work education. This goal seems to have been achieved since

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currently in South Africa supervision forms part of the courses in social work education in most tertiary institutions.

## 2.3    OBJECTIVES OF SUPERVISION.

Kadushin (1992:20) and Morrison (1993:14) stated the following objectives of supervision:

- o  To ensure that the worker is clear about roles and responsibilities.
- o  To ensure that the worker meets the agency's objectives.
- o  To ensure that workers have the capacity to render quality services to clients
- o  To assist professional development and growth.
- o  To reduce stress, and help the worker feel good about doing his job.
- o  To maximize his clinical knowledge and skills to the point where he can perform autonomously and independent of supervision.
- o  To ensure the worker is given work context and the resource to do their job effectively.

In summarizing the above objectives, it is clear that supervision aims to render effective and efficient social work services to clients but also to enhance the professional development of the social workers.

## 2.4    NATURE OF SUPERVISION

For supervision to be effective and efficient the following propositions must be followed and a contract needs to be in place to outline the conditions of supervision.

### 2.4.1 Propositions for effective supervision

Five basic propositions that serve as the foundation for effective supervision (Munson, 2002:12) are as follows:

### 2.4.1.1      Structure

A formal Structure for supervision is made clear to the supervisee. Structure refers to the formats for conducting supervision, such as individual supervision and group supervision. Together, the supervisor and supervisees must plan the structure that is best for their learning needs, for instance which method of supervision must be used and when.

### 2.4.1.2      Regular.

Supervision should be conducted regularly. It is easy for a busy supervisor to fail to formalize the regularity of supervision and as a result, supervision is delayed or avoided completely. Both the supervisees and the supervisor must adhere to the date scheduled for supervision and if it is postponed for reasons that were beyond their control, a new date must be agreed on, so that supervision is not delayed or avoided.

### 2.4.1.3      Consistent.

The supervisor should work to ensure that the style and approach used with the supervisee is consistent.

### 2.4.1.4      Case oriented.

To be effective and efficient, supervision should be case-oriented at all times. Administrative issues, personal matters, and learning should all be connected to case material when discussed. When personal matters are discussed, it must be those that affect the supervisee's work performance.

### 2.4.1.5      Evaluated

Supervision itself should be evaluated. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to always or periodically give formal and informal feedback about supervision practice they are conducting. The supervisor is expected to review and evaluate the tasks allocated to the students or supervisees, thereby ensuring that the allocated tasks conform to agency procedures and university standards (Hoffman 1990:104).  He further states that evaluation is composed of three activities: firstly, to assess the quality of each of the supervisee's interventive contacts; secondly, to assess the supervisee's planning and frequency of contact with each client system; and thirdly, to provide guidance to student on how to assess needs.

The researcher believes that supervision must also be planned. Thus planning should be added as one of the propositions since both the supervisor and supervisee must prepare and have an agenda for supervision to ensure a structured supervision session. Seloana (1997:36) also supports the researcher's viewpoint by stating that both supervisor and the social worker have the responsibility of preparing for supervision.  If no preparation is done and there is no agenda, the supervision session will lose focus and will not be case-oriented thus compromising the value of supervision. Furthermore, for supervision to be

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effective there should be a contract agreed upon by the supervisee and supervisor to ensure that all parties comply with the conditions of the contract and consequently deliver excellent service.

Contracting as one of the significant elements of the nature of supervision will be discussed below.

## 2.4.2  CONTRACTING IN SUPERVISION

One of the characteristics above is that supervision must be regular because it is easy for a busy supervisor to fail to formalize the regularity of supervision. Contracting is then necessary in supervision to ensure that the propositions are enforced. A contract is a specific and explicit way of identifying the expectations between the worker and the supervisor which will govern the learning opportunities in the workplace (Compare Ford and Jones, 1987:32 and Morrison, 1993:29).

A contract can be written or verbal. A written contract is important because it is signed and every one has a copy. It also serves as a proof or evidence. The above authors added that the role of the supervisor is to ensure that the contract is properly negotiated and agreed on a competent basis, because supervisors are usually both more experienced and knowledgeable about the agency setting. The researcher believes that only well-trained supervisors should negotiate contracts and that supervisees should be included in the planning process. The majority of problems in supervision have their roots in failure to clarify or review mutual expectations.

Ford and Jones (1987:39) and Munson (2002:176-178) mention that the contents of a contract must include the following:

- o The work that is to be undertaken by the worker, e.g. cases to be assigned or type of project in a community work agency.
- o Special conditions. These are requirements that are unique to the setting, such as providing legal testimony or any activity for which the practitioner lacks training or familiarity. In such cases the contract should state how the agency expects the practitioner to acquire the knowledge and skill required. Learning structure: the teaching/learning methods through which supervision will be conducted. The use of aids or models of supervision, for example role playing and direct observation. Joint interview, audiovisual will help the supervisor to gain access to the performance and learning of the supervisee.

- o Timing elements. The conditions of service, that is hours of working, use of resources etc. A contract must include time or frequency of supervision and the duration of supervision process.
- o Include in the contract what procedures can be used if either party does not meet the conditions of the contract.

Although a contract is a joint agreement between the supervisor and the worker about supervision, it must be flexible in a sense that it can be changed or other items can be added. Munson (2002:176) argues that contracting literature has not taken into account the power difference in the supervisory relationship that places limits on the ability of the supervisee to negotiate a contract. He further states that any structure or issue the supervisee wishes to negotiate must always be judged in advance by the supervisor as to whether it is essential to learning. The researcher agrees with the above author and believes that even if the supervisee is inexperienced, it is important to understand why the supervisee wants to include certain issues and how they are relevant to his/her learning needs.

It is evident from the discussion above that a contract plays a crucial role in supervision, since it stipulates the conditions for supervision. Thus if the contract is well-formulated and both the supervisor and supervisee abide by the terms of the contract, then supervision is bound to be successful, and that will result in quality service delivery to the client system.

## 2.5   FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

There seems to be no agreement on the exact number of supervision functions from the literature since different authors have identified different functions of supervision. Kadushin (1992:44-295) described the three main functions of supervision as including administrative, educational and supportive supervision, while Richards and Pain in Morrison (1993:19) identified four principal functions of supervision as management, education, support and mediation. From the above, it seems the most common functions are educational and supportive supervision. In this study the researcher will discuss the following six functions of supervision according to McKendrick (1990),  Kadushin (1992), Marrison (1993), Cronjé, Du Toit, Marais and Attalla (2003).

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## 2.5.1  ADMINISTRATIVE SUPERVISION

An administrative supervision provides the organizational structure and access to organizational resources that facilitate work, (McKendrick, 1990:207). Administrative supervision is concerned with structuring the work environment and providing the resources that enable workers to perform their work effectively (Kadushin, 1992:139). The supervisor is a link in the chain of administration. As an administrator, the supervisor is a mediator between the worker, agency and the client. Kadushin (1992:45) added that administration is a process which implements organizational objectives. According to Skidmore (1995:247) administration is a managerial role in which the supervisor directs and guides workers and helps with management matters such as salaries, promotions, assignment of cases, and appointment to committees.

Morrison (1993:20) describes the administrative function as a management function. He stated that the aims of the management function are to ensure that the overall quality of the worker's performance, agency policy, and procedures are understood and followed, the worker understands the functions of other agencies and relates to them appropriately, and the worker receives regular formal appraisal. The researcher's understanding of the above definition is that for the workers to achieve the organizational goals, the necessary resources must be provided, and the policies and procedures should be in place to guide workers when doing their work.

The supervisor has some *roles or tasks* and *functions* to perform in discharging the responsibilities of administrative supervision (Kadushin, 1992:46):

### 2.5.1.1     Staff recruitment and selection

The supervisor has the responsibility of selecting the candidates who are likely to fit the job. The supervisor, as the manager, knows the details of the job that needs to be done and the attitudes, skills, and knowledge required to do it. As a result, it is important that he/she form part of, or make a contribution in the process of staff recruitment and selection.  Since supervisors know the work that needs to be done, they participate in establishing criteria for hiring staff and in implementing these criteria in interviewing job applicants.

### 2.5.1.2     Inducting and placing the worker

When the worker is recruited and hired, she/he needs to find a place in the organizational framework. He/she needs to know with whom she/he will be working with and to whom she/he will be reporting. It is the role of the supervisor to make sure that the worker is

informed about the organizational culture, policies, rules, and regulations. The worker must be orientated and well-placed in the organization. Induction involves locating the worker physically, socially, and organizationally in the agency. The worker must be informed of the function of the unit to which the worker has been placed and how it fits into the total agency. The worker must feel comfortable and welcome in the organization. Among others she/he must be allocated an office and provided with the resources needed to perform the relevant duties.

### 2.5.1.3    Work planning and delegation

Once the worker is hired, inducted, or orientated, and placed, both the supervisor and the worker have to sit down and plan what the agency expects from the worker (job description). Policies and objectives need to broken down into specific duties, and ultimately, into specific tasks within a time frame. The responsibility of the supervisor is to put the job description to work. Planning involves decisions about scheduling and prioritizing work.

The supervisor has the responsibility of delegating work to supervisees. In doing that, the supervisor needs to understand that other workers are not willing to take a risk, or make mistakes and learn from it, some may be ambivalent about accepting responsibility because this implies accepting blame for failure as well as commendation for success. The researcher believes that in delegating tasks to supervisees, the supervisor will be able to identify supervisees who feel a strong need for independence and who are ready to take risks. These persons` will be observed when supervisees accomplish the tasks given to them within a given period of time.

### 2.5.1.4    Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating work

Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating are inspectional aspects of administrative supervision. In monitoring the supervisor needs to obtain reports, review statistical reports, and read records and verbal reports from the workers.  Work reviews are necessary to determine whether the work is being done as planned and to see whether the supervisees are able to cover the workload. Formal evaluation of the worker's performance is an administrative act, and must be done periodically. Evaluation may be done quarterly or yearly.

### 2.5.1.5        Coordinating work

Through coordination, the supervisor brings workers into a relationship with other workers involved in activities that are reciprocal, supportive, or supplementary to their own work. Coordination unifies different workers' efforts toward achievement of agency objectives. This increases cooperation among members and reduces conflict.   The role of the supervisor is to coordinate and integrate her unit with other units of the agency and with other agencies in the community's social welfare network.

### 2.5.1.6        The communication function

Communication permits more effective coordination of the work of the agency through linkages provided by the flow of information and feedback. The supervisor has the responsibility to channel information from the workers to the management and vice versa. She must encourage relevant communication from supervisee and establish a climate of receptivity and readiness to listen. Supervisors must listen to the workers and keep them updated on any developments. That will encourage openness amongst the workers and that is necessary to achieve organisational goals.

### 2.5.1.7        The supervisor as advocate

To be effective the supervisor has to do more than act as a messenger. Supervisees look to the supervisor to represent their interests and actively press for the implementation of necessary changes as they don't have direct contact with management. The supervisor has to assertively advocate for and protect her supervisees with clerical staff as well as with administrators.

### 2.5.1.8        The supervisor as administrative buffer

The supervisor acts as a buffer between client complainants and the agency, again as a buffer between the worker and agency. The supervisor protects the worker from imposition by administrators for unreasonable workload standards. The supervisor has the responsibility of protecting supervisees from any kind of sexual harassment within the work unit which the supervisor is responsible for.

### 2.5.1.9        The supervisor as change agent

The supervisor is in a strategic position to act as a change agent for the agency. A supervisor has the responsibility of using her knowledge of the situation to formulate suggested changes in agency policy and procedure. Standing between administration and

the workers, she can actively influence administration to make changes and influence workers to accept them.

In pursuing the above mentioned roles or tasks the supervisor employs the generic administrative function of planning, organizing, leading/directing, controlling and staffing (Compare Mc Kendrick, 1990:209-212; Cronjé, Du Toit, Marais and Attalla, 2003:140-190).

o **PLANNING**

Planning forms the basis of all the tasks of the management, because it gives the organization its direction and determines the actions of management. The most important contribution that planning makes to the managerial process is that it gives direction in terms of what the organization wants to achieve and how it aims to do that.

Planning promotes coordination between the various Departments and people in the organization. Once goals have been clearly formulated and plans have been developed, tasks and resources can be allocated so that everybody involved is able to contribute effectively to the realization of the goals. Scarce resources can be channelled and utilized rationally, which is absolutely necessary for productivity. Planning also helps practitioners to be certain about operational details which entails what is to be done, when, where, how and who will do it.

o **ORGANISING**

Organising means that management has to develop mechanisms in order to implement the strategy or plan. Arrangements have to be made to determine what activities will be carried out, what resources will be employed, and who will perform the various activities. This involves the allocation or distribution of tasks among employees, the allocation of resources to persons and Departments, and giving the necessary authority to certain people to ensure that the tasks are in fact carried out. Above all there must be communication, cooperation and coordination between the people and the Departments or sections performing the tasks. The important aspects of organising are the following:

- Organising entails a detailed analysis of work to be done and resources to be used to accomplish the aims of the organization.

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- Organising divides the total workload into activities that can comfortably be performed by individual's or a group.
- Tasks are allocated according to the abilities or a qualifications of individuals, thus ensuring that nobody in the organization has either too much or too little to do.

o **DIRECTING/LEADING**

Directing or Leading entails providing leadership in the assigning, instructing, activating and guiding of the work force in the work efforts. There are some important attributes that help supervisors to be effective in the supervisor-supervisee relationship. These include trust, support, consistency, caring and building staff morale. Leadership is the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of predetermined goal. According to Cronjé *et al* (2003:174) leadership may be defined as the influencing and directing of the behaviour of subordinates in such a way that they willingly strive to accomplish the goal or objectives of the organization.

o **CONTROLLING**

Controlling constitutes monitoring workers performance and taking corrective action. It includes assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of programme of the organization as well as the performance of workers in direct service delivery.

o **STAFFING**

According to McKendrick (1990:210) staffing refer to all activities concerned with the recruitment and retention of workers in the organization. He states that workers should be appropriately placed in positions where knowledge and skills can be applied and growth can occur. Kadushin (1992:46) discussed staffing under the tasks (Staff recruitment and selection) of the supervisor in discharging the responsibilities of administrative supervision. The researcher believes that both authors are right because it is falls under administrative function although discussed under different headings.

## 2.5.2 EDUCATIONAL SUPERVISION

Educational supervision is concerned with teaching the worker what he needs to know in order to do his job and helping him to learn it. Educational supervision provides the

knowledge and instrumental skills that are the worker's necessary equipment for effective practice (Kadushin, 1992:20).

According to McKendrick (1990:213) educational supervision is planned, systematized process, based on a teaching-learning cycle which comprises establishing areas of learning need based on formal, criteria-based assessment; formulating teaching-learning objectives; selecting and organizing contents; planning and implementing teaching-learning strategies; and evaluating the outcome of the process.

The researcher views educational supervision as the learning process, where some one who is more knowledgeable and skilled impart knowledge and skills to others, identifying what they know, what they need to know, and how they want to learn it. The objective of educational supervision is to improve the worker's capacity to do his job more effectively and to help the worker to grow and develop professionally to the point where he can perform autonomously and independently of supervision.

Humphrey & Stokes (2000:10) maintains that educational function is vital in supervision to meet the growing demands of the market by providing quality services, increase the speed, shortening the time that it takes to deliver such products or services. The researcher agrees with the above authors in a sense that educational function help to capacitate workers as a result effective services will be rendered to the clients.


### 2.5.2.1    Distinction between educational supervision, in-service training and staff development.

The three share the task of helping the social worker determine his needs in order to perform his duties effectively. It is geared towards assisting the social worker to be sure on what he needs to know in order to do his job properly. Kadushin (1992:137) makes the following distinction:

- Staff development

It refers to all the procedures an organization uses to increase work related knowledge, skills and attitudes of all its staff members. In staff development both in-service and educational supervision are included. The following are cited as activities of staff development: training sessions, lectures, workshops, institutes, information pamphlets, and discussion groups for case workers, administrators, clerical staff and supervisors.

- In-service Training

It is a more particular form of staff development. It is a planned formal training given to workers within an organization with same work responsibilities and classifications. Its programme is planned in accordance with the general educational needs of a group of workers (Barker, 1991:224). He further states that it is an educational programme given to workers and usually carried out by a supervisor or specialist/expert to assist supervisees to be more productive and effective in achieving a specific duty or the overall objectives of the agency. It usually happens on the job and for short periods but not always.

- Educational supervision

It supplements in-service training by personalizing general learning in accordance with the particular performance of the specific worker. It is geared towards the needs of a specific worker doing a particular caseload while experiencing specific problems which requires some individualized programme of education. It is bound and concerned with practice in specific situations. It is a line function where supervisors have administrative responsibilities to the supervisee where training is offered.

## 2.5.2.2    Contents of educational supervision

Kadushin (1992:142-147) alleys that the content of educational supervision is made out of the 5P's i.e. the person, the problem, the place, the process and the personnel. The role of the supervisor is to provide adequate knowledge to the supervisees in relation to the contents of the 5P's in that particular agency.

o   The person.

The person is the client that can either be individual, families, group, or community. The worker needs to know if the agency provides specific services to a particular client system, for example Reception, Assessment and Referral Centre (Department of Social development) is working with juveniles only, (children under 18 who are in-conflict with the law). The probation officers do Developmental assessment to the juvenile and family/guardian and present a report to the juvenile court. If the clients who need to apply for foster care go to the centre they will be referred to relevant offices. This means that the organization render services to a specific client group, juveniles and their families only.

- o The problems

  The problem differs depending on the nature and kind of clients served in the organization. The supervisor must make sure the worker has the knowledge of the common problems that their clients' experience, e.g. juveniles experience problems of peer pressure, or experimenting with drugs. The supervisor must teach the worker about the problems and how they affect the family and the community, the response of the community to the problem.

- o The place

  The place refers to the agency that provides services to the client. The workers need to have knowledge about the agency they are working for. This knowledge includes how their agency is related to other agencies. Internally the worker needs to know organizational structure, vision and mission, communication channels and the long and short term objectives of the agency. For instance at Reception, Assessment and Referral Centre (RAR) the supervisor must teach the worker how their office is related to the court, NGO's (Nicro, Khulisa, Conquest for life, South African National Council for Alcohol Anonymous-SANCA) where they refer juveniles for diversion programme.

- o The process

  The process is employed in helping the client to a restoration of a more effective level of social functioning or ameliorating pr preventing social dysfunction. The supervisor must teach the worker the process that is followed to help the client, e.g. at RAR the worker must know that when the juvenile is assessed by a social worker/probation officer and a report is handed to the prosecutor before he/she appear in court, and if he takes responsibility of the offence and the court found him to be a candidate for diversion, the probation officer must know that referral correspondence to Nicro or SANCA must be given to the client. To conduct Developmental Assessment the worker need to be trained or attend Developmental Assessment course.

- o The personnel

  The personnel are the social workers who engage the clients in the process of rendering services. The supervisor must teach the workers about themselves. The worker must know and understand himself before he can understand or know others – self awareness. The aim is to develop a greater measure of self-awareness in the worker so that she can act in a deliberate, disciplined, consciously

directed manner in the worker-client interaction so as to be optimally helpful to the client.

The researcher is of the idea that 5P's are the marketing mix. The worker needs to have knowledge of the all the 5P's because she/he cannot do without the other, the components are interrelated.

## 2.5.3 SUPPORTIVE SUPERVISION

The supervisor has the responsibility of sustaining worker morale, helping with job-related discouragements and discontents, and giving supervisees a sense of worth as professionals, a sense of belonging in agency and a sense of security in their performance. According to McKendrick (1990:220) the goal of supportive supervision is to provide the psychological and interpersonal resources that enable the worker to mobilize the emotional energy needed for effective job performance while Kadushin (1992:231) assets that supportive supervision provides emotional support to workers and enhance their feelings of importance and self worth at work.

The supportive function provides the psychological and interpersonal content that enables the worker to mobilize the emotional energy needed for effective job performance. It is primarily concerned with increasing effectiveness of the worker through decreasing stress that interferes with performance and increasing motivation and intensifying commitment that enhances performance.

The researcher believes that if social workers are to do their job effectively they need to feel good about themselves and about the job they are doing. The role of the supervisor is to provide emotional support. She must encourage, strengthen, stimulate and even comfort and pacify the worker. This can be achieved if the supervisor is constantly aware of the emotional needs and able to respond appropriately to both explicit and implicit support needs of the worker.

The aims of supportive supervision according to Marrison (1993:22) are as follows:

- To validate the worker both as a professional and as a person.
- Debrief the worker and give them permission to talk about feelings, especially fear, anger, sadness, etc.
- To monitor the overall health and emotional functioning of the worker, especially with regard to the effects of stress.

- To help the worker reflect on difficulties in colleague relationships, to assist the worker in resolving conflict.

- To support workers who are subject to any form of abuse either from a client or from colleagues, whether this is physical, psychological or discriminatory.

The researcher believes that social workers are always in direct interaction with different number of individuals with different problems in their service delivery as a result social workers need support to overcome stress and burn out. According to Kadushin (1992:248) stress can result from the nature of social work tasks and the conditions under which the work is done, and from the fact that the workers' responsibilities exceed their power and resources. He further states that the workers are faced with the stress of balancing ethical demands and expectations. They are required to be objective and maintain some emotional distance from clients, at the same time they are required to be empathetic, feeling what the client feels, putting themselves figuratively in the client's situation. These are contradictory demands.

The supervisor has the responsibility of responding to the problem in a way that might prevent the development of stress and burnout. Kadushin (1992:261) indicates that helping the worker do her job and providing the information the worker needs are more effective in ameliorating stress. The researcher believes that the supervisor must make him/herself available to the worker and be supportive.

### 2.5.4    Modelling Supervision.

According to Hensley (2002:101) supervisors serve as role models to the young social workers they supervise and this gives added emphasis to the importance of these qualities in a supervisor that not only enhance teaching and training but also are associated with clients receiving good care.

Modelling according to Kadushin (1992:156) involves deliberately selected displays of behaviour by the supervisor for didactic purposes. Modelling involves, observing, desirable worker behaviour available from a wide variety of sources reading typescript of interviews, listening to audio tapes, watching movies and sitting in on an interview. All those procedures provide the supervisee with a model of how a worker should behave in contact with a client.

Good supervision is then a model for what the supervisee needs to learn and an instrumentality for facilitating such learning (Kadushin, 1992:156). He further states that

being a role model is important for job growth of the supervisee and describes qualities of good supervisors as available, accessible, able and affable.

Seloana (1997:34) states that modelling function puts more pressure on supervisors to exercise a degree of congruency between their actions and the verbally communicated guidance. Supervisor should thus practice what they preach. Modelling as a function suggest that supervisors should have high regards for their behaviour, knowing that whatever they do and how they do it, may serve as an example for their subordinates. Supervisors must act in an ethical manner towards their supervisees and model ethical behaviour in all areas of their professional lives.

### 2.5.5  Personality Enrichment.

Makondo (1997:17) defines personality enrichment within supervision as the improvement of the supervisee's behaviour patterns, established through administrative, educational and supportive functions, in order to promote growth and development in the supervisee. Kadushin (1992:144) discussed personality enrichment function as part of educational function. He refers to it as self awareness. Grossbard in Kadushin (1992:144) talks of self awareness as a person's ability to recognize with a reasonable degree of accuracy how he reacts to the outside world and how the outside world reacts to him. Cournoyer (1997:8) agrees with the above author that a social worker should be able to understand and know himself/herself as much as possible so that he/she should be able to minimize the chance of doing damage to the clients in the process of service delivery.

Supervisor's responsibility is to be aware of the supervisee's personality and establish whether it needs to be changed or modified. Change can be done through supportive and educational function. According to Mokoena (1997:25) personality enrichment is important as it can be seen as the first requirement for the successful and satisfying development of a person. She further states that the relationship and feedback plays an important role in personality enrichment and interpersonal relationship as it gives the supervisees an explanation of how the supervisor perceives them. Self awareness provides a greater assurance that the worker's personal reactions to these professional problems will not adversely contaminate the helping relationship.

## 2.5.6  MOTIVATIONAL FUNCTION

According to Cronjé *et al* (2003:184) motivation is the behavioural determinant that makes workers to respond to such needs. Motivation is what makes people want to work or the reason people want to work. It is the internal drive that encourages people to achieve a particular goal.

Heightened motivation and in strict job satisfaction tend to be associated with greater autonomy in implementation of job assignment,        (Kadushin, 1992:56). Thus one can deduce that motivation is getting people exert a high degree of effort on their job. Cronjé *et al* (2003:223) cited that motivation is two dimensional, with internal and external dimension.

o    Internal motivation

It originates from the satisfaction that occurs when a task is executed or a duty is performed. The activity is rewarding and worker will be self motivated.

o    External motivation

External usually involves action taken by a third party. A person is motivated because it is in anticipation that a reward of some kind, e.g. money, award or feedback regarding performance will be given.

The researcher believes that a combination of both internal and external motivation is necessary, for instance giving workers challenging jobs and incentives after completing the work at a given period.

## 2.5.6.1    Employees Motivational Strategies

According to Cronjé *et al* (2003:232) employees need to be better motivated not only to improve organizational effectiveness, but also to provide a better quality of life for all employees. They further cited possible broad motivational strategies to improve employee motivation.

o    Job design

Employees place a high value on jobs that provide satisfaction, are challenging, providing growth and will allow adequate achievement opportunities. Job rotation, job enlargement or job enrichment can make a job more challenging.

o     Training and Education

Learning opportunities can be a strong motivational force since they are critical to individual growth and opportunity. Organisations that invest in the training and development of employees are generally more successful. In South Africa opportunities to invest in the training and development of people/employees have been created by means of the skills development Act 97 of 1998 and Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999.

o     Incentives

Incentives and reward from above average work performance are widely used to drive results in organizations, and they vary from cash, bonus to trophies and certificates. The researcher believes that the use of incentives will reinforce workers and they will be willing to do more, and it will motivate others to also want to receive incentives.

o     Empowerment and participation.

Empowerment is the process of enabling employees to set their own goals make decisions, and solve problems within their sphere of responsibility and authority. Participation is the process of giving employees a voice in making decisions about their own work. This is supported by McKendrick (1990:221) stating that need satisfaction makes motivation in work, and the supervisor must provide the worker with opportunities to satisfy needs ranging from basic, physical needs, financial remuneration, and needs related to self esteem and self actualization.

Based on the above discussion the researcher believes that the supervisor must know the following motivational tips:

o     Match people to jobs
o     Recognize individual difference
o     Make use of objectives, and they must be SMART (Simple, Measured, Attainable, Realistic and have Time frame).
o     Link reward to performance
o     The supervisor must execute the following roles in order to motivate employees:
o     The supervisor must have knowledge about the supervisee. Workers can not be the same that is why it is important to understand them as unique individuals.
o     The supervisor must identify the worker's learning needs and training needs and sent them to relevant training.

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o The supervisor must give credit where is due, reward the workers for doing more than was expected of them or when they are able to carry out challenging work.

Functions of supervision are all interrelated and equally important. Administrative supervision is concerned with structuring the work environment and providing the resources that enable workers to perform their jobs effectively, educational supervision provides the knowledge and instrumental skills that are the worker's necessary equipment for effective practice (Kadushin, 1992:139). Supportive supervision is often implemented not as separate, explicitly identifiable activity, but rather as part of the work of educational and administrative supervision. Increasing job performance and improving competence through educational supervision provides a sense of accomplishment (which is personality enrichment), makes the job more meaningful, and leads to greater job satisfaction, which is motivation.

## 2.6    Types of supervision.

There are different types of supervision that can be used in working with supervisees. The researcher believes that for supervision to be effective the supervisors must use them interchangeably.

### 2.6.1    Individual supervision.

According to Bernard and Goodyear (1992:49) individual supervision is a cornerstone of professional development. Individual supervision is a one to one supervision session between the supervisor and social worker, and usually more intense than the other methods of supervision. The researcher believes this method is where the supervisor and the worker also discuss personal problems that may be affecting work or their professional relationship.  This is the method where both the worker and the supervisor build a worker-supervisor relationship. The objectives of individual supervision are that it focuses on individual learning needs, and supervisory relationship is important.

Rothmund and Botha (1991:10) suggest that individual supervision can be on – the – spot, unscheduled, informal and unscheduled, informal and unstructured responding to worker's need for ventilation, maybe after handling  a stressful situation.  Seloana (1997:36) states that during the actual supervision conference the focus should be on the worker's self-observation concerning professional development. Coulshed & Mullender (2001:168) agree with the above author in that individual supervision allows for the development of professional and personal

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practice, meeting each staff member at his or her stage of experience and confidence and dealing with needs which cannot be met or which may be threatening in some way when talked about in a group.

In most cases the supervisor supervises more than one worker and it is necessary for them to share knowledge and skills with each other, then group supervision is necessary. The advantage of individual supervision is that the supervisee understands his/her personal progress, learning needs and growth. The supervisee is able to share personal problems with the supervisor. The disadvantage of individual supervision is that the supervisee may feel anxious about supervision; there is no one to share the experience with.

## 2.6.2   Group Supervision.

Barnard and Goodyear (1992:72) define group supervision as the regular meeting of a group of social workers with a designated supervisor for the purpose of furthering their understanding of themselves as clinicians, or their clients, or of service delivery in general. Social workers are aided in their endeavour by their interactions with each other and with their supervisor in the context of group process.

The researcher believes that group supervision offers the greater variety of experiences to each participant and therefore offers greater potential for learning. Group supervision is employed to encourage interaction among members of a work unit and to help develop peer group cohesion (Kadushin, 1992:409). He further states that it develops a sense of belonging to a worker in the agency, a sense of group and professional identity of group cohesion. Several authors view group supervision as an important team building activity and may be undertaken as part of team building work. They stated that each person learns from all the others' through sharing knowledge, experience, hearing different perspectives and discussing issues, both common and unique to each group member. (Compare Morrison, 1993:39; Coulshed and Mullender, 2001:168 and Bogo, Sussman and Globerman, 2004:13). The supervisor is able to observe supervisees in different relationship and additional perspective of how the supervisees function in a group situation. The additional advantages of group supervision are as follows:

  o   It saves time for both the supervisor and
  o   Supervisor and workers learn from each other.

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- o It provides opportunity for social workers to share their experiences with similar problems encountered on the job and possible solution that each has formulated in response
- o Facilitate the giving and receiving of feedback within a supportive setting
- o Generates a corporate sense of responsibility for problem –solving

Geller (1994) in Bogo, Sussman and Globerman (2004:13) indicates that through peer interaction and role playing workers can acquire new skills and develop a more accurate self-appraisal of their ability. They added that workers need a group climate where they feel respected and can trust each other with their vulnerabilities. The researcher in her experience observed that group supervision like group work, supervisees experience group dynamics such as group cohesion, group norms, and group conflict. The role of the supervisor in group supervision is to promote group norms, facilitate group interaction and be supportive. Though group supervision seems to have many advantages it is notable that it has a potential for group pressure or unhealthy peer competition.

### 2.6.3  Consultation/peer supervision.

According to Hare & Frankena in Kadushin (1992:483) peer group supervision is a process by which a group of professionals in the same agency meet regularly to review cases and treatment approaches without a leader, share expertise and take responsibility of their own and each other's professional development and for maintaining standards of service.

 Hardcastle (1992:68) indicates that this method serves as an alternative for a close, costly, narrow span of controlling supervision by an organizational manager. The researcher believes that peer supervision assist professionals because they are at the same level of competency, and their experience and support each other. This can be good for supervisors because in most instances supervisors have no one to take care of them.

The advantage of peer supervision is that the peers are in the "same boat", they are at the same level, and there is no leader. Peer supervision works best between peers with approximately equal levels of competence so that the consultee today may be a consultant tomorrow to her consultant of yesterday. The disadvantage is that the peers might be inexperienced and not able to solve other problems.

## 2.7     PHASES OF SUPERVISION SESSION

As the workers learn and grow they go through phases of supervision that will be discussed below. Several authors (compare Ford and Jones, 1987:71-72 and Coulshed Mullender, 2001:171) discussed the phases of supervision as follows.

### 2.7.1    The Descriptive Stage.

According to Coulshed and Mullender (2001:171) at descriptive stage the aim is getting to know what happened, allowing the staff member to describe each situation with the supervisor intervening minimally, just to check that salient facts have been covered and understood.

At this stage, the supervisor must listen and try to understand the problem as seen by the social worker. It is important to allow the workers to convey their understanding of the situation first, as this will enable them to remain in control of the work, and to feel a sense of responsibility for the problem. The workers must be allowed to communicate their point of view (Ford and Jones, 1987:71).

The supervisor's role at this stage is to encourage the worker, withholding criticism, but avoiding reinforcement of any poor practice.  The Supervisor must avoid we-ism at this stage. The supervisor mustn't create a situation where it seems as if they have a joint responsibility of the work; otherwise the worker does not acquire a sense of responsibility.  The Supervisor must guard against criticism.

### 2.7.2    The Clarification Stage.

 It focuses on 'What did this mean?' The aim of this stage is for the supervisor to establish a common understanding of the situation as it is perceived by the supervisee. The two related issues that should be noted here are the objective problem as brought by client and the problem as diagnosed by the worker, as well as reasons for bringing it to supervision

The supervisor should focus on the difficulties of the supervisee in handling cases, in order to help him/her to still feel in control and responsible. At this stage, the supervisee's tension becomes reduced and the level of confidence in doing her/his work is increased. The supervisor's role is to give support.

### 2.7.3    Analysis phase

Coulshed and Mullender (2001:171) added the analysis phase, and maintain that at this phase an individual is helped to form a pattern out of all the information that has been shared by asking 'How do we make sense of it?' This stage needs to be grounded in relevant knowledge, policy, law, and practical wisdom.

### 2.7.4    The evaluative Stage

At this stage, the supervisee seeks confirmation of the way in which he/she has handled the case or task. The supervisor's role is to encourage positive results or achievements, and to identify those aspects that were difficult to handle. The general principle at this stage is to draw out the supervisee's understanding of the problem and his knowledge and skills relevant to the problem (Ford and Jones, 1987:72). It is at this stage where the supervisor identifies the learning needs of the supervisee in terms of increasing understanding of the problem.

This stage is educational, and direct teaching may be necessary, or the worker may be requested to undertake some research into available resources. The researcher believes that performance evaluation, together with the job description, should be used to evaluate the worker's performance. Recently, performance has been done quarterly in the Department of Social Services in Johannesburg, and there is a reward for those who performed well at the end of a financial year. The role of the supervisor during supervision is to assist workers who are not performing well, by identifying their learning and training needs or to identify what makes them to under perform.

### 2.7.5    Implementation Stage.

At the Implementation phase, the worker is enabled to progress in service delivery, to help him to take the next step. The golden rule at this stage is not to go far beyond the supervisee's present stage of learning. It is also important to remember that the supervisor is not responsible for the pace at which the student or supervisee is able to learn. The supervisor must try to facilitate the student's learning and avoid holding them up.

 At the end the supervisor and supervisee need to be satisfied that as much work as possible in the time available has been done on the topic for supervision. The

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supervisee must be able to move on confidently and the supervisor should ensure that any area of concern have been discussed and resolved.

## 2.8    MODELS OF SUPERVISION.

According to Kaplan (1991) in Engelbrecht (2004:208), a model can be defined as structured and adaptable exposition of reality.

### 2.8.1  Competence model of supervision.

Engelbrecht (2004:206) discussed the competence model of supervision for social workers/students as relevant or suited to the current South African situation, because the implementation of policy as stipulated by White Paper for Social Welfare (Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997) and the South African Qualifications Authority Act (RSA Ministry of Education, 1995) both require that social workers and students demonstrate specific competencies.

The competence model focuses on the outcomes of supervision rather than on the process followed to achieve these outcomes (Engelbrecht, 2002:207).  The workers must be able to demonstrate that they have attained set outcomes, so as to prove that they have successfully accomplished certain tasks. It also focuses on the final results that are expected, that enables the worker through supervision to achieve the anticipated outcomes and demonstrate specific competencies. The supervisor plays the role of facilitator.

Assessment criteria that are used to indicate different categories of competence are discussed as follows (Engelbrecht, 2002:208)

o   Intellectual  competence
    Intellectual competence involves knowing what to do, when to do, it and who has to do it.  The focus is on practical and useful knowledge, but also on the development of more abstract knowledge. Competency and knowing what knowledge to apply to particular people and circumstances must therefore be developed.  During supervision, competencies must be carried over from one situation to another and must be adapted in accordance with the demands of the environment and the situation. This is the pivotal aspect of the competence model.
o   Performance competence

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This involves knowing how to act in any given situation.  In this regard, the focus during supervision is on the ecological perspective.  The worker must be able to assess the impact of systems on the environment.  Strengths in the environment must be facilitated, while limitations must be inhibited.  The worker must be able to critically evaluate his/her own performance competence.

- o Personal competence

  The worker must understanding him/herself, as well as the need for self-development. It develops the mutual relationship between the worker and the supervisor that lays the foundation for the various roles that they both play during supervision. The supervisor's role is to promote worker's self-awareness and to assist him/her in understanding his/her work and related situations. Another role is to highlight areas where self development is necessary and to propose ways in which his/her self-development can be promoted. The supervisor must therefore provide the worker with opportunities for professional development. The supervisee's role is to be actively involved in his/her own development.

- o Consequence competence.

  Consequence competence involves facilitating the worker's effort to determine the effectiveness of their intervention. It takes place on two levels:

➢ The first level focuses on an ecological assessment, which workers do to determine the extent to which their interventions have influenced the interaction between systems and whether development has taken place in the part of the consumer system.

➢ The second level focuses on the extent to which the goals of intervention, aided by the intervention plan, have been achieved.

This implies that a baseline assessment is done prior to intervention, which is then measured again during and after intervention.

### 2.8.2  Outcome-based Supervision.

Outcome means end-products of the learning process. The success of outcomes-based supervision depends on the continuous, systematic and creative application of outcomes-based principles (Engelbrecht, 2002:209).

The two principles of outcomes-based supervision are discussed as follows:

- The community and appropriate role players in practice and welfare agencies should in one way or another be involved in the supervision process so that the social workers may come to understand changing needs, phenomena, policies and structures.

  The supervisors need to take the initiative in an appropriate manner, by incorporating the role players concerned in the supervision process.

- It is centred on the worker and that all workers can learn and achieve, but not necessarily at the same time or in the same manner.

  The supervisor must be flexible during supervision, because the focus is not on procedures, but on the outcomes. The worker must not be measured against what other workers achieve, but only against the outcomes that are supposed to be achieved.  Workers are expected to take responsibility of their own achievement of the outcomes.

### 2.8.3  Empowerment Supervision.

Empowerment supervision is outcomes-based, which in turn is worker-centred. It therefore comprises teaching strategies that result from the joint planning of supervisors and workers so as to provide for a diversity of learning styles. According to Sturgeon (1998:34) empowerment models are aimed at creating independence. Applied to supervision, this involves the maximum participation of the worker in the supervision process while at the same time also respecting their self determination.

The purpose of empowerment is therefore to lead to capacity-building of workers so as to develop their self control regarding their reaction and decisions. The supervisor must therefore assume the role of facilitator and must let go of the power associated with the title of "supervisor", so that a partnership-relationship can exist between the supervisor and the worker, (Engelbrecht, 2002:213).

### 2.9  AIDS IN SUPERVISION

According to Pont (1990:91), aids are tools to help improve supervisors' training and their delegates' learning. The researcher believes that aids are tools that are utilized for better results. Mhango (1997:24) cited that aids should serve to:

- highlight key points
- illustrate complicated information
- add variety and value
- increase the attention span/concentration of the learner and
- reinforce the message

Various aids can be applied by the supervisor to enhance the quality of supervision. Different types of aids are discussed briefly below:

### 2.9.1  Discussions

According to Sithole (1998: 21) the discussion method is the frequently-used aid in supervision.  Using this aid, the student provides a verbal report of the case or process. Discussion takes place when the supervisee relates verbally to the supervisor.  It can be used in group supervision.  The researcher believes that the discussion allows the supervisor to indirectly experience the process between the supervisee and the client.

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### 2.9.2  Work records

According to Mhango (1997:24) the supervisor uses the worker's records to gain access to his/her work through the written accounts submitted before the supervision session.  She further states that the recording will indicate to the supervisor not only the worker's weaknesses but also those areas of functioning where the worker's performance is good. Work records provide an opportunity for the supervisor to reflect on the contents of the work, and to prepare notes, structure the points that will be made, and refer to the previous record to see the pattern of development of the work.

### 2.9.2.1      Types of work records

### 2.9.2.1.1     Process recording/report

The process report is the record of a professional interview or contacts between the social worker and the client.  It is important to keep records so that when the worker resigns or is absent, the other worker can continue with the work or offer assistance to the client. It also helps the supervisor to have an idea of what transpired during the interview.

### 2.9.2.1.2     Progress report

A progress report is usually written to determine the progress of the client or case. After each session with the client, a progress report is written to inform both the supervisee and the supervisor what short and long-term plans are and how these fit into the time frame.

### 2.9.2.1.3     Daily records (diary)

It is important for every worker to keep a diary and to note important dates. A diary helps workers to plan for the day, week, month, and year.  The worker is able to note important dates for the meetings, supervision, submission, date, etc.

### 2.9.3  Direct Observation/Sitting In/Live

Direct observation according to Kadushin (1992:448) is sitting in with the supervisee while conducting an interview with a client. The purpose is to observe whether the worker is doing the work right.   What is important with direct observation is that the client's permission is needed.

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### 2.9.4  Video Tapes

Video tape involves video recording of the actual intervention. Mhango (1997:36) states that video recording and video feedback have been used extensively in counselling and therapy for the purpose of skill training.

Hatting and De Vos (1992:3) state that video playback permits considerable self-learning and encourages the development of self-supervision and independence from supervision.

According to Connor (1994:142) they provide immediate, accurate, detailed and sustained feedback and performance. Playback allows the supervisee to learn more about him/herself.  It gives him/her an opportunity to know his/her weaknesses and strengths. They are able to sit back and observe themselves during the interview. The tape can be stored for future references.

### 2.9.5  Role plays

Role playing is used when the participants attempt to portray a situation as if it were real, using their knowledge and experience to convey how they think the person they are role-playing would behave, think and feel (Sithole, 1997:26).  He further states that role playing is one of the effective ways of ensuring that students apply their theory, and for supervisor to provide feedback on specific forms of behaviour that are in conflict with theory. The researcher believes that role playing is important because it helps people to reflect on their actions.

### 2.9.5  Computers

Social workers in different organizations handle many cases or interviews with clients per day.  As a result they may end up not remembering where other records had been filed. Computers play an important role in record keeping and report writing, and in assisting in caseload management and time management.  They can be used as a means of communication between supervisor and supervisee.  During supervision, the supervisor can retrieve information from the computer, which helps workers to process work more speedily and more accurately.

### 2.9.6.1 E-mail

E-mail can be used as another method of communication between the supervisor and supervisees. The supervisee may send reports through e-mail and vice versa.

### 2.9.6.2 The Internet

The Internet can be used to search for information about supervision throughout the world. It keeps supervisor and supervisee up to date with the information. Each and every worker may put his daily work on computer. At the end of the month the computer will graphically show the percentage of work done by different supervisees. Robinson and Dow (2001:59) state that supervisors using graphic feedback are able to know how many hours supervisee were working daily. Each supervisee will be given a summary of his/her averages, as a graph of his/her own performance. Although the Internet has a disadvantage of people breaking through other people's privacy, security clearance checks can be arranged with Information Technology officers to prevent the risk.

### 2.9.6.3 Video conferencing

Modern technology allows video conferencing as an aid in supervision. Video conferencing utilizes a computer or television screen and digital camera. One is able to communicate with another person in another country live on a screen. Video conferencing can be used on a group or individual basis. The Supervisor may discuss an assignment with the worker in a different area through video conferencing. The advantage of video conferencing is that it saves time and lots of travelling. It is a live interaction between two or more people. One is able to observe the other person's body language even when the participants are in different places. The disadvantage is that it is expensive, and technical problems may be experienced, such as a power failure during interview.

### 2.10 PHENOMENA IN SUPERVISION

Phenomena according to Naudé (1993:16) are commonly found in interaction between people, and its objectives are to sidestep or avoid a problem. The following are the phenomena in supervision:

## 2.10.1    Game playing

According to Kadushin (1992:280) a game is generally played by intelligent, intuitively gifted supervisees who are impatient with routine agency procedures. They claim that professional rendering of services and the administrative procedures conflict with each other, for example claim that it is more important to meet client's needs than to write a report and filling in forms. Naudé (1993:16) defines game playing as conscious behaviour by social workers and supervisors towards each other in the supervision relationship in order to achieve certain objectives which usually undermine the purpose of supervision.  It can be both supervisor and supervisee in supervision with hidden pay-offs for both. The supervisors play games for the same reasons that the supervisees play.

### 2.10.1.1    Games supervisees can play.

o    Supervision changed to social relationship

    Supervisee wants to discuss social and personal issues during work time.

o    Putting  supervisor in a subordinate position

    Asking the supervisor what he/she knows about a particular issue


o    The social worker tries to persuade the supervisor to let him/her do his/her her own thing, e.g. he/she claims it is more important to meet the client's needs than to write reports and fill in forms.

o    Claiming that his/her supervisor is a good supervisor

    Game playing can be dealt with by being aware of it and refusing to play along, confronting the worker openly, clarifying roles, and informing the supervisee of your style of supervision. The supervisor should be fully aware of the type of game-playing that may occur in supervision, so that he/she can identify it and eliminate manipulation by social workers.

## 2.10.2    Dependency

Dependency is defined as the condition of trusting in or relying on another for support or existence (Barnhart and Barnhart, 1992:560).   The supervisor may foster worker's dependency by doing too much for him/her, which results in too little responsibility for action and change in the worker.  Dependency is mostly caused by a fear of uncertainty, a lack of initiatives, a feeling that one needs guidance even for simple tasks, a respect for authority; looking to the supervisor for protection, and being less willing to initiate change. To handle dependency, the supervisor must do the following activities:

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- Build the worker's self confidence
- Encourage the worker to show initiatives
- Be a role model

### 2.10.3    Narcissism

Narcissism is a concentration of psychological interest upon the self, Fines (1986) in Sithole (1998:42). Extreme concentration upon the self can become a serious problem towards achieving the assignment that the worker has been given to complete. A narcistic person has an obsession with self love, needs constant attention, wants to control, resists change, fears failure, lacks empathy, and functions best within a rigid structure. It is therefore necessary for supervisors to identify problems resulting from narcissism, and to deal with them effectively very early in the relationship.

The role of the supervisor is to counsel the workers, who display narcistic behaviour or refer them for therapy. The supervisor must

o    remember that the worker needs empathy and warmth;

o    provide a secure learning environment;

o    show trust and support;

o    avoid confrontation;  and

o    be a positive role model.

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## 2.11        Conclusion

Many authors define supervision as a process, which means that it is continuous and that there are steps followed. Supervision is a process, because after the social worker has been allocated  supervision there must be contracting between the two parties on how supervision will be conducted, frequency, venue, time, and agenda to mention a few. During supervision, the social worker goes through various phases of supervision, namely: the descriptive, clarification, analysis, evaluative and implementation stages. During these stages, the supervisor needs to play different roles and carry out different tasks and need to guard against the phenomena of supervision. Aids can be used to assist both supervisor and supervisee. It is essential for social workers to be trained before they become supervisors, because without training supervision will not be carried out effectively, and consequently it will impact negatively upon the supervisees, clients and the organisation.

# CHAPTER 3

# ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The study was conducted to investigate the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Services in Johannesburg. The researcher did a pilot test with five social workers in the Department of social services in order to ascertain whether the questionnaire will collect the relevant data. These five social workers were not part of the main study. Ninety questionnaires were distributed to social workers and only forty five were returned.

In this chapter, the data collected will be analysed and interpreted in relation to the title of the study which is focused on perspectives of social workers towards supervision.

## 3.2 Research Methodology

The Quantitative approach was used in the study; fore the findings will be presented in a numerical manner using graphs, tables and figures. The type of research undertaken by the researcher was applied research, as the findings will be applied to solve social problems of immediate concern, (Bailey, 1994:25). As referred to in chapter 1, this study will help the Department of Social Development in designing best and creative strategies to enhance their supervision. The design chosen was descriptive in nature because general information is available on supervision, but the intention of the study was to describe social worker's perspectives towards supervision specifically within the Department of Social Development in Johannesburg.

## 3.3 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In the discussion to follow, tables and graphs were used to present the findings from the data collected.

## 3.3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

## 3.3.1.1 Gender
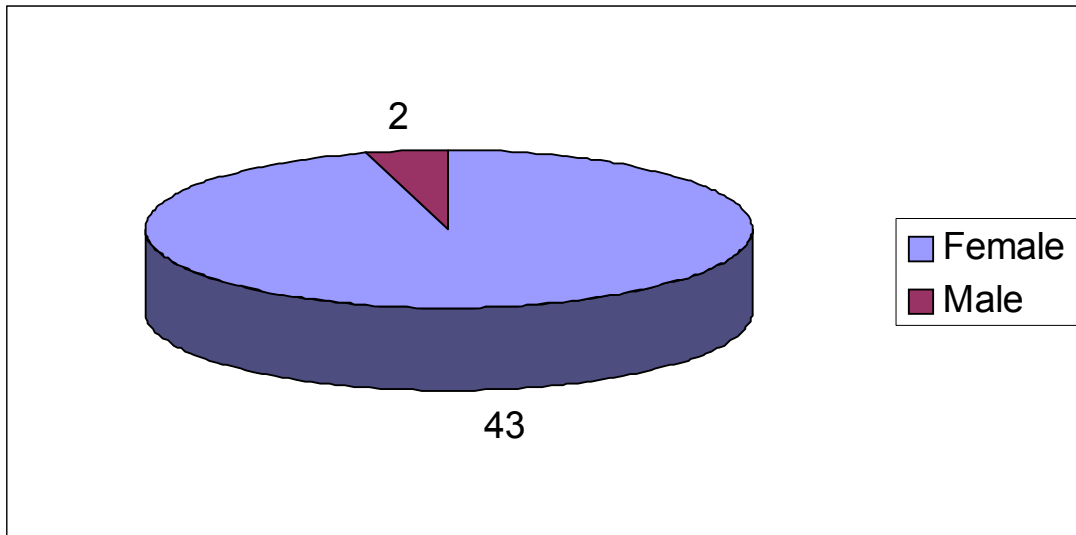


**Figure 1 Gender**

Figure 1 indicates that 96% of social workers in the Department are female and 4% are males. The researcher believes that the above correlates with the national social worker's demographics in terms of gender distribution, whereby the majority of social workers are female.

## 3.3.1.2 Age group
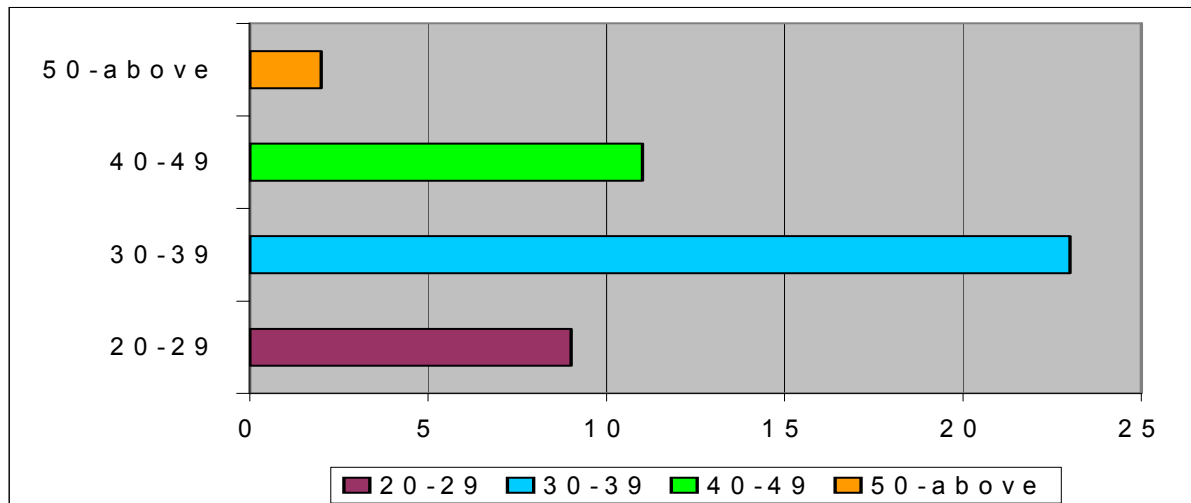


**Figure 2       Age group**

Figure 2 above gives an indication of the age group of social workers working for the Department of Social Development. About 51% of the respondents were between the ages of 30-39, 24% were between 40-49, 20% and only 5% fell in the range of 50 and above. In analyzing the above data, it shows that a high percentage of the respondents' age ranged from 30 – 39 which signifies the adult stage of development. People in this stage have already acquired a qualification (s) and are likely to have been in the field for a few years. Thus from the above one can speculate based on age that the respondents will be qualified and well experienced in the field of social work.

## 3.3.1.3 Highest social work qualification
**Table 1**

| Highest qualifications | Total number of respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Diploma | 0 | 0 |
| BA(sw) 3yrs | 6 | 12 |
| BA (sw) 4 yrs or BA(sw)Hons or | 38 | 74 |
| MA | 3 | 6 |
| Ph.D. | 0 | 0 |
| Others, Specify | 4 | 8 |
| **Total** | **51** | **100** |

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The table above indicates that 74% of the respondents have a BA (SW) Honours or 4yrs degree and 12% have studied BA (SW) 3yrs. Only 6% of respondents have a post-graduate qualification (Master's in clinical Social Work) and 8% has studied other courses such as Diploma in Human Resources, or Diploma in Labour Relations to further their studies. It is notable that though respondents have a degree in social work, only a few of them furthered their studies specifically in social work supervision. The researcher is of the opinion that lack of qualifications on supervision may impact on the perspectives of social workers towards supervision as they lack relevant knowledge of supervision processes and/or functions.

In the table above, the total of the respondents and percentage is above 45 because the respondents chose more than one option due to some of them having more than one qualification besides social work.

### 3.3.1.4        Years of experience in the field of Social Work
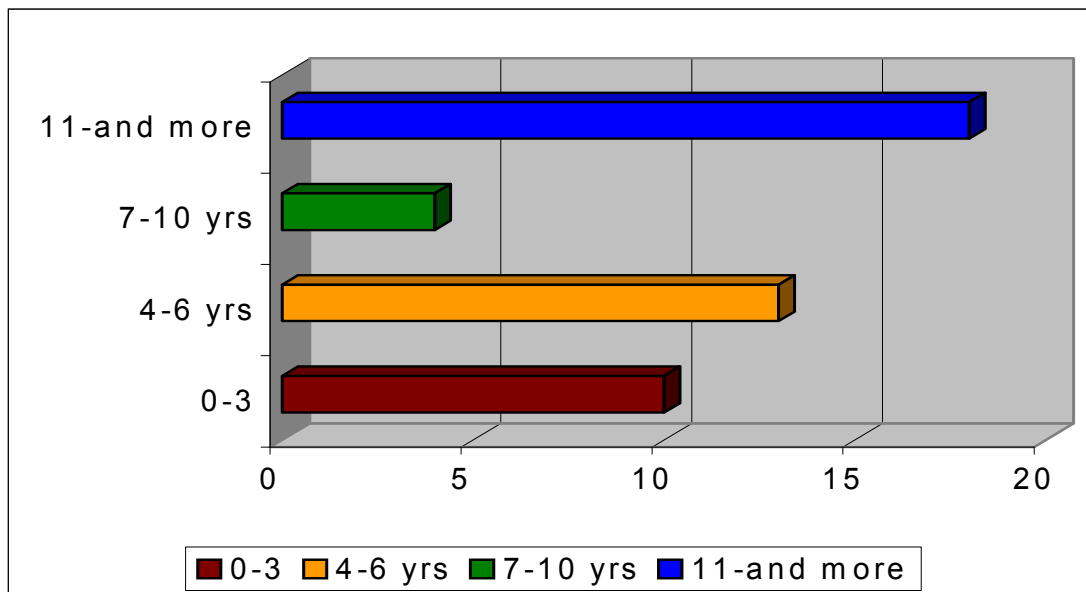


**Figure 3 Years of experience**

The figure above indicates that 40% of the respondents have been working as social workers for more than 11 years, 29% have been working for 4-6 years, and 22% have been working for 0-3 years. Only 9% have 7-10 years experience. The figure above shows that the majority of social workers in the Department of Social Development are well experienced in the field of social work. This may also impact on the perspectives of respondents as social workers with more experience are less likely to rely on supervision

as compared to those who have just entered the field because of knowledge already acquired.

## 3.3.1.5        Length of service with the Department of Social Development
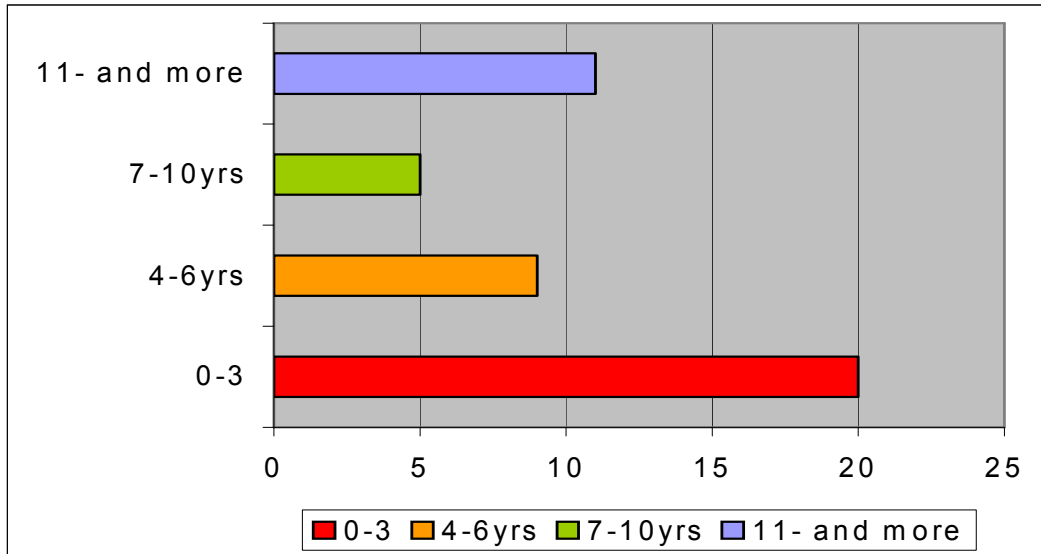


**FIGURE 4 Length of service**

The above figure indicates that the length of service for most respondents 45% is between 0-3 years, while only 24% have worked for the Department for more than 11 years, The other respondent's length of service ranged between 4-6 years 20% and five 11% have been in the Department for less than 10 years. Although the previous figure (Fig 3) shows that some social workers are experienced workers, it is clear that the length of service of most of the workers in the Department of Social Development is less than four years. The researcher believes that, as the majority of respondents are still new in the Department, there may be a need for constant supervision to be able to adjust to the new environment and work demands.  However, there is also a possibility that, due to the social worker's level of experience, there may be no need for constant supervision, because of prior knowledge.

### 3.3.2  NATURE OF SUPERVISION

### 3.3.2.1      The statement that best defines supervision
**Table 2**

| The best definition of supervision | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Supervision is a process of learning and developing new skills | 22 | 33 |
| Intersectional process in which a supervisor has been assigned to assist in, and direct, the practice of supervisees in the areas of teaching, administration and helping | 26 | 39 |
| Monitoring and evaluating the work of supervisees | 15 | 23 |
| Policing other social workers or supervisees | 1 | 2 |
| Others, specify | 2 | 3 |
| **Total** | **66** | **100** |

The table above indicates that 39% of the total respondents believe that supervision can best be defined as an intersectional process in which the supervisor has been assigned to assist in and direct the practice of supervisees in the areas of teaching, administration, and helping as defined by (Munson, 1992:10), 33% believe that supervision is a process of learning and developing new skills and 23% believes that supervision is monitoring and evaluating the work of supervisees. The researcher believes that supervision is a process of learning and developing skills. It is continuous and the social worker and the supervisor go through different phases of supervision.

The 3% of respondents selected the 'others' option and specified that supervision is a process where the supervisee's strengths and weaknesses are identified, and proper measures are put into practice to address them to promote growth and development. The researcher believes that this definition is correct, because it defines supervision as a process and includes growth and development of supervisees. It is notable from the table above that the majority of respondents preferred the more holistic definition of supervision which could be a reflection of the kind of supervision they may need. The respondents were requested to choose more than one option as a result the total number of respondents is not 45.

**3.3.2.2.1 Allocation of supervisor after appointment by the Dept of Social Development**
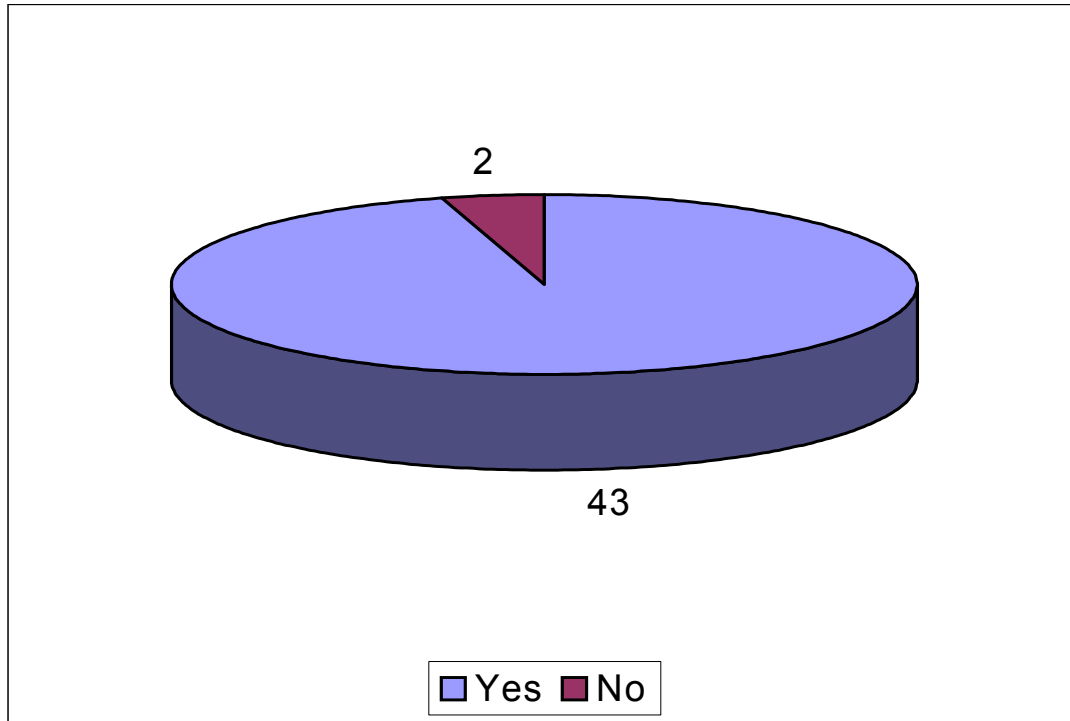


**Figure 5      Allocation of supervisor**

Figure 5 shows that 96% respondents were allocated supervisors after their appointment as social workers and 4% were not allocated supervisors after their appointment. The reason might be that the two have more than 11 years of working experience and the Department might either have thought that they don't need supervision or intend to promote them to supervisor's post.

**3.3.2.3        FORMAL SUPERVISION**
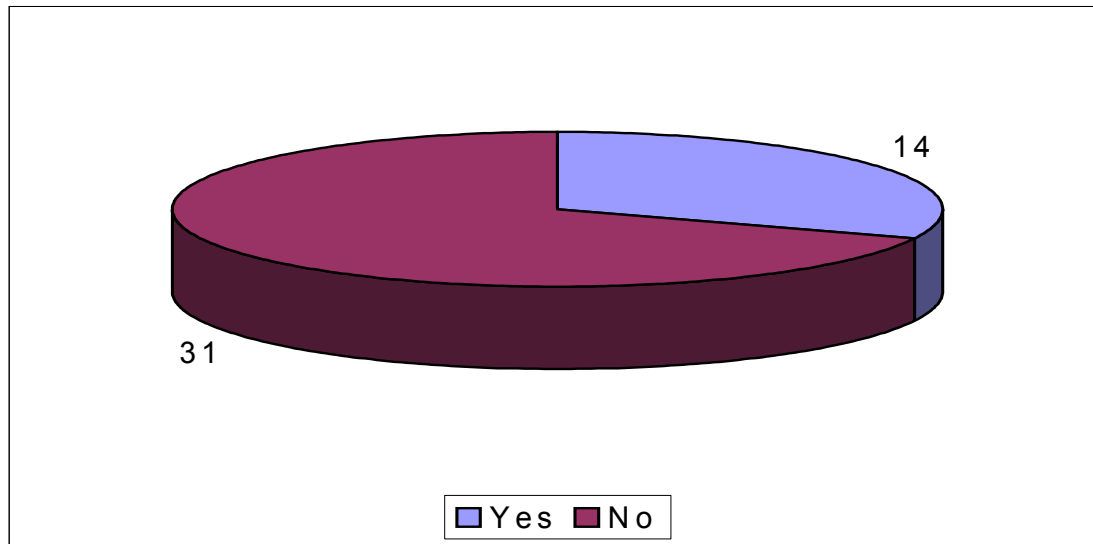


**Figure 6        Formal supervision**

It is interesting to note that although 96% were allocated supervisors after their appointment, only 31% of the respondents received formal supervision while 69% did not receive formal supervision. From the above results, the researcher has noticed a gap in terms of formalizing of supervision within the Department of Social Development and that may impact on quality service delivery. This may imply that supervision is not structured, regular, and evaluated, which raises a concern about how social workers cope in such a challenging environment of social work, which demands constant supervision. Supervision should be conducted regularly, because it is easy for a busy supervisor to fail to formalize the regularity of supervision as a result, supervision is delayed or avoided completely, (Munson 2002:12).

The researcher believes that the workers are allocated supervisors who do not practice in the full capacity of a social work supervisor and thus fail to enter into a supervision contract with the supervisees and apply all the functions of supervision and roles of the supervisor.

### 3.3.2.4    Frequency of supervision sessions
**Table 3**

| Frequency of supervision | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Weekly | 3 | 9 |
| Fortnight | 3 | 9 |
| Monthly | 8 | 24 |
| Bi-monthly | 4 | 12 |
| Others | 15 | 46 |
| **Total** | **33** | **100** |

The table above indicates that 24% of the respondents are supervised monthly, 12% are supervised bi-monthly, 9% weekly, 9% fortnightly and 46% indicated others. It is clear from the above that the majority of social workers chose the option "others" by which they specified that supervision takes place when necessary, sporadically, or that they consult the supervisor when the need arises.

The researcher believes that it is possible that workers are supervised when necessary only, or when the need arises, because the table shows that 69% don't receive formal supervision.  In these cases, supervision is done when the need arises, when there is a case that needs to be discussed.

The total of the table above is 45 because some respondents indicated that they were not allocated supervisors and others (10 respondents) indicated that they did not receive formal supervision, and as a result they did not answer this question.

### 3.3.2.5    Duration of supervision
**Table 4**

| Duration of supervision | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| 45 Minutes | 14 | 31 |
| 1 Hour | 5 | 11 |
| 1-2 Hours | 2 | 5 |
| Others, specify | 24 | 53 |
| **Total** | **45** | **100** |

The table above indicates that 31% of respondent's supervision session last for 45 minutes, 11% indicated that it last for 1 hour, while the majority of respondents 53% chose the option of 'other' and motivated that the duration of supervision is not stated, it depends

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on the nature of the case, some stated that it is less than 30 minutes, the amount of work and lastly some stated that they do not receive supervision. The researcher believes that a reasonable duration of supervision is between 45 minutes and 1 hour.

### 3.3.2.6        CONTRACTING IN SUPERVISION
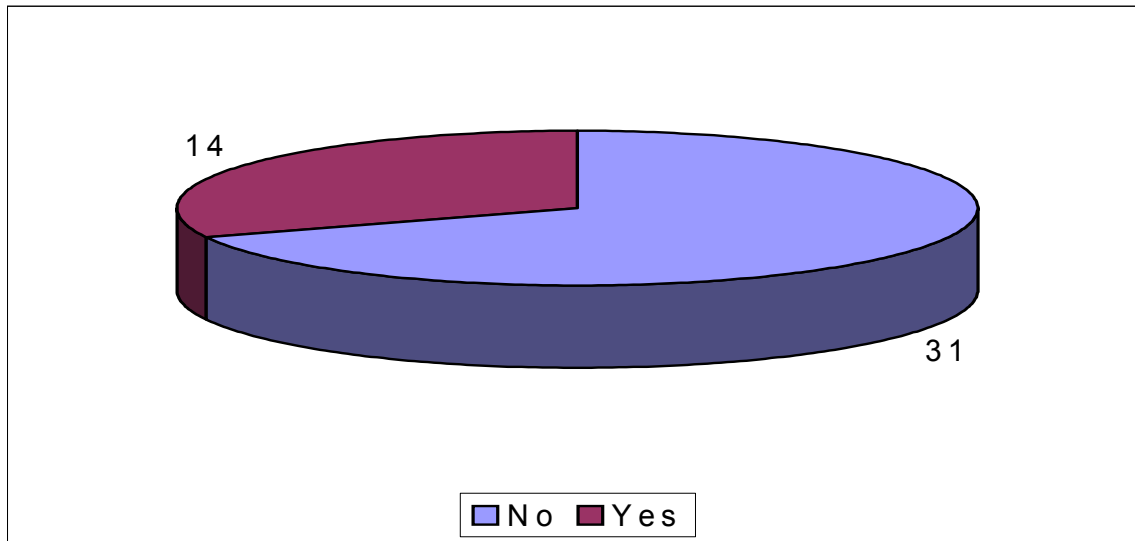


**Figure 7        Contracting in supervision**

Figure 7 indicates that the majority of respondents 69% did not contract for supervision with their supervisors, and 31% did contract with their supervisors.  However 53% of the respondents reported that their contract was verbal and eight 47% was written – refer to table below. This figure supports figures 5 and 6 where the majority 96% of social workers are allocated supervisors and the majority 69% of these do not receive formal supervision. The researcher believes that the reason might be that there is no contracting in supervision. As a result, the workers receive unstructured supervision.

 It is evident that contracting in supervision is not taken seriously, because a large group of respondents reported that they never contracted with their supervisors for supervision. The researcher is of the opinion that supervisees regard contracts as a one-sided document when supervisors don't live up to the contracts. If there is no contracting in supervision, both parties will not be committed to the process. Contracting identifies roles and tasks for

both the supervisor and supervisee in the process, and lays down the criteria that will be helpful during the measurement of progress toward the desired goal.  This is supported by several authors (Compare Ford and Jones, 1987:32 and Morrison, 1993:29) a contract is a specific and explicit way of identifying the expectations between the worker and the supervisor which will govern the learning opportunities in the workplace.

### 3.3.2.7      METHOD OF CONTRACTING

**Table 5**

| Method of contracting | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Verbal | 9 | 53 |
| Written | 8 | 47 |
| **Total** | **17** | **100** |

The table above indicate that 53% of respondent's contract is verbal and 47% reported that their contract was written. The majority of respondents indicated that they never contracted with their supervisors. The researcher believes that the respondents who did not answer this question are those who indicated that they never contracted with their supervisors in the above figure as a result the total result of respondents and percentage is not 45.

### 3.3.2.8      Planning for supervision
**Table 6**

| Do you and supervisor plan for supervision? | Total Number of Respondents | Percentages % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 13 | 30 |
| No | 30 | 70 |
| **Total** | **43** | **100** |

A large group of respondents 70% reported that they don't plan for supervision with their supervisors and 30% reported that they do plan for supervision together with their supervisors. About 4% did not answer the question because they indicated that they had not been allocated supervisors after their appointment. 70% of the respondents responded that supervision takes place when necessary or when there is a serious case and they need the supervisor's opinion.  In comparing Figures 5 to 7 and Tables 3 to 6, one can

deduce that supervision within the Department of Social Development was not done according to the propositions for effective supervision as quoted in Munson (2001:12) that supervision must be structured, regular, consistent, case-oriented, and evaluated.

### 3.3.2.9      FORMAT OF SUPERVISION
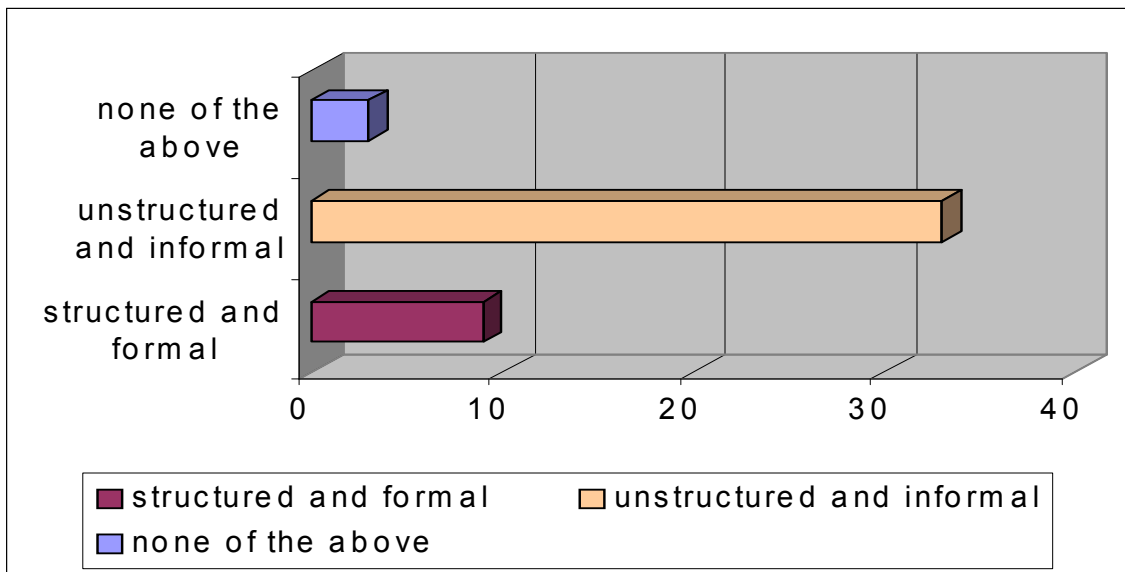


**Figure 8 Format of Supervision**

Figure 8 reveals that a considerable group of 73% respondents indicated that their supervision session was unstructured and informal. Most of the above respondents remarked that they only received supervision when they needed a second opinion on in a particular or complicated case. A small group of 20% respondents indicated that their supervision was structured and formal and 6% reported that they don't receive supervision at all. It seems that in most instances supervisees were the ones who ask for supervision. The research thus reveals that most of the respondents affirm that supervision is unstructured and unplanned. According to Munson (2002:12) a formal structure for supervision is important because it is the foundation for effective supervision. Structured supervision is one of the characteristics for effective supervision.

### 3.3.2.10     Adherence to scheduled supervision

**Table 7**

| Do you always adhere to your scheduled supervision? | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| No | 34 | 79 |
| Yes | 9 | 21 |
| specify if answer is no | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **43** | **100** |

The majority of respondents 79% indicated that they don't always adhere to scheduled supervision, and 21% stated that they always adhere to scheduled supervision session. Two respondents did not answer this question because they indicated that they had not been allocated supervisors.  The respondents were asked to motivate the reasons for not adhering to supervision and most of them reported that they always postpone because of the supervisor's commitment, and sometimes they themselves were attending to clients. Munson (2002:12) states that supervision should be conducted regularly, because it is easy for a busy supervisor to fail to formalize the regularity of supervision, and consequently, supervision is delayed or avoided completely.

### 3.3.2.11     Periodic evaluation of supervision

**Table 8**

| Evaluation of supervision | Total Number of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 12 | 29 |
| No | 29 | 71 |
| **Total** | **41** | **100** |

The table above indicates that a majority of respondents 71% reported that their supervision is not evaluated periodically and 29% reported that their supervision is evaluated periodically. The 29% respondents who reported that their supervision is evaluated periodically indicated that evaluation is conducted once a month. Although the research process is not followed, other aspects of supervision are carried out.  According to Hoffman (1990:104) the supervisor is expected to review and evaluate the tasks allocated to the students or supervisees to ensure that allocated tasks conform to agency procedures. He further states that evaluation is used to assess the quality of each of the supervisee's interventive contacts; to assess the supervisee's planning and frequency of

contact with each client system; and lastly to provide guidance to supervisee on how to assess needs.

Some of the respondents who did not receive formal supervision did not answer this question, so that the total number of respondents does not add up to 45.

## 3.3.2.12    Records of supervision
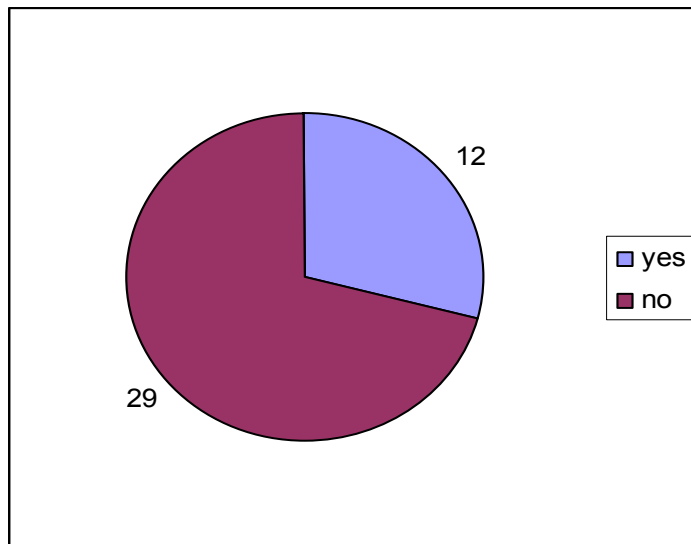


**Figure 9 Records of supervision**

Figure above indicate that 70% of the total respondents reported that the supervision sessions are not recorded, and 30% reported that supervision sessions are recorded. The researcher believes that both the supervisor and supervisee must keep records of the supervision sessions for future reference and to monitor progress and development.

**3.3.2.13    Supervision methods**
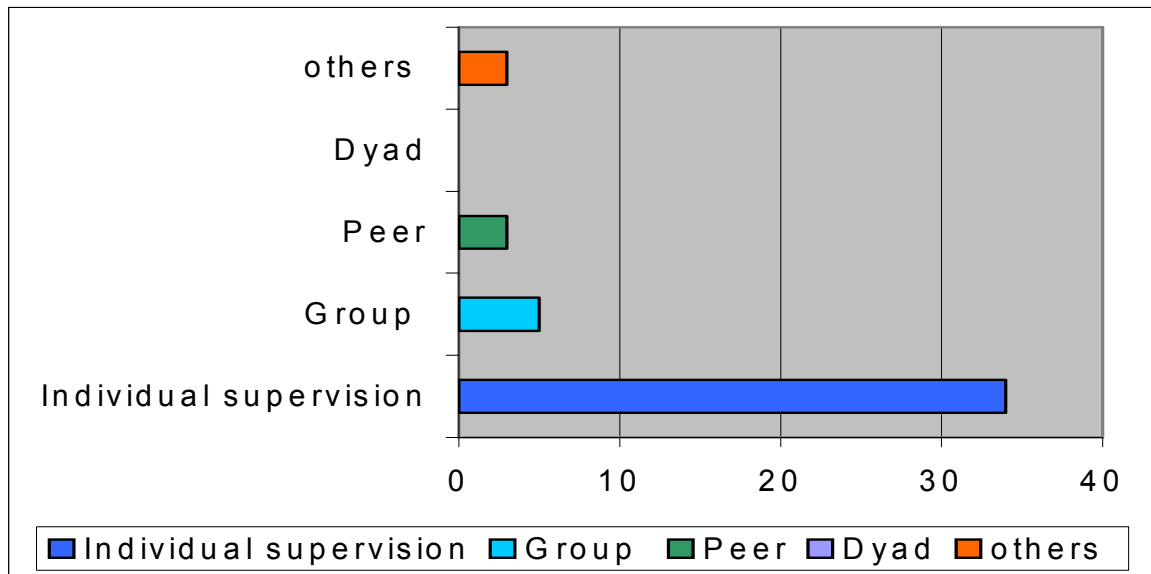


**Figure 10    Supervision methods**

The majority of respondents 76% indicated that the method applied during supervision was individual supervision. Rothmund and Botha (1991:10) state that individual supervision can be on-the-spot, unscheduled, informal and unstructured, or informal and unstructured responding to workers' need for ventilation. This is supported by the findings in figure 8, that 73% of respondents received informal and unstructured supervision. 33% of all respondents mentioned that they receive supervision whenever a need arises, when they need to discuss complicated or difficult cases, or when in need of a second opinion.

### 3.3.3  FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

### 3.3.3.1        Functions of supervision applied during supervision

**Table 9**

| Which function of supervision is applied during supervision? | Total Number of Respondents | Percentages % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Administrative | 23 | 19 |
| Educational | 18 | 15 |
| Supportive | 27 | 22 |
| Personality | 11 | 9 |
| Motivation | 26 | 21 |
| Modelling | 14 | 12 |
| Not applicable | 2 | 2 |
| **Total** | **121** | **100** |

The table above indicates that 22% of the respondents reported that the function of supervision that was applied during supervision was supportive, and 21% indicated the motivational function, 19% they selected administrative function, 15% indicated the Educational function, 12% selected the Modelling function, 9% selected the Personality function and 2% indicated that none of the above is applied, because they don't receive supervision.

The table shows that the total of respondents is more than 45 and this is because the respondents were asked to choose more than one option. It was necessary in this question to get an idea of which functions are common during their supervision, since they all have to be applied if supervision is done properly. It is interesting to note that, though most social workers were not receiving formal supervision, they still felt that the supportive function was the most applicable function. This shows a positive reflection on the perspectives of social workers towards the supervision in the Department of Social Development.

### 3.3.3.2     MOTIVATIONAL FUNCTION

**Table 10**

| The extent to which supervisors play motivator role | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| To a large extent | 13 | 29 |
| To an extent | 16 | 36 |
| not at all | 14 | 31 |
| not applicable | 2 | 4 |
| **Total** | **45** | **100** |

In this section, respondents were asked to evaluate the extent to which their supervisors applied the motivation function. The table shows that a large group of 36% respondents reported that their supervisors played the role of motivator to a certain extent. This seems to correlate with the feedback received in the previous table which indicated that motivational function was chosen as the second highest function applied during supervision. About 31% of the participants indicated that they are not motivated by their supervisors at all, 29% reported that their supervisor plays the role of  motivator to a large extent and 4% indicated "not applicable", as they did not receive supervision at all.

### 3.3.3.3     MODELLING FUNCTION

**Table 11**

| Do you regard your supervisor as a role model | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 19 | 50 |
| No | 19 | 50 |
| **Total** | **38** | **100** |

In this section, respondents were requested to indicate whether their supervisors acted as role models. The table above indicates an equal distribution of responses in terms of supervisors acting as role models. Half of the respondents 50% reported that they regard their supervisors as role models while the other half 50% of the respondents do not regard their supervisors as role models. The total on the table is not 45 because seven 16 respondents did not answer the question, which could be linked to a few reasons, including lack of understanding of the question, they did not receive supervision, thus no need to respond, or did not want to answer the question.

### 3.3.3.4    SUPPORTIVE FUNCTION

**Table 12**

| Serial No | How supportive was your supervisor? | Total Number of Respondents | Percentages |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D |
| 1 | Very supportive | 19 | 42 |
| 2 | Supportive | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Average | 16 | 36 |
|  | Least supportive | 3 | 7 |
| 4 | Not supportive | 7 | 16 |
| 5 | other specify | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | **Total** | **45** | **100** |

The respondents had to evaluate on a scale of 1-5 the support they received from their supervisors. The table indicate that 42% of respondents evaluated their supervisors as very supportive, 36% reported that their supervisors support them on an average rate, seven 16% reported that they are not supportive and three 7% reported that they are least supportive.

This still confirms that though the supervision was not structured, at least the social workers did receive support in managing their jobs. This is an indication that some of the elements of supervision are present or exist within the Department, but they are not formalized. This impacts on how supervision is being utilized to the benefit of the social workers.

### 3.3.3.5    Communication on developments regarding the organization
**Table 13**

| Update on developments regarding org. | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 27 | 60 |
| No | 16 | 36 |
| Sometimes | 2 | 4 |
| **Total** | **45** | **100** |

The majority of respondents 60% reported that they are constantly updated on the developments in the organization, and 36% reported that they are not updated with new developments in the Department or organization. This question was posed to determine

the level of communication on developments taking place within the organization. In the table above, it is clearly reflected that there was communication for some employees but not for all of them. This issue could have been addressed through group supervision to ensure that everyone is on par with the developments within the organization, since they do impact on service delivery. This is supported by Kadushin (1992:46) who cites that the role of the supervisor is to listen to the workers and to keep them updated on any developments in the organisation. He further stated that the supervisor has the responsibility to channel information from the workers to management, and vice versa.

### 3.3.4 THE VIEWS OF SOCIAL WORKERS ON SUPERVISION

### 3.3.4.1 REASONS FOR SUPERVISORS' INEFFECTIVENESS

**Table 14**

| Reasons for supervisors' ineffectiveness | Total Number of respondents | Percentages % |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of resources | 23 | 19 |
| Lack of training for supervisors | 32 | 26 |
| Bad personality | 8 | 6 |
| High case-load of supervisor | 27 | 22 |
| Lack of time | 29 | 23 |
| Others, specify | 5 | 4 |
| **Total** | **124** | **100** |

In this question, respondents were asked to tick more than one option to get an overview of their perspectives about ineffective supervision. Table 14 indicates that 26% of the respondents think that the reason why supervisors are not effective in their supervisory tasks is because of lack of training for supervisors, 23% blamed lack of time, 22% mentioned the high case-load for supervisors, 19% ascribed it to lack of resources, eight 6% to bad personality, and 4%, others. Those who said "others" specified that ineffective supervision is caused by the following:

- Handling cases and rendering supervisory tasks causes the supervisor not to focus
- Social workers with the same years of experience as the supervisor are likely to reject supervision, because of the assumption that they know enough.

 The respondents were asked to tick more than one option and consequently the total is more than 45.

**3.3.4.2      NEED FOR SUPERVISION**
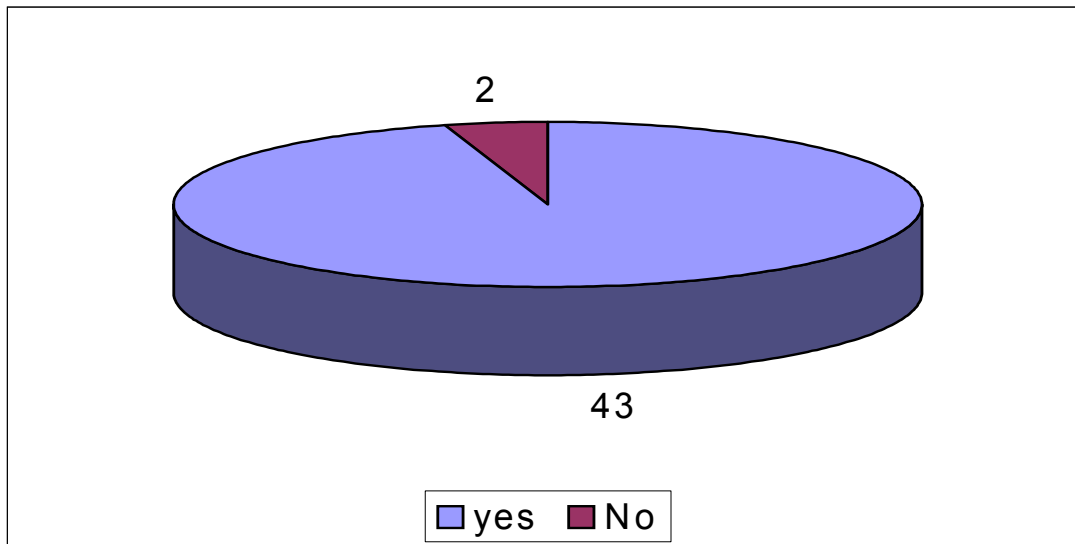


**Figure 11 Need for supervision**

Respondents were asked to rate the necessity or significance of supervision in their work context. According to figure 9, majority of respondents 96% regarded supervision necessary in their job, and 4% did not think that supervision was necessary.   The respondents were asked to motivate the answer, and they indicated that supervision is necessary for support, helps with high burnout in the Department, helps to equip supervisees with new skills and personal development, and monitors and evaluates their jobs. Kadushin (1992:30-35) supports the above responses by stating that supervision is significant in social work, because the greatest percentage of social workers perform their professional functions within an agency, which has bureaucratic structure, and this requires supervision.   He further states that the agency needs to be accountable to the community and to make sure that policies are correctly implemented; therefore the workers need to be supervised to ensure accountability to the community and political entities for correct implementation of policies.

### 3.3.4.3 TRAINING OF SUPERVISORS ON SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION
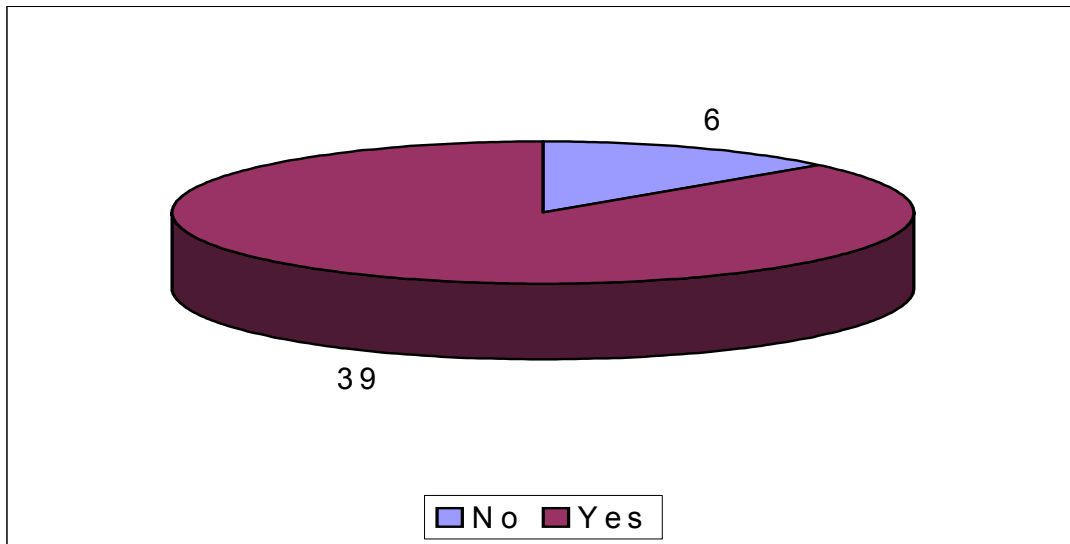


**Figure 12 Training of supervisors on social work supervision**

Figure 12 indicates that 87% of respondents believe that social workers need to be trained first before they become supervisors, 13% think that social workers do not need to be trained first before they become supervisors. The above findings are supported by several authors, Mathebula, (2003:11, Ngweniso, (1998:1), Seloana, (1997:16-17) and Mudau, (1996:56), who state that there are social workers in supervisory positions with no special training in supervision, and others are appointed as managers or supervisors on the basis of previous experience obtained as direct service practitioners, rather than on their potential, development, education, and training in management. This seems to be one of the major causes for ineffective supervision, whereby because of lack of knowledge no contracting is done, no planning for the supervision and ensuring that all the functions are applied. The results above correlate with the findings in Table 11 which revealed that social workers feel that one of the reasons for ineffective supervision is lack of training for supervisors.

## 3.3.4.4      EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPERVISION
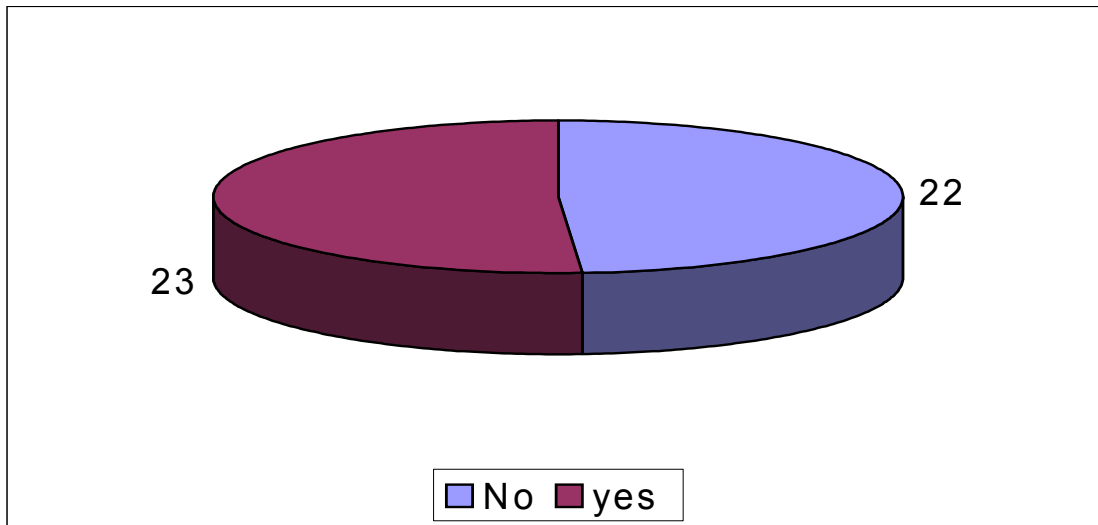


**Figure 13 Effectiveness of supervision**

Respondents were requested to evaluate whether the supervision received was effective or not. According to the table, 51% of the respondents cited that they received effective supervision, and 49 % think it was not effective. They further motivated that it is effective in the sense that it was educative, skilful, practical, and realistic.  Forty nine percent 49% motivated that the supervision they received was not effective, because it was non-productive, non-educative, and unskilful.   The findings reflect that almost half of the respondents believe that supervision they received was effective and the other half believes it is not effective. The finding does not support the result in figure 5, where 69% reported that they do not receive formal supervision.  According to Munson (2002: 12), one of the propositions for effective supervision is structured supervision (regular, consistent, evaluated etc) which was not applied in the Department of Social Development.   It is interesting to note that for the respondents, the lack of formality for supervision did not impact on their viewpoints on effective supervision.

## 3.3.4.5        Preferred frequency of supervision
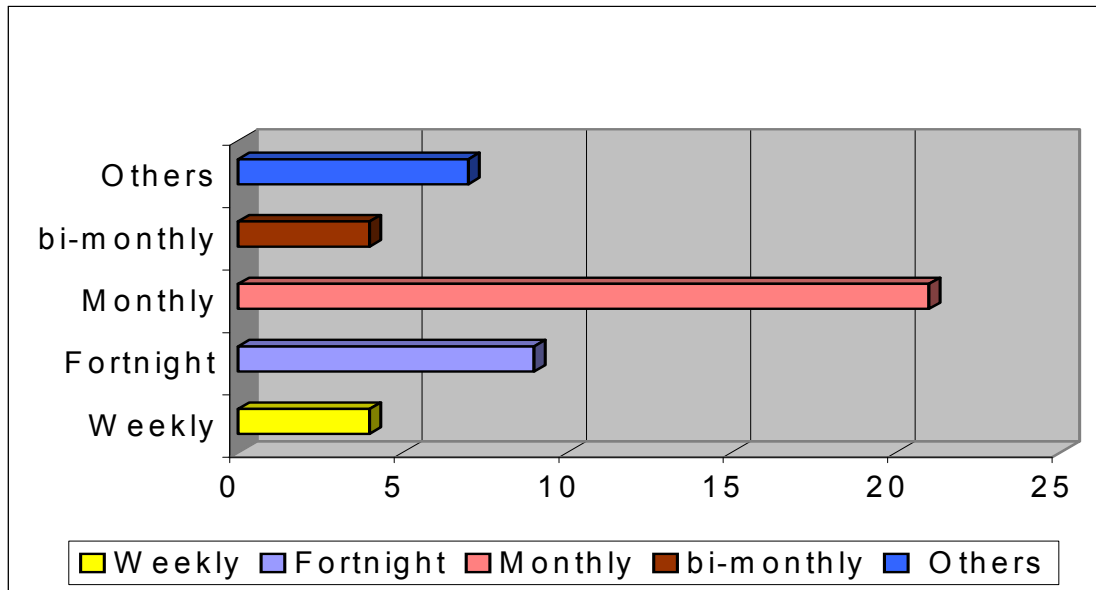


**FIGURE 14 Preferred frequency of supervision**

Figure 14 Indicates that 47% of respondents would like to be supervised on a monthly basis, 20% indicated they would like to be supervised fortnightly, 16% indicated "other", and they specified that they wanted to be supervised quarterly, and consult when a need arises, because of different levels of performance, for instance those who perform poorly should be supervised frequently. The high percentage shown for monthly supervision points out that the majority of workers need supervision monthly and it is important to focus on issues of structuring supervision and contracting to ensure regular supervision.

### 3.3.4.6        Preferred method of supervision

**Table 15**

| Preferred method of supervision | Total Number of Respondents | Percentage % |
|---|---|---|
| Individual | 25 | 26 |
| Group | 29 | 30 |
| Peer | 10 | 11 |
| Dyad | 1 | 1 |
| Consultation | 30 | 32 |
| None, specify | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **95** | **100** |

Table 15 indicates that 32% of respondents prefer consultation with supervisors,  30% of respondents are in favour of group supervision, 26%  indicated individual supervision, 11% prefer peer supervision, and 1% is dyad supervision. The highest percentage of respondents preferred the consultation method as compared to individual, group, and peer supervision methods. The researcher believes that the reason might be because consultation is done only when one needs a supervisor's opinion or assistance in a difficult case which is currently practiced in the Department according to the findings on figure 7, where 73% of the respondents indicated that they received informal and unstructured supervision.

The total number of respondents in Table 12 is more than 45, because respondents were asked to tick more that one option.

**3.3.4.7      Preferred function of supervision to be applied during supervision**
**Table 16**

| Function | 1=Very important | 2=Important | 3=Average | 4=Less Important | 5=Not important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative | 3 | 15 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| Educational | 12 | 20 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Supportive | 11 | 21 | 12 | 5 | 3 |
| Personality enrichment | 6 | 12 | 12 | 5 | 3 |
| Motivation | 9 | 18 | 8 | 4 | 1 |
| Modelling | 2 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 8 |

In this table, respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 (1=Very important and 5=Not important) the preferred functions of supervision that they would like to see applied by their supervisors during supervision.

In analyzing the table above in totality, it is clear that respondents felt that most functions were important (administrative, educational, supportive, personality enrichment, and motivation). However, it is notable from the findings that though five functions were rated as important the supportive function was chosen by more respondents (21 respondents). This indicates that most respondents would prefer to receive support from their supervisors. This could be due to work pressure and working conditions within the Department. Few of the respondents rated the modelling function average and this could be due to the fact that the basic functions of supervision are usually the educational, administrative and supportive functions and modelling function is viewed as an additional function, since it is at times not even acknowledged in some of the literature.

**3.3.4.8    RESPONDENTS' RECOMMENDATION ON HOW SUPERVISION CAN BEST BE IMPROVED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**The respondents suggested that:**

- supervisors be trained before they become supervisors;

- supervisors' skills and knowledge be enriched by regular training and workshops;

- more staff be employed, so that supervisors can be given enough time to attend to supervision;

- supervisors be allocated low case-loads to be able to fulfil their supervision functions;

- supervision be more structured whereby all employees have supervision once a month;

- workers be correctly placed in the working environment - so that skills can be directed to the correct place;

- both material and human resources be provided to the organization for effective services;

- contracting between supervisee and supervisor and supervision be planned and scheduled;

- monitoring and evaluation tools be put in place for supervisors;

- supervision policy be developed and implemented in the organization.

### 3.3.5   Conclusion

From this chapter, it is clear that though majority of the social workers were allocated supervisors after their appointment, most of them did not receive formal and structured supervision. However it is interesting to note that most social workers actually preferred the informal kind of supervision whereby they were supervised when necessary. This may imply that that social workers are either satisfied with the current structure of supervision or they are not clear of the processes of supervision that should be followed to ensure quality service delivery. Thus it would be significant to explore the knowledge of social workers about supervision to understand their own expectations of supervision. Based on the findings from this chapter the researcher will draw proper conclusions and make recommendations on how to enhance supervision in the Department of Social Development.

# CHAPTER 4

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher conducted a thorough investigation on the perspectives of social workers regarding supervision, and the following conclusions and recommendations were made.

## 4.2 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher has formulated the following conclusions:

➤ The researcher distributed 90 questionnaires, and 45 were returned. The researcher was informed by the Human Resource officer that the social workers that they had at the time data was collected are 80. About 10 social workers resigned from the Department, including the researcher. Thirty-five respondents did not return their questionnaires. The reasons for not retuning the questionnaires could include: lack of time, lack of interest in the study, or some other reason.

➤ The majority of workers working for social development are between the ages 30-39, followed by 40-49, and a few are between the ages 20-29. Most social workers are experienced workers in the Department. 40% of the respondents have been working for 11 and more years followed by 29% for 4-6 years. 40% of the social workers have worked for 11 years, and 24% have worked for the Department of social development.

➤ All social workers have a degree in social work, a few have an MA degree in social work, and nobody has a PhD degree. This shows that most social workers did not upgrade their studies, after qualifying as social workers.

➤ About 96% of the social workers were allocated supervisors after being appointed in the Department of Social Development, while 4% were not.

➤ 69% of the respondents indicated that they don't receive formal supervision, even though they were allocated supervisors. The respondents believe that the reason

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why they don't receive formal supervision is because the supervisors keep on postponing, and priority is given to service delivery. The researcher is of the opinion that there is no contracting and planning of supervision and as result supervision is ignored.

➢ The frequency of supervision was different, the majority of respondents indicated that the time for supervision is not known, because supervision takes place sporadically, when a need arises. This is reason enough to support the fact that 69% of respondents don't receive formal supervision and that supervision received was informal and unstructured.

➢ The majority (69%) of the respondents indicated that they had never contracted with their supervisors for supervision.  The researcher is of the opinion that supervisors do not view contracting as one of the processes of supervision.  Contracting helps to identifies the tasks and roles of the participants in the process of supervision. This is an indication that supervisors need training in supervision.

➢ A few respondents (18%) indicated that their contract with supervisors was written and 20% indicated a verbal contract.  This still shows that no effort was put into implementing effective and professional supervision for the social workers at the Department of Social Development.

➢ Most (67%) of the respondents indicated that neither they nor their supervisors they planned for supervision. This also shows that supervision was not structured and no agenda was used, thus evaluation could be a challenge. This confirms that supervision was conducted only when it was necessary which sow that no contracting was done.

➢  A high percentage of respondents (76%) selected individual supervision as the method applied during supervision. Although individual supervision allows for the development of professional and personal practice and for meeting   each staff member at their stage of experience and confidence which cannot be met or may be threatening in some way when talked about in a group, the researcher is of the view that most supervisors don't apply other methods of supervision.

➤ The social workers indicated that the supportive function of supervision is applied during supervision, followed by the motivation and administrative functions.

➤ About 60% of the social workers agreed that they are being updated on developments in the organization, while 36% indicated that they are not informed. The researcher is of the opinion that the reason might be that the workers do not give themselves time to read circulars or new documents, or meeting are not held frequently where new developments can be discussed.

➤ Multiple responses were given regarding what makes supervisors not to be effective in their supervisory tasks, and the responses point mainly to a lack of training for supervisors, a lack of time, the high case-load of supervisors, and a lack of resources.

➤ A large percentage (96%) of the respondents believes that supervision is necessary in their jobs. According to the researcher, supervision is necessary because it assists the worker and the supervisor to render effective and efficient social work services to clients.

➤ The majority (87%) of the respondents believe that supervisors must be trained before they become supervisors. The researcher is of the opinion that supervisors must not be appointed on the basis of their years of experience, but rather on their competence or credibility.

➤ There was a slight percentage difference between the social workers who believe that supervision they received was effective (51%) and 49% believed that it was ineffective.

➤   Most respondents would like to be supervised on a monthly basis. The researcher is of the opinion that supervision once a month is ideal, because most workers (78%) are experienced and have been working for more than 4 years, therefore there is no need for weekly supervision.

➢ The social workers were of the opinion that educational, supportive, administrative, motivational, personality enrichment supervision was important in their job performance. However, out of the five important functions, the supportive function was chosen by the majority of respondents. This is a signal that there is a need for support on the side of the social workers to deal with the demands of the ever changing and challenging social work environment.

## 4.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the conclusions:

➢ The Department of Social Development should develop a policy on social work supervision. The policy must cover issues of criteria for appointing supervisors, the roles of the supervisors and supervisees. The process that must be followed to conduct supervision must also be outlined in the policy. The policy must be communicated to all the employees of the Department to ensure transparency.

➢ Proper and professional training for supervisors should be put in place before supervisors carry out their duties as supervisors. Supervision training or workshops must be held continuously. The Department should contract with universities to offer supervision training. Such training should also be applied when one social worker is promoted internally into a supervisor/management position. This will guarantee that all social workers in supervisory positions are well trained to offer effective supervision.

➢ Supervision should adhere to the 5 propositions as outlined by Munson (2002:12) who states that supervision should be structured, regular, consistent, case-oriented and evaluated.  In implementing the above propositions, supervision will improve and will impact positively on service delivery.

➢ Supervision of social workers should form part of the key performance areas of all supervisors to ensure that they fulfil their duties as supervisors. This will also help management in evaluating the performance of supervisors.

➢ The Department of Social Development must be realistic in case allocation for the supervisors. Supervisors must not be allocated a high case-load, since these have an impact on the management of their supervisees. Due to a high workload, supervisors are not able to make time for supervision. It is important, therefore, for the Department to do case-load allocation based on the job design of the supervisor and the number of supervisees under the control of the supervisor.

➢ It is crucial that supervisors not be appointed based solely on their years of experience, but rather on their competency and credibility. In case such appointment is done, the relevant supervisor should receive training before assuming his/her new duties of being a supervisor.

➢ Monitoring and evaluation tools should be developed for supervision in the organisation. The Department may establish a task team that conducts inspection quarterly to peruse the supervision files and to make sure that supervision is done and the policy and guideline are used.

➢ The Department can benefit if this research could be extended to other provinces within Social Development to ascertain whether the viewpoints of social workers towards supervision are the same as those who took part in this study. If a study is done on a provincial level, one can be in a position to make conclusions based on broad viewpoints of a larger sample thus be able to make generalizations. This could help in ensuring that recommendations are directed to the national office whereby standardised policies and procedures on supervision could be developed and implemented to ensure quality service delivery and to achieve organisational objectives.

## 4.4    CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study clearly confirmed that there is limited formal or structured supervision within the Department. However, it is interesting to note that although supervision was not structured, most respondents still viewed it as being effective and that may be an indication that social workers lack the knowledge or clarity of what to expect during supervision. This implies that because of lack of structure, the roles, functions and methods of supervision were not well implemented. In addition, the research has also confirmed that the reason for ineffective supervision was due to lack of training of supervisors on supervision. The perspectives of social workers regarding supervision seem to have been mixed since some felt supervision was effective and others felt it was ineffective. Furthermore, though social workers stated their need for formal supervision they again revealed that they preferred to be supervised on a consultation basis and mostly when it is necessary. Thus a specific needs analysis may assist the Department in determining the specific needs of social workers regarding supervision.

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**ANNEXURE A - CONSENT FORM**

Participant's name ----------------------------------------------       Date ------------

**Principal Investigator:     Ms M.B. Mboniswa  19 Geelhout Street Marais Steyn Park Edenvale 1609.**

**INFORMED CONSENT**

1. **Title of study:**   Perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development, Johannesburg.

2. **Purpose of the study:** To explore the perspectives of social workers regarding the supervision in the Department of Social Services, Johannesburg.

3. **Procedures:** I will be asked to complete a questionnaire which I will return to the researcher by mailbox.

4. **Benefits:** I am aware that there are no direct benefits to me for participating in the study. However, the study will benefit the Department of Social Services because both management and supervisors will be aware of the views of social workers about supervision and be able to identify the relevant training needs**.**

5. **Participation rights:** Participation in the study is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without penalty.

6. **Confidentiality:** I understand that the information shared with the researcher will be kept between me, the researcher and the research team at the University of Pretoria. The results of the study may be published in professional journals or presented at a professional conference, but my records or identity will not be revealed.

   **For any questions or concerns, I can call Ms Bertha Mboniswa at any time during the day at 082 690 0478.**

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


_____                    _____

**Subject's signature**                                              **Date**


_____

**Signature of investigator**

**ANNEXURE B – COVER LETTER**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Ref.    Ms N. Masango\ Ms B. Mboniswa
Tel:    (012) 420 4848/084 805 2571

Dear Respondent

**Title of the study**: Perspectives of social workers regarding supervision in the Department
                        of Social Development, Johannesburg

The above-mentioned study is conducted by Ms B Mboniswa, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree M.A. (S.W.) Management at the University of
Pretoria. The study aims at exploring the perspectives of social workers
regarding supervision in the Department of Social Development – Johannesburg.

   You are requested to complete the attached questionnaire by considering the

   following instructions:

♦  Please complete the questionnaire as accurate as possible.
♦  Complete all the sections of the questionnaire from section 1-4.
♦  After completion, place the questionnaire in the mail box of the researcher
Please take note, that it will take you not more than 30 minutes to complete the
Questionnaire and remember that your participation is of utmost importance.


Thanking you


Ms. M.B. Mboniswa

**ANNEXURE C -  QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING SUPERVISION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, JOHANNESBURG**

**SECTION 1:  DEMOGRAPHIC DATA.**

1.1    Sex          Male          ☐

                    Female       ☐


1.2    Age

| 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-and above |
|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
|       |       |       |              |


1.3    What is your highest social work qualification?

| Qualification | Year Obtained | Where obtained |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Diploma |  |  |
| BA(sw) 3 yrs |  |  |
| BA(sw) 4yrs or BA(sw) Hons |  |  |
| MA |  |  |
| Ph.D. |  |  |
| Others, Specify |  |  |


1.4    Please state your years of experience as a social worker?

☐    0 - 3

☐    4 - 6

☐    7 – 10

☐    11 - and more years


3

1.5     How long have you worked for the Department of Social

        Development, Johannesburg?

| 0-3 | 4-6 | 7-10 | 11-and more years |
|-----|-----|------|-------------------|
|     |     |      |                   |

**SECTION 2:          NATURE OF SUPERVISION.**

2.1 Choose (one or more) the statement that best defines supervision in your own opinion?

| | |
|---|---|
| Supervision is a process of learning and developing new skills | |
| Intersectional process in which a supervisor has been assigned to assist in and direct the practice of supervisees in the areas of teaching, administration and helping. | |
| Monitoring and evaluating the work of supervisees. | |
| Policing other social workers or supervisees. | |
| Others, Specify | |

2.2     Were you allocated a supervisor after your appointment as a social worker in the Department of Social Services?

        Yes ☐    No ☐

        If no, motivate why  ......................................................................................

        ......................................................................................

        ......................................................................................

4

2.3　　Do you receive formal supervision sessions with your supervisor at work?

Yes ☐　　No ☐

2.4　　If the answer to 2.2 is yes, how frequent are you supervised?

| Weekly | Fortnight | Monthly | Bi – Monthly | Others |
|--------|-----------|---------|--------------|--------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

If the answer is 5, specify.　☐

2.5　What is the duration of your supervision session?

| | |
|--|--|
| 45 minutes | |
| 1 hour | |
| 1 –2 hrs | |
| Others, Specify | |

2.6　　Did you and the supervisor contract for supervision?

No ☐　　　Yes ☐

2.7　　If yes what kind of contract was reached?

Verbal ☐

Written ☐

5

2.8    Do you and your supervisor plan for supervision?

Yes    ☐        No    ☐

If the answer is No, please give reasons

.......................................................................................

.......................................................................................

2.9    What is the format of your supervision session?

| | |
|---|---|
| Structured and formal | |
| Unstructured and informal | |
| None of the above | |
| Specify if none of the above | |
| | |

2.10    Do you always adhere to your scheduled supervision?

No    ☐        Yes    ☐

If the answer is No, please motivate.........................................

.......................................................................................

.......................................................................................

2.11    Is your supervision evaluated periodically by the supervisor?

Yes    ☐        No    ☐

If yes, indicate how frequent.

| Weekly | Fortnight | Monthly | Bimonthly | Others, specify |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

6

2.12 Is the information discussed during supervision recorded?

Yes ☐    No ☐

2.13 If you are supervised, which of the following supervisory method is applied during supervision?

| | |
|---|---|
| Individual supervision | |
| Group supervision | |
| Peer supervision | |
| Dyad | |

Others specify................................................................

................................................................

**SECTION 3:    FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION.**

3.1    Please tick the functions of supervision applied by your supervisor during supervision sessions.
    (Tick as many as applicable)

| | |
|---|---|
| Administrative | |
| Educational | |
| Supportive Function | |
| Personality Enrichment | |
| Motivation | |
| Role Model | |
| Not applicable | |

7

3.2 To what extent did your supervisor play a role of a motivator in your supervision?
(Tick one option)

| | |
|---|---|
| To a large extent | |
| To an extent | |
| Not at all | |
| Not applicable | |

3.3 Do you regard your supervisor as a role model?

Yes ☐          No ☐

3.4 How supportive was your supervisor?

| | |
|---|---|
| Very Supportive | |
| Supportive | |
| Average | |
| Least supportive | |
| Not supportive | |
| Other, specify | |

3.5 Are you being updated on developments regarding changes in agency procedures

Yes ☐          No ☐

### SECTION 4:   THE VIEWS OF SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING SUPERVISION.

4.1   In your own opinion what makes supervisors not to be effective in their supervisory tasks?
       (Tick as many as applicable)

| | |
|---|---|
| Lack of resources | |
| Lack of training for supervisor | |
| Bad personality | |
| High case-load of supervisor | |
| Lack of time | |
| Others, specify | |
| | |

4.2 Do you consider supervision necessary in your job?

Yes ☐     No ☐

Motivate.............................................................................

............................................................................

............................................................................

4.3   In your own opinion do you think social workers need to be trained first before they can become supervisors?

No ☐          Yes ☐

Motivate for the answer you have given for 4.3.

............................................................................................

............................................................................................

............................................................................................

4.4   Do you consider the supervision that you receive to be effective?

No ☐   Yes ☐


4.5   If yes was answered in the previous question, choose the most appropriate word describing the word "Effectiveness": Tick different options if applicable.

| | |
|---|---|
| Decisive | |
| Impressive | |
| Realistic | |
| Practical | |
| Educative | |
| Skilful | |
| Others, specify | |


4.6   If "No" was your answer in question 4.4 Choose the most appropriate work describing the word "Ineffectiveness":

| | |
|---|---|
| Non-productive | |
| Non educative | |
| Biased | |
| Unskilful | |
| Others, specify | |

4.7 How frequent would you like to be supervised?

| Weekly | Fortnight | Monthly | Bi-monthly | Others |
|--------|-----------|---------|------------|--------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

If the answer is 5 specify.

_____.


_____.


4.8    Which of the following methods would you have liked applied during supervision (Indicate as many as applicable)

| Individual | Group | Peer | Dyad | Consultation | None, specify |
|------------|-------|------|------|--------------|---------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

4.9 Please rank in order of importance the functions of supervision you would have liked applied by your supervisor during your orientation. Use the following scale:

1=Very important; 2 = Important; 3= Average; 4 = Less important; 5 = Not important

| | |
|---|---|
| Administrative | |
| Educational | |
| Supportive Function | |
| Personality Enrichment | |
| Motivation | |
| Modelling? | |

11

4.10    Please provide recommendations about how you think the quality of supervision can be improved in the Department of Social Development:

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

...................................................................................................

Thank you very much for your kind assistance and cooperation!!

 **PLEASE REMEMBER TO DROP THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE BOX AT THE OFFICE.**

## ANNEXURE D – LETTER OF PERMISSION

The Department of Social Services granted the researcher permission to use the social workers as respondents for the study.