EXPLORING RE-ALIGNMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AS AN ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY AT MUNICIPAL LEVELS: A CASE STUDY OF UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

By

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Abstract

This study aims at exploring the social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at the local municipal level. The study was undertaken in both rural and urban areas of Midlands, a part of the KwaZulu-Natal Province, under uMgungundlovu District Municipality, specifically at Impendle, Mkhambathini, Msunduzi and Howick service offices. The qualitative approach was applied for its use of the case study design and its descriptive nature. The purposive sampling method was used to select twelve social workers comprising ten females and two males. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews that were audio-recorded. The thematic analysis approach was used to analyse the data transcribed from the interviews. The theoretical framework that guided this study drew from the Structural Social Work Theory. The findings of this study, in relation to the objectives of the study, revealed that the interviewed social workers understood the crises that were created by the Apartheid regime. These involve the segregation of the majority of Black South Africans, depriving them of the basic services and the means of economic production and as such, the establishment of the re-alignment process sought to redress those social imbalances and injustices. The social workers who participated in the study reported the huge success made by the State, with the Department of Social Development responsible for enhancement of the citizenry's access to social services as well as fostering the community's awareness of the available services. The participants reported experiencing some challenges concerning supervision, reports demands and shortage of resources. Furthermore, an ineffective communication approach as well as social workers' exclusion from the decision–making process reportedly posed challenges to the current welfare system in South Africa. Lastly, and on a positive note, the social workers found the pieces of legislation and policies put in place by the State as assisting them to continue adapting to the process of re-alignment. The recommendations regarding the strengthening and enhancement of service delivery at the local municipal level were made.

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I would like to thank the following for making it possible for me to complete this dissertation:

Declaration

I, Mbongeleni William Buthelezi, Student Number: 217075627 declare that,

1. The study stated in this dissertation, apart from where is indicated, is my own original work.
2. This dissertation has never been submitted either for a degree or examination purpose at any academic institution.
3. This dissertation does not comprise of anyone's graphs, information, pictures or data except precisely acknowledged as having been obtained from someone else.
4. This dissertation comprises none of anyone's writings except precisely recognised as obtained from other investigators. Where ever written sources were quoted from someone's work, then;
   a) Their own words have been re-written but the overall information recognised to them has been referenced.
   b) Whereas their direct wording has been used, their own writings were represented in italics between quotation marks and then referenced.
5. This dissertation comprises none of the graphics, text nor cut-and-paste tables from any website, except precisely recognised, a source being comprehensively mentioned in this dissertation as well as in the References segment.

Signature:

Mbongeleni William Buthelezi

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The colonial and Apartheid Regime in South Africa had put the country's communities in unjust and oppressive social conditions. Consequent to that development, the Department of Social Development established a White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) whose aim was to restructure and transform both the public and the private sectors by developing and implementing social developmental policies and programmes. The Framework for Social Welfare Services (2013) was developed to facilitate and guide the implementation of a comprehensive, integrated, rights-based, well-resourced and quality developmental social welfare service. Among the role players designated for the implementation of these frameworks, social workers were identified as the key role players. The ultimate goal of the structural social workers is to address social inequalities by transforming and infusing structural barriers that had been put in place to deprive the majority of the population access to basic service delivery (George, Coleman & Barnoff, 2010). It is on this basis that a study that explores the social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at the local municipal level becomes imperative.

1.2 Background to and Rationale for the Study

The regional history and the politics, cultures and economies of countries provide a narrative background within which the current social welfare systems are shaped (Mohatt, Thompson, Thai & Tebes, 2014). Colonialism and Apartheid are the twin systems that have shaped the evolution of social welfare systems in the South African context. Meyer and Van Der Elst (2014) echo the same view, adding that the historical impact of Apartheid in South Africa contributed to the majority of the South African population being in need of social welfare support. As a result, the South African government is currently taking cognisance of its history as it sets out to re-align its social welfare system. It is on this historical basis that the transformation taking place in the social services, particularly in terms of meeting

the requirements of the developmental welfare approach, requires the re-alignment of services or/and structures.

As provided for in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and the related prescripts, the Service Standards Directorate under the jurisdiction of the Welfare Services Chief Directorate of the Department of Social Development (DSD), has been instrumental in facilitating the transformation of social welfare services by developing and coordinating policies and pieces of legislation that promote the provision of integrated and professional social service delivery. The Framework for Social Welfare Services (The Department of Social Development, 2013) affirms this view and states that the alignment of social welfare services is dependent on the development of the relevant programmes, legislative frameworks, policies and services. Cordella and Tempini (2015) concur, positing that in the process of social change, Government ought to reconfigure organisational arrangements by reforming rules and regulations in a bid to improve service delivery. Moreover, this transformational agenda has been reiterated by both the Estimates of National Expenditure (DSD, 2015) and the Annual Report (DSD, 2015). These two policy documents emphasise the need for the Government's 2014-2019 Medium Term Strategic Framework to aim at reforming and standardising the social welfare system, and to ensure that the constitutional principles of social justice and the Bill of Rights foster the creation of better living conditions for the poor, vulnerable groups, and the excluded groups of people in the South African society.

The Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) and the Estimates of National Expenditure (DSD, 2015), view social workers as essential cogs in the drive towards the improvement and standardisation of social welfare services. Congress (2017) attests to the view that strong focus of social work is concerned with the most vulnerable groups in our societies. In addition, social workers understand the origin and the complexity of the social problems, and at the same time, they are also required to continue challenging the oppressive discourse that delays the delivery of social services, amid efforts to create a conducive environment for the empowerment of marginalised sections of the population in the community (Johnstone, Lee & Connelly, 2017).

It is therefore imperative that practitioners in the domain of social work are capacitated to facilitate the implementation of the Social Development Integrated Service Delivery Model at the local municipality level. It is against this backdrop that the views of social workers are elicited as this study is bent on exploring the re-alignment of social welfare services in order to enhance service delivery at the level of local municipalities.

1.3 Problem Statement

There has been a glaring scantiness in terms of the prescripts and processes, which directly or indirectly, were geared towards the restructuring and the re-alignment of the Department of Social Development and its social services in a bid to enhance service delivery. These efforts, though scant, range from the promulgation of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) to the recent inception of the Social Work Indaba held in Durban in 2015 (DSD, 2015). For social workers to impact positively on poverty and inequality, they should demonstrate awareness of, and the ability to integrate, the relevant policies and legislative frameworks that are applicable to the respective field of practice, consciously seeking to understand the socio-economic and political contexts in which they operate and show an in-depth understanding of the embedded value of social justice and human rights (Lombard, 2008). Precisely, there is no evidence suggestive of any study conducted to assess the degree to which social workers understand the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at the municipal level. In transformative pursuits that involve the restructuring and re-alignment of social welfare services, social workers are often remarkably suited for the implementation of social services and the promotion of social change (Patel, 2005). Apparently, an explorative study that zeroes in on the re-alignment and restructuring of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery, becomes a matter of necessity as it provides more insights into social workers' understanding of these processes. These frames of knowledge range from the level of social workers' involvement in the decision-making processes prior to the restructuring process, an understanding of their expected roles to the extent of adaptation of the new social welfare service structures afterwards, among other dimensions of social services.

1.4 Location of the Study

According to Statistics SA (2011), the Municipality of uMgungundlovu District falls under Category C municipality. Category C refers to the municipality that has an executive and legislative authority in an area with more than one local municipality, as defined in chapter 7 section 155 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. It is located in the Midlands area in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The district comprises seven local municipalities, which are based in their respective towns as follows: Impendle Municipality in Impendle Town, Mkhambathini Municipality in Camperdown Town, Mpofana Municipality in Mooi River Town, Msunduzi Municipality in Pietermaritzburg Town, Richmond Municipality in Richmond Town, the Municipality of uMngeni in Howick Town, and the Municipality of Mshwathi in New Hanover/Wartburg Town. The uMgungundlovu District Municipality services a population of 1017763 (85% - African Blacks, 7% - Indians, 6% - Whites, 2% - Coloured and 0,3% - Others) and households numbering to 272666. The main economic sectors are community services (25-30%), finance (15-20%), manufacturing (10-15%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (10-15%), wholesale and retail trade (10-15%), transport and storage (10%). Most significantly, uMgungundlovu District accommodates both the capital city and the legislature of KwaZulu-Natal Province and it is where the head offices of most government departments are situated, including the Department of Social Development, the organization this study focuses on. As expatiated under the section on sampling, the study focuses on four service offices, which fall under the four local municipalities, namely: Pietermaritzburg (Msunduzi), Impendle (Impendle), Howick (uMngeni) and Camperdown (Mkhambathini).

1.5 Aim and Objectives of the Proposed Study

1.5.1 Aim

To explore the social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at the local municipal level, in order to strengthen service delivery and identify areas of improvement.

1.5.2 Objectives

1.5.2.1 To explore social workers' understanding of re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery**;**

1.5.2.2 To explore the experiences of social workers as key role-players in the re-alignment of social welfare services at the local municipal level;

1.5.2.3 To examine the successes and barriers to the re-alignment of social welfare services at the local municipal level;

1.5.2.4 To identify the extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment of social welfare services;

1.5.2.5 To examine how social workers have adapted to the transition resulting from the re-alignment of social welfare services.

1.6 Research questions

1.6.1 What are the social worker's understanding of re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery?

1.6.2 What are the experiences of social workers as key role-players in the re-alignment of social development services at the local municipality level?

1.6.3 What are the successes of and barriers to the re-alignment of social services at the local municipality level?

1.6.4 What is the extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment process?

1.6.5 How have social workers adapted to the transition resulting from the re-alignment of social services?

1.7 Preliminary Literature Review

1.7.1 Local Municipalities' progress in social development

A global assessment of the progress of social development at the level of local municipality requires a common indicator in practice whereby the national, provincial and the local government show sufficient effort in terms of progress (Pires, Fidélis & Ramos, 2014). The level of service delivery, among other indicators, can be a practical tool used to measure major developments and to assess the strength of the community in fostering social development. This view has also been affirmed by the Global Agenda for Social Work, as articulated in Jones and Truell (2012), which highlights the importance of fostering strong and resilient communities which can achieve a stable well-being as well as appreciate the importance of the role played by social workers and social development practitioners in facilitating the development of healthy and strong communities. Armed with clear common tools that measure social development, success at all levels of community development whereby communities are made to fully participate through strong facilitation by social workers; social development progress in local municipalities can be easily assessed.

1.7.2 Policies and Legislation

The most important aspect that underlies the developmental state focuses on the social policy and its institutional underpinnings. In South Africa, these underpinnings are concentrated on the inner operations of departments in the social cluster or service delivery domain. This, therefore, begins to draw the attention of policy-makers to the type of institutional regimes required for effective provision of public goods and services (Edigheji, 2010). The National Social Welfare Policy Conference in 1998 resolved that a single State Department of Welfare be instituted; then a new form of welfare state would evolve in a democratic South Africa with policies aiming at mitigating the negative impact of market forces to achieve greater social equality, meeting people's basic needs and promoting social services as a right to all citizens (Gray, 2006). Later on, the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), Policy on Financial Award to Service Providers (2005) and the Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005) for improved social service delivery were launched. These policy

frameworks paved the way for the operationalisation of developmental social welfare systems and social service delivery (Powell & Hendricks, 2014). It is against the background of this policy framework that South Africa has been inclined towards a strong reorganisation drive in terms of service delivery. This paradigm shift has been facilitated by the country's strong constitutional framework, which accords a great deal of autonomy to municipal authorities (Cameron, 2014).

1.7.3 Re-alignment of social welfare services

According to the Integrated Service Delivery Model (DSD, 2005), the re-alignment of social welfare services depends on the decentralisation of services by establishing local offices responsible for identifying local needs, the required resources and the provision of direct services to the people at ward level. Lombard (2014) remarks that, while the state has made progress in terms of the re-alignment of social development services by promoting social justice through social grants, among other things, there appears to be other remaining challenges, especially on the implementation of developmental intervention strategies and policies aligned to the Integrated Service Delivery Model. Similarly, Lombard and du Preez (2014) aver that, in order to achieve the alignment of this nature, partnerships need to be built and strong commitment be agreed upon regarding the advancement of the social development agenda for South Africa. This view echoes the assertions made by Patel (2012) that partnerships born out of social welfare development and the Non-Profitable Organisations constitute a significant sector and a substantial contribution to social development that needs to be constructively utilised and managed by the Government.

1.7.4 Progress of the re-alignment of social welfare services

Notwithstanding the fact that much effort has been employed by the Department of Social Development to re-align and restructure the social service delivery system, the outcomes appear unsatisfactory. Affirming this observation, Ntjana (2015) expresses the conviction that the progression of the delivery of social welfare service toward a complete social developmental approach is retarded and unsatisfactory. To mitigate such challenges, there is need to develop a continuous capacity building programme for service providers and

practitioners in government departments so as to provide them with essential skills for the proper implementation of the developmental approach complemented by sustainable community empowerment programmes (Khanyile, 2014). The progress of the re-alignment of social welfare services through the implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) was hindered by issues of corruption in government, institutions not working for poor people and youth unemployment (Patel, 2014).

1.7.5 Social workers as key role players

Social work is a profession that constitutes a large percentage of social welfare services and it also plays a crucial role in facilitating the strategies for re-alignment of social welfare services. Therefore, it would be a huge step forward if the challenges related to attitude, partnership, a huge caseload and integrated service delivery are prioritised for the social welfare agenda in South Africa in order to secure an enabling environment for developmental statutory social services (Lombard & Kleijn, 2014). A similar view was affirmed by Peeters (2012) who views social workers as having a significant role to play in transforming and sustaining social development programmes in various aspects such as socio-ecological systems through enhancing people's capabilities and building social capital. In addition, social workers should maintain their open-mindedness in their pursuit of new ways of driving social development and, of course, they ought to be guided by the philosophy that these efforts must fall within the profession's venerable moral tradition (Reamer, 2013).

It is indisputable that South African social work practice was rooted in historical past of colonialism and apartheid and faces the critiques of relevance, this required radical transformation, social change and social justice through policy, practice and training (Smith, 2008). In spite of progress in South African health system, education reforms and expansion of social grants, nonetheless social work need complete transformation from Western frameworks to align with indigenous knowledge in order to meet local needs and contributing developmental social welfare policy (Cook, 2019).

1.7.6 Persisting challenges

The existence of challenges should not be misconstrued to imply the absence of important progress that has already been made in transforming the social welfare system; but there is need to highlight the existing challenges related to the slow, iterative and fragmented process of over-hauling the entire welfare system. It is essential to acknowledge both the current successes and failures in order to identify and deal with serious barriers that impede progress and therefore induce accelerated growth (Patel & Hochfeld, 2013). The South African social security system, which is implemented through social grants, has proved to be too inadequate to accomplish the goals of social security as one of the social development services which require changes within the assistance system in order to enhance efficiency, accuracy and effectiveness in the disbursement of grants and the alignment of the system with aggressive work programmes and job stimulation policies that truly empower the poor and provide them with the resources to bail them out of the bog of poverty (Potts, 2012). According to Schmid (2014), the shortage of qualified social workers has continued to impede the re-alignment of social development services in South Africa which requires an urgent need not only to improve the numbers and the quality of social workers in the field, but also to expand the child welfare workforce to include other service providers. Similar views have been expressed by Skhosana (2013) who argues that the scarcity of social workers makes it difficult for them to offer their services within the parameters of the Children's Act Number 38 of 2005 and the shortage of home-based social workers worsens the situation in terms of delivering service to deserving communities.

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm delineates an approach, which involves envisaging the actual process of undertaking a research, whereby a community of researchers poses a common set of beliefs, values and assumptions regarding the nature and conduct of research (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). The interpretivist research paradigm, which was applied in this study, is a suitable paradigm as it is concerned about understanding the world from the subjective

experiences of individuals using interviews and the participants' observations. It aims at explaining the subjective reasons and meanings that influence social action (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Expressing our voices and allowing what we think to be documented is the starting point for the interpretivist researcher (Dean, 2018). In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews which allowed the participants to share their experiential world regarding the process of re-aligning social welfare services, and in the interpretation of the study findings and proffering recommendations, the researcher expressed views and meanings extracted from the participants' views.

1.8.2 Research Approach

The study followed a qualitative research approach, which, according to Carey (2009), entails the exploration of detailed themes encompassing behaviour, emotions, attitudes and experiences of a particular population sample. Social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at local municipal can better be explored through the qualitative approach and explained within the context of the interpretive research paradigm.

1.8.3 Research Design

This study employed the case study design, which is descriptive in nature. According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), the case study design seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of particular intervention strategies or the implementation of policy in a logic time series. The researcher seeks to describe, analyse and interpret the phenomenon under study, namely; the effects of the re-alignment of social services on social workers. The main purpose of the study was to explore the understanding of the social workers in relation to the re-alignment undertaken by the Department of Social Development.

1.8.4 The research population, sampling and sampling techniques

1.8.4.1 Population

Babbie (2009) describes population as the entire collection of research subjects the researcher

selects for study and therefore draws conclusions based on the findings and the researcher

believes that the research population meets the sample inclusion criteria. The population of

this study comprised all the social workers that were employed by the Department of Social Development in KwaZulu-Natal.

1.8.4.2 Sampling Strategies

The sample was recruited using the purposive sampling technique, which entails the selection of sample basing on the researcher's judgment of which units of population have the most expertise expected by the investigative topic (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). The selection of the participants was based on their possession of expert knowledge and experience in the area of study.

Inclusion criteria

- For one to be a participant, they had to be a social worker working for KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development under Umgundlovu District Municipality in one of the service offices, namely; Impendle, Camperdown, Howick and Pietermaritzburg Service Offices.

- A participant had to be an experienced social worker who had been under employment in the Department of Social Development in KwaZulu-Natal prior to the year 2013. The choice of the year 2013 was determined by the notion that it was only after this year that the restructuring process started.

- A participant had to voluntarily offer to participate in this study.

The researcher's choice of participants was based on the assumption that those practitioners who met these criteria were regarded as likely to demonstrate a comparatively better understanding of the implications of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and that they had already been implementing the policy before the introduction of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013). This criterion was crucial since the latter document formed one of the key bases that informed the re-alignment of social welfare services.

Recruitment process

- A total of twelve serving social workers who met the above-mentioned criteria were recruited through making reference to the service office's database requested from the Human Resource units.

- Pre-screening interviews were conducted for purposes of satisfying the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

1.8.5 Data Collection Instruments

The data collection process is a fundamental part of the entire study process. It is defined as a sequence of interconnected research activities that are aimed at gathering data to address the emerging study questions (Creswell, 2009). The researcher solicited for data through conducting semi-structured interviews. According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), semi-structured interviews use an interview guide, which is essentially a form outlining the topics and issues that the interviewer should cover in the interview. However, the flexibility of the interview guide allows the interviewer to adopt the sequencing and wording of questions that suit each particular interview.

Prior to the actual data collection process, the researcher sent the prescribed interview questions to the participants together with research aims and objectives. A day before the dates of interview appointment, the researcher explained the aims and objectives of the study and addressed any questions that sought to clarify certain issues to the participants.

The permission to use a tape recorder and to take some notes during interviews was requested and granted. The duration of the interview with each participant lasted approximately 16 to 45 minutes and the interviews were conducted mainly in English though the participant's language of preference was also considered.

1.8.6 Data Analysis

The qualitative data were analysed using the thematic analysis technique. This method involved empirical research and it was highly inductive as the themes emerged from the data and not imposed by the researcher (Carey, 2009). The researcher followed the six phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) as follows:

1) **Familiarisation with data;**

   This involved reading the transcripts, listening to audio recordings more than once; making some notes and comments to make the data more understandable.

2) **Coding**

   This stage involved the process of systematically putting together the data that are related to each other using codes, ensuring that the coded data have the potential to form themes.

3) **Searching for themes**

   The stage entails reviewing the codes, identifying those that form specific patterns that relate to the research questions, which then assists in the formulation of the relevant themes.

4) **Reviewing themes**

   This stage involves rechecking the collection of themes to ascertain their relatedness to data, in relation to the research questions by re-reading the collected data.

5) **Defining and naming themes**

   The stage clearly identifies the meaning of each theme in relation to the other themes, categorizing those that are essentially common in order to put them together into a name that summarises them. Some of the themes may be so unique that they stand alone without being combined with others.

6)   Writing up the report

The stage entails the presentation of themes in a logical, meaningful and relevant manner to tell a coherent story emanating from data in relation to each research question.

1.9 Ethical Considerations

In research, ethics are understood within the context of formulating general rules that govern conduct (codes of ethics), establishing institutions responsible for controlling research conduct (ethics committees) and the taking into account of the best research practices governed by principles that should characterise the day-to-day practices in the field and process of research (Flick, 2014). In research, all the ethical concerns belong to one of the following categories; protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and lastly, honesty with professional colleagues (Leedy & Ormond, 2010).

Gatekeeper's permission

Gatekeepers, who include staff at the recruitment site or stakeholders off-site, provide researchers with access to potential participants. Therefore, it is fundamental for the researcher to use their permission during the recruitment of participants because they reserve the power to facilitate or hinder the recruitment of participants (Namageyo- Funa, Rimando, Brace, Christiana, Fowles, Davis, Martinez & Sealy, 2014). The researcher obtained the ethical clearance to conduct this research project from the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal's Research Ethics Committee. The researcher was also served with a letter requesting participation from the potential participants.

Do no harm

In any research study, it is essential for the researcher to be cognisant of the need to minimise the ways in which participating in the study may be harmful to the participants and to stipulate clear aversive action to minimise the risk (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). The researcher ensured that all the participants clearly understood the aims and procedures of the study and possible risks that would arise from their participation in

the study. Nevertheless, there was no known risk and potential harm. Furthermore, the researcher, who also happened to be a social worker, prepared the participants to make them emotionally and psychological ready for participation prior to the commencement of the study.

Informed consent

The principle of informed consent ensures that participation is based on voluntary agreement between the researcher and the participants. Under this agreement, the researcher provides information about the purpose and funder of the study, the nature and composition of the research team, how the data will be used, and what participation requires of them, the subjects likely to be covered, the amount of time required to complete the study and so on (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher explained the aim of the study and all its procedures to the participants, allowed them to ask for any form of clarity they might need and then requested them to grant their participation consent and therefore endorse the consent form. The researcher also explained the voluntary nature of participation and emphasised the point that they could withdraw at any point in time during the process of the study if they felt like doing so without fear of being prejudiced.

Anonymity

Anonymity is a concept concerned with the concealment of the identity of participants from the public excluded from the research team. Though absolute guarantees of anonymity cannot be given, the participants should be made aware of anyone who might be in a position to know of their participation (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher assured the participants that their identity particulars were not going to be used in the study, but only participants' codes would be used to avoid their identities being linked to the study.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality protects participants against direct or indirect attribution of their comments in the reports or presentations to their identities to avoid violating the confidentiality of their identities (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher assured participants that the report and publications of the study will respect and maintain their privacy and confidentiality. Their

records will be kept in a lockable cabinet, and digital records will be password secured and their audio records will be deleted after the completion of the final report.

1.10 Trustworthiness

The principle of trustworthiness in qualitative research presupposes that the study findings are accurate or true not only from the standpoint of the researcher but also from that of the participants and the readers of the study (Yilmaz, 2013). To measure up to the rigors of qualitative study, the research findings must adhere to principles of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Yilmaz, 2013).

Dependability

Dependability refers to the firmness of data over time and under different conditions (Elo, Kääriäinen, Kanste, Pölkki, Utriainen & Kyngäs, 2014). Dependability can be established if the research process is logical, traceable and clearly documented (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris & Pearson, 2014). The researcher ensured the consistency of the findings across the different environments and that they are also traceable, following the research questions, theoretical framework and the methodology used in the study.

Transferability

Transferability occurs when the findings can be generalised and transferred to other settings or other fields of research (Elo et al., 2014). The researcher ensured that the results of this research can be simulated in different contexts of a similar nature.

Conformability

Conformability refers to the objectivity of the research data, creating the potential for congruence between more than one independent person regarding the accuracy, relevance and meaning of the data (Elo et al., 2014). The investigator must ensure that, as far as possible, the findings are the results of the original experiences and ideas of the informants and participants, rather than the preferences of the researcher (Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). The researcher ensured that the results of this study truly reflected the participants' experiences, and that they were not based on the researcher's biased perceptions.

Credibility

Credibility is reflected in the confidence that derives from the truth of the research findings. That occurs when the research findings represent reasonable information proffered by the participants and when the correct interpretation of the participants' original views has been rendered (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher ensured that the collected data were of high quality, collected directly from participants in the sufficient time allotted to the interview sessions and in the environment that was conducive for engagement with the participants.

1.11 Potential Value of the Study

This study explored the experiences of social workers regarding the re-alignment of social services at the level of local municipalities in order to intensify service delivery and identify areas that need improvement. The Social Work profession is arguably insightful with reference to the factors that relate to policy and legislation, which have affected their values particularly their mandate to strive for social justice and promote social inclusion. The Department of Social Development gets a broader picture of how far the implementation of the re-alignment of social development services has gone and how much effort is still required, while at the end the service, users will be the whole community which is set to benefit from the implementation of the re-alignment process through service delivery.

1.12 Assumptions of the study

Social workers, as key role-players, are the most eligible experts in terms of demonstrating an understanding of the process of re-aligning social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery in local municipalities and in terms of exploring the applicable recommendations for the complete implementation and enhancement of the programme in line with White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and the Framework for Social Welfare Services (2013). Gaining an insight into social workers' understanding of this re-alignment process through their experiences, the successes made, the challenges encountered; their

level of participation and their adaptation to the process, are testimonies to the milestones made in enhancing service delivery at the local municipal levels.

1.13 Clarification of concepts

In research, the clarification of the concepts is defined as a research concept whereby investigators state the meanings of commonly used terms within the contextual precincts of the study (Babbie, 2009). The following are the concepts the researcher defined in line with the context of the research.

Re-alignment – This implies the continually changing democratic process whereby the desires of the public are translated through improvement in the public service delivery system (Campbell & Trilling, 2012). This lasting change of system manifests after the completion of the re-alignment process. This then permits a judgment ascertaining whether a significant shift has occurred during a given period of time (Sundquist, 2011).

Social services –The term refers to the broad, comprehensive range of services that relate to social welfare and community development services provided in a continuum to ensure the integration and sustainability of intervention efforts (The Integrated Service Delivery Model, 2005).

Social welfare services -These are programmes rendered by the Department of Social Development which offers help to deserving persons, families and societies, assisting them to overcome their social, economic, environmental as well as political ills (Skhosana, 2013).

1.14 Potential Limitations of the Study

In every process of a research project, there is a possibility that challenges may occur during the course of the project. While some challenges may be eliminated, others may not. This study had its limitations, which needed to be considered against the background of the results of the study.

UMgungundlovu District Municipality consists of seven local municipalities, and of these, only four were reached for data collection and therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalised in other departments as a whole and other departments as well. Lastly, only African participants were voluntarily recruited, and the findings will not be reflective of the perspectives of other races in South Africa. However, race was not part of the study inclusion criteria.

1.15 Overview of Chapters
Chapter One: General Introduction

This chapter provides a brief background to the study and spells out the research problem; the aim of the study and research questions as well as the methodological paradigm and design employed to address these questions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The chapter reviews the relevant literature in relation to local municipalities' social development progress, policies and legislation, re-alignment of social welfare services, progress of re-alignment of social welfare services, social workers as key role players, persisting challenges and presents the theoretical framework that underpins the study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology employed to obtain data and it highlights the ethical considerations the researcher took into account.

Chapter Four: Findings

The chapter presents the findings of the study based on the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the analysis of the data.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter Five presents the summary, conclusion and the recommendations based on the findings of the study.

1.16 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented the general introduction to the study, which included a brief background to the study, statement of the research problem, the aim of the study, research questions and the methodology employed in the study to solicit for data. It also highlighted the potential value of the study, the assumptions of the study, clarification of concepts and an overview of the whole dissertation. The following chapter presents the theoretical framework that underpins the study and a critical review of the literature relevant to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 presented the background of the study, which was informed by the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) and the Estimates of National Expenditure (DSD, 2015). These two policy frameworks assert that social workers are essential as far as the improvement and standardisation of social welfare services is concerned. As part of the background to the discussion of the problem statement, the lack of proper communication and a proper understanding of the policy are exacerbated by challenges in the social welfare system (Brynard, 2011). Smith (2013: 367) assert that "*continuous reflexivity will enable social workers and social work educators to challenge class and race-based structures of oppression and to therefore work towards social change*".

This chapter reviews the literature related to social welfare services, social change and the Social Work profession in order to provide an overview of the factors that influence the process of the re-alignment of the social welfare services. This literature review section is presented in line with the following non-exhaustive sub-headings that derive from the research objectives which encapsulate the essence of the study:

- An understanding of the social welfare frameworks and policies

- Putting the frameworks and policies into practice

- The best impact of the re-alignment of social welfare services

- Obstacles on re-alignment of social welfare services

- Social workers' participation in the improvement of social development services

- The trend of the re-alignment process in various public sectors

- Transformation of social work practice and education to the re-alignment of social welfare services

Lastly, the chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the study, including its background, the key postulation and the critique of the presented theory.

2.2. Understanding the social welfare frameworks and policies

There is a correlation between policy implementers on the one hand and policy understanding and implementation on the other. In the international context, research indicates that the United States of America considers professions as contributing magnificently to the implementation of the social development frameworks; for instance, social workers' understanding of patients' environmental context, knowledge of social systems and training in evidence-based practice makes social workers adequately equipped to serve as excellent framework executers and advocates of service users (Andrews et al., 2013). Kemshall (2010) confirms that there is a significant correlation between the rationality of policies and the contextual rationalities of both users and workers. This relationship often results in the existence of implementation gaps which are caused by lack of understanding. It is further reiterated that it is imperative for leaders and policy makers to understand social contexts, processes and frameworks that underpin systems to avoid rationality confusion among both service providers and service users.

From the South African perspective, one's understanding of the policy message is influenced by individual cognition, situated cognition and the role of the implementing agents who sometimes reject or revise the policy (Brynard, 2010). Furthermore, to take a stand regarding a certain policy, implementers must first understand the policy and the role they ought to play. This requires cognitive skills and an understanding of the processes of interpretation (Brynard, 2010). Social workers revealed the fact that they have confusion regarding the definition of the concept of the Manual for Family Preservation and Recommendations, stating that a clear and measurable definition of family preservation be provided and that the objectives of the manual be clearly formulated and availed to the social workers to reduce the confusion (Mosoma, 2014).

The process of re-aligning social welfare services has been exerted by the level of communication among role players and their clear understanding of the policies and frameworks that inform the process. Affirming this sentiment, Brynard (2011) avers that the lack of alignment between institutions is not only horizontal especially in terms of intergovernmental relations, whereby lack of proper communication and proper understanding of the policy is often accelerated by persisting challenges within the department.

Furthermore, social workers must consistently update their knowledge of the relevant policies and the legislative frameworks that impact positively on service delivery. In addition, policy makers from the Department of Social Development should implement policy frameworks with social workers (Govender, 2010). Precisely, the understanding of legislations in relation to their implementation should be provided for in the profession's training curriculum. Sundell et al. (2010) concur, adding that the Social Work profession requires academics to implement appropriate educational and training programmes to make evidence-based practice properly understood and implemented as a particular and very unique approach to practice.

2.3 Putting frameworks and policies into practice

The effectiveness of a particular framework or policy is determined by field-based implementation, which incorporates the end-users. Confirming this view, Andrews et al. (2013) assert that it is the time for the Social Work profession to develop a well-coordinated strategy that communicates the evidence that demonstrates social workers' effectiveness in advancing development programmes and their contribution to the implementation of legislative frameworks. Masuka (2014) stresses the point that progressive legislative provisions alone cannot assure the realisation of end-users' rights, but the translation of pieces of legislation into programmes and services can directly impact on people's lives. In addition, Sandell et al. (2010) state that the introduction and implementation of evidence-based policy requires the activation of the vital aspects of the implementation network and

to ensure that they are in harmony and continuously between policy makers, government agencies, managers and practitioners.

Other factors that contribute to the policy implementation need to be considered; thus, looking at the broader spectrum of the process of the re-alignment of social welfare services will give a complete insight into the phenomenon. Brynard (2010) outlines these factors as; interaction of knowledge, experience, beliefs and attitude of implementers as understood within the field situation, thereby giving meaning to the policy. Although much has been done to implement social welfare frameworks, such efforts are apparently inadequate. This assertion is affirmed by Mosoma and Spies (2016) who assert that social workers played a vital role in the implementation of family preservation services regardless of the challenges that negatively impact on working conditions. In this regard social workers are depicted as the most capable advocates and communicators with regards to planning, leading and facilitating advanced services or programme (Stein & Fineberg, 2013).

Strydom (2014) stresses the point that the implementation of provisions in policy documents, in terms of developmental social work services, could only occur if workforce related challenges are sufficiently addressed. Considering such challenges will be so crucial for social work advocates and researchers for them to construct a strong working relationship with state agencies in order to ascertain that the existence of comprehensive knowledge of key policy decisions. This influences the attitudes of workforce, the entire service provision process and the elimination of impediments in the implementation process (Andrews et al., 2013). Masuka (2014) concurs, positing that social workers can exert their influence on the empowerment drive as an intervention strategy to ensure that people are afforded their rights to service as stipulated by the legislative frameworks.

The practical application of policies and legislations does not seem to be a simple exercise in African countries and the world over. Banda and Ngwerume in (Mugumbate et al., 2014) affirm that even if the laws that can bring further benefit to vulnerable groups have been

passed, it remains that additional resources and improved capacity development necessary for implementation are found to be unavailable, making it difficult to translate the provisions of the law from theory into practice within the community. Echoing the same sentiments Soydan et al., (2010) state that despite the fact that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, serious impediments abound in terms of putting policies and legislative frameworks into practice, thereby resulting in the gaps between theory, policy and practice in the provision of social services, which involves complementary procedures, primary knowledge, experience and service delivery within stipulated timelines.

2.4. Best impact of the Re-alignment of Social Welfare Services (RSWS)

In the past two decades after South Africa became a democratic polity, there have been remarkable improvements in terms of the enhancement of social welfare services as demonstrated by the introduction of the Integrated Service Delivery Model (DSD, 2005), the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) and the Estimates of National Expenditure (DSD, 2015) which facilitated these improvements. Such initiatives which drove collective service delivery resulted in various benefits such as elimination of duplication in service provision, improved coordination in the delivery of services, cost effectiveness and capacity building amongst stakeholder organisations (Chikadzi & Mafetsa, 2014). They further stress that this can go a long way in plugging service delivery gaps that are characteristic of the provision of welfare services in the South African context. On the other hand, Chikadzi and Mafetsa (2014) argued that different stakeholders and networking forums working directly or indirectly with the welfare sector can lay a foundation that creates cross- sectorial partnerships.

Social workers in collaboration with other drivers of the process of the re-alignment of social welfare services continued to depict a positive image as part of the multi-disciplinary team through the enthusiasm that characterised their working relationships and the holistic serving of their clients (Raniga & Kasiram, 2014). However, different researchers argue that it is still difficult for developmental welfare to succeed in closing the gap between the rich and the poor, whereas social development requires widespread institutional support

systems in order to overcome the recurrent challenges such as high unemployment, retarded economic growth and insufficient foreign investment inflows (Gray, 2006).

Gray (2006) further concludes that it is doubtful whether this state of affairs can lead to successful change as long as government slowly intervenes in the economy. As such, the promotion of black economic empowerment and the centralisation of decision-making seem impractical in this particular connection. Even though the welfare service delivery system is in shambles, the challenges can be overcome through communities' holistic benefit and quality services from all the involved stakeholders including Government, the private sector and the non-profit making organisations (Chikadzi & Mafetsa, 2014).

2.5. Obstacles in the Re-alignment of Social Welfare Services (RSWS)

The barriers that impede the implementation of social welfare frameworks and policies manifest in various aspects involved in the processes of re-aligning social welfare services. Worldwide, the dilemma between the need to adopt social work values and agency guidelines in rendering services has been revealed. This has resulted in workers having to terminate service delivery or disqualify service users basing on agency guidelines (Gallina, 2010). Chikadzi and Pretorius (2014) concur, citing the point that social workers, as agents of the State's social development department, often tended to limit people's rights to development through applying departmental qualifying criteria to assess the clients' eligibility for services, further recommending that separating the State from its agents cannot be so simple though social workers can constructively engage the State's policies for the benefit of their clients.

In spite of the coming of the democratic dispensation in South Africa, social work education remains dominated by foreign theories and models, whereas political influence and Government's guidelines on access to services appeared to contradict the values of social work (Chikadzi & Pretorius, 2014). Among other challenges, there has been a complex interplay of factors such as domestic politics, international donor pressure,

financial realities and operational feasibility, which have tended to present challenges to the design and implementation of social welfare programmes (Lagomarsino et al., 2012).

Though separated from social welfare services, economic functioning is the other fundamental development aspect that needs equal attention. Feldman (2015) asserts that social policy scholars have not yet paid enough attention to social protection in the context of economic function. Feldman (2015) contends that researchers ought to pay more attention to the emancipatory function of the social protection initiative that has often been sidelined by policy makers, further asserting that social protection can promote economic growth by increasing social capital and maintaining aggregate economic demand.

Apart from the challenges related to the social work profession, there are some challenges related to material resources that still hinder the process of re-aligning the provision of welfare services. This sentiment has also been affirmed by Govender (2010: 74) who posits that 'lack of resources, high staff turnover and recruitment of foster families emerged as factors that contributed to the challenges experienced by both institutional and child welfare social workers'. Similarly, some researchers have indicated the virtual impossibility of rendering family preservation services by welfare organisations because of heavy caseload coupled with insufficient staff establishments (Strydom, 2014).

2.6 Social workers' participation in the improvement of social development services

The involvement of service providers and service users in decision-making regarding policy development closes the gap between policy makers, users and workers in relation to policy implementation. Referring to the implementation of the affordable Care Act in the United States of America, researchers found it critical for social work advocates and researchers to demonstrate understanding of social work practice to key decision–makers overseeing adherence to the act (Andrews et al., 2013). Complementing the above assertions is the view that without feedback from policy implementers and service users, there is minimal

hope of bridging the systemic gap existing on the side of policy makers (Broadhurst et al., 2010).

The mandate to produce professionals and workers who are capable of applying themselves to and participating in policy development remained pivotal in both global and local training institutions. According to Raniga and Zelnick (2014:396), "*integrating Global Agenda in curriculum teaching shapes the training of professionals who will be able to engage and influence international, national and local policy development and ultimately contribute to the development of a socially just society*". Nonetheless, this participation does not often occur smoothly. Sebola (2014) affirms that the challenge in making participation a reality in integrated development plans lies in the need to transform the corridors and citadels of power and bureaucratic hegemonies in municipal officials. Success in such a milestone transformation can enable professionals to understand the role of participation better and not only be realistic but also relevant in the drive towards poverty eradication.

2.7. Trends of the re-alignment process in various public sectors

It is not only South Africa that is still grappling with the process of rectifying the consequences and imbalances created by the past governance systems. Essentially, this re-alignment process is occurring in many parts of the international community, on the African continent and the Sub-Sahara region. The United Kingdom has found it difficult to accurately measure the progress of development due to the missing millions of the poorest population prevalent in developing countries. This has led to an over-estimation of the progress made towards developmental goals and a substantial under-estimation of the societal inequalities. This calls for an urgent intervention by both international and national organisations in terms of promoting reliable and transparent censuses and agreed upon testing procedures to determine the impact of the missing population (Carr-Hill, 2013).

Reflecting on universal health in Africa and Asia, Lagomarsino et al., (2012) assert that none of the common model proved to be correct in terms of measuring the progress and the

standard used to pursue development programmes, especially in view of the contextual features of each country, such as the political environment, culture and the inherited legacy, except for situations whereby comparisons are made with other countries along the dimensions of fair distribution of resources, the delivery of key services, the quality of services and reduction in the levels of impoverishment caused by health costs. Furthermore, policy makers continue to acquire new experiences on what other countries have done and embark on a critical review of that information to develop politically and operationally feasible options suitable for the local environment in their country (Lagomarsina et al., 2012).

Another persistent error that has tended to worsen the challenges facing African countries is the application of foreign-based solutions to the local context with particular reference to the analysis of the system of education during the South African post-apartheid dispensation. Mouton et al. (2012) affirm that the curriculum leads to disastrous consequences when its implementation is meant for highly developed and first world countries, and definitely not for a developing country whose structures and policies are not compatible with developed countries' programmes. Makoelle (2012) concludes that regarding the issue of inclusive pedagogy in South Africa, more research is required to conceptualize the notion of inclusion within the South African context, adding that there is need for adopting a more rational approach towards inclusive policy implementation.

Sub-Saharan African countries, particularly Botswana, Ghana, Mauritius and South Africa, in spite of the initial and different growth-retarding conditions such as colonialism and adverse geographical circumstances, have each achieved remarkable progress, with their development progress depicting the notion that history and the environment are not destiny in themselves, as historical and environmental challenges can be overcome through the establishment of democratic governance, appropriate socio-economic and political institutions, as well as good economic policies (Naude, 2013). Arguably, South Africa has achieved significant social and economic development in the past two decades of

democracy. The country experienced economic stability in mid-2000s and social development also improved (Gumede, 2013).

Nnadozie (2013) argues that there is still unacceptable inequality with reference to access to basic services especially for the Black and lowest-income earning households in South Africa. Gumede (2013) further concurs with this view, arguing that policy perspective has fallen short of significance in South Africa because of inappropriate policy development, implementation challenges and lack of economic vision. These have tended to constrain the advancement of welfare services in South Africa.

The Government of South Africa needs to take advantage of post-1994 democratic dispensation to provide and secure a stable social, economic and political environment in view of the existing developmental challenges such as unemployment, poverty, inequalities and the State's capacity to improve service delivery (Qwabe, 2013). Similar sentiments have been expressed by Nnadozie (2013) who affirms that the major developmental challenge South Africa has to face is inequality, which manifests when it comes to accessing basic services across different demographic segments of communities.

Hendricks (2013) asserts that there are obstacles that pose a risk to the successful implementation of the Integrated Financial Management Information System in South Africa and these include a lack of capacity, lack of commitment as well as institutional and technical challenges. Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss (2012) allude to similar challenges facing South Africa in the supply chain management which include lack of proper knowledge, skills and capacity, non-compliance with the national treasury policies and regulations, inadequate planning and failure to link demand to the budget, lack of proper accountability, fraud and corruption, inadequate response to, and inconsistency in, risk management in the supply chain management, inadequate measures that support monitoring and evaluation, unethical behaviour, too much decentralisation and the ineffectiveness of the Broad-Base Black Economic Empowerment policy.

A number of countries continually acknowledge that public procurement is a key concept that plays a significant role in the successful management of public resources. These countries instituted efforts to integrate public procurement in a strategic position of government in their bid to address mismanagement and corruption (Ambe & Badenhorst-Weiss, 2012). Hendricks (2013) further encapsulates the significance of following guidelines when implementing public programmes such as the Integrated Financial Management Information Systems, further stating that such a decision needs to be accompanied by a capacity-building programme, ensuring the commitment of all role players, the creation of a legal framework, adopting an agenda for effective change management, creating a strong project management team, organising the approach to implementation into phases and the development of a well-defined project implementation plan.

Possible solutions that suit the relevant context, as outlined by Qwabe (2013), indicated that renewed capacity-building programmes for the public sector framework advocate innovation and learning as requisites for the development of public-sector leadership capable of promoting the government's performance in order to address developmental challenges impeding this framework for learning demands innovation in the design of future public-sector capacity-building programmes. Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss (2012) reiterate the fact that specialised training programmes are required to equip public servants, suppliers and all the stakeholders involved in the supply chain management with the skills to achieve the objectives of procurement including the employment of qualified procurement practitioners, the development of an effective monitoring and evaluation tool, and the creation of incentive programmes to motivate competitive performance.

Regarding policy perspective, Qwabe (2013) asserts that more policy-related thinking should be exercised for both social and economic transformations to occur. Precisely, policy should pursue the vision imbedded in the economic blueprint that should be agreed upon through national consensus. In addition, intensifying community participation could assist in the creation of an effective and civilised mechanism for people's views to be heard

and to enhance communal resources in social capital. Furthermore, a considerable push in the direction of policy initiative linked to strong political commitment is needed at both national and municipal levels to reduce the backlogs in the delivery of service to the neediest members of society (Nnadoz, 2013).

2.8 Transformation of social work practice and education to the Re-alignment of Social Welfare Services

For the process involving the re-alignment of social welfare services to be fully effective, it requires effort from social workers and the adoption of the initiative by role-players. Harms (2013) states that social change, social justice and social transformation are part of social workers' duty performed through exploiting their knowledge and practice, while their continuous reflexivity will enable them to eliminate inequality related barriers as well as working towards social change. Lombard and Wairire (2010: 108) assert that '*research on the alignment of social work curricula with developmental goals can inform the re-design of the curriculum for developmental social work as well as the agenda for re-orientating social work practitioners for developmental social work*'.

The preparation of social workers' adoption of the re-alignment process should start at training level. This view has been confirmed by Masuka (2015) who argues that the curriculum of social work needs to be re-oriented towards developmental social work thrust, advocacy, indigenous knowledge and the incorporation of social work practice. Similar sentiments by Mogorosi (2018) affirm that insufficient attention has been paid to the deliberate effort to integrate indigenous knowledge into the social work curricula to enrich practice.

According to Qalinge and van Brenda (2018), as South Africa enters a new phase of knowledge acquisition in disciplines like social work, the country encounters the challenge related to re-thinking and developing own methods and theories to embrace this emerging variation, for this requires a transformed social work education that acknowledges philosophies and discourses such as indigenisation, decolonisation and Africanisation.

Smith (2013) concurs, arguing that the social work discourse is shaped by ideologies and that it must be depicted in all fields that entail the characteristics of oppression, knowledge of maintenance of the status quo, institutional reformist knowledge, transformative knowledge and social work educators to contend class, race structures of oppression and working towards social change.

Social work education and practice need to adopt a liberal approach that enables critical thinking, critical dialogue and an inspired reflexive practice when social workers are working with vulnerable communities (Raniga, 2012). Since its origin from the global North, social work has enhanced discipline and professionalism in developing countries such as South Africa (Mogorotsi, 2018).

Balancing theory and practice in social work training has proved to be too inadequate to sufficiently facilitate the adoption of the social work process. Mugumbate et al., (2014) affirm that a great potion of students' training must be inclined towards practical work in the filed rather than waiting for four years for it to be introduced to the community. Since communities offer the best teaching platform in the world, students in the field of social work learn more from the community than they do in the classroom. They further stress that field work and research are better approaches of teaching social work than theoretical teaching.

Furthermore, the transformation of the social work profession by creating more effective services and culturally competent practitioners, social work practice and education should be underpinned by developing indigenous theories, practice and policies involving primary service-users as sources of information (Ross, 2018). For a remarkable alignment of social work training and practice to effectively apply in the African context, social sciences and traditional approaches should continue in maturing the profession and calling upon expert social casework services that conform to the traditional values and the country's specific needs (Motsi et al., 2013).

2.9 Theoretical Framework of the Study

In this study, the Structural Social Work Theory was used as a lens aiding the exploration of social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services, with the view of intensifying service delivery and identifying areas of improvement in the entire service delivery system with specific reference to services being delivered to communities. This was relevant given the fact that South Africa is still in the process of healing from the wounds of exploitation and alienation of the social order fostered by the Apartheid regime. Apparently, social work is set to play a significant role as a healing and transformational initiative (Abdullah, 2015). George et al. (2010) posit that structural social work intends to eliminate societal inequalities through applying transformative measures that ultimately emancipate those who had been oppressed by the previous system. Furthermore, the Structural Social Work Theory is based on Marxist principles, observing class relations and the socio-economic situation as crucial indicators pointing to unequal relations among societies (George et al., 2010).

Murray and Hick (2012) affirm that the themes covered in the Structural Social Work Theory respond to social issues embedded in the accessibility and distribution of resources, the prioritisation of the material needs of the community, the multi-level political action geared towards challenging structural injustice and the advancement of human rights. Echoing similar views, Peters (2012) argues that commonalities across the theory are the inclusion of all forms of oppression, an understanding of oppression at individual, cultural and structural levels and the interactions between these variables. George et al. (2010) make the submission that the structural social work approach is not only a theory but a practice that provides experts with strategies to address the issue of lack of resources.

The rationale for the choice of this theory was based on the understanding that the main policy frameworks informing this process, the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) have both economic and political implications. Both frameworks were established to transform social welfare structures in

the communities affected by colonialism and the Apartheid regime, a goal similar to that of the Structural Social Work Theory.

2.9.1 Background of the theory

Historically, the Structural Social Work perspective developed from the socialist belief system concerned about class struggle. It started off as a conflict of perspectives rather than a cannon of theories considering the community as made up of people with conflicting welfares as they compete for resources and the imposition of their own conceptual opinions of the world on others (George et al., 2010). Furthermore, the theory drew from various critical and historical perspectives including Marxism, feminism, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, radical humanism and post-modernism in its emphasis of how oppressive the structural relations of patriarchal capitalism, colonialism, racism, heterosexism, ableism and ageism, among others form the basis of social problems (Murray & Hick, 2012).

Hickey and Du Toit (2013) state that the tendency of adverse incorporation and social exclusion research to emphasise the importance of historical and political contexts tends to work against one-size-fits-all solutions that are often applied across different contexts, further suggesting that any significant challenge to these inter-related processes requires a political movement and a real social transformation rather than just tweaks to policy designed by experts. In South Africa, spatial legacies of Apartheid often deprived poor people of the opportunity to participate in economic activities in townships and locate them far away from the economic hubs such as firms and large corporations that dominate the economy (Hickey & Du Toit, 2013). Expressing similar sentiments, Hickey and Du Toit (2013) reiterate the observation that these forms of social segregation include denying the citizenry their inalienable political rights, personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression and equality of opportunities.

In 2000, South Africa initiated a terminological shift from the Department of Welfare to the Department of Social Development without effecting any changes in the structure of the

welfare system, which, since the retrogressive days of Apartheid, had been hinged on the continuation of the residual welfare system established during the Apartheid era and where over 90% of the welfare budget was spent on social security (Gray, 2010). Nevertheless, Gray (2010) pointed out that the Reconstruction and Development Programme put in place an ideal multi-pronged approach to alleviate poverty. The approach requires that all sectors of society and government work in partnership with each other in South Africa's reconstruction and development drive.

In colonial South Africa, the colonial colour bar separating settlers from the indigenous people was famously elaborated into a categorical and complicated system of ranked memberships, leading to familiar phenomena called the 'poor white problem' and the increasingly significant differentiation between the more and less educated black urbanites and the white folk (Ferguson, 2013). According to Ferguson (2013), the breakdown of the old system of work membership has had profound consequences on one's understanding of the current impasses in Southern African politics and issues of social policy alike. According to Cavanagh (2012), South Africa has convincingly demonstrated that its bid to redress the long-standing historical injustices has been one of its most successful pursuits in the post-colonial period. Ferguson (2013) concurs, asserting that Apartheid South Africa's notorious race laws such as the pass laws and housing restrictions were being dismantled by the new political establishment.

The legacy of the Apartheid epoch such as unemployment, poverty and inequality continue to haunt the post-Apartheid dispensation in South Africa, with gender inequality, the burden of HIV/AIDS and violence-related mortality impacting negatively on family and parental practices, undermining the lives of black community and more significantly, some of the challenges young people face to date may be associated with the enduring legacy of structural violence (Ratele, Shefer & Clowes, 2012). Ratele et al., (2012) also advanced the view that colonial and apartheid ideology, laws and policies around marriages, sexual life, residential patterns, job reservation, educational opportunities, business and political franchise undermined and negatively impacted on the lives of Africans. In addition, Graven (2014) maintains that the history of Apartheid in South Africa exudes the glaring reality

that race and poverty are complexly intertwined to elicit higher levels of poverty, widening the socio-economic gulf between the rich and the poor in various systems and spheres of life.

2.9.2 Key postulation of the theory

The major elements of the Structural Social Work Theory are hinged upon the understanding that individual and societal problems are caused by a differential access to power and the consequential oppression this arrangement engenders (Whyte, 2012). George et al. (2010) express similar views, contending that the Structural Social Work approach conceptualises power as a commodity that people possess in variable degrees. The Structural Social Work Theory identifies the need for social workers to provide practical and humanitarian care to the victims and casualties of the patriarchal and liberal-capitalist society and therefore, restructure society along socialist lines (Deveau-Brock, 2013). Moreover, the drawback that impedes the applicability of the Structural Social Work Theory is its depiction of all spheres of life as fighting places between the oppressor and the oppressed, whereby social workers represent one side which does not allow the existence of conflicts that the participation of social workers in community issues involves (George et al., 2010).

According to George et al. (2010), organisations are designed in a manner that segregates against other groups of people on the basis of class, skin colour, sex, capability, sexual orientation, age and belief; whereas the function of the social work profession is embedded in the desire to eliminate these disparities which cater for those in authority, enabling them to hold on to their authority and privileges at the expense of poor people. Similarly, Murray and Hick (2012) assert that these subtle forms of domination through regulatory coercion, unjust political and economic arrangements are maintained by institutions underpinned by regulations and correctional establishments, including the police, the armed forces, courts and social services. Lastly, Peters (2012) comprehends that the Structural Social Work Theory also acknowledges other approaches such as the feminist ideology, the

postmodernist philosophy and critical social work, or anti-oppressive school of thought which are all partners in pursuit of a similar and primary goal, which is social justice.

2.9.3 Critique of the theory

The Structural Social Work Theory has been criticised for lack of theoretical clarity (Murray & Hick, 2012), which could otherwise be helpful in explaining the complexity of issues encountered in social work practice. Bailey (2010) further argues that theoretically, there are weak points that tended to undermine the efforts by its practitioners to apply the framework in practice as well as further developing the approach's theoretical base in response to the political and theoretical challenges of today. For instance, the theory avoids a substantial discussion of environmental issues or at least an engagement with ecological problems such as natural disaster and climate change which impact heavily on marginalised and oppressed people in society (Murray & Hick, 2012).

On the other hand, the theory has come under heavy criticism for engendering epistemological confusion between the concepts of the individual and the subject (Bailey, 2010). This criticism is affirmed by George et al., (2010) who argue that the Structural Social Work perspective positions a puzzling twofold understanding of the individual and structure, seeing structure as something outside the individual and that a social actor creates societal structures. Peters (2012) expresses similar concerns, viewing the theory as positing that the dominant societal ideology directs the understanding of social problems and the implementation of social work activities, without an understanding of the underlying ideology and knowledge of alternative paradigms. Given this understanding, social work is poised to maintain the status quo rather than identifying and exploring other directions in order to address social problems.

Lastly, structural social workers have been criticised for being role players in conflicting situations in which they select an approach that perpetuates the pathologising of clients and

an approach, which does not offer analytical instruments needed to observe the types of class and race inequalities (George et al., 2010).

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the history and the state of social welfare services at international, regional, national and local levels in relation to the re-alignment process that intends to enhance welfare service delivery. The chapter has also discussed social workers understanding of the available welfare policies and frameworks, which have contributed to the implementation of traditional welfare programmes. Also under spotlight were the achievements and challenges regarding the identified re-alignment process, the trend of the re-alignment process in various components of public sector. It also outlined the involvement of policy implementers in policy development in both practice and training. Furthermore, the chapter presented the transformation of social work practitioners in order to suit new roles in the re-alignment process. Lastly, the discussed theoretical framework of the study was presented starting from its background, postulation of its key tenets to the major criticisms of the theory.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This study aimed at exploring how social workers understood the re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery. This chapter presents the research methodology and design that was used to collect data. The sub-headings that follow discuss the study approach, location of the study, study design, research population, sampling techniques, data collection methods and instruments, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research approach and paradigm

This study adopted a qualitative approach, which enables researchers to focus on study participants' perspectives of the problem under investigation, without imposing their own understanding as researchers (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this study, the researcher sought to learn how study participants understood and experienced the re-alignment process of social welfare service as enhancement of service delivery.

The research paradigm entails an approach to conduct research, whereby researchers share common values, assumptions and beliefs concerning the conduct and nature of research (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). This study adopted an interpretive paradigm in order to enable social workers to explore detailed experiential understanding of re-alignment process of social welfare services. Carey (2009) asserts that in qualitative research, the behaviours, emotions, attitudes and experiences of a particular population are explored. Creswell and Poth (2017) maintain that qualitative research is conducted for the issue to be explored, and in turn to study the population, identify conditions that can be studied and hear silenced views. The interpretive paradigm is consistent with the qualitative approach.

This study began with the view that social workers were the suitable population to explore the re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery in

UMgungundlovu. The researcher employed a theoretical lens to investigate this case study. Creswell and Poth (2017) aver that qualitative research starts with assumptions, followed by worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. In interacting with the participants through the selected theoretical lens, the researcher maintained on learning from their views, meaning and experiences in relation to the process of re-alignment. Creswell and Poth (2017) attest that when using a qualitative approach, investigators direct their attention to learning the gist that study participants share regarding the problem and not the connotation that the investigators desires about the study.

3.3 Research design

This study used a case study design, which is descriptive in nature. Rubin and Babbie (2011) defined a case study as a design that seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of a particular intervention or implementation of policy in logic time sequence. The purpose for this design was to explore social workers' understanding of the re-alignment initiative undertaken by the Department of Social Development. Creswell and Poth (2017) reiterate that when using a case study design, the researcher explores a limited system or multiple constrained cases over the period of time, for instance a single program may be selected for study through detailed and in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information such as interviews, reports, case description and case-based themes.

The main focus in using the case study design was to explore social workers' views of, and experiences on the re-alignment process initiated by the Department of Social Development. Creswell and Poth (2017) aver that the focus of the case study design is the case itself which seeks to evaluate programs presented in a unique way. Baskarada (2014) further affirms that descriptive case studies seek to completely describe different characteristics of a phenomenon in its context and it is mainly used for theory building. Lastly, the case study design gains relevance when more in-depth explanations and descriptions (Gog, 2015).

3.3.1 Location of the study

When using a case study, the investigator needs to choose a location to investigate programs or process and a significant phase in the process is to locate people or a location to investigate, gaining access to, as well as to create rapport with study participants in order to get rich data (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This study was undertaken in both rural and urban areas in Midlands, KwaZulu-Natal Province, under uMgungundlovu District Municipality, which is described as a Category C municipality (Statistics SA, 2011). Category C refers to the municipality with executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality. The district comprises of the following seven local municipalities, which are based in the accompanying towns: Impendle – Impendle, Mkhambathini – Camperdown, Mpofana – Mooi River, Msunduzi – Pietermaritzburg, Richmond – Richmond, uMngeni – Howick, and Mshwathi – New Hanover/Wartburg.

UMgungundlovu District Municipality carries a population of 1017763 (85% - African Blacks, 7% - Indians, 6% - Whites, 2% - Coloured and 0,3% - Others) and households of 272 666. The main economic sectors are community services (25-30%), finance (15-20%), manufacturing (10-15%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (10-15%), wholesale and retail trade (10-15%), transport and storage (10%) (Stat SA, 2011).

This district was chosen because it is a capital city of the province, and it is where the legislature of KwaZulu-Natal is situated. Secondly, it is where all provincial departments' head offices are located, including the Department of Social Development, which is the organisation of focus. As expatiated under sampling, the study focused on four service offices, which fall under the four local municipalities, namely; Pietermaritzburg (Msunduzi), Impendle (Impendle), Howick (uMngeni) and Camperdown (Mkhambathini). Due to broadness of the district in absence of funding, the researcher selected only four local municipalities to reach both rural and urban location.

3.3.2 Population

Babbie (2009) describes the notion of population as the whole collection of research subjects that the researcher seek to study, draw conclusion about and of which the researcher believes that it will meet the criteria of sample inclusion. The population of this study consisted of social workers employed by KwaZulu-Natal Department of Social Development, under the Pietermaritzburg Cluster, which comprised Ugu, Harry Gwala and uMgungundlovu district.

3.3.3 Sampling strategies

Not all social workers working for the Department of Social Development were selected but only those posited to be rich data sources were involved in this study. Gentles et al. (2015) maintained that the notion of purposive sampling indicates that participants are selected on the basis of their knowledge of the group to which they belong. Gentles et al. (2015) repeat that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Creswell and Poth (2017) agree that the investigator chooses individual participants for research, intentionally based on their knowledge and understanding about the study problem. Lastly, Singh and Masuku (2014) argue that this technique can be used only for some specific purposes because it provides biased estimates and it is not statistically recognised.

The sample was recruited using purposive sampling, which entails the selection of a sample based on the researcher's judgment about suitable sample to the topic under investigation (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). Participants were selected based on their expert knowledge and experience as social workers working for the Department of Social Development. According to Khan (2014), sampling is a method of deducing information about the whole population instead of measuring every unit of the population. Gentles et al. (2015) report that in case study research, sampling strategies involve guidance on how to select specific data sources to address the research objectives.

Creswell and Poth (2017) state that the researcher needs to decide about who should be sampled, how many people need to be sampled and also ascertain whether sampling will be reliable, considering the quality of data required. Etikan et al., (2016) reiterate that the researcher is subjective and biased in choosing the subjects of the study. The following criterion was established to reach those suitable participants considered as rich sources of data required to achieve the objectives of this study.

- All social workers employed by the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Department of Social Development under uMgungundlovu District Municipality in both rural and urban areas of Impendle, Camperdown, Howick and Pietermaritzburg Service Offices.

- All experienced social workers of the above-mentioned service offices who have been employed by KZN DSD before 2013.

- All social workers of the above criteria who volunteered to participate in this study.

The researcher selected social workers, considering that they are viewed as key role players in the delivery of social services and that they are the first contact-persons in interacting with services users. This choice was based on the assumption that practitioners with this experience are likely to have a comparatively better understanding of the implications of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and that they have been practicing before the introduction of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013). This is crucial since the latter document is one of the key documents that informing the re-alignment of social welfare services.

3.3.4 Recruitment process
The researcher made an arrangement with each service office manager and social work supervisors in Msunduzi, Impendle, uMngeni and Mkhambathini using direct calls and emails. They were given the permission letter from the Department of Social Development's Head of Department which was accompanied by study aims and objectives. The researcher visited all the identified service offices on separate dates and to recruit

participants. Presentations were done and those who met the inclusion criteria and were interested in participating in the study were recruited and interviewed individually. During each service office presentation, preliminary meeting occurred through open discussion with bigger group whereby researcher explained in details the process of interviews so that all interested participants gained clear depiction on how they had to undergo. Twelve social workers were recruited, ten of them were female and the other two were males.

3.3.5 Data collection method

The researcher used qualitative interviews to elicit participants' views on the topic. According to Wahyuni (2012), study participants are able to convey their knowledge and experiences to the researcher regarding the study topic through conversation. In this study, social workers as experts on the study topic explored their experiences and understanding of re-alignment of social welfare services as enhancement of service delivery through face-to-face qualitative interviews. This method enabled the participants to have open expression of their views, experiences and feelings about the topic. As a result, the researcher was provided with the opportunity to observe all aspects of communication unlike in the use of questionnaires.

3.3.6 Data collection instruments

Data collection is an essential component of the research process. It is defined as a sequence of interconnected actions intended at putting together data to respond to emerging study questions (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2017). To elicit the participants' views on the topic, semi-structured interviews were conducted. According to Rubin and Babbie (2011), semi-structured interviews use interview guides that outline the topics and issues that the interviewer should cover in the interview. An interview guide allows the interviewer to adopt the logical sequencing and wording of questions to suit each particular interview. The researcher conducted a thorough literature search to identify gaps in the body of knowledge, and then generated an interview guide with the relevant questions.

Prior to semi-structured interview sessions, the researcher made an appointment with each Service Office's social work-supervisors to conduct a presentation to potential participants (social workers) in order to provide a detailed explanation of the study aim and objectives, and to explain issues of ethical significance. The researcher explained the importance of using a voice recorder during interviews. According to Khan (2014), interviews can be audio-taped with permission from the participant to ascertain that an accurate account of the interview is captured, which can be replayed later for analytic purposes. Further, anonymity should be assured during the course of the recording.

Semi-structured interviews are designed to ascertain subjective responses from participants regarding a particular situation they have experienced (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Twelve open-ended questions were administered during one-on-one conversation. In keeping with Creswell and Poth (2017) social workers were not hesitant to speak, sharing ideas, experience and understanding in relation to the re-alignment process of social welfare services within their workplace. Wahyuni (2012) confirms that participants who are the practitioners in their field passes on their knowledge to the researcher through the conversations held during the interview process. Hence, the researcher was afforded a better opportunity to get participants' opinions, views and experiences in detail (Khan, 2014).

Each interview had duration of 30-45 minutes and was conducted in English as per participant's preference to particular questions and all interviews were audio recorded. Khan (2014) argues that the interview time and duration depends on the participant's responses which can extend and prolong the interview session. Interviews took place in each participant's working office and overall duration of data collection lasted for one month thirteen days, resulted from availability of participants scheduled time.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis involves gathering and organizing of data for analysis, funneling data into themes following the process of coding and presenting data in discussion (Creswell & Poth,

2017). The researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of thematic data analysis as follows;

1) **Familiarisation with data;**

   Researcher repeatedly read transcripts, listened to audio recordings and made some notes to clearly understand the data.

2) **Coding**

   The researcher used codes to put together data that is correlated to each other, which had potential to form themes.

3) **Searching for themes**

   The researcher reviewed codes, identified those that formed specific patterns related to research questions, which assisted in the formulation of relevant themes.

4) **Reviewing themes**

   The researcher rechecked the collection of themes, ascertained their relatedness to data in relation to research questions by re-reading the data collected.

5) **Defining and naming themes**

   The researcher identified the meaning of each theme in relation to other themes, categorised those in common and named them as independent themes or sub-themes.

6) **Writing up the report**

   The researcher presented themes in a logical manner, telling a coherent story that emanated from the data in relation to each research question.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethics in research are bound between formulating general rules (codes of ethics), establishing institutions of control (ethics committees) and the taking into account of principles in day-to-day practices in the field and in the process of research (Flick, 2014). Almost all ethical related matters in the study belong to four groups; safety from any harm, informed consent, privacy rights and honesty to other professional co-workers (Leedy & Ormond, 2010).

3.5.1 Gatekeeper's permission

Gatekeepers who include staff at a recruitment site or stakeholders off-site provide the researcher with access to potential participants. Therefore, it is important to use their permission during recruitment because they may facilitate or hinder recruitment of participants (Namageyo-Funa et al., 2014). The researcher obtained permission to interview social workers from the senior management of KZN's Department of Social Development. This was followed by further engagement with Service Offices management to access social workers in their working places. Mellor et al. (2013) stressed that accessing an organisation to conduct research on their personnel involves either a formal process of gaining entry followed by an informal process where the researcher becomes known to the relevant gatekeepers, since the gatekeeper has a right to know the proposed research processes and their potential consequent impact on the normal operational functioning of the institution. In addition, it is important that researchers respect and understand the attitudes and context specific influences of intermediate gatekeepers within the institution, because gatekeepers are influenced and shaped by different priorities, which in turn could impact the project (Mellor et al., 2013). The researcher obtained ethical clearance to conduct this research project from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN) research ethics committee and letter requesting participation administered to the potential participants. Wahyuni (2012) asserts that after obtaining the ethical clearance then the interviews can be conducted. This process was a pre-requisite procedure for the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee to review the study for any potential harmful impact and risk to potential participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

3.5.2 Maleficence

In any research study, it is essential to give consideration to minimizing the ways in which taking part may be harmful to the participants and to stipulate clear aversive action (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher ensured that all the participants clearly understood the aims, procedures and possible expectations of their participation in the study, and there was no known risk and potential harm. Creswell and Poth (2017) maintained that it can be problematic if the data recounted cause harms to study participants in any form.

Furthermore, as a social worker, the researcher prepared the participants emotionally and psychological prior to the interviews, and after the interviews emotional distress session made available. Mellor et al. (2013) concurred that all researchers have an ethical obligation to minimise foreseeable risks such as physical, emotional, informational risks, including pain, discomfort, embarrassment, emotional distress, breach of confidentiality and stigmatisation.

3.5.3 Informed consent

Informed consent entails a participation agreement between researcher and participants, which provides information about the purpose of the study, the funder, research team, how the data will be used, and what participation will require of them, subjects likely to be covered, how much time is required and so on (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher explained the aim of the study and all the procedures to the participants and allowed them to ask any questions to enhance clarity. They were formally requested them to give their consent to participation and sign the consent form. Creswell and Poth (2017) reiterate that it is a prerequisite for participants to grant their permission in order to be investigated. Furthermore, participants should clearly understand the aim of the research, required time to complete the research interview, as well as plans for using the findings obtained from interview. The researcher also explained that participation in this study was totally voluntary, hence they could withdraw at any time if they felt so, without fear of being prejudiced. Ferreira et al. (2015) repeat that voluntary informed consent is the cornerstone of research ethics and the consent form should provide a brief description of the features of the study that might affect their decision to participate, particularly regarding the method-ology of the study, potential harm, and the anonymity or confidentiality of their responses. Participants signed a consent form, in keeping with Wahyuni (2012) that interviewees are given a consent form to be signed off by them as voluntary participants.

3.5.4 Anonymity

The concept anonymity means that the identity of participants must not be known to the public outside the research team. As such, absolute guarantees of anonymity cannot be

given to the participant, but they should be made aware who will know of their participation (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher assured the participants that their identity particulars were not going to be disclosed in the study. To ensure anonymity, the researcher used participants' codes to avoid their identity link to the study. Creswell and Poth (2017) assert that a researcher must protect the identity of the informants by assigning numbers or aliases to the participants.

3.5.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality entails that direct or indirect attribution of comments in reports or presentations to identify participants must be avoided (Ritchie et al., 2013). In simple application of confidentiality, the researcher knows the identity of participants and can link them back to their responses but works hard to protect their privacy by using codes rather than names to link subjects back to their responses (Ferreira et al., 2015). The researcher assured participants that the report and publications of the study would be in their respect by maintaining their privacy and confidentiality, their records are kept in a lockable cabinet, password secured to digital records and their audio records will be deleted after the completion of the final report. According to Wahyuni (2012), a researcher starts off the interview by briefly explaining the aim of the interview, emphasizing the confidentiality, anonymity and the voluntary nature of the study. Khan (2014) is of the similar view that researchers should assure the interviewee of the confidentiality. Participants in the current study were assured of their confidentiality.

3.6 Trustworthiness

The concept trustworthiness in qualitative research means that the study findings are accurate or true not only from the standpoint of the researcher but also from that of the participants and the readers of the study (Yilmaz, 2013). The research is of good quality when it thinks theoretically through and with data, develops empirically sound and reliable findings (Loh, 2013). Trustworthiness is the equivalence of validity and reliability in quantitative research (Shenton, 2004). Following the procedures of qualitative approach, case study design and methodology used in this study in line with criteria of reliability and

trustworthy, then other researchers by following my protocol can reach to my findings. Participants were told that findings and recommendations of this study will be presented to them before publishing. Baskarada (2014) illustrates a similar view that reliability is concerned with demonstrating that same results can be obtained by repeating the data collection procedure and other investigators should in principle be able to follow the same procedures and arrive at the same results. Furthermore, Connelly, (2016) referred to trustworthiness as the degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods used to ensure the quality of a study. Trustworthiness is operationalized through the following constructs:

3.6.1 Dependability

The researcher ensured that the findings are consistent and dependable as a result of sufficient data being collected both in rural and urban areas. Furthermore, the findings reflecting the truth about the topic under investigation. The researcher recruited well informed and experienced social workers. Wahyuni (2012) avers that enhancing dependability can be achieved by presenting detailed and step-by-step description of the research processes undertaken, as well as providing the main instruments used to gather data. The study supervisor went through all the procedures undertaken in this study before final submission, as posited by Creswell and Poth (2017) that the results can be dependable after a thorough audit of the research process.

3.6.2 Transferability

To ensure that the findings are transferable among the investigators and study participants, a comprehensive description is essential (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The researcher ensured that findings of this study would be applicable and transferable to other research contexts. Wahyuni (2012) avers that with similar accurate alterations in the setting of research findings that are drawn from rich descriptions on the current state of observed practices have the possibility of being transferred into a different field of study.

3.6.3 Conformability

The researcher ensured that results of the study would reflect the primary data and be tracked back from the source documents, this would be accomplished by my supervisor's verification of data. Creswell and Poth (2017) confirmed that confirmability should be found throughout a reviewing of the study progression. Wahyuni (2012) refers to confirmability as the extent to which others can confirm the findings in order to ensure that they reflect the understandings and experiences from observed participants rather than the researcher's own preferences.

3.6.4 Credibility

The researcher ensured that the data is of high quality, drawn from reliable sources, direct interviews and observation from participants to show that the study conclude what was intended (Wahyuni, 2012). This was established through direct and open engagement with study participants during semi-structured interviews, supervisor's review and findings would be disseminated prior to publishing. Connelly (2016) reiterates that techniques used to establish credibility include prolonged engagement with participants, member-checking, questioning of the data and returning to examine it several times. All these strategies were implemented in this study to enhance credibility.

3.7 Limitations of the study

In every research study, there is a possibility that challenges may occur during the course of the project. While some challenges may be eliminated, others may not. This study had its limitations, which needed to be considered against the background of the results of the study. UMgungundlovu District Municipality consists of seven local municipalities, and of these, only four were reached for data collection and therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalised to other departments. Secondly, only African participants were voluntarily recruited, and the findings will not be reflective of the perspectives of other races in South Africa. However, race was not part of the study inclusion criteria. Lastly, some social workers were not willing to participate with an undisclosed reasons, this may have implications in sample size.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology employed to conduct this study, the processes and procedures used. It began with a discussion on study approach, followed by study design which includes location of the study, research population, sampling techniques, data collection method, data collection processes, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. Presentation of study findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF STUDY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The study is preoccupied with an exploration of the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at municipal levels: with reference to the case study of uMgungundlovu District Municipality. The participants were social workers employed by the Department of Social Development at uMgungundlovu District under the local municipalities of Impedle, Howick, Msunduzi and Mkhambathini. The thematic analysis approach was employed to analyse data and to develop themes. These aspects constitute the structure of this chapter, taking into account the specificity of the research context as well as the experience and expertise of research participants. The theoretical framework for this study is the Structural Social Work Theory which entails the undoing and the re-structuring of the unjust social conditions shaped by the Apartheid system and the colonial past. The theory views social workers as key role players in so far as they facilitate the re-structuring process at field level.

4.1.1 Research Participants' Profile

The following table describes the biographic information of the participants recruited for the study.

Table 4.1: Participants Profile

Participant	Gender	Age	Experience	Race	Office Area	Date recruited
01	F	25-35	2012	African	Rural	15/10/2018
02	F	25-35	2010	African	Rural	15/10/2018
03	F	25-35	2011	African	Rural	15/10/2018
04	F	25-35	2012	African	Urban	19/10/2018
05	F	25-35	2011	African	Urban	19/10/2018
06	F	25-35	2012	African	Urban	19/10/2018
07	M	25-35	2011	African	Urban	19/10/2018
08	F	45-55	1992	African	Rural	23/10/2018
09	M	25-35	2010	African	Rural	23/10/2018
10	F	25-35	2012	African	Urban	28/11/2018
11	F	25-35	2011	African	Urban	28/11/2018
12	F	25-35	2010	African	Urban	28/11/2018

As shown in Table 4.1. above, about twelve social workers were recruited, ten of them were female and the other two were males; eleven belonged to the 25-35 years age group and one was in the 45-55 years age group. Of the twelve participants, eleven were employed between 2010 and 2012 and one was employed since 1992. All the participants were Africans and among them, seven were working at urban welfare service offices of uMngeni and Msunduzi and five were working at rural welfare service offices of Impendle and Mkhambathini.

4.2 Themes and sub-themes

Highlighted in the below table below are study objectives and the themes that emerged from this study.

Table 4.2 Study Objectives and themes

Objectives	Themes	Sub-themes
1. To explore social workers' understanding of the re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery;	1. Purpose of re-alignment process	
2. To explore the experiences of social workers as key role-players in the re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level;	2. Nature of Social work-supervision applied in the organisation 3. Quantity at the expense of quality	
3. To examine the successes and barriers of re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level;	4. Successes on Realignment of Social Welfare Services	*Access to Social Welfare Services *Community Awareness on Social Development Service
	5. Barriers to Realignment of Social Welfare Services	*DSD Communication Strategy

		*Lack of Human Resources *Lack of Material Resources *Capacity-Building & Skills Development
4. To identify the extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment of social welfare services;	6. Social workers' input in the re-alignment process	
5. To examine how social workers have adapted to the transition resulting from the re-alignment of social welfare services.	7. Adaptation to transition: The role and mandate of legislative frameworks and policies.	

4.3: Purpose of re-alignment process

Participants shared their understanding of the main purpose of the re-alignment of social welfare services. Their contributions were based on the information from the legislative structures and policies established by democratic government through the Department of Social Development. The rationale for the re-alignment was to restore dignity and improve living conditions for disadvantaged communities as inherited from the past injustices. The priority of the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) was to holistically re-structure and rationalise the entire social welfare delivery system including social development, social functioning, social care, social welfare services and social security. Concurrently with structural social workers whom are to render empowerment social services to the victims of colonialism and apartheid regime (Deveau-Brock, 2013).

Participants 1 and Participant 2 affirmed that:

"The democratic government of South Africa that took over after the collapse of the Apartheid regime came up with strategies in a bid to redress the past injustices" (Participant 1).

"Okay, the policies that we are using have demonstrated that Government has interest in the needs of the community and has the intent to improve people's conditions of living" (Participant 2).

These assertions illustrate the participants' understanding that the re-structuring process is an ongoing intervention strategy developed and implemented by the South African democratic government with the intention to redress the legacy of injustice passed on by the Apartheid regime. Ngwenya (2016) appraises the Government of South Africa, arguing that it has committed itself to redress the discriminatory practices presided over by the social welfare services during the Apartheid period through the re-structuring of the social security services system.

In fact, the re-structuring journey that involves the rooting out of the deep roots of the colonial and Apartheid legacy has never been an easy enterprise. Similar sentiments were expressed by Badat and Sayed (2014), who argued that in spite of the provisions of the Constitution of South Africa and other available legislative frameworks adopted by the State to realise wide-ranging goals through education, the post-1994 State's commitment to the implementation of strong versions of social justice remained moot. However, this shortcoming does not overshadow the massive progress made in the direction of the re-alignment of social welfare services, as reflected in the participants' understanding that the process was intended to bring better conditions of life for all South Africans particularly the poor. Some participants maintained that:

"In fact, the new social welfare services seek to improve people's conditions of living" (Participant 4).

"The process of re-alignment serves to improve service delivery within the communities" (Participant 6).

"We are developing communities. I view it as a department that seeks to change people's lives" (Participant 9).

Based on participants' understanding of the re-alignment process, it became clear that the forces of discrimination and unjust systems have been exposed and eliminated. Leubolt (2014) agrees with the view that the post-Apartheid political dispensation has embarked on social reforms geared towards the elimination of institutional racism and an extensively weakened heritage of social policies. Through this understanding of participant 4, 6 and 9, it is clearly shown that the new dispensation initially identified structural factors that resulted in inequality and unjust living conditions which required the new democratic government, through the Department of Social Development, to re-structure the welfare service delivery systems. On the same note, Harland (2014) reiterates the point that it is significant for practitioners in the social work profession to understand the dynamic forces and the characteristic factors that reproduce inequality and poverty in order to facilitate the development and implementation of social protection interventions and the setting in motion of the transformative change.

4.4 Nature of Social work- supervision applied in the organisation

The participants expressed common feelings regarding their support system, particularly the area of social work supervision. They reported that they experienced supervision that operated far away from them and in that way, they felt the absence of advocacy towards the challenges they encountered as social workers. However, Baldwin (2016) suggests that supervision has the capability to overcome the current challenges facing the profession and the organisations under its operational jurisdiction.

For effective organisational practice to occur, supportive supervision should be prioritised, which also calls into the fold the need promote leadership training programmes (Vito, 2015). Furthermore, supportive supervision enables social workers to ventilate their emotions, reflect on their experiences, leading to a better understanding of the context of their work (Baldwin, 2016). This contradicts what was reported by participants that supervisors are not mounting adequate advocacy on behalf of their supervisees. They asserted that:

"Just support from the immediate supervisor is not enough as they are too scared to report our views and feelings to the senior management above them. They fail to advocate for our concerns and strive for their fruition" (Participant 9).

"We expect supportive supervision to develop strategies that can address community needs and the challenges we encounter as social workers. Without putting these measures in place, there is no meaningful support because of insurmountable workloads" (Participant 6).

The participants' reports regarding supervision tended to question the current nature of supervision used by social work supervisors. Reportedly, the supervision system was criticised for being too administrative as supervisors tended to focus on office work and reports, and not in touch with the field. Reports indicate that the current system refrains from practically monitoring field activities. Thus, Baldwin (2016) affirms that traditional supervision methods were characterised by supporting social workers in emotionally demanding work and also by exploring various options that apply to the real world of clients.

The participants reported that the current supervision focuses more on reports and orders, failing to envisage social workers' need for supportive supervision, which is more emphatic on the fieldwork needs of the social workers. O'Donoghue et al. (2018) aver that in order to strengthen supervision of social work, there is need to adopt a more practical approach that is responsive to contemporary challenges. In line with this observation, participants described their supervisors as living in a world different from their own. One of the social workers in the field expressed the feeling that:

"I think constant supervision is needed; not much of having supervisors as overseers or watchdogs, but as supporters in the true essence of work support" (Participant 1).

"Supervision is very important but it is lacking in our department. Supervision is no longer there because I have seen supervisors referring cases to social workers; then after that, it does not matter where those cases end up to" (Participant 7).

"We need supportive supervision, effective induction and orientation immediately after appointment" *(Participant 4).*

Supervision in social work should be a holistic package that caters for support, learning, empowerment and reflection on expertise. In agreement with this view, Baldwin (2016) maintains that the reflexive and developmental supervision approach should holistically address professional activities. In addition, Baldwin (2016) adds that supervision in social work should allow better understating of social work practice, the wider context of work and enable social workers to employ various alternatives when dealing with clients.

4.5 Quantity at the expense of quality

The participants reported that the Department of Social Development employed impressive tools to monitor and evaluate programmes that are occurring in the field in order to assess the quality of work and therefore develop improvement plans where necessary. This is in sync with the objective of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013), which borders on the need to establish mechanisms that promote the provision of quality social welfare services linked to a monitoring and evaluation system.

This view was reported by participants basing on their experiences as key role players. They reported having supervisors responsible for monitoring, evaluation and planning which they do collaboratively with social workers, using such tools like the non-financial data form (NFD) as well as monthly and quarterly reports. Beddoe, Karvinen-Niinikoski, Ruch and Tsui (2015) maintain that supervision is considered a very much interesting exercise in social work and it is seen as a vital activity for attaining various professional demands. Participants affirmed that:

"A supervisor takes files and checks if what he or she said on a particular day is done. For instance, one may say I went to Igulube (pig) homestead and there must be a process. The

supervisor does not indicate that the social worker was there, you see (laughing). That is how they monitor our visits" (Participant 2).

"At the department office level, we have supervision to ensure that services are rendered properly. We even have targets and we even compile monthly reports" (Participant 9).

"In the office base, we have supervision on one-on-one basis. We compile monthly reports in statistics and we use the NFD reporting tool on a monthly basis" (Participant 12).

"We compile reports monthly and quarterly and we fill in forms to monitor ECD" (Participant 4).

"In our department, we do the reporting every month. Supervisors come to check out files, verifying our reports" (Participant 5).

"The tracking tool that we use is the NFD form (non-financial data) which enables us to submit monthly reports" (Participant 7).

It appeared that reports are compiled within stipulated timeframes and targets which, according to the participants, were supposed to be adhered to by the social workers. The participants also reported that they experienced pressure from supervisors and officers in the higher structures of the department urging them to meet targets and deadlines. They also mentioned that the composition of targets are not transparently stipulated to them as field workers but are decedent as complete from higher structures. They maintained that:

"The things that make our work so difficult are targets. There are service office targets and individual targets you need to meet as per given timeframes" (Participant 7).

"I think we now have much pressure to meet targets because so far, what I observed is that social workers are more worried about meeting targets which are set at the provincial level" (Participant 1).

"Supervisors set targets. We do not even know how they come up with those targets" (Participant 9).

As they struggle to meet targets within given timeframes, participants reported that they disguise their performance, which compromises the quality of service. The participants felt that the numbers or targets become a significant objective of the department, a situation which promotes an element of competition amongst other service offices. Resultantly, focus moves away from the actual field cases and the reality of progress made in those cases. Actual work receives less attention as long as impressive numbers are captured. The participants strongly reiterated that the quality of service should have a priority over high numbers and there has to be a balance between targets and the quality of services. The participants expressed the following sentiments, that:

"For me, if they want us to do quality work, targets should be set aside. You cannot set targets with people's problems since no one is responsible for creating them. Let us strive for quality work and refrain from pushing for mere numbers" (Participant 7).

"Sometimes we work under pressure to meet targets but ending up not doing quality work but merely pushing numbers" (Participant 9).

"The population in my ward is excessively high making it difficult to meet my targets. If supervisors can consider quality work rather than the quantity of work to be done, people would be guaranteed of sufficient services" (Participant 2).

In fact, it is correct to believe that working under pressure with insufficient resources negatively affects staff motivation. Bakker (2015) shares similar sentiments, arguing that if job demands are consistently high and job resources are consistently minimal, then staff motivation also wanes.

4.6 Successes on the Re-alignment of Social Welfare Services

The participants confidently acknowledged the successes made by the Department of Social Development through the re-alignment process. Two facets of success were reported as; access to available social welfare services and people's awareness of services rendered by the Department of Social Development as discussed in the following sub-themes.

4.6.1 Access to social welfare services

Utterances about the access to social welfare services were commonly expressed after a pertinent question was posed requiring participants to recount the achievements made in re-aligning social welfare services at municipal level in relation to the operational legislative and policy frameworks. One of the objectives of this study was to examine the successes of and barriers to the re-alignment of social welfare services at the local municipal level.

Noticeable from the data collected is the fact that the majority of participants indicated a huge achievement made within the Department of Social Development in terms of fostering the accessibility of services to the majority of communities compared to the pre- 1994 era. Information privy to the researcher illustrates that some of the social welfare services were not designed for all the needy citizens but they were ear-marked for particular racial groups until this re-alignment process was established and became effective. Seemingly, structural social workers responsibilities are to eliminate the imbalances of power on the basis of race and class created by apartheid system (George et at., 2010).

Rooting out the legacy of inequality and segregation in terms of the provision of social services will never be accomplished just overnight, but it has been an ongoing process till to date. Harland (2014) is of the same view that attaining transformative change can never be a magic bullet; however, trends remarkably suggest that social protection measures will reverse marginalisation, overcome poverty and facilitate access to basic needs but not limiting attention to other aspects of the re-structuring paradigm.

In describing this transformation, participants said:

"Now there is a magnificent change, people have access to our services compared to previous times when they did not even know that services were existing" (Participant 10).

"A lot of resources have been provided by the current government in order to rectify the injustice that has been presided over by the Apartheid government" (Participant 1).

"I think, as we know, that access to services by Africans was seriously limited, but now there is progress as parents who are looking after orphans are receiving the foster care

grant, have access to family courts, access to basic education without having to pay any fees " (Participant 10).

Success stories pointing to improved service delivery continue to explicitly manifest in this democratic government of South Africa compared to the past Apartheid regime. Ngwenya (2016) confirms that the delivery of social services to the needy through state-owned entities has radically improved compared to the past era; however, this should be more effective if there is availability of the required resources.

The guiding principle of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013) states that the accessibility of services in terms of the physical and geographical conditions, time, language and need should be ensured. Nethathe (2015) agrees, arguing that service centre had been good inception points as far as bringing government services closer to the people is concerned, following a meaningful contribution in the acceleration of service delivery and the enhancement of access to government services.

The participants also reported that social welfare services are decentralised by the Department of Social Development through service offices and ward-based deployment of social workers whereby communities need not to travel long distances to reach services. This recent inception depicts a paradigm shift in government service delivery approach from the one where poor people spend money to reach services to the one where services are delivered to people's residences. This was expressed by participants in detail as follows:

"Right now, the services provided by social workers are so decentralised that they are closer to the communities from satellite offices to the wards. People are easily accessing our services and they no longer need to pay transport fares to reach our offices" (Participant 4).

"From my own observation, I can say that our services are easily accessible to the communities. Most of the communities no longer need transport to get to our services and our services are offered free of charge" (Participant 5).

"Are now getting a support grant called foster grant under the supervision of their foster parents. They are now easily accessing that grant which is a great achievement" (Participants 4).

"There are lots of such cases and we dealt with them successfully through safer placement, rehabilitation, foster care and many more. From my experience working with children, this is an array of achievements I am proud of" (Participant 7).

The current status of South African beneficiaries of social grants depicts a positive impact on the living conditions of poor households and the community at large. These observations have been affirmed by what participants witnessed and reported on. Hall and Budlender (2016) and Thurman, Kidman and Taylor (2015) reiterate the point that social grants depicted a substantial evidence in social protection aspects such as poverty reduction, improvement in health conditions and improvement in educational outcomes among children in South Africa. Furthermore, the old-age pension programme in South Africa has made a remarkable contribution as a major tool in the redistribution of resources to needy households and as a strategy aimed at addressing the huge gap of inequality in societies (Ralston, Schatz, Menken, Gómez-Olivé & Tollman, 2016).

4.6.2 Community Awareness to social development services

According to the principles of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (DSD, 2013), access to information should be ensured and openness should characterise administrative and management procedures. As part of the achievements made by the Department of Social Development through the process of re-aligning social welfare services, the participants reported that communities have sufficient information about services they are entitled to as rendered by the Department of Social Development. In addition, the community knows where to go for any particular social welfare needs including foster care services, child grant, placement and many more. Fombad (2014) concurs, positing that information about eligibility, service delivery procedures, budget and expenditure should be made available to the service users and communities at large. Participants stressed that:

"Okay, now most people are aware of the foster care programme. They know where to go if there are orphaned children and they also know other organisations that render related support. People are much aware of our services as social workers" (Participant 5).

"Taking one of Batho Pele principle of information into consideration and looking at the Department of Social Development, there is no one in this community who does not know how to apply for a foster care grant. The community knows what our department does and what social workers do in the community" (Participant 6).

Most interestingly, the participants indicated that people in communities are now aware that there are social workers deployed to work in their wards by the Department of Social Development service offices. They are also clearly aware of what their duties are. Social workers, as key role players in the re-alignment process and as advocates of the vulnerable population, are literally in touch with needy people on the ground and they are practically visible. Participants said:

"People know about us social workers and what exactly we are doing in the communities" (Participant 11).

"Before, social workers were unknown to the communities, but now people are receiving their services. For instance, there were children who were sent to rehabilitation centres" (Participant 6).

"People now know about us and all our services" (Participant 4).

"I think there has been a change so far. We are visible in the communities" (Participant 11).

Precisely, as reported by the participants, Kilewo and Frumence (2015) are of the same view that state departments should develop community awareness campaigns which clearly explain the nature of services being offered as well as the roles and responsibilities of service providers. Moreover, Nethathe (2015) asserts that the availability of service centres

contributes to keeping communities well informed as people become knowledgeable concerning government programmes and ways of accessing them.

4.7 Barriers to the Re-alignment of Social Welfare Services

In spite of the successes registered to date, some challenges have been reported by participants, a scenario which seems to taint the progress made by the re-alignment process. Such challenges were discernible in the Department of Social Development's communication approach, lack of resources, lack of capacity-building and skills development as discussed in the following sub-themes.

4.7.1 Department of Social Development's communication approach

Viewed from a broader spectrum of the Department of Social Development, particularly its mode of communication and consultation, it is reported as a matter of concern that has tainted the re-alignment process. Christensen (2014) maintains that it is stipulated that communication is part of organisational daily life; however, managers tend to forget that significant aspect during change processes. Participants shared common experience that things start from higher structures cascading down to the field. They believed that if an approach can change to the bottom-up approach, the department would realise its essence of giving exactly what the community needs. Some participants affirmed that:

"This thing of top-down approach and lack of consultation are the major setback; but the minute they change to bottom-up approach, involving us, the department will shine" (Participant 9).

"As far as I know, we use more of the top-down approach" (Participant 1).

"As I once mentioned before, this top-down approach does not assist us" (Participant 9).

While using the top-down approach, significant information often gets lost at various levels in the organisational hierarchy and similarly, urgent information delays beyond the stipulated timeframes. All these delays and loss of information negatively affect the sustainability and enhancement of the re-alignment process within the department. At the

same time, a conflict relationship between participants and service users in the community materialises; hence, building trust with staff members through internal communication provides mutual benefits for both the organisation and the workforce (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra, 2014). Participants stated that;

"Delays in the dissemination of information from higher structures to us as field workers are counter-productive. For instance, the communication may have been sent two months back only to find that it reaches us with very little space left to beat the deadline" *(Participant 4).*

"If they can make sure that whatever programme or policy they are developing involves workers in the field or at ground level, the department will succeed" *(Participant 9).*

"Maybe successes will be registered if we are consulted by our top management in the department's structures because there is a huge gap between us on the ground and people who design our work programmes and policies at the top" *(Participant 12).*

It is the responsibility of any organisation to ensure that accurate information is shared equally and timeously at all levels of employees. Men (2014) reiterated the point that an organisation must provide managers at all levels to provide accurate information to all stakeholders and that all the organisation's workforce should together explore ways of enhancing an understanding of how leadership influences internal communication.

4.7.2 Lack of resources

The challenge related to inadequate resources within the Department of Social Development has been reported in several studies, and in this study, it was commonly depicted as a barrier to the process of the re-alignment of social welfare services. The participants reported such a challenge from a broader perspective encompassing shortage or lack of resources.

The participants' views resonated with the observation that lack of resources negatively affects the standard of service provision apart from demotivating them as service providers and field workers. This sound contrary to the themes of structural social work theory, which seeks to address social issues based on access and distribution of resources (Murray & Hick, 2012). Furthermore, participants identified some actions that could sustain the achievements (see themes 4 and 5) brought about by the process of re-alignment, which also has the potential to successfully address this and other challenges. However, other participants specified those particular well-known challenges which are discussed in the subsequent sub-themes. Participant 12 maintained that:

"Basically, at our level, we need resources because we are well capacitated and competent. However, fighting this war without weapons degrades and frustrates us" (Participant 12).

"Our main challenge emanates from lack of resources. I do not see any other challenge" (Participant 12).

"But if we can get support in terms of resources, the standard of our services would be better" (Participant 12).

"I assure you that the provision of sufficient resources will also sustain these achievements" (Participant 12).

4.7.2.1 Lack of human resources

Participants reported the shortage of staff and the resultant unsustainable workloads. The respondents reported that they often end up running up and down like 'headless chickens' trying to achieve daily and monthly objectives. They reported huge volumes of work in terms of communities to be served as per their assigned wards, high volume of administrative work that needs to be done in short timeframes given, which reportedly ended up creating pressure as discussed in Theme 3. They further expressed the need for the Department to establish specialties that deal with particular cases so that one may not take an assortment of cases to avoid prolonged delays and loss to follow-ups. The following assertions affirmed that:

"There are lots of backlogs that owe their existence to the apparent shortage of staff." (Participant 12).

"One of the challenges is workload, just workload" (Participant 1).

"I suggest that the Department employs more social workers so that we can be sufficiently staffed in the wards and that people are assured of getting services accordingly" (Participant 2).

"If we can increase specialties, we could ensure that one focuses on a particular service not doing everything in general, for instance, offering services in areas such as substance abuse, psycho-social support, foster care and many more" (Participant 6).

Workforce, including both supervisors and social workers, is apparently insufficient in the field, resulting in negative effects impinging on service delivery. Similar sentiments were uttered by Congress (2017) who argued that supervision has diminished. Even the newly graduated social workers are short-changed by this shortage of resources in the social services sector, which characterises their work-environment.

4.7.2.2 Lack of material Resources

Apart from shortage of human resources, insufficient material resources were also reported to be a challenge to the process of the re-alignment of social welfare services. This challenge includes shortage of office space, computers with which to compile reports, Internet connectivity which helps to access emails, vehicles to reach out to communities as well as cell phones or telephones which facilitate communication tracing progress and making follow-ups. Participants asserted that:

"There are lots of resource constraints, but briefly, office space is small. As you can see, we share offices and we have limited stationery" (Participant 5).

"We also have insufficient resources and as you can see; we are sharing the only available laptop" (Participant 10).

Shortage of the above-mentioned resources highly affected social workers' motivation and clients' increased dissatisfaction with the social services being offered. Concurring, Bakker (2015) maintains that resource allocation and job demands in the public service determine motivation in the provision of public services.

4.7.2.3 Capacity-building and skills development

South Africa is still experiencing an outcry signifying lack of access to basic services particularly in rural areas and townships. However, local governance in municipalities has been adopted and established. Monkam (2014) posits that the recruitment of highly skilled staff and management can sufficiently address this barrier. The participants expressed the feeling that skills development, refresher training, sufficient induction and orientation are significant actions that can sustain the achievements made through the re-alignment of social welfare services. Unfortunately, these strategies have not yet been fully implemented by the responsible department as reported by the participants. They maintained that;

 "We need regular trainings through refresher programmes because we do a lot of things and we must be effective. If we are experiencing fatigue not because we want to be followed behind, we certainly need that motivation" (Participant 2).

"I think we need trainings to refresh our capacity" (Participant 11).

"The support we need here ranges from trainings, detailed orientation and supportive supervision" (Participant 5).

"As I mentioned earlier, trainings and workshops are still needed to refresh and enhance our skills in these evolving communities" (Participant 11).

"Okay, I propose that we start with trainings and capacity-building programmes" (Participant 3).

Lastly, when the Department cuts expenditures, it should think seriously about staff training and skills development, since such expenditures are apparently wiser investment to

successful and leading organisations. Sung and Choi (2014) maintain the same view, arguing that the professional development of personnel plays a pivotal role in sustaining long-term innovation potential and retain a high profiled workforce within the organisation.

4.8 Social worker's input to the re-alignment process

Seemingly, the reported culture within the Department of Social Development, when it comes to policy and programmes development, is that policy makers and programme developers unilaterally do all the planning and afterwards hand down the programmes to the field workers for implementation. Jensen and Maslesa (2015) assert that lack of proper involvement for any transformational project, including the re-alignment process, breeds dissatisfaction among the programme users.

In a similar fashion, the reports will be sent back by field workers till they reach the higher structure. Clearly, there is no direct interaction and engagement between policy makers as well as programme developers on the one hand and field workers on the other. However, reports from many developing countries indicate that the culture of involving stakeholders and the promotion of public participation has been successfully implemented (Renn, 2015). The participants reiterated that:

"Normally, you find that directives come from above down to us, the top-down approach. There is no such time when we are given the platform or chance to give our views as inputs" (Participant 3).

"Here on the ground we only get instructions and programmes from the top structures. We are just told what to do and we are too far in terms of contributing to the department" (Participant 7).

"No, they do not involve us since we do not have any say in the policy formulation process. They develop the policy and hand it down to us and then instruct us to comply with its stipulations. There is none of my input in the crafting of the policies" (Participant 2).

"I do not think there is great contribution we are supposed to make. I am not even sure of the channels which are supposed to be followed if one wants to contribute to those policies" (Participant 1).

The participants shared strong, common views apparently suggesting that social workers hardly make any contribution towards policy formulation and programme development. Their exclusion makes them feel that they are being deprived of an effective platform to share their insights and ventilate the challenges encountered. This is in sync with the view by Renn (2015) that the involvement of all stakeholders' input is a major requirement for effective governance and to overcome any challenges incurred.

The participants argued that it will take time to close the gap arising from developing unsuitable programmes as long as people who are in direct contact with programmes users are excluded from the process, since they are the ones who know what the community really needs, what works and what does not work for particular communities. Waas, Hugé, Block, Wright, Benitez-Capistros and Verbruggen (2014) reiterate that, going forward, a societal transition needs to consider a decision –making strategy that involves all stakeholders from the grassroots to the highest level. The participants stressed that:

"I am not sure, but we are not involved at all. They do not take our input even though we are the ones who have direct contact with the users of the services" (Participant 11).

"Not much of involvement is evident on the ground. At our level, we have no part to play when it comes to policy amendments or programme development. Really, our involvement is non-existent. We do not have any say" (Participant 12).

"No, if anything, our involvement is too low. As I have mentioned earlier, this is one of the challenges we have to grapple with. We do not get an opportunity to ventilate our views though we are the ones who render services" (Participant 9).

"Unfortunately, we are not involved at all. If they want to develop a new policy, they simply go ahead with or without us. It does not matter how we feel about it. That is not up to us to decide" (Participant 5).

The involvement of all the relevant stakeholders in the re-alignment process does not only benefit the policy makers but all service providers and service users equally stand to benefit from the success of the programme. Harvey (2014) reiterates the fact that ensuring that both the community and the department are involved through decision-making, experience and respective skills in community programmes evince mutual benefit. Primarily, social workers are major role players in developing strategies that respond to the social ills as defined by structural social work theory (George et al. 2010). Furthermore, regular consultation with service providers, policy makers and services users (communities) needs to be intergraded into the whole system of management that mans the social protection schemes (Harland, 2014).

4.9 Adaptation to transition: The role of legislative and policy mandate

The study participants demonstrated clear understanding of their responsibilities as key role players in the re-alignment process as stipulated by the legislative frameworks and legal policies such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Children's Act Number 38 of 2005 and the Batho Pele Principles among others. Thondhlana, Shackleton and Blignaut (2015) echoed the same sentiments, positing that a multi-disciplinary setting requires careful consideration in defining different roles, responsibilities, values and common goals among role players. Some participants affirmed that:

"The Batho Pele Principles is the one that mostly guides the manner in which we should render our services and the Children's Act acts as a guide since we mostly working with children and Older Person's Act" (Participant 11).

"Okay, the first legislative framework is the Constitution of the country, the Children's Act Number 38 of 2005, the Social Assistant Act and the Public Funds Management Act, the last of which ensures that public funds are used for the intended purposes" (Participant 8).

"The legal frameworks include the Batho Pele Principles, the Children's Act, the Constitution of South Africa and the Justice Act" (Participant 12).

"First and foremost, there is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa because every legislative statute is derived from it. Moving on from the constitution, because we are dealing with children a lot, we look at the Children's Act" (Participant 1).

The participants clearly indicated how they continually adapted to the process of re-alignment as social workers. The above-mentioned legislative frameworks and policy principles are monitoring tools at the disposal of social workers since they guide them on how services should be rendered to the respective service users. They expressed the view that:

"All this process, with policies and frameworks, serves as our guidelines on how to provide services to particular clients in our communities. They assist us to understand what we are actually required to do" (Participant 10).

"This process and the policies that underpin it show me the direction to follow. However, challenges may cause deviations from that direction, but policies clarify what I am expected to do as a social worker. They are guiding us" (Participant 6).

"To me this process makes things easy concerning knowledge of my responsibilities as required by the department. It simplifies the objectives of the department, the municipality and service office through outlining my duties" (Participant 11).

"Looking at the re-alignment process, it has made a lot of improvement and now it is up to us. Policies are there and they put it so clearly that we know what to do. Honestly, social workers are playing their role at the best" (Participant 3).

These pieces of legislation and policies, which inform the re-alignment process, made it easy for social workers to adapt to the process by clearly stipulating what is expected of them through their duties and knowledge to achieve aims and objectives of the re-alignment process. In a way, all stakeholders in the process have clear responsibilities to play, which social workers continue to take advantage of. Bank (2016) maintains that the proper role of

a social worker is to advocate the best interest of those who are vulnerable and therefore too incapacitated to defend themselves. Some of the participants reported that:

"To me, this process serves as a reminder of what I am supposed to do and what is expected of me as a social worker serving in the Department of Social Development" (Participant 12).

"As a social worker, I now have a better understanding of what is expected from me or what is expected from my profession" (Participant 3).

"For me, it means that, as a social worker, I need to understand the policies clearly, understanding people to whom I render my services and have an understanding of the service I am required to render" (Participant 4).

"To me, it means that after the policies had been developed, I then have to apply them practically to help those in need like children and elderly people. The policies serve as an instruction for me to follow in executing my duties as a social worker" (Participant 5).

In addition, social workers' role in the process of re-alignment was affirmed to be a mechanism of the change process. Kuipers, Higgs, Kickert, Tummers, Grandia, and Van der Voet (2014) concur that civil servants, in changing State organisations, are considered not as subjects but as actors in the entire change process. Furthermore, Lorenzo (2015) asserts that community-based social development practitioners are strategically positioned to provide support to the disadvantaged in terms of deprivation of resources and services.

4.10 Conclusion

This study aimed at exploring social workers' understanding of the re-alignment process that targets social welfare services with the aim of enhancing service delivery at the local municipal level. The exploration sought to deepen their insights into welfare issues as key role players in this crucial process. It became clear that the participants understand the circumstances that necessitated the re-alignment process particularly the structural crisis created by Apartheid regime to systematically segregate the majority of Black South Africans, depriving them of the basic services and means of economic production; hence,

the process sought to re-dress those social imbalances and injustice upon the accession to power by the democratic government of South Africa in 1994. Thus, it was interesting to note that the participants reported huge successes made within the Department of Social Development regarding access to social services as well as the community's awareness of the available services. However, the respondents reported experiencing some challenges related to supervision, reports-related demands and shortage of resources. Ineffective communication approaches as well as social workers' exclusion from decision making processes were reported to be among the daunting challenges. Furthermore, the participants acknowledged that the pieces of legislation and policies instituted by the State assisted them to continue adapting to the re-alignment process.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the study's aims, objectives and research questions in order to articulate the conclusion and recommendations elicited from the data analysis.

5.2 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to explore the understanding of social workers regarding the re-alignment of social welfare services as a mechanism of enhancing service delivery at local municipal level in order to fortify service delivery and identify areas of improvement.

Chapter one provided general overview and the contextual background of the study. The significance of this study articulated within the context of social workers' understanding of the re-alignment of social welfare services at the level of local municipalities, insight into the factors related to policy and legislation affecting their values particularly the need to strive for social justice and the promotion of social inclusion and fostering an understanding of the broader picture reflective of the extent to which the implementation of the re-alignment of social development services has gone and to determine how much effort is still required.

5.3 Overview of the achievement of the study's main aim and objectives

The main aim of this study was to explore the understanding of social workers on the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at local municipal level. This was accomplished through the achievement of the following key objectives:

5.3.1 Objective One

To explore social workers' understanding of the re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery

This objective was achieved owing to in-depth interviews conducted with participants, allowing them to share their understanding and purpose of the re-alignment process and the re-structuring of social welfare services by the Department of Social Development. Firstly, the participants viewed the Department and the new democratic government of South Africa as having the intention to redress the structural imbalances created by Apartheid and the colonial regime and cases in point are; inequality, injustice and the systematic segregation of the majority of the population in the country. De Vos (2012) vindicates the view that constitutionally valid measures that sought to address the legacy of Apartheid and colonialism need to focus on all factors that can effectively respond to the past and the ongoing effects of racial discrimination. Furthermore, Modiri (2012) advocates the need to adopt a radical transformational drive that renders racial exclusion and marginalisation a crime in South Africa's democratic and constitutional dispensation.

Lastly, the participants understand that the process of re-alignment basically aimed at improving the living conditions of South Africans through the provision of social welfare services particularly to those who were previously disadvantaged. Daire and Gilson (2014) further assert that as agents of change, social workers need to understand the whole spectrum of environmental factors within the community while addressing their needs or implementing change.

5.3.2 Objective Two

To explore the experiences of social workers as key role-players in the re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level

The participants experienced an ineffective supervision strategy administered by the Department of Social Development, which lacks the key element of being supportive

regarding the holistic needs of social workers in the field of social welfare such as administrative, advocacy and psycho-social support. Benatar (2014) affirms that an appropriate method of supervision regarded as having an essential aspect of professionalism required to sustain high quality services. In addition, organisational support plays a major role in change related dilemmas and adaptability to influence employees' performance and job satisfaction (Cullen, Edwards, Casper & Gue, 2014).

Moreover, participants experienced the pressure to meet report demands, thereby compromising the quality of work and the outcome of the services rendered to users. Kanayo (2014) concurs, adding that such demands and pressure literally overwhelm social workers if everything needs to be done.

Secondly, participants regarded the communication approach within the Department of Social Development as top-down approach; programmes and targets descend from the top echelons requiring them as field workers to simply comply with or implement the orders. At the same time, communication takes time to reach them from the top structures which results in them missing deadlines. Airing similar sentiments, Morin, Meyer, Bélanger, Boudrias, Gagné and Parker (2016) applaud the bottom-up managerial approach as the best way of empowering employees in the process of implementing change.

5.3.3 Objective Three

To examine the successes of and barriers to the re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level

Regarding the objective on success of the re-alignment process, the participants confidently reported that the Government, through the Department of Social Development made remarkable achievements by positioning social welfare services closer to the needy people. Communities no longer need transport to reach out to the Social Development offices; they just walk because the offices are decentralised to the ward level. They described 'access' in

the context of the implementation of the Batho Pele Principle; Principle Number Three and one of the principles of the Framework for Social Welfare Services (2013). Concurring with these sentiments, Ngidi and Dorasamy (2014) indicate that all citizens should have access to the services which they are entitled to as prescribed in the Batho Pele Principles.

Secondly, the participants reported that people and communities at large were made aware of the available services and how to access them. They reported having sufficient information about the services offered by the Department of Social Development. Ngidi and Dorasamy (2014) uphold the notion that people should be furnished with full and accurate information regarding public services they are entitled to and further affirmed that above two third of the majority of the citizenry are happy with the manner in which information is disseminated in the department.

Furthermore, the participants made it clear that despite the successes mentioned above, it remains that there are still persisting challenges that tend to retard the momentum of the re-alignment process. Ngidi and Dorasamy (2014) concur, asserting that Government has made an improvement in terms of service delivery, but it still remains that there are factors that need to be considered in order to plug the gaps in service provision. In addition, the participants reported lack of resources as the major challenge they encountered in different facets such as shortage of staff, resulting in backlogs and failure to reach out to the whole catchment areas allocated to them as social workers, insufficient office space, the sharing of laptops and offices, unavailability of Internet connectivity and the absence of telecommunication services. A successful delivery of services requires supply of adequate resources and adherence to long-term commitments (Krasner & Risse, 2014).

Participants further reported that there are delays in orientation and induction programmes after appointment. As such, there is need to provide newly appointed employees with a formal induction package comprising clear job descriptions, mentorship to best practice and support for routine work dynamics (Daire & Gilson, 2014).

Lastly, the study participants reported lack of timeous capacity-building workshops and refresher trainings. Cullen et al. (2014) posit that the organisation should increase employee support mechanisms through training, developmental feedback, rewards and job rotation. Kum, Cowden and Karodia (2014) reiterate the view that organisations that invest in human resources view training as an opportunity to increase long-term productivity in addition to considering employees as essential assets to the organisation.

5.3.4 Objective Four

To identify the extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment of social welfare services

This resonates with participants' reports in relation to objective two above regarding the Department of Social Development's communication approach. The participants strongly maintained that there is very scanty or no involvement of social workers in the field when in it comes to decision-making, policy development, planning as well as programme development. More involving and inclusive management practices help to eliminate unnecessary strains in workplaces, allow employees more access to the change process through transparent communication and give employees greater voice (Cullen et al., 2014).

The participants further indicated that they do not know where to go if they wish to contribute towards programme or policy development. They even question the formula used to set-up weekly, monthly and annual targets for their department. Lastly, the participants believed that by virtue of having the first and direct contacts with the service users, the department ought to involve them in decision–making processes since they know very well what can work for the communities they serve. In that way, the department will flourish.

5.3.5 Objective Five

To examine how social workers have adapted to the transition resulting from the re-alignment of social welfare service

The existing legislative structures, policies and principles mentioned in Chapter 4.2.9 that had been put in place by the Department of Social Development, such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Children's Act Number 38 of 2005, the Social Assistant Act, the public Funds Management Act and the Batho Pele Principles among others played great role in assisting social workers to adapt to the re-alignment process.

The participants also reported that such legislative frameworks and policies kept on assisting them to understand the main intention of the department and Government regarding the re-alignment process. They further reported that these frameworks serve as guidelines and monitoring tools for them to assess how services should be rendered to the respective service users. Lonsdale, Pringle and Turner (2015) assert that transformational adaptation requires the capacity to understand the history of the previous system and to challenge the assumptions attached to existing structures in order to gain insights into the whole implementation exercise. In addition, transformation demands an adaptation to analysis and policy innovation that can help to provide a complete account of the adaptation as a constituent part of ongoing development routes (Pelling, O'Brien & Matyas, 2015).

Lastly, participants mentioned that as social workers, policies and legislative structures made it easy for them to adapt to the process by adhering to clearly stipulated expectations that could be achieved through applying their skills, knowledge and experience in order to achieve and sustain the purpose of the re-alignment process. The researcher noted that the Department of Social Development had adopted good policies and legislative frameworks which play a pivotal role in rallying all role players around the common goal of redressing the social imbalances inherited from the colonial past.

5.4 Summary of the study and key findings

5.4.1 Summary of the study

The researcher aimed at exploring the understanding of social workers regarding the re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at the level of

local municipalities. In achieving the first objective, which was to explore social workers' understanding of re-alignment process of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery, the study revealed that indeed social workers understand that the re-alignment process embodied the intention to redress social imbalances and the injustices created by past governance systems. Furthermore, it aimed at improving the living conditions of the previously disadvantaged population in the Republic of South Africa. The second objective sought to explore the experiences of social workers as key role-players in the re-alignment of social welfare services at the local municipal level. The findings show that social workers experienced non-supportive supervision and the pressure to meet targets characterised their daily routine which reportedly ended up compromising the quality of services they render.

The study's third objective was to examine the successes of and barriers to the re-alignment of social welfare services at the local municipal level. The study revealed that successes manifest in making social welfare services accessible to the people in need and ensuring that communities have access to adequate and correct information about the available services in the Department of Social Development. However, the study also found a couple of challenges that were reportedly encountered by social workers such as the ineffectiveness of the top-down approach to management used by the department, shortage of staff, insufficient working equipment and lack of capacity-building programmes for staff.

The fourth objective was to identify the extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment of social welfare services. The findings showed that there is scanty or no involvement of social workers when it comes to the planning and development of their policies and programmes. The study revealed that social workers believe that the department would have gone far if they were involved in decision–making processes. The fifth and last objective of the study was to examine how social workers have adapted to the transition resulting from the re-alignment of social welfare services. The findings show that the Department of Social Development' legislative frameworks, policies and principles assisted social workers to adapt to the transitional process of re-alignment through

providing clear guidelines and concise descriptions of aims of the re-alignment process and the responsibilities and expectations of service renders.

The following are the key findings of this study as proffered by social workers:

- The participants understood that the main purpose of re-aligning social welfare services was to redress the past social imbalances created by the colonial government and its apartheid systems.

- The participants experienced a non-supportive supervision system and the demands of the work posed a threat to the quality of services rendered.

- The participants identified huge successes as reflected in communities' access to services and awareness to the services availed by the Department of Social Development. However, they also encountered challenges such lack of resources, the department's ineffective top-down management approach and lack of capacity–building initiatives for the staff.

- The participants did not feel involved by the department regarding decision-making in policies and programmes.

- The participants showed compliance to policies, legislative acts and principles put in place by the Department of Social Development as assisting them adapt to the new order and they were accordingly guided by the same mechanisms as they adapted to the transitional re-alignment process.

5.5 Conclusion
It is thus concluded that:

Social workers, as key role players in the process of re-alignment of social welfare services, clearly understand that the process intends to root out the legacy of apartheid by improving living conditions for the previously disadvantaged population.

- Social workers experience the pressure to meet targets in an environment characterised by non-supportive supervision, resulting in the quality of work being compromised.

- Social workers acknowledged successes scored by the department in terms of fostering beneficiaries' awareness of and access to social welfare services, while striving to overcome challenges like lack of resources, the department's top-down management approach and lack of capacity-building training programmes.

- Social workers are not involved by the department in decision–making processes.

- Social workers used legislative structures and policies to understand and adapt to the transitional re-alignment process.

5.6 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made basing on the findings of the study:

- The Department of Social Development should continue ensuring that its workforce understand the social history of the country, the current needs of the people the department is serving and the vision it has for the future.

- The Department of Social Development should review its monitoring and evaluation tools in order to prioritise the quality of service delivery so that it surpasses statistical targets.

- The Department of Social Development should review the context of social work supervision in order to gravitate towards the one that advocates and supports the holistic needs of social workers in the field.

- The Department of Social Development should strengthen its major stakes in terms of sustaining and enhancing the needy people's awareness of and access to services provided by the department.

- The Department of Social Development should review its communication and decision-making approaches and align them to the bottom-up approach, so that suitable programs to service users are developed and true reflection of community needs occurs from monitoring an evaluation processes.

- The Department of Social Development should invest much in resource mobilisation and provision as well as capacity-building.

- The Department of Social Development should, by any means necessary, involve ground workforces in decision-making, policy development and programme planning in order to close the yawning gap between policy makers or programme developers at the top and implementers on the ground.

- The Department of Social Development should enhance supporting mechanisms that assist the workforce to adapt to any work-related transformation.

Further research

This study focused on the social workers as service providers in the Department of Social Development. The study sample was instrumental in providing insightful perspectives based on their experiences. However, it is paramount to recommend that a future study should be envisioned to explore the reflections of the social welfare service users regarding the process of re-aligning social welfare services. A study on the beneficiaries of welfare services may be able to provide new insights into the degree to which the re-alignment drive impacted on service delivery, that is, from the perspectives of those on the other end of the value chain. This will also assist the Department of Social Development to develop programmes that seek to accurately address the needs of service users and therefore strive to align its programmes to a more client-centred approach, since service users are the best experts as far as the diagnosis of their needs is concerned.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter revisited the study's aim, objectives and research questions in line with the findings. The chapter rounded up by presenting the conclusion and proffering

recommendations that are based on study findings as understood within the context of the study aims and objectives achieved from the assistance of data analysis.

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Appendices

Addendum A: Ethical Clearance Letter

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

18 July 2018

Mr Mbongeleni William Buthelezi (217075627)
School of Applied Human Sciences – Social Work
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Buthelezi,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0306/018M
Project title: Exploring the effects of re-alignment of Social Development Services at Municipality level: Case study of Umgungundlovu District Municipality

Approval Notification – Expedited Approval

In response to your application received on 11 April 2018, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Maud Mthembu
Cc Academic Leader Research:
Cc School Administrator: Ms Ayanda Ntuli

Addendum B: Gatekeepers Letter

social development
Department:
Social Development
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

FAX	: (033) 264 2075	**HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**
Telephone/ Ucingo /Telefoon	: (033) 264 2078	174 Mayors Walk
Enquiries / Imibuzo / Navrae	: Mr VW Gumede	Private Bag x9144
E-mail	: Velaphi.Gumede@kznsocdev.gov.za	Pietermaritzburg
Reference /Inkomba/ Navrae	: S.6/2/1	3200

Mr Mbongeleni W. Buthelezi
P.O.Box 487
Ceza
3866

Dear Mr Buthelezi

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH UNDER UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

This letter has reference

Kindly be informed that permission has been granted by the Head of Department for you to conduct research UMgungundlovu District Municipality for you to fulfill the requirement of your study.

The permission authorizes you to:-

   (a) Approach and distribute your survey questionnaires to Social Workers willing to participate in order to solicit information intended for your research; and
   (b) Interview management at their consent deemed relevant to your research project and maintain high level of confidentiality.
   (c) Share your findings with the department.

Wishing you success during your research project.

Yours Faithfully

MS NG KHANYILE
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
Date: 21/6/2017

Addendum C: Copy of informed consent form

Dear Participant,

My name is Mbongeleni William Buthelezi, Student no: 217075627. I am a Masters Social Work candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. The title of my research is: **Exploring re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at municipality level: case study of UMgungundlovu district municipality**. The aim of the study is: **To explore the understanding of social workers on re-alignment of social welfare services as an enhancement of service delivery at local municipal level**. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

• The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.

• Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.

• Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.

• The interview will take about 30-60 minutes.

• The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file and hard copies in the lockable cabinet in the office accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.

• If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

Risk

Note that reasonable care will be undertaken to ensure that you are not exposed to unreasonable discomfort. However, should by any chance you feel exposed to uncomfortable experiences, and where you deem it fit, debriefing or counseling would be provided.

Benefits

There may be no direct benefit to you for participating in this study. However, it is possible that through your contribution, the social development sector and the community may benefit. You may also get some personal satisfaction from being a part of a research study.

If you wish to obtain information on your rights as a participant, please contact: The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: <u>ximbap@ukzn.ac.za,</u>Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I……………………………………………………………………… *(full names of participant)* hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I hereby consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded.

……………………………………_____................................._____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   **DATE**

Addendum D: Copy of the interview schedule

EXPLORING RE-ALIGNMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AS AN ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICE DELIVERY AT MUNICIPAL LEVELS: CASE STUDY OF UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY.

1. What is your understanding of re-alignment of social welfare services in service delivery?

2. What does realignment of social welfare services at municipal level mean to you in relation to the development approach?

3. Which legislative and policy frameworks informed the re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level?

4. What are the achievements made in re-aligning social welfare services at municipal level in relation to legislative and policy frameworks?

5. What measures need to be in place to sustain and enhance achievements made in re-alignment of social welfare services?

6. How is the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of social welfare services conducted in relation to this realignment?

7. What are the challenges emerging from the re-alignment of social welfare service at municipal level?

8. How could the re-alignment of social welfare services be effected at local municipal level referring to challenges emerged?

9. What extent of social workers' involvement in the re-alignment of social welfare services?

10. Which adjustments do social workers need to deal with in order to effectively implement the realignment of social welfare services at municipal level?

11. What support do you think social workers require to assist them in effectively implementing the re-alignment of social welfare services at local municipal level?

12. How has the manner which social workers render their services been adapted as a result of realignment of social welfare services?

Addendum E: Turnitin Report

Mbongeleni MA 1