

THE FEATURES AND USE OF
MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN
SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED
SOCIAL WORKERS

by

VERONICA CLOETE

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Supervisor: Dr LK Engelbrecht

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly stated otherwise) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2012

SUMMARY

Mentoring, which is described as an activity in social work supervision, is promoted to assist with the recruitment and retention of newly qualified social workers. However research relating to the execution of mentoring within the context of social work supervision is limited. Also, a lack of supervision of newly qualified as well as existing social workers has resulted in a critical shortage of social workers in South Africa. This in turn decreases the quality of social work service rendering to communities in South Africa. In an effort to reverse the aforementioned circumstances, the South African government introduced the “Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers” in 2006. The Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers reaffirmed the value of supervision for social workers as well as the utilisation of mentoring in order to provide adequate support to newly qualified as well as existing social workers. Hence the study was undertaken, first to provide an overview of social work supervision and second, to explore the use of mentoring in the context of social work supervision.

A combined qualitative and quantitative research approach was utilised to explore the experiences of social work supervisors in the Department of Social Development (Western Cape), with regard to the use of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision. The motivation for this study originated from an apparent lack of research relating to the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers within the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape. The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the features and use of mentoring as well as how mentoring can be utilised as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

The literature study first focused on giving an overview of social work supervision, to provide a contextual basis for mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. The literature study then explored the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

The researcher utilised a purposive sample of 20 social work supervisors. These supervisors have been appointed to the different regional and local offices of the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape and provide supervision to social workers, specifically newly qualified social workers. Newly qualified social workers refer to social workers with a maximum experience of 24 months in the practical field. The researcher utilised an interview schedule as a measuring instrument. The results of the investigation confirmed that supervision of newly qualified social workers is essential to ensure quality service rendering. Second, the results concluded that due to the allocation of responsibilities other than supervision, inadequate time is spent on the execution of the social work supervision process. Third, the lack of formal training of supervisors in social work supervision, has a negative impact on the execution of the supervision process, as most of the supervisors provide supervision to newly qualified social workers, based on their own experience of supervision as well as the fact that social work supervision follows a process running parallel to the social work process. Fourth, a majority of the social work supervisors execute mentoring on an informal basis. Fifth, most of the social work supervisors are in favour of the appointment of multiple mentors for each newly qualified social worker. Lastly, senior social workers are viewed as important mentors to assist newly qualified social workers with the acquisition of skills relating to social work service delivery.

Recommendations made by this study highlighted the importance of providing accredited supervision training to social work supervisors as well as introducing a policy on the execution of supervision, and mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. Further recommendations focused on the provision of training to all selected mentors as well as on the use of multiple mentors for each newly qualified social worker. Lastly, the use of senior social workers both within the Department and organisations in the NPO sector is promoted, especially to assist newly qualified social workers to attain those skills relating to the execution of their statutory duties and to improve quality service rendering through the enhancement of their professional report writing skills.

OPSOMMING

Mentorskap, wat as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie omskryf word, bevorder die werwing en behoud van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers. Navorsing wat verband hou met die uitvoering van mentorskap binne die konteks van maatskaplikewerk-supervisie is egter beperk. Daarbenewens het 'n gebrek aan supervisie van pas gekwalifiseerde sowel as van die meer ervare maatskaplike werkers gelei tot 'n kritieke tekort aan maatskaplike werkers in Suid-Afrika. Dit het weer gelei tot 'n afname in die gehalte van maatskaplikewerk-dienslewering aan gemeenskappe in Suid-Afrika. In 'n poging om die genoemde omstandighede om te keer, het die Suid-Afrikaanse regering die *Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers* in 2006 geloods. Die *Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers* benadruk die waarde van supervisie aan maatskaplike werkers sowel as die benutting van mentorskap om voldoende ondersteuning te bied aan pas gekwalifiseerde sowel as meer ervare maatskaplike werkers. Die studie word dus onderneem, eerstens om 'n oorsig van maatskaplikewerk-supervisie te verkry en tweedens om die gebruik van mentorskap binne die konteks van maatskaplikewerk-supervisie te verken.

'n Gekombineerde kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering is benut om die ervarings van maatskaplikewerk-supervisors in die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling, rakende mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers te ontbloot. Die studie is gemotiveer deur 'n opmerklieke gebrek aan navorsing ten opsigte van die benutting van mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers in die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling. Die doel van die studie was om begrip te ontwikkel rondom die eienskappe en benutting van mentorskap sowel as hoe mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie benut kan word.

Die literatuurstudie verskaf eerstens 'n oorsig van maatskaplikewerk-supervisie om sodoende 'n kontekstuele basis vir mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers aan te bied. Die literatuurstudie verken voorts die eienskappe en benutting van mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers.

Die navorser het 'n doelbewuste steekproef van 20 maatskaplikewerk supervisors benut. Hierdie supervisors is werksaam in die verskillende streeks- en plaaslike kantore van die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling en verskaf supervisie aan onder andere pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers. Pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers verwys na alle maatskaplike werkers met minder as 24 maande ervaring in die praktyk. Die navorser het 'n onderhoudskedule as meetinstrument benut. Die resultate van die ondersoek bevestig eerstens dat die verskaffing van supervisie aan pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers noodsaaklik is vir die versekering van kwaliteit dienslewering. Tweedens bevestig die bevindinge ook dat, as gevolg van die aanwysing van verantwoordelikhede, buiten supervisie, daar onvoldoende tyd aan die uitvoering van maatskaplikewerk-supervisieprosesse bestee word. Derdens het die gebrek aan formele supervisie-onderrig, 'n negatiewe uitwerking op die uitvoering van die supervisieproses, aangesien die meeste supervisors wat supervisie aan pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers verskaf, dit baseer op hul eie ervarings van supervisie sowel as die feit dat die supervisie parallel verloop met die maatskaplikewerk-proses. Vierdens verrig die meeste maatskaplikewerk-supervisors hul mentorskap op 'n informele wyse. Vyfdens is die meeste supervisors ten gunste van die aanstelling van meer as een mentor vir elke pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werker. Laastens word senior maatskaplike werkers beskou as belangrike mentors om pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers te help met die verkryging van daardie vaardighede wat verband hou met maatskaplikewerk-dienslewering.

Aanbevelings wat in die studie gemaak is beklemtoon die belangrikheid van die verskaffing van geakkrediteerde supervisie-onderrig aan maatskaplikewerk-supervisors, die daarstelling van 'n supervisiebeleid sowel as die benutting van mentorskap as 'n aktiwiteit in maatskaplikewerk-supervisie. Verdere aanbevelings fokus op die verskaffing van opleiding aangaande die proses van mentorskap. Laastens word die gebruik van senior maatskaplike werkers sowel in die Wes-Kaapse Departement van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling as in ander organisasies in die nregerings sektor, as mentors ondersteun, ten einde meer spesifiek pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers te help met die aanleer van daardie vaardighede wat verband hou met die uitvoering van hul statutêre verpligtinge en om die kwaliteit van dienslewering te bevorder deur die verbetering van die professionele skryfvaardighede van pas gekwalifiseerde maatskaplike werkers.

**DEDICATED TO MY LATE SISTER MENTOR , FRIEND AND PILLAR
OF SUPPORT:**

SJ SAMUELS

“I shall pass through this world but once! Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now, in his name, and for his sake! Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”

“Unknown”

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1	MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	1
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	4
1.3	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	4
1.4	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	5
1.4.1	Research approach	5
1.4.2	Research design	5
1.4.3	Research method	6
1.4.3.1	Literature study	6
1.4.3.2	Universe, population and sampling	7
1.4.3.3	Methods of data collection	8
1.4.3.4	Methods of data analysis	9
1.5	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	10
1.5.1	Informed consent	10
1.5.2	Right to privacy and confidentiality	11
1.5.3	Release or publication of the findings	11
1.5.4	Debriefing of respondents	11
1.6	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	11
1.7	PRESENTATION	12

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

2.1	INTRODUCTION	13
2.2	HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	14
2.2.1	Individual supervision with a focus on the administrative function	14
2.2.2	The influence of social work training and literature, case-work and social work theories	14
2.2.3	Supervision in group work and community work	16
2.2.4	The development of social work supervision in South Africa	16
2.2.4.1	Emerging and predominantly administrative years (1960-1975)	16
2.2.4.2	Period of integrated supervision functions and expansion of knowledge base (1975-1990)	17
2.2.4.3	Times of change (1990 and beyond)	17
2.3	THE NEED FOR SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	18
2.4	A DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	19
2.5	THE ECOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	20
2.5.1	The service user	21
2.5.2	The organisational system	22
2.5.3	The supervisor system	22
2.5.4	The supervisee system	24
2.6	THEORIES IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	24
2.7	FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	26
2.7.1	Administrative function	26
2.7.1.1	Planning	26
2.7.1.2	Organising	27
2.7.1.3	Activation	27
2.7.1.4	Control	27
2.7.2	Educational function	28
2.7.3	Support function	31
2.8	PROCESS OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	33
2.8.1	The engagement and assessment phase	33

2.8.2	Planning phase	35
2.8.3	The working phase	36
2.8.4	Evaluation and termination phase	37
2.9	METHODS IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	38
2.9.1	Individual supervision	38
2.9.2	Group supervision	39
2.9.3	Peer supervision	40
2.10	ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	41
2.11	CONCLUSION	42

CHAPTER 3

THE FEATURES AND USE OF MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

3.1	INTRODUCTION	43
3.2	THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH NECESSITATES THE USE OF MENTORING IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION	44
3.2.1	White Paper for Social Welfare (1997)	44
3.2.2	Social Service Professions Act (1998)	45
3.2.3	The Policy on Financial Awards (2004)	46
3.2.4	Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005)	47
3.2.5	Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (2006)	48
3.2.6	The Child Care Act (2008)	48
3.3	THE NEED FOR MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS	49
3.3.1	Definition of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	50
3.3.2	Differences between mentoring and social work supervision	52
3.3.3	Benefits of mentoring for newly qualified social workers	53
3.3.4	Risks of mentoring	55

3.4	ROLES TO FULFIL IN THE EXECUTION OF MENTORING	56
3.5	FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING	57
3.6	PROCESS OF MENTORING	59
3.6.1	Initial phase	60
3.6.1.1	The planning, introduction and launch of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	60
3.6.1.2	The identification, appointment and orientation of the mentors	62
3.6.1.3	The matching of the newly qualified social workers and mentors	62
3.6.2	Cultivation phase	63
3.6.3	Implementation phase	65
3.6.4	Evaluation and termination phase	66
3.7	TYPES OF MENTORING	67
3.7.1	Informal mentoring	67
3.7.2	Formal mentoring	67
3.7.3	Reverse mentoring	68
3.7.4	Situational mentoring	68
3.7.5	Electronic-supported mentoring	68
3.8	FACTORS IMPACTING ON MENTORING	69
3.8.1	Organisational context	69
3.8.2	Gender	70
3.8.3	Race	71
3.9	CONCLUSION	72

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

4.1	INTRODUCTION	74
SECTION A: RESEARCH METHOD		
4.2	PREPARATION FOR THE INVESTIGATION	75
4.2.1	Research sample	75
4.2.2	Research approach, design and instrument	75
4.2.3	Data gathering and analysis	76
SECTION B: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS		
4.3	PROFILE OF THE SUPERVISORS	77
4.3.1	Gender	79
4.3.2	Age group	80
4.3.3	Highest social work qualifications	81
4.3.4	Years of experience as a registered social worker	82
4.3.5	Respondents' experience of social work supervision	82
4.3.6	Years of experience as a supervisor	84
4.3.7	Type of training as a social work supervisor -	85
4.3.8	Number of supervisees each respondent is responsible for	85
4.3.9	Number of newly qualified social workers each respondent is responsible for	85
4.3.10	Responsibilities other than supervision	86
SECTION C: EXPOSITION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS		
4.4	THEMES, SUBTHEMES AND CATEGORIES	88
SECTION D: SUPERVISION		
4.5	THEME 1: SUPERVISION FUNCTIONS	90
4.5.1	Subtheme 1.1: Functions of supervision as executed by respondents	90
4.5.1.1	Category: Functions of supervision executed most often by the supervisor	90

4.6	THEME 2: METHODS OF SUPERVISION	93
4.6.1	Subtheme 2.1: Execution of methods of supervision.....	93
4.6.1.1	Category: Methods of supervision employed most often	93
4.7	THEME 3: PHASES OF SUPERVISION	94
4.7.1	Subtheme 3.1: Execution of the engagement and assessment phase	94
4.7.1.1	Category: Physical setting: Comfort	94
4.7.1.2	Category: Physical setting: Confidentiality	96
4.7.1.3	Category Physical setting: Communication	97
4.7.1.4	Category: Physical setting: Compatibility	97
4.7.1.5	Category: Personal development assessment	98
4.7.2	Subtheme 3.2: Planning phase	100
4.7.2.1	Category: Personal development plan	100
4.7.2.2	Category: The supervision contract	102
4.7.3	Subtheme 3.3: Working phase	104
4.7.3.1	Category: Frequency and duration of the supervision session	104
4.7.3.2	Category: Aspects of supervision sessions	105
4.7.3.3	Category: Skills employed during the execution of the supervision process	107
4.7.4	Subtheme 3.4: Evaluation and termination phase	108
4.7.4.1	Category: Evaluation phase	108
4.7.4.2	Category: Termination phase	110
4.7.5	Subtheme 3.5: Activities in social work supervision	111
4.7.5.1	Category: Activities executed most often in supervision	111

SECTION E: MENTORING

4.8	THEME 4: MENTORING	113
4.8.1	Subtheme 4.1: Features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	113
4.8.1.1	Category: Differences between mentoring and social work supervision	113
4.8.1.2	Category: Multiple mentors vs. one mentor	115
4.8.1.3	Category: Persons to be appointed as mentors	117

4.8.2	Subtheme 4.2: The benefits and risks of mentoring	118
4.8.2.1	Categories of benefits for the newly qualified social worker as illustrated with excerpts from the interviews.....	118
4.8.2.2	Categories of benefits of mentoring for the organisation as illustrated with excerpts from the interviews	119
4.8.2.3	Categories of risks of mentoring.....	120
4.8.3	Subtheme 4.3: Qualities of mentors during the execution of the mentoring process	120
4.8.3.1	Category: Qualities of a mentor for the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	120
4.8.4	Subtheme 4.4: Roles for the successful execution of the mentoring process	122
4.8.4.1	Category: Roles for the mentor in the execution of mentoring as an activit2 in social work supervision	122
4.8.4.2	Category: Roles for the newly qualified social worker, for the successful execution of the mentoring process	123
4.9	THEME 5: FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING	124
4.9.1	Subtheme 5.1: Execution of functions of mentoring in social work supervision .	124
4.10	THEME 6: PROCESS OF MENTORING	126
4.10.1	Subtheme 6.1: Execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	126
4.10.1.1	Category: Supervisor’s execution of the mentoring process in social work supervision as indicated by the respondents	126
4.10.1.2	Category: Necessity of a relationship fit	129
4.10.1.3	Category: Training of mentors and aspects of mentoring to be included in a mentoring programme	130
4.10.1.4	Category: Skills needed by mentors and how they relate to those identified skills of the supervisors	131
4.10.2	Subtheme 6.2: Types of mentoring	131
4.10.2.1	Category: Types of mentoring to be executed during the mentoring process in social work supervision	132
4.10.3	Subtheme 6.3: Factors impacting on mentoring	134
4.10.3.1	Category: Factors which influence the mentoring process	134
4.11	CONCLUSION	136

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	INTRODUCTION	137
5.2	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	137
5.2.1	Profile of the supervisors	137
5.2.2	Responsibilities other than social work supervision	138
5.2.3	Training of social work supervisors	139
5.2.4	Number of newly qualified social workers for whom supervisors are responsible for	139
5.2.5	Functions of supervision	140
5.2.6	Methods of supervision	141
5.2.7	Process of supervision	142
5.2.7.1	Engagement and assessment phase	142
5.2.7.2	Planning phase	142
5.2.7.3	Working phase	143
5.2.7.4	Evaluation phase	144
5.2.7.5	Activities in social work supervision	144
5.2.8	Mentoring	145
5.2.8.1	The appointment of mentors	145
5.2.8.2	Benefits and risks of mentoring	146
5.2.8.3	The qualities and roles of a mentor	147
5.2.8.4	Mentoring process	147
5.2.8.5	Training of supervisors in mentoring as an activity in social work supervision ..	148
5.2.8.6	Skills required by a mentor for the execution of the mentoring process	148
5.2.8.7	Types of mentoring	149
5.3	FURTHER RESEARCH	150
5.4	SUMMARY	150
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	152
	ADDENDUM A	164

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1:	Benefits of mentoring for newly qualified social workers	54
Table 4.1:	Profile of the respondents	78
Table 4.2:	Responsibilities other than social work supervision	86
Table 4.3:	Themes, subthemes and categories	89
Table 4.4:	Functions executed most often by respondents	90
Table 4.5:	Reasons provided by respondents for the execution of each function	91
Table 4.6:	Methods of supervision	93
Table 4.7:	Physical setting: Comfort	95
Table 4.8:	Physical setting: Confidentiality	96
Table 4.9:	Physical setting: Communication	97
Table 4.10:	Physical Setting: Compatibility	98
Table 4.11:	Personal development assessment	99
Table 4.12:	Personal development plan	101
Table 4.13:	The supervision contract	102
Table 4.14:	Frequency and duration of supervision	104
Table 4.15:	Supervisory skills as utilised by respondents	108
Table 4.16:	Evaluation Phase	109
Table 4.17:	Termination phase	110
Table 4.18:	Supervision activity most often executed by respondents	111
Table 4.19:	Differences between social work supervision and mentoring	114
Table 4.20:	Multiple mentors versus one mentor	115
Table 4.21:	Persons to be appointed as mentors	117
Table 4.22:	Qualities of a mentor	121
Table 4.23:	Roles of a mentor	122
Table 4.24:	Roles of the newly qualified social worker	123
Table 4.25:	Functions of mentoring as executed in social work supervision	125
Table 4.26:	Relationship fit	129
Table 4.27:	Types of mentoring	132

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1:	Ecology of supervision	21
Figure 4.1:	Gender of respondents	79
Figure 4.2:	Age groups of respondents	80
Figure 4.3:	Highest qualifications in Social Work	81
Figure 4.4:	Years of experience as social workers	82
Figure 4.5:	Respondents' experience of social work supervision	83
Figure 4.6:	Years of experience as a supervisor	84

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

In 2009 the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape introduced a programme of excellence for social workers, focusing on the provision of support and the continuous professional development of social workers working in the Western Cape Province (Department of Social Development, 2009). The programme was introduced in response to the National Department of Social Development's Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (Department of Social Development, 2006), to address the shortage of social workers in South Africa. This shortage has been aggravated by the outflow of South African social workers to countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, by workers leaving the profession due to poor working conditions and the increased demand for social work services by the South African population (Department of Social Development, 2006). One of the recommendations in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers was that quality social work supervision be provided through the transfer of skills, including the mentoring of newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17). The recommendation should however be viewed within a specific context, based on particular conceptualisations, which were not clarified and which were not the intention of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy document.

Hence, in an effort to conceptualise the aforementioned recommendation of the National Department of Social Development's Recruitment and Retention Strategy, the term "newly qualified social worker" may refer to a practitioner who has been a social work practitioner for less than 24 months (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:24). Newly qualified social workers currently constitute 27% of the social worker population in South Africa and their ages range from between 20 and 29 years (Earle, 2008:48). Supervision of these social workers is usually mandatory in social work organisations (National Task Team for Management and Supervision in the Social Work Profession, 2011). Supervision within a social work organisation can be defined as an interactional process within the context of a positive, anti-discriminatory relationship, based on distinct theories, models and perspectives, whereby a supervisor

supervises a social work practitioner by performing educational, supportive and administrative functions in order to promote efficient and professional rendering of social work services (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2000:5).

However, social work supervision in South Africa did not receive its rightful attention, as postulated by Botha (2002:vi) a decade ago. The supervisory functions in the South Africa during the apartheid era, was also mainly assigned to white social workers whilst black social workers were subject to continuous supervision. This together with the perception by non-social worker managers that supervision is non-essential led to supervision becoming less popular (Department of Social Development, 2006:19). Botha (2002:vi) is furthermore of the opinion that although social work supervision has lost its value in the South African context, it has not lost its significance. This opinion of Botha is still relevant today, as the value of social workers and supervision has been reiterated by the South African government and led to the declaration of social work as a "scarce skill" in 2006 (Department of Social Development, 2006). In addition, the Recruitment and Retention Strategy (Department of Social Development, 2006) identified supervision as a critical area that needs attention for the retention of social work professionals and to address the deterioration in the quality of service provision. The decline in social work service delivery, which necessitates the use of supervision, is attributed to high case-loads, and emotional and other trauma experienced by workers in service delivery, high stress levels due to personal, professional and social demands, a lack of resources to deliver on their mandate as well as the supervision of social workers by non-social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006).

Botha (2002:vi) also mentions that supervision in South Africa is regarded as an opportunity for promotion for social workers with some years of experience, irrespective of whether they are equipped for the position or not. Furthermore social work supervisors receive no formal training and are usually expected to execute their supervisory responsibilities, without any set policies and guidelines. Supervision is also viewed as an invaluable and critical part of the professional development and growth of the social worker (Bogo & McKnight, 2005:49); and is also promoted as there is an increased focus on the social work fraternity to be more accountable (Abott & Lyter, 1998:43). Thus supervision of social workers leads to greater professionalism and enables social workers to deliver the quality of services expected from communities as well

as government. Accountability is important as it is one of the values endorsed by the South African government and also a vehicle to ensure that public funds are utilised in a cost-effective and sufficient manner (Ministry for Welfare and Population Development, 1997).

It is therefore imperative that social work supervision receives its rightful attention in the South African context. However, research relating to supervision in South Africa is limited (Botha, 2002:vi) and Engelbrecht's (2010) research furthermore revealed the stagnation of local developments in supervision. These arguments compel this study, especially the Recruitment and Retention Strategy's (Department of Social Development, 2006) focus on mentoring as a strategy for the provision of support to newly qualified social workers, and Tsui's (2005) conceptualisation of mentoring within the context of social work as an activity of supervision. Hence this study will explore mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

Mentoring has different meanings in different professions and is a relatively new concept in the social work profession (Greenwood, 1995:17). Mentoring in the social work profession is defined as an activity of social work supervision (Tsui, 2005:77), and is a "one-on-one" process between a mentor and a protégé which creates a space for mutual action, learning and reflection (Rolfe-Flett, 2002:2). In addition Tillman (2001:296) describes the mentoring process as a professional relationship between a less and a more experienced person. Baugh and Scandura (1999:4), Karallis and Sandeland (2009:205) and Strand and Bosco-Ruggiero (2010:51) further describe mentoring as occurring at the beginning stages of the career of an individual. Hence, mentoring can be viewed as an activity which is employed especially during the engagement phase of the supervision process of newly qualified social workers. A study on an activity towards the retention and enhancement of the work performance of newly qualified social workers would thus be of a cutting-edge nature, since the Department of Social Development have made a substantial number of bursaries available to social work students as part of their retention strategy, culminating in an exceptional acquisition of newly qualified social workers. During the period of 2010 and 2011, for example, more than 150 newly qualified social workers have been placed in the different local offices and facilities in the Western Cape Department of Social Development (Mtheke, 2011).

The benefits of mentoring are similar to the benefits of social work supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002), as social work supervision promotes the professional identity as well as the work performance of social workers (Botha, 2002:1). The various benefits of mentoring as outlined in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy (Department of Social Development, 2006) as well as the similarities between mentoring and social work supervision, therefore make the exploration of mentoring within the context of the social work profession, with a specific focus on newly qualified social workers, a significant and valuable area of study.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Mentoring is promoted to assist with the retention and recruitment of newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17). However, Strand and Bosco-Ruggiero (2010:51) are of the opinion that research on mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers is limited; a postulation that is supported by Kelly (2001:18) who mentions that the use of mentoring in the field of social work supervision is new.

Based on the fact that mentoring is viewed as an activity of supervision (Tsui, 2005:77), and that it is promoted for supervision of newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2009:17), but lacks empirical support in terms of its execution (Kelly, 2001:18; Strand & Bosco-Ruggiero, 2010:51), the following research question can be formulated: what are the features of mentoring as an activity in the supervision of newly qualified social workers and how can it be utilised? A study towards gaining an understanding of the utilisation of mentoring as an activity in supervision of newly qualified social workers is therefore relevant.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to gain an understanding of the features of mentoring and how mentoring can be utilised as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. The following objectives have been identified towards achieving this aim:

- To present an overview of social work supervision;
- To explain the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers;
- To investigate the utilisation of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

- To make recommendations to organisations employing social workers, on how to utilise mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section will focus on the research methodology which was employed in this study. A description of the research approach and research design as well as the research methodology is also provided.

1.4.1 Research approach

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research was used. Although De Vos (2005b:359) states that the use of both quantitative and qualitative research is time consuming and costly, other authors such as Mouton and Marais (1990:360) suggest that the use of both research approaches assists the researcher in gaining a clearer understanding of human nature and social science. The researcher therefore used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain an understanding of the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. The combined use of both approaches will also enhance the quality of the research (Mouton, 1996:36).

1.4.2 Research design

Fouché and De Vos (2005:134) describe exploratory design as allowing the researcher to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon or community. The exploratory design used will give the researcher the opportunity to explore and gain new insights in the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

The descriptive design was applied to describe the nature of social work supervision and mentoring as an activity thereof. The descriptive design was also applicable because mentoring and how it is employed as an activity in social work supervision is a relatively new concept and research related to it is limited (Grinnell, 1988:220; Kelly, 2001:18).

Grinnell (1988:220) further mentions that exploratory and descriptive designs are used to explore a subject that is relatively new and unstudied. Given that mentoring and how it is employed as an

activity in social work supervision is a relatively new concept and research relating to it is limited (Kelly, 2001:18), a combination of the exploratory and descriptive designs was justified.

1.4.3 Research method

In this section the researcher will explain the nature of the literature review which will be undertaken and will include a description of the sample size, the methods of data collection as well as research instruments. This will be followed by an outline of the methods of data analysis that has been used.

1.4.3.1 Literature study

A review of the literature, and how it contributes to a clearer understanding of the identified problem was undertaken (Fouché & Delpont, 2005:123). The literature review of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers assisted the researcher in gaining a clearer understanding on the topic.

The review of international and local literature was obtained from a perusal of professional journals and relevant National and Provincial Government documents. Other relevant legislative documents were also obtained from the Provincial Department of Social Development in the Western Cape. Towards a thorough understanding of supervision, primary sources which might appear outdated, but which are necessary and relevant to capture the field of research in a scholarly way, were utilised.

Literature on mentoring was also carefully selected, and interpreted within the context of an activity of social work supervision, as most sources conceptualise mentoring within a business context, combining mentoring and coaching as activities. However, based on the suggestion of Tsui (2005:77), the researcher just focused on mentoring which posed a creative challenge, as no substantial research could be found that provided a comprehensive exposition of mentoring within the context of social work supervision. Most authors and researchers only refer, as does Tsui (2005), to mentoring as an activity in supervision, without further exploration or elaboration. The task of the researcher was thus to first present an overview of supervision in social work, and then to contextualise mentoring as an activity of supervision.

1.4.3.2 Universe, population and sampling

The universe comprises all those potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher is interested, whereas population refers to those individuals in the universe who are included in the study (Arkava & Lane, 1983:27). As it was practically impossible for the researcher to include the whole universe of social work supervisors in all South African organisational contexts, the study was demarcated to the Department of Social Development, Western Cape, as this Department employed 150 newly qualified social workers in the year preceding the study (Mtheke, 2011). Supervisors in the Department concerned would thus have ample experience of supervision of newly qualified social workers. These newly qualified social workers and supervisors would have the same attributes than other newly qualified social workers and supervisors in other organisational contexts, as the focus of this study is on an understanding of how mentoring can be utilised as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers and not on different variables due to the impact of different organisational contexts on supervision or mentoring.

For the purposes of this study the population consisted of all 49 social work supervisors employed in the six regional offices of the Western Cape Department of Social Development (Appollis, 2011). The sample of the study consisted of all those social work supervisors who provide supervision to newly qualified social workers who are employed in the regional offices of the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape (Provincial Government Western Cape, 2010:10). Twenty supervisors that provide supervision to newly qualified social workers were purposively selected to participate in this study.

A non-probability sampling, more specific purposive sampling, was applied in this study. The sample of twenty social work supervisors is representative will allow the researcher to draw generalisations according to Strydom (2005:198) from the sample to the larger population. Purposive sampling is described by as those elements that contain the most characteristics of the population. The main criteria for the inclusion of these supervisors as part of the population were the following:

- Supervisors were qualified social workers;

- Supervisors were registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professionals (SACSSP);
- Supervisors were employed by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape;
- Supervisors had a minimum of three years' experience in social work as required by the Department of Social Development;
- Supervisors provided supervision to newly qualified social workers.

1.4.3.3 Methods of data collection

Research instruments employed in the study included interviews based on a questionnaire. Huysamen (1993:149) confirms that interviews allows for flexibility as the researcher will have the opportunity to clarify and explain questions to respondents during the interview sessions. The researcher utilised one-on-one interviews based on semi-structured questionnaires for data collection. Greeff (2005:296) mentions that the semi-structured interview in qualitative research can be used to gain a detailed picture of the participants' perceptions as well as to obtain quantitative data; this allowed the researcher to have predetermined questions on an interview schedule. The questions were close-ended as well as open-ended and were based on the literature review relating to supervision and mentoring. Questions used during the interview primarily focused on how the supervisor effected supervision during supervision of supervisees as well as how mentoring can be utilised as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

As interviews were conducted in English, which was not the first language of some supervisors, the possibility that concepts and terminology might be misinterpreted, existed. One-on-one interviews however created the opportunity to reduce this risk as it allowed the researcher to clarify misconceptions. The responses of the participants to the open-ended questions asked during the interviews, which were based on the semi-structured interview schedule, were recorded on the interviewing sheets exactly as uttered by the participants.

1.4.3.4 Methods of data analysis

Data analysis refers to the dissection of data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships to gain an understanding of the various elements of the researcher's data and between concepts, constructs and variables, to see whether there are any patterns that can be identified (Fouché & De Vos, 2005:108). For the purposes of this study data were analyzed in the following manner:

- First the questionnaires were computed numerically and organised according to themes and categories;
- The information obtained from the questionnaires was then summarised and interpreted by comparing it to the data obtained from the literature review;
- Lastly these findings were presented in tubular, graphic and narrative form.

In addition De Vos (2005a:345-347) is of the opinion that research must conform to the following norms to ensure the trustworthiness of the research study:

a) Credibility

The researcher made use of different interviewing techniques such as paraphrasing, probing, clarification, summarising and focusing to ensure that the subject was accurately presented according to the questionnaire.

b) Transferability

Transferability of the study was achieved through a detailed description of the research methodology used. This ensured that the research findings were transferable to other settings, within the same context in which this study was conducted.

c) Reliability

The reliability of the study has been ensured through the accurate and systematic recording of data. A thorough description of the conceptual framework in which the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision occurs, also created reliability.

d) Conformability

Conformability of the study is important. The researcher was enabled to present the research findings in such a manner that it could be confirmed by other studies. Conformability also includes the concept of objectivity, which was achieved when the researcher allowed respondents to express their views and opinions relating to the research subject, without any interruptions or interference.

1.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important to adhere to the ethics of social research (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:528-531; Neuman, 1997:443). The researcher is a registered social worker, hence required to adhere to the ethical code of the SACSSP. Research was conducted in a structured and professional manner and the rights and dignity of the respondents in this study have been protected. Further consideration in this study was given to other ethical matters such as informed consent, the right to privacy and confidentiality, release or publication of findings as well as the debriefing of respondents (Strydom, 2005:59-62). These ethical considerations are discussed in more detail below.

1.5.1 Informed consent

The researcher was employed by the Western Cape Department of Social Development. Consent to conduct this study was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of the Western Cape Department of Social Development. Furthermore Williams, Tutty and Grinnell (1995:41) are of the opinion that respondents should be informed about the purpose of the study, the procedure to be followed during interviewing as well as possible dangers, advantages and disadvantages to which they might be exposed to. Respondents in this study were therefore informed about the purpose, advantages as well as disadvantages of this study.

The researcher also respected each respondent's right to self-determination. Self-determination refers to respondents' right and competence to evaluate available information, weigh the alternatives and make an informed decision to participate or refuse to participate in the study (Dane, 1990:45).

1.5.2 Right to privacy and confidentiality

The researcher respected the right to privacy of each respondent and adhered to the principle of confidentiality during this study (Babbie, 2007:65). Information was relayed anonymously; thereby ensuring that the identity of each respondent was kept confidential.

1.5.3 Release or publication of the findings

The findings of the study are to be introduced to the reading public in a written format, as suggested by Strydom (1994:18-19). These research findings will furthermore be presented in a concise and objective manner.

1.5.4 Debriefing of respondents

Debriefing of respondents is important to minimise any harm which might be caused by the study (Judd, Smith & Kidder, 1991:517). The researcher debriefed each respondent in this study by first providing them with a detailed explanation about the intent of the study. Second the researcher created opportunities during the interviews whereby respondents could discuss their feelings about the research study.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the limitations of the study might be that research relating to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision in South Africa as well as internationally is limited. However the researcher was able to access literature about mentoring and its use in other occupational fields from academic journals. This information was contextualized within a social work context.

The literature review pertaining to social work supervision may be considered outdated as primary sources were used. However, the use of these primary sources was critical towards gaining a sound, original understanding of supervision in social work.

Despite the sample of 20 social work supervisors, employed by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape, the researcher is of the opinion that the research findings were representative of the universe as it allowed the researcher to make generalisations from the

sample to the larger population (Strydom, 2005:198). As already explained, the focus of this study was not on different variables due to the impact of different organisational contexts on supervision or mentoring. Therefore the limited sample of supervisors would not have an effect on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

A substantial limitation of the study might be that the newly qualified social workers' experiences of supervision were not captured, as this might differ from the experiences and responses of the supervisors. However, the aim of this study was to gain an understanding of the features and how mentoring can be utilised as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers, and not on the quality of supervision and mentoring, satisfaction of supervisees or differences in experiences. The latter variables may be captured and exposed in further research, flowing from this study.

1.7 PRESENTATION

This research study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 serves to provide an introduction to and motivation for the study. The research methodology utilised in the study is also described in this chapter. This introductory chapter highlights the importance of the study, as well as what it aims to achieve and the manner in which it will do so.

Chapters 2 and 3 serve as the literature review for the study. These two chapters provide a factual basis for the situational analysis within this study. Chapter 2 provides an overview of social work supervision. Chapter 3 describes the social work context of newly qualified social workers as well as explaining the use of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

Chapter 4 includes the empirical study, providing an analysis and interpretation of data collected during interviews with respondents. Finally, chapter 5 will present the conclusions and recommendations based on the analyzed data which is obtained during the empirical study.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Supervision in social work has gained renewed interest in the South Africa. This interest is due to the recommendation by the national Department of Social Development, that quality supervision should be promoted as a strategy to retain existing social workers and recruit new social workers in the field of social work in South Africa. The recruitment and retention strategy of the Department of Social Development (2006:23) confirms that there is a lack of structured supervision in South Africa and calls for an investigation into the current supervisory practices in the country. The aim of this chapter is therefore to provide an overview of social work supervision. This is necessary as the focus of this research is on mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. It is therefore important to present an overview of the current state of social work supervision, as this lays the foundation for conceptualising mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. This chapter will therefore focus on a detailed discussion of the current state of social work supervision in a global and local environment.

Although most of the research in this chapter consulted primary sources such as Austin (1981), Brashers (1995), Kadushin (1992), Munson (1983), Pettes (1967) Shulman (1993) and Tsui (2005), it is worthwhile to mention that South African authors such as Botha (2002), Engelbrecht (2006) and Hoffman (1997) also extensively examined supervision practices within a local context. In this chapter the history of social work supervision will be discussed; this history is important as it provides the context for the rest of the chapter. Thereafter the need for social work supervision in a global context will be highlighted. A definition of social work supervision is presented, followed by a brief discussion of the different theories in social work supervision. The three functions of social work supervision, more specifically the administrative, educational and support functions will then be outlined. The researcher will highlight the process of social work supervision, and the different methods of social work supervision namely individual, group

and peer supervision will be discussed. Lastly the activities of social work supervision will be mentioned and discussed briefly.

2.2 HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

An investigation into the history of social work is imperative as it will assist the researcher to understand its philosophy, to identify its importance as well as to clarify its functions in an organisational context (Tsui, 2005:xviii). According to Kadushin (1992:1) there are a few references to the term social work supervision before 1920. Social work supervision has developed along the following themes: individual supervision with a focus on the administrative function, the influence of social work training and literature, case-work and social work theories as well as group and community work (Kadushin, 1992; Tsui, 2005).

2.2.1 Individual supervision with a focus on the administrative function

Individual supervision has its roots in the Charity Organization Society Movement in Buffalo City in New York in 1878, due to the concerns about indiscriminate almsgiving by charities (Kadushin, 1992; Munson, 1983). Volunteers were assigned to families to offer personal support. These volunteers, also referred to as visitors, were regarded as paid service workers of the Charity Organization agencies. They were responsible for paying visits to families and to relay the gathered information to the management of the Charity Organization Movement.

Tsui (2005:2) mentions that some of the volunteers lacked the skills to assist families and therefore could not cope with the demands made by the communities. This led to a high turnover of volunteers. The training and guidance of volunteers thus became vital and became the responsibility of the permanent, more experienced staff of the organisation. The focus of supervision, during 1878, was more administrative in nature (Pettes, 1967:17).

2.2.2 The influence of social work training and literature, case-work and social work theories

The second theme which influenced the development of supervision was social work training and literature, case-work and social work theories. According to Munson (1983:38) the development of social work supervision cannot be separated from the development of social work practice. The first course in supervision was introduced in 1911 under the sponsorship of

the Charity Organization Department of the Russell Sage Foundation (Tsui, 2005:3). This training course was headed by Mary Richmond, who was regarded as a pioneer in social work (Kadushin, 1992:4). Pettes (1983:17) mentions that the role of the supervisor during these times was influenced by the professional development of the schools of social work.

As the schools of social work paid attention to the development of social work as a profession, a need for the analysis of supervision was identified (Kadushin, 1987:11). Kadushin (1987:11) mentions that the first social work text that used the word “supervision” in the title was written by John Brackett in 1904. The full title was *Supervision and Education in Charity*. This book was concerned with the supervision of the welfare organisations of that time. Other authors which contributed to the development of literature pertaining to supervision included Munson (1983), Pettes (1967) and Wilson (1981). The *Clinical Supervisor*, a journal which was devoted exclusively to the art and science of clinical supervision, was first published in 1983. Other seminal contributions to supervision in social work were written by authors such as Middleman and Rhodes (1985), Holloway and Brager (1989) and Kadushin (1976).

The core theme of the books of these aforementioned authors was strongly influenced by the psycho-analytic theory in the earlier years of the twentieth century. Other theories which influenced the development of social work supervision include the client-centred and behaviour theory, learning theories and systems theories (Brashers, 1995; Middleman & Rhodes, 1985; Munson, 1983).

According to Tsui (2005:6) the format and structure of social work supervision was strongly influenced by the case-work method as used in social work. Pettes (1967:18) explains that the case-work method was used by social work supervisors who had not received any formal training in social work supervision. Social work supervisors in the earlier days of the profession assumed the role of therapists and used their skills to assist the supervisee with social work service delivery.

Tsui (2005:7) however argues that the “case-work” approach to social work supervision is rejected by many social workers as they consider it to be a violation of the privacy of the supervisee. The case-work method of supervision was not sufficient to achieve positive client

outcomes, and this led to an increased use of group supervision. Although social work supervision was heavily influenced by case-work in social work practice until the 1950s, references are also made to supervision in group and community work (Tsui, 2005:7).

2.2.3 Supervision in group work and community work

Not much in literature seems to have been dedicated to supervision in group and community work. Most of the literature of social work supervision has been influenced by the case-work method of social work (Kadushin, 1987:14). However it is still important to mention that group supervision, although it did not receive the same attention as individual supervision, was also influenced by the group-work method which is used by organisations employing group work as a method. The use of supervision in community work is even less structured than in group supervision (Kadushin, 1987:15). This is due to challenges such as staff shortages and a lack of skilled supervisors employed in community-based organisations (Tsui, 2005:7).

In conclusion the history of social work supervision was influenced by the three methods of social work namely case-, group and community work and was influenced therefore by the social work theories employed in the three methods. However this study also focuses on the practice of supervision in the South African context, hence the historical development of supervision in South Africa will be discussed below.

2.2.4 The development of social work supervision in South Africa

Engelbrecht (2010:325) categorises the historical development of social work supervision in South Africa into the following three periods.

2.2.4.1 Emerging and predominantly administrative years (1960-1975)

In the earlier 1960s, supervision in South Africa was known as field guidance and occurred within a group work context. During this time field guidance featured prominently as a form of in-service training especially within the Department of Social Welfare and Pensions. During 1965, emphasis was placed on the administrative and educational function of supervision. This led to the development of supervision into a fully-fledged system and further emphasised the training of supervisors at South African universities.

In addition Du Plessis (1965:115, 116) and Botha (2002:1) found that the working conditions of social workers limited their professional development. As a result supervision did not receive its rightful place in social work. The historical development of supervision in South Africa was further influenced by the series of scholarly articles by Barette (1968a, 1968b) in *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk*, a professional journal. It is thus clear that the historical development of supervision in South Africa has its roots in the administrative function, followed by educational practices. Engelbrecht (2010:325) further mentions that supervision in South Africa also developed along hierarchical lines, but with an emphasis on the educational function of supervision. Consequently the early 1970s heralded a change in the development of supervision, as supervision was formally defined in a South African social work dictionary. However the definition was only available in Afrikaans and did not refer to any functions of supervision (Engelbrecht, 2010:325). Supervision was narrowly defined as a process whereby the social work supervisor assists the social worker to achieve work-related goals. Engelbrecht (2010:325) adds that the various literature contributions of South African authors such as Botha (1972), Smit (1972), Dercksen (1973) and Hoffman (1987) therefore mostly drew on supervision literature as published by colleagues in North America.

2.2.4.2 Period of integrated supervision functions and expansion of knowledge base (1975-1990)

International researchers such as Kadushin (1976), Austin (1981), Middleman and Rhodes (1985) have positioned supervision within a social and political context and defined specific supervision functions. The work of these authors were acknowledged in the research of local authors such as Botha (1985a) and Pelser (1985), who campaigned for the provision of effective and professional supervision and emphasised the educational, supportive and administrative functions of supervision. Additionally Botha's development of an educational model for supervision provided a solid foundation for the practice and training of supervisors in South Africa.

2.2.4.3 Times of change (1990 and beyond)

The 1990s were characterised by an overabundance of Masters dissertations in South Africa (Engelbrecht, 2010:326). However as the political context was changing, the focus on

supervision became less popular. In addition the high case-loads of social workers, poor working conditions, poor salaries, migration of social workers to other countries and a lack of quality supervision, led to a critical shortage of social workers in South Africa as well as a decline in the quality of social work services to the communities in South Africa.

Due to these factors, the value of social workers and supervision has been reaffirmed by the South African government, leading to the declaration of social work as a “scarce skill” in 2006 (Department of Social Development, 2006). In addition many dissertations which focused on social work supervision were written, but within a specific context, and not allowing for generalisations to the rest of the South African context (Engelbrecht, 2010). Botha (2002:3) also argues for a renewal of supervision practices, emphasising the fact that an unambiguous focus on supervision is long overdue and needed.

2.3 THE NEED FOR SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

The need for social work supervision has been highlighted by various international and local authors such as Brashers (1995:692), Botha (2002:1), and Kadushin (1992:20). All these authors postulate that supervision is used as a means to control and develop the quality of social welfare services to communities. Second, it increases accountability within social welfare organisations. Third, social work supervision equips new and inexperienced social workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver effective social welfare services to the client system. The focus of this research is on mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. Hence the researcher needs to conceptualise mentoring within the current social work supervision context in South Africa. This is important as there are increasing expectations from societies, especially donors, for organisations to be more accountable (Kadushin, 1992:20). As the need for social work supervision evolves, so does a need for the development of a definition of social work supervision.

2.4 A DEFINITION OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Social work supervision is often confused with consultation (Botha, 2002:282). It is therefore important to differentiate between the definitions for consultation and supervision. Consequently the researcher will provide a definition for consultation, followed by a discussion of the definition of social work supervision.

According to Austin (1981:13) consultation is a process whereby the supervisor provides assistance to others when requested. Furthermore Middleman and Rhodes (1985:16) mention that consultation is a voluntary meeting between professional peers, initiated by the worker seeking advice about a specific issue, from someone with specific expertise. Therefore consultation differs from supervision in that consultation is a process between peers, whereas supervision is a process between a supervisor and the supervisee.

Social work supervision is defined in various ways (Tsui, 2005:16). The researcher will highlight the definition of social work supervision as provided by authors such as Austin (1981), Botha (2002), Munson (1983), and O'Donoghue (2000). According to O'Donoghue (2000:5) social work supervision is a process which takes place within a professional relationship between a social work supervisor and the supervisee, with the ultimate goal to facilitate critical reflections upon actions, processes, persons and the context of social work practice. This process is interactional and takes place between the supervisee and the supervisor (Austin, 1981:11; Munson, 1983:3).

Kadushin and Harkness (2002:11) mentions that the supervisor is a middle manager in an organisation and performs educational, administrative and supportive functions in order to promote the efficient and professional rendering of services. This process of supervision is embedded in a theoretical framework. Tsui (2005:11-12) defines supervision in terms of normative, empirical and pragmatic approaches. These approaches focus on defining social work supervision in terms of the functions, roles, styles and behaviour of supervisors. To encapsulate the before-mentioned authors' postulations and for the purpose of this study the researcher will define social work supervision as follows:

Supervision is an interactional process, embedded in a theoretical framework, during which a supervisor provides educational, administrative and supportive functions in the supervision of a supervisee within a social welfare organisation with the aim of providing effective and efficient social work services to the service users. The supervisor is a middle manager and serves as the link between the top management of the social welfare organisation and the supervisee.

It is evident from the preceding definition that supervision is influenced by various systems in the ecology of social work (Kadushin, 1992:26). Consequently the ecology of social work supervision will be explained below.

2.5 THE ECOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Hawkins and Shohet (2002:69) and O'Donoghue (2000:2) state that social work supervision is influenced by the person involved and the environment in which social work supervision takes place. Tsui (2005:485) adds that supervision aims to develop and control the quality of social service delivery. Tsui (2005:49) also mentions that social work supervision is presented in a physical, interpersonal, cultural and psychological context. The physical context refers to the environment or setting in which social work supervision happens. The ecology of social work supervision is illustrated by figure 2.1, and thereafter the different systems will be discussed.

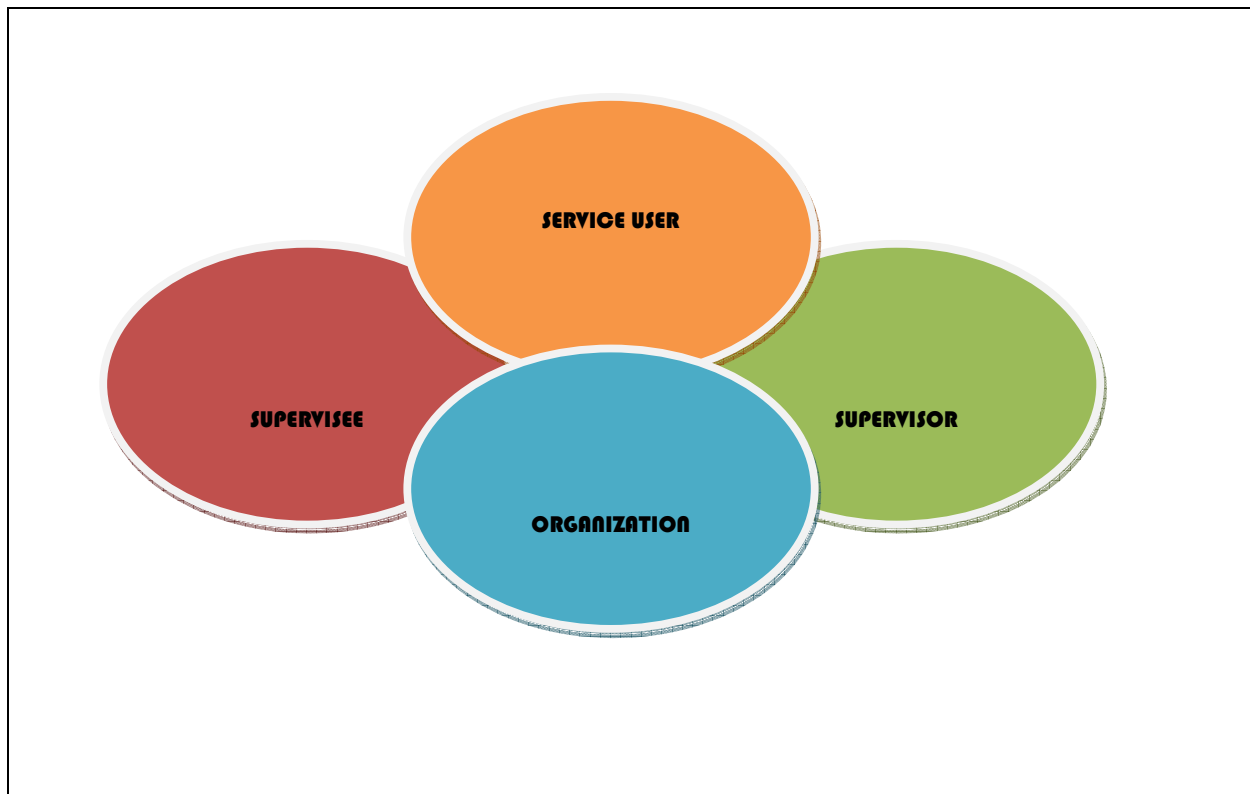


Figure 2.1: Ecology of supervision

2.5.1 The service user

In general the service user approaches the organisation with a specific need which requires social work intervention. The service users are those people who were or still are receiving social work services (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011: 6). Although supervision takes place within an agency, the ultimate objective of social work supervision is to deliver quality services to the service user. Supervisors do not directly work with the service user; however their activities with the supervisee affect the quality of interventions to the service user (Kadushin, 1992:23).

Poor supervision or a lack of supervision of especially inexperienced and newly qualified social workers can be detrimental to service users, as their needs cannot be met or service delivery can be unsatisfactory. Good supervision practices are therefore necessary as this will have long-term effects for the supervisee, who models the behaviour of the supervisor.

Tsui (2005:43) mentions that the professional helping relationship between supervisees and the service user, during which supervisees use the knowledge they have acquired through their training, together with the education they receive from their supervisors, ensures that the needs of the service user are met.

2.5.2 The organisational system

The organisation determines the structure of social work supervision (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:28). Middleman and Rhodes (1985:191) define an organisation as the setting in which professionals practice. According to O'Donoghue (2000) social work supervision is used by the organisation to deliver cost-effective services. It is also a tool for risk management to protect the organisation from potentially unprofessional and unethical practices by social workers and social work supervisors. Tsui (2005:41) is of the opinion that social work supervision is influenced by the goals, structure, policies and procedures of social welfare organisations. Therefore the process of social work supervision is determined by the role of supervision in an organisation, the organisational climate and the vision and mission of the organisation. Tsui (2005:41) notes that these are all related to the culture of the organisation, implying that social work supervision is used as a tool to reach organisational goals.

Social workers are employed in different types of organisations. Middleman and Rhodes (1985:191) emphasise that social workers are moving into private practice, and some social workers are being employed by different government departments and non-governmental organisations. The nature of social work supervision of the supervisees will therefore differ, depending on the organisational system (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002:26).

2.5.3 The supervisor system

According to Pettes (1967:24) the supervisor is the middle manager who is responsible to ensure that the supervisee meets the needs of the service user. The supervisor is responsible for the execution of social work supervision. For most supervisors the aim of supervision in social work is to ensure that quality services are provided through the provision of advice and guidance. Therefore it is important to obtain a clear picture of the supervisor system. The supervisor is usually employed within an organisation and is the link between the executive management and

the supervisees. The supervisor is seen as a service specialist, an organisational specialist, a training specialist and a personnel specialist. To this end, the supervisor has certain characteristics.

Munson (1983:15) highlights the following characteristics of a supervisor: supervisors will most probably have ample work experience and sufficient qualifications, be female, and in their 40s. Some of the supervisors divide their time between supervision and field practice, while others spend more time on supervising staff (Kadushin, 1992:14). An alarming fact stressed by Munson (1983:25) is that some supervisors still practice field work as part of their supervisory responsibilities, which create issues with time management and cause conflict between practice demands and supervisory demands. Bradley, Engelbrecht and Hojer (2010:780) further mention that a supervisor in South Africa generally has the following attributes:

- the supervisor is a female over 30 years;
- is in a middle management position for which she has applied or have been promoted to;
- has more than 5 years' experience as a social worker;
- is a registered social worker by the South African Council for Social Service Professionals;
- manages up to 10 social workers whose case-loads can consist of approximately 140 households per worker;
- is co-responsible for the statutory cases of all her supervisees;
- has additional tasks such as being a manager and consultant for the organisation;
- spends a lot of time on the orientation of new social workers as a result of the critical shortages of social workers and supervisors as well as high staff turnover.

Tsui (2005:41) sees the supervisor as an administrator on the one hand and as the most senior frontline manager on the other hand. He adds that the role of the supervisor is influenced by the training experiences of supervisors, their culture, their working background and their level of competence.

Hawkins and Shohet (2006:55) identify the following roles of the supervisor: teacher, counsellor, monitor evaluator, boss, colleague, expert technician and manager of administrative relationships. These roles assist the supervisors in the execution of their duties to the supervisee.

2.5.4 The supervisee system

The supervisees can be the students or staff of the organisation. Social work supervision can be provided to both the student and staff. As this research focuses on staff, the supervisee system will exclude a description of the student as a supervisee. Kadushin (1992:31) notes that the supervisees are usually new and inexperienced social workers. The supervisee is required to be supervised as this is part of the job requirements. Social work supervision assists the supervisee to deliver quality services to the service user system (Tsui, 2008:491). There has been, for example, an increase in the number of newly qualified social workers, specifically in the Western Cape, due to the implementation of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers in South Africa. During 2010 and 2011 more than 150 newly qualified social workers have been placed in the different local offices and facilities in the Western Cape Department of Social Development (Mtheku, 2011). It is required of these social workers to receive supervision to enable them to deliver quality social work services ((National Task Team for Supervision and Management, 2011:17).

2.6 THEORIES IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Social work education is underpinned by various social work theories (Tsui, 2005:18). Theories are comprehensive, coherent and internally consistent systems of ideas about a set of phenomena (Knowles, 1971:6). Munson (1983:146) defines a theory as an explanation of the interrelatedness of concepts.

From the early 1800s to the 1950's social work and social work supervision have been influenced by theories borrowed from psychology, particularly from psycho-analytic theories (Munson, 1983:42). This followed the introduction of the interaction theories as highlighted by Tsui (2005:18). Interaction theories were borrowed from sociology, and emphasise the skills used by the supervisee to ensure a positive working relationship with the client, hereafter referred to as the service user (Schulman, 1993:7). The service users' ability to manage their feelings and problems is the focus of this theory.

Since social work supervision was heavily influenced by case-work in social work, the theories in social work supervision have also been influenced by the theories used in case-work in social work (Kadushin, 1992:12). The theories of social work supervision were influenced by the

following theories: behaviourism, personality theories and systems theories (Middleman & Rhodes, 1985:7).

The systems theories were predominantly used during the 1970s and were borrowed from disciplines such as biology and chemistry. Systems theories comprise those concepts that emphasised the relationships between individuals, groups, communities and organisations and the influence of the environment on these systems (Barker, 1987:162). Other theories which have received attention include development theories (Hawkins & Shohet, 2002:62).

These different theories can be employed during the supervision process, depending on the objectives of the supervisor. For example, Middleman and Rhodes (1985:7) discuss the following theories: pragmatism, behaviourism, empiricism, existentialism, phenomenology and the systems theories. Perlman in Munson (1983:54) draws on theories such as learning theories, the systems theory and its influence. These theories are used to meet the objectives of the educational function of social work supervision. Engelbrecht (2010:332-333) identifies the following five categories of theoretical models which influence the provision of supervision in South Africa, namely:

- practice theory models, which are based on the theories, perspectives and models employed by supervisees during their interventions;
- structural-functional models, which focus on the functions of supervision;
- organisation models, which reflect the practice of supervision within a specific organisational structure as well as the supervision methods used;
- interactional models which focus on the interaction between the supervisee and supervisor.

Other models highlighted by Kaufman and Swartz (2003:151) include developmental models which focus on ongoing growth, and integration models which focus on the integration of multiple models. In conclusion social work supervision is influenced by a myriad of theories; however the five models as identified by Engelbrecht (2010:332-333) are appropriate for the employment of supervision in the South African context because they may potentially be embedded in the strengths perspective and social development approach. These theories of supervision are employed during the distinct functions of supervision and will be discussed accordingly.

2.7 FUNCTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Kadushin (1992), Botha (2002), and Tsui (2005) are of the opinion that the following three functions of supervision are important namely the administrative, educational and support function.

2.7.1 Administrative function

The first function to be discussed is the administrative function of supervision. Social work supervision has its roots in the administrative function (Tsui, 2008:486), which is concerned with the promotion and maintenance of good organisational standards and policies. Hence administrative supervision is concerned with ensuring that social work service rendering to the user system occurs in an effective and efficient manner (Bogo & McKnight, 2005:50). The supervisor should therefore focus on the work functioning and performance of the supervisee (Tromski-Klingshirn, 2006:55). To ensure accountability at all levels of society, the supervisor has the following administrative tasks: planning, organising, activating and control (Botha, 2002:38). These tasks will be discussed in the next session.

2.7.1.1 Planning

Planning is important for goal formulation and for the design of a strategy to ensure that organisational goals are met (Botha, 2002:38). The supervisor assists supervisees in planning their time effectively, to ensure that supervisees are available to service users for social work service rendering. Kadushin (1992:51) mentions that supervisors must also plan the division of the work-load of the supervisee, according to the available resources. This will ensure that the objectives and the goals of the organisation are met. Different strategies, such as management by objectives and workload-management are identified to ensure that the planning process is executed successfully.

Austin (1981) and Weinbach (1998) maintain that planning in organisations can be implemented successfully if the strategy of Management by Objectives is applied. Management by Objectives is perceived as a results-oriented methodology with the main thrust towards the future accomplishment of organisational tasks. This planning process gives staff of the organisation the opportunity to become involved in the planning process (Botha, 2002:38).

A second strategy in the planning process is workload-management, which according to Middleman and Rhodes (1985:169-174) refers to the total number of tasks the supervisees have to perform at any given time. During workload-management, the role of the supervisor would be to plan and delegate activities to ensure that the supervisees execute their duties. Botha (2002:41) argues that the following factors should be taken into account when work is delegated to the supervisee: the strengths and weaknesses of the supervisee and the variety of the tasks and time scheduling. Therefore the different strategies and factors which influence the planning process are important to ensure that the administrative function is implemented successfully.

2.7.1.2 Organising

The second task in the administrative function is organising, which is important to ensure that adequate time is spent on planning. According to Botha (2002:47) organising refers to the act of the structuring of the pre-determined tasks of the supervisor. To ensure that the task of organising is executed the principles of responsibility, authority and delegation are important. Delegation enables supervisees to perform certain tasks, as allocated with authority by the supervisors, making sure that the supervisee is empowered. Delegation also ensures that supervisors are not over-burdened (Botha, 2002:49). Although the supervisor allocates certain tasks to the supervisee, he/she is still ultimately held accountable for the execution of these tasks.

2.7.1.3 Activation

The third task in the administrative function is activation. According to Botha (2002:54) activation is the supervisor's ability to delegate, communicate, encourage, direct, lead and discipline supervisees as well as to explain assignments, thereby ensuring maximum job performance by the supervisee. Activation is influenced by three aspects: abilities, politics and values (Middleman & Rhodes, 1985:107-109). These aspects are also referred to as internal and external factors which have an impact on the activation process. Botha (2002:55) is of the opinion that these three factors should be reconciled for successful activation.

2.7.1.4 Control

The fourth task in the administrative function refers to control. Control as a task of the administrative function is used to measure the effectiveness of programmes of organisations.

Control is also needed to determine whether organisational goals are met, for quality assurance, to protect limited resources against misuse, to measure productivity and for effective planning.

The afore-mentioned tasks in the administrative function of supervision require of supervisors to have certain knowledge and skills such as conceptual skills, decision-making skills, human relations skills and authority. Authority refers to the effective use of power to execute tasks. Kadushin (1992:134) distinguishes power from authority and mentions that power is the skill to instigate the proper use of power. Power and authority are used by the supervisor to ensure that organisational goals are met. Tsui (2005:74) mentions that the use of power and authority by supervisors is based on their knowledge and skills.

In conclusion, the administrative functions of social work supervision are concerned with the promotion and maintenance of good standards of work and adherence to policies and good practice. The administrative function thus deals with the quality assurance dimension of supervision. In implementing the administrative responsibilities and functions the supervisor organises the work place, facilities, and human resources to achieve agency goals and objectives. Kadushin (1992:138) adds that administrative supervision and educational supervision shares the same objective, namely the provision of quality services to the service users.

2.7.2 Educational function

Education is the second function in the supervision process. Middleman and Rhodes (1985:3) state that the educational function of supervision in social work is concerned with the enhancement of the professional development of social workers. The educational supervision aims to equip the supervisee with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to affect service rendering (Botha, 2002; Kadushin, 1992; Tsui, 2005). In this section the educational function will be discussed in terms of the various approaches and models of education, the principles of adult education, techniques, learning and educational styles and the educational process in supervision (Botha, 2002:82).

The aim of supervision is to provide effective services to the service users. This is done within a specific approach or model. The different **educational approaches** include empirical

approaches, the pragmatic approach, the spiral-ecological approach (Cooper, 1984; Middleman & Rhodes, 1980) and the **holistic model** which is promoted by Botha (2002:82).

These approaches and models should be used in accordance with the learning needs of an adult, therefore the principles of adult education are applied. The **principles of adult** education which were formulated by Knowles (1971) are summarised by Kadushin (1992:183-200) as follows. Supervisees learn best when:

- they are motivated to learn;
- most of the energy in the learning process is devoted to learning;
- the learning process is followed by positive satisfaction;
- they are actively involved in the learning process;
- the content is presented meaningfully;
- the supervisor takes the supervisees' uniqueness into account.

The above-mentioned principles form the foundation for **learning and educational styles** in social work supervision. Various authors (Austin, 1981; Kadushin, 1992; Munson, 1983) mention that there are different learning styles of supervisees which determine specific educational styles of social work supervisors. These styles should take into account the uniqueness of the supervisee (Botha, 2002:95). Examples of different learning styles of the supervisee include: the dependent learner who requires directive education as an educational style, the independent learner who will require a delegated education style and the task orientated systematic learner who requires task-centred teaching as an educational style.

These learning and educational styles provide the basis for an **educational model** in social work supervision. According to Botha (2002:101) the educational model is the basis for supervision where educational principles and techniques are carefully applied in accordance with the learning styles of the supervisee and educational style of the supervisor. Kadushin in Botha (2002:111) also proposes that the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the social worker in terms of the service user, the organisation, the process, the problem experienced by the service user and the social workers who are responsible for service delivery to the service user, should be determined. This can be used to evaluate the progress made during the supervisory sessions. Thereafter the needs of the supervisee should be recorded after which an educational evaluation should be designed.

The **educational evaluation** should be used by the supervisor to develop individual educational programmes for the supervisee. This educational programme forms the basis for discussions and formats of the supervisory sessions. This programme is also used to determine which learning needs of the supervisee are priorities. Botha (2002:115) mentions that the implementation of the educational programme takes place during the supervisory sessions.

The **supervisory sessions** has three phases, namely the structuring, preparation, presentation and termination phase (Botha, 2002:125). During each phase the supervisor and the supervisee are expected to make meaningful contributions. Various factors and techniques are used in social work supervision, which affect the successful execution of the educational function. Kadushin (1992) and Towle (1963) list the following techniques: discussion, clarification and feedback.

Feedback is highlighted as an important technique (Kadushin, 1992; Towle, 1963). It is important that supervisors provide the supervisees with feedback regarding their progress and the quality of their interventions. Feedback provides the supervisees with a sense of the progress made in terms of their professional development. It ensures that the supervisee remains confident and delivers services to the service user system. Service delivery to the service user is also affected by factors which negatively influence the educational process. These factors focus on the behaviour of supervisors and include games of abdication and the use and abuse of authority (Botha, 2002:122-123). It is therefore important that the supervisors should be aware of their own behaviour as this could influence the successful execution of the educational function.

The educational function is important as it determines the professional status of the supervisee (Botha, 2002:132). The researcher has discussed the following important aspects of the educational function: the educational model as proposed by Botha (2002:82), an educational evaluation, an educational programme for each supervisee and the supervisory sessions. The different phases, techniques and aspects which are used and which affect the supervisory process have also been discussed. The support function as the third function of social work supervision will be discussed subsequently.

2.7.3 Support function

One aspect which distinguishes the social work profession from other professions is the provision of emotional support. Kadushin (1992:227) is of the opinion that supportive supervision aims to improve the productivity of the supervisees by decreasing the stressors they are experiencing. These stressors relate to the nature of social work services provided by the supervisees. According to Botha (2002:196) social work is labour intensive and work productivity is to a large extent determined by the motivation and dedication of the personnel. Tsui (2005:81) mentions that supervision provides the time and place for the supervisees to receive support from their supervisors. Stress has an impact on staff which in turn affects productivity.

Stress has various causes. Botha (2002:197-210) and Kadushin (1992:236-260) identify the following causes of stress namely: the attitude of those communities in which supervisees operate, the communities' attitudes towards social work; organisational policies and procedures; the working conditions of the supervisee; the execution of the administrative and educational functions; the tasks of the supervisees; the relationship between the supervisee and the supervisor; the personality of the supervisee, the nature of the service user system and the lack of support to supervisors. These stressors can lead to burnout, if not addressed effectively. Burnout refers to a state of emotional exhaustion. Tsui (2005:86) identifies four stages of burnout namely: initial exhaustion, premature routinisation, self-doubt and stagnation, collapse or recovery. The provision of support during the various phases of burnout is important, as burnout could impair the effectiveness of services that are rendered to service users.

Tsui (2005:86) further mentions four forms of support to address the issue of burnout. These are emotional support, appraisals, instrumental support and informational support. Emotional support is expressed through an attitude of friendliness, caring and warmth by the supervisor. During the appraisal process the supervisor recognises and affirms work done by the supervisee. Through instrumental support the supervisor provides guidance and assistance to the supervisee to ensure that effective social welfare services are delivered. With informational support the supervisor gives/shares information with the supervisee. This information is useful and facilitates the work performance of supervisees.

Supportive supervision also increases overall job satisfaction. Job satisfaction refers to the supervisee's overall gratification through his/her job (Scroffer, 1999:96). Therefore supportive supervision leads to increased job satisfaction, which in turn leads to the retention of supervisees in organisations. This again has a positive impact on the quality of social work service delivery. In addition various factors affect the employment of the support function in supervision.

Gender is the first factor which affects interaction during supervision. Two important gender factors in social work supervision are highlighted in this study. First the social work profession is dominated by females (Tsui, 2005:86). However even though the majority of the social workers are female, few of these females are in managerial positions. Second Kadushin (1992:318) notes that younger male supervisees are more susceptible to a female supervisor and feel less threatened, whereas older male supervisees tend to resist the authority of female supervisors.

Race is another important factor to be considered in social work supervision. Tsui (2005:89) mentions that diversity has become increasingly important as a larger number of supervisees, supervisors and service users are from different ethnic and cultural groups. This can be discussed on two levels. The first level relates to the supervisors and their experiences and the second level refers to supervisees and their experiences. In addition Kadushin (1992:313) mentions that there are different ways to address the race factor. First, the supervisor should be aware of the cultural differences which also include the differences in concepts of time, space, worldviews and beliefs. This statement is supported by Magnusom, Norem, Jones, McCrary and Gentry (2000:198) who challenge supervisors to examine their own level of cultural competence. Second, these variations must be explored in relation to social work supervision. Third, both the supervisor and the supervisee should pay attention to the cultural issues which impact on the supervisory process. Tsui (2005:89) proposes the adoption of a cultural-sensitive attitude in dealing with this issue. Supervisees and supervisors should respect one another's differences and they should view difference as a natural part of life.

In conclusion the support function of supervision is used to address and prevent issues which cause stress and burnout. The researcher focused on the need for support to both the supervisor and the supervisee as the ultimate aim of support supervision is to deliver effective services to

the service user system. During the support function attention should be given inter alia to the impact of gender and race on the supervisory process. The researcher proposes a cultural-sensitive approach to address issues of race and culture that could transpire during the supervisory process. The supervisory process is an inherent part of both the educational, administrative and support function. The process of supervision will be discussed accordingly.

2.8 PROCESS OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Distinct supervision theories, models and perspectives determine the course of the supervision process. However, different phases in the process (such as an engagement, assessment, planning, contracting, working, evaluation and termination phase) and the cyclical nature of the process are evident and have to be operationalised by means of specific tasks. These tasks should include a personal development assessment of the supervisee, a personal development plan, a supervision contract, a range of supervision sessions and a performance appraisal, followed by a new cycle, beginning with a personal development assessment (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011).

The supervision process is also determined by the different perspectives, theories and models. The process of social work supervision is further embedded in an interactional process as proposed by Munson (1983:7). While Tsui (2005:41) is in agreement with Munson, he also discusses the supervision process in terms of: the relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee, the supervision contract, the format of supervision and the phases of supervision. The National Task Team for Management and Supervision (2011:11) identifies the following phases of supervision: the engagement, assessment, planning, contracting, working, evaluation and termination phases. However Kadushin (1992:22) identifies the following phases: the preliminary, the beginning, the work and the termination phases. The researcher will discuss the process of supervision according to the following phases: the engagement and assessment phase, planning phase, working phase and lastly the evaluation and termination phase.

2.8.1 The engagement and assessment phase

During this phase the supervisor initiates contact with the supervisee. Kaufman and Swartz (2003:146) mention that the supervisee is more dependent on the supervisor to ensure that the

assessment and treatment plans of the service user are appropriately executed. Furthermore the focus of this phase is on the establishment of a trusting relationship between the supervisor and supervisee (Tsui, 2005:112), which is important especially to ensure that the learning needs of the supervisee are assessed in an appropriate manner.

The physical setting, especially in the engagement phase in social work supervision refers to the location and setting plan. Tsui (2005:125) refers to the four Cs which influence successful physical settings. These are comfort, confidentiality, communication and compatibility. Comfort in a physical setting is achieved when the supervisee and the supervisor enjoy sharing their thoughts and feelings. Comfort in the physical setting refers to the appropriate temperature, humidity, the avoidance of noisy backgrounds and sufficient private space (Tsui, 2005:125). Confidentiality refers to an acceptable level of privacy. Therefore the physical setting should allow the supervisee and supervisor to discuss sensitive information regarding the profession, service user and sometimes personal issues, to enhance confidentiality. Confidentiality is also an important ethical principle in the social work profession. Communication during the supervisory process should be open and clear. Compatibility in organisations is achieved when the physical setting reflects the organisational goal, structure, processes and culture. Hence during the assessment of the supervisee, the supervisor must complete a personal development assessment which is based on those competencies that enable the supervisee to deliver effective services within a specific work context. It further serves as a process of information gathering to compile a register of learning needs, strengths, assets and capabilities, which should be actively engaged in a personal development plan and subsequent supervision sessions (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011). The assessment of the learning needs of the supervisee must also be based on the principles of adult education in which the social work process is grounded (Botha, 2002:90). The social work supervisor can utilise a variety of assessment tools such as social history grids for the compilation of a personal development plan (Miley, Omelia & Du Boois, 1995:265-274). The assessment of the learning needs of the supervisee is important as it determines the goals, objectives and nature of the supervision process and provides a solid foundation for the planning phase of the supervision process, which will be discussed below.

2.8.2 Planning phase

Browne and Bourne (1996:50-51) as well as Tsui (2005:125) view planning during the supervision process as important since insufficient planning can jeopardize the goals of social work supervision. Browne and Bourne (1996:50-51) list the following elements as important during planning: the physical setting, the supervisory contract, the agenda and recording of the supervisory process, the time factors in supervision and the content of the discussion during the supervisory process, as indicated in a personal development plan. A personal development plan is a tool that clearly indicates identified learning needs in order of priority, based on the personal development assessment. It defines *what* the supervisee will learn (e.g. specific competencies in terms of specific outcomes), *how* the supervisee will learn (e.g. specific supervision methods, forms of supervision and techniques, and opportunities for demonstration), and *when* (e.g. specific supervision sessions). The supervisor must take primary responsibility for structuring, monitoring and evaluating the plan (with the co-operation of the supervisee), and must provide opportunities and time to make it realistic and workable. The plan should be regularly reviewed to ensure that the learning needs have been met (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011).

The supervision contract should be written and signed by both parties. It defines the professional relationship between the supervisor and supervisee and should promote constancy, commitment, ownership, growth and empowerment. The contract is the official mutual agreement of the personal development plan and should focus inter alia on the following: format, scope and context of the supervision; supervision outcomes; tasks, roles, responsibilities and mandates; different procedures; frequency and duration of supervision sessions; supervision methods; methods of reviews and evaluations; manner of feedback; and revision of the supervision contract (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011). Planning of the supervision process is thus important to ensure that the ultimate aim of supervision namely the delivery of quality services to service users is achieved. Successful planning ensures the successful execution of duties during the working phase of the supervision process.

2.8.3 The working phase

The work phase is the core phase of the supervisory process (Tsui, 2005:113). During this phase certain skills are acquired by the supervisor for the successful execution of the work. Shulman (1993:79-133) discusses the following skills: contracting skills, assertive skills, elaborating skills, empathic skills, sharing skills, and skills in sharing data. These skills assist the supervisor in delivering quality supervision to the supervisee, who in turn should deliver quality services to the service user.

During the working phase the functions of supervision are executed as outlined earlier in this chapter. Tsui (2005:113) also notes that the supervisor must focus on the specific learning needs of the supervisee as encompassed by the personal development plan. Although the supervisory contract determines the content and structure of the supervision process, the supervisor should allow for some flexibility to give the supervisee the opportunity to discuss any pressing issues which may arise from his/her contact with the service user system. Tsui (2005:133) proposes a maximum of one and a half hours for supervisory sessions. Tsui (2005:134) further proposes that the discussion in supervision should begin with a supportive discussion as this would allow the supervisee to be more receptive to communication. This can be followed by a discussion of administrative and educational matters. Supervision sessions are structured learning situations, according to a set agenda with a goal and/or defined outcomes, based on the social work practitioner's personal development plan. The purpose is to provide opportunities for the development of learning needs, strengths and competencies of the supervisee by means of critical reflections in order to promote the supervisee's work-related knowledge, skills and values. Supervision functions (administrative, educational and supportive) in the supervision sessions are equally important (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011).

The supervisor should also monitor the progress of the supervisee closely (Tsui, 2005:116). This will ensure that the goals and objectives of the supervision process as set out in the supervisory contract are met. In addition the supervisor should also summarise the discussions during each individual supervision session (Shulman, 1993). The supervisor also takes responsibility to identify the steps needed to achieve each of the objectives agreed upon. Specific attention should also be given to any issues which may be highlighted by the supervisee during the end of a

session. This will provide the supervisor with the opportunity to rearrange the agenda, format and structure of the supervision sessions, if needed.

Each supervision session should be captured with a supervision report, which is an evidence-based information source with the end purpose to achieve subsequent outcomes, based on the personal development plan. Both the supervisor and supervisee may write supervision reports to record their reflections on the outcomes of a particular supervision session, culminating in planning for the next supervision session. Supervision reports should demonstrate factual objectivity, logical order, coverage of relevant material, brevity and a correspondence with the supervisee's personal development plan (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011). The achievement of the goals of the supervisory process during the working phase allows for the evaluation and termination phase, which will be discussed next.

2.8.4 Evaluation and termination phase

According to Botha (2002:228) evaluation is one of the most important activities of the supervision process, but is usually neglected. Evaluation is important as it measures the overall functioning of the supervisee and determines the action which may follow. Evaluation also determines whether quality social work services are rendered to service users. Hence the evaluation phase should be based on certain principles. Botha (2002:235-239) proposes the following principles to which the evaluation should adhere:

- evaluation should be a continuous process;
- evaluation should be discussed with the supervisee;
- evaluation should be meaningful and conducted within a positive value system;
- evaluation should be based on the reality of the supervisee's operational framework;
- evaluation should focus on the work performance of the supervisees and not on their personalities;
- evaluation should be substantiated with practice examples of the supervisee;
- evaluation should be equitable, balanced and should propose areas of improvement, if needed;
- evaluation should be consistent, recorded and terminated in a friendly manner.

The application of the above-mentioned principles during the evaluation of the supervisee, will ensure that the supervisee derive maximum benefit from the overall supervision process, which in turn may lead to improved quality of social work service delivery. Evaluation determines whether a supervisee should be promoted to consultation status and also gives an indication of the level of independent functioning of the supervisee. This prepares the supervisee as well as the supervisor for the termination phase of the supervision process.

Termination of the supervision process can occur in instances where the predetermined goals of the supervision process have been met, in cases where the supervisee is equipped with the necessary skills to be promoted to consultation and in instances where the supervisee leaves the employment of an organisation. During the termination phase the supervisor summarises the various phases of the supervision process (Tsui, 2005:117). The supervisor also gives feedback to the supervisees regarding their growth during the process.

In conclusion, the supervisory process is interactional and embedded in the different phases of the supervision process. These phases develop alongside a continuum and progression from one phase to another is dependent on the successful execution of the preceding phase. Furthermore, different methods of supervision can also be employed during the supervision process. These methods will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.9 METHODS IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

For purposes of this study the researcher will focus on discussing individual, group and peer group supervision. Botha (2002:124) mentions that irrespective of the employment of individual, group supervision or peer supervision, the supervision should address the learning needs of supervisees.

2.9.1 Individual supervision

Individual supervision is the most commonly used method in social work supervision (Kadushin, 1992:9). As mentioned previously the development of social work supervision was influenced by the case-work model. Therefore the format of individual supervision follows the format of case-work (Tsui, 2005:23). Individual supervision entails the interaction of the supervisor and the

supervisee in a one-on-one setting (Newgent, 2004:66). During individual supervision the supervisor focuses on the individual learning needs of supervisees.

Individual supervision follows a process parallel to case-work. However, recurrent problems which are discussed in individual supervision usually create the context for group supervision. In other words the common needs of a group of supervisees as identified by the supervisor lay the foundation for group supervision. In addition, Young and Walter (1999:81) summarises the following advantages of individual supervision:

- the promotion of individual attention;
- the provision of case-specific direction and support;
- supervisees become the drivers of their own learning needs;
- supervisees personalise the development of their skills.

2.9.2 Group supervision

According to Kadushin (1992:404) group supervision is defined as the use of a group setting to implement the responsibilities of supervision. Botha (2002:125) mentions that group supervision is used by supervisors to address the learning needs of a group of supervisees simultaneously. Therefore the supervisors should be clear about the duration, frequency, attendance requirements, rules of confidentiality and differentiation relating to the group setting. This would ensure that the process of group supervision is implemented successfully.

Group supervision is a process during which a group of supervisees uses the group setting to discuss matters of general concern. These matters include case-load management, interviewing and recording, worker-client interaction and sessions (Kadushin, 1992:424). In addition, Hawkins and Shohet (2002:131) maintain that contracting during group supervision is important to ensure that the expectations of both the supervisees and the supervisors are met. It also ensures that all parties involved, are clear about their roles and responsibilities during group supervision.

Group supervision has many advantages. Authors such as Scaife (2009:137) and Tsui (2005:121-122) stress the following advantages:

- group supervision lessens the dependence on an expert supervisor;

- the sense of responsibility of supervisees to evaluate their own skills and those of other supervisees is enhanced;
- the supervisees develop skills to determine and influence their own professional growth;
- supervisees develop more confidence and independence;
- other supervisees are viewed as role models;
- supervisees give each other emotional support;
- promotion of group cohesion;
- the responsibility for the supervisory process is shared amongst supervisees of the group.

These advantages all complement the delivery of effective and quality services to the service user. Group supervision is useful especially if supervisees are at the same level; if not, group supervision can be to the disadvantage of those supervisees who are not at the same level.

Other advantages of group supervision as mentioned by Kadushin (1992:440) and Hawkins and Shohet (2002:128) are: it ensures that supervision is cost and time effective; it ensures the efficient use of a wide variety of learning experiences; it also provides a platform for supervisees where common problems and solutions could be discussed and members could act as a source of emotional support; it provides supervisees with a platform to share anxieties and it also provides the supervisor with the opportunity to test whether the reactions to information shared by the supervisee are similar to the reactions of other group members.

However, Kadushin (1992:440) cautions that group supervision must not be used as a substitute for individual supervision. The need for and use of group supervision should be based on the common needs and problems of supervisees as identified by the supervisor during individual supervision. Peer supervision as the third method will be discussed subsequently.

2.9.3 Peer supervision

Both the supervisor as well as the supervisee are equal participants during peer supervision (Tsui, 2005:26). Hence the supervisor is not the leader of the group. Botha (2002:125) adds that peer supervision is employed in cases where experienced supervisees have reached a certain level of professional maturity and have developed a certain degree of expertise. These

supervisees also demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics and complexities of the supervisor process.

Botha (2002:125) mentions further that peer group supervision is an ongoing process and an important aspect of professional development. The most important feature of peer group supervision is that each member of the group must make his/her own decisions and take responsibility for the outcomes of these decisions. Peer supervision as a method of supervision can be used by supervisees to assist with solving difficult social work cases (Hawkins & Shohet, 2002:142). The researcher is of the opinion that peer supervision should only be used as a method in the supervision of newly qualified social workers, if the group includes various other skilled senior social workers who will be sensitive to the fact that newly qualified social workers are inexperienced. Although the literature review states that peer supervision is one of the methods of supervision, the researcher proposes that peer supervision is also to be used in both individual and group supervision as a technique to enhance shared learning between more and less experienced supervisees.

2.10 ACTIVITIES OF SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

Various activities are implemented during social work supervision. Tsui (2005:77) identifies various activities of social work supervision such as: teaching, training, staff development, coaching and mentoring.

Teaching refers to the process of providing for a learner what is regarded as important by a specific learning theory (Knowles, 1971:50). The aim of teaching is to provide the learner, in this case the supervisee, with the necessary knowledge, and the focus on teaching is on the provision of new knowledge and education. Teaching is more long-term and theoretically orientated. According to Weinbach (1998:158-159) **training** teaches supervisees to act according to a prescribed manner, whereas **staff development** focuses on addressing problem situations or in providing newly qualified social workers with new or updated learning required for functioning in changing work environments. Training is more practically orientated and focuses on skills transfer. Training is also more short-term and is executed through the employment of tools and techniques.

Mentoring refers to the assistance provided by one person to another in making specific transitions in knowledge or thinking (thinking (Megginson, Clutterbuck, Garvey, Stokes & Garret-Harris, 2006:4). Mentoring can be short or long-term and the mentor may be someone with more experience in a certain field. **Coaching** is more structured than mentoring and the focus of coaching is to address specific developmental areas or issues of a supervisee (Connor & Pokora, 2007:13). However Connor and Pokora (2007:11) also mention that mentoring and coaching may be used interchangeably as in both the emphasis is on learning. Supervisees are thus enabled to reach their potential by taking responsibility for their own development.

Hensley (2002:105) acknowledge the role of the supervisor as a mentor. Mentoring and coaching are seen as activities that can decrease the likelihood of burnout which may be experienced by supervisees. Mentoring can also be employed to improve specific job-related skills (Ralph, 2002:193). Both mentoring and coaching focus on the personal development of individuals. Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision can thus assist with the personal as well as the professional development of the supervisee. In addition mentoring is proposed as one of the strategies to retain social workers within the social work profession in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2009:17). As Tsui (2005:77) has identified mentoring as an activity of supervision, the next chapter will be dedicated to explaining how mentoring can be employed as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers

2.11 CONCLUSION

In this chapter an overview of social work supervision has been provided. The value of social work supervision as well as the need for social work in a global and local context is highlighted. In addition the literature study reveals that the quality of social work services in South Africa has decreased, due to a shortage of adequately trained supervisors as well as the critical shortage of social workers in South Africa. As a result the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for social workers, which promotes the provision of quality supervision as well as the use of mentoring as an activity to retain social workers, more specifically newly qualified supervisees, was introduced in 2006. The detailed discussion of the history of social work supervision, the definition of social work supervision and the supervision process therefore provides a basis for the discussion of the use of mentoring of supervisees as an activity in supervision. This chapter underpins chapter 3, which will explain the use of mentoring in social work supervision.

CHAPTER 3

THE FEATURES AND USE OF MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Mentoring offers various career benefits for newly qualified social workers (Allan, McManus & Russel, 1999; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Scandura, 1992; Whitely, Dougherty & Dreher, 1994). One of these benefits is the retention of newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2007:13). Mentoring is also promoted for the transfer of skills between employees (Republic of South Africa, 2008:37). It is therefore imperative to explain the meaning of mentoring in the context of the social work profession. In this chapter, the milieu in which the newly qualified social worker is expected to perform will be outlined. This includes a deliberation on the legislative context of the social work profession, which provides a clear understanding of the current work environment of newly qualified social workers. Thereafter the need for mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of the newly qualified social worker will be outlined. The researcher will also deliberate on a definition of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. Subsequently the benefits, advantages, and risks of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision will be outlined. The roles of the mentor and the newly qualified social worker during the execution of the mentoring process will also be discussed.

Furthermore the four functions of mentoring, namely the psychosocial support, career development, coaching and role modelling functions will be highlighted. The researcher will also discuss the roles of the mentor as well as those of the newly qualified social worker during the execution of each of these functions. The mentoring process and its employment as an activity in social supervision of newly qualified social workers will be discussed in detail, including a discussion of the different phases of the mentoring process within the context of social work supervision. Lastly, the activities of the mentoring process, as well as those factors which may affect the execution of the mentoring process, will be considered.

3.2 THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICE DELIVERY IN SOUTH AFRICA WHICH NECESSITATES THE USE OF MENTORING IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION

The scope of social work service delivery for newly qualified social workers post-1994 has changed significantly. The 1994 election in South Africa brought an end to Apartheid. This created the opportunity for all South Africans to access social work services, which was not previously the case. As a result of the changing political and social context of South Africa, post-1994, the legislative environment for social work service delivery required revision. The transition of Apartheid South Africa to a democratic state also meant that an increasing number of people required social work services. As a result, the work-load of existing social workers increased rapidly. This is still the case for newly qualified social workers who are confronted with high case-loads in an attempt to meet the vast demands for social work services (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:39).

Although social work service delivery was influenced by the development of various new legislative documents, the researcher will only focus on the following documents which has a direct impact on the supervision of newly qualified social workers, namely the White Paper for Social Welfare, the Social Service Professions Act, the Integrated Social Service Delivery Model, the Policy on Financial Awards, The Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers, as well as the Child Care Act. The researcher is of the opinion that these legislative documents necessitated the social work profession to change the manner in which services were delivered; a statement that supports findings by Earle (2008:22-44).

3.2.1 White Paper for Social Welfare (1997)

The first legislative document which had a significant impact on social work service delivery, post-1994, was the White Paper for Social Welfare (Ministry of Welfare and Population Development, 1997). The White Paper for Social Welfare first promotes access to social work services for all South Africans in need. This resulted in an increased demand for social work services from the majority of South Africans and consequently a rapid increase in the work-load of social workers. Newly qualified social workers are therefore also confronted with high case-loads at the beginning of their careers. Second, the White Paper for Social Welfare aims to facilitate the delivery of social welfare services within the context of social development. Social

development is concerned with the development of society in its totality (Department of Social Development, 2005:100). The social development approach requires social workers to move away from the case-work model of social work service delivery and to focus on both the social and economic development of the service user. The service user refers to those people who were or are still receiving social work services (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011:16).

However, whilst social work required a shift from the residual model of social work to social development, the need for case-work still existed and social workers were still expected to deal with case-work, more specifically through statutory intervention. Additionally the misconceptions relating to and the incoherent manner in which the social development approach was employed, resulted in the development of negative perceptions about the ability of social workers to give effect to this approach (Department of Social Development, 2005:10). This is currently still the case for newly qualified social workers who are required to perform their duties in a social work environment characterised by misconceptions and misperceptions regarding how social development as an approach should be executed.

3.2.2 Social Service Professions Act (1998)

The second legislative document which influenced the context of the social work profession, was the amendment to the Social Service Professions Act (110 of 1978) in 1998. The Social Service Professions Act makes provision for the registration of social workers as well as other social service professionals (Earle, 2008:35). Although the Social Service Professions Act has broadened the scope to include a wider spectrum of social service professionals, other than social workers, it also affected the professional identity of social workers because no clear boundaries in terms of service delivery existed. In addition, social workers, who were also viewed as the foot soldiers of the apartheid government, found themselves defending their professional identity because other social service professionals such as child and youth care workers also rendered social services to the South African communities. This resulted in the development of the poor public image of social workers and affected the recruitment of potential social workers to the social work profession.

Furthermore, the Social Service Professions Act states that only registered social workers are to render supervision to social workers (Department of Social Development, 1998:16). However, Botha (2002:2) mentions that there are shortages of adequately trained social work supervisors. The shortage of social work supervisors in South Africa therefore results in inadequate supervision of newly qualified social workers. The lack of adequate social work supervision could lead to burnout amongst social workers, including newly qualified social workers (Department of Social Development, 2006:19). This in turn may lead to a decline in the quality of social work service provision. These conditions were further aggravated by the introduction of the Policy on Financial Awards in 2004.

3.2.3 The Policy on Financial Awards (2004)

The Policy on Financial Awards, introduced in 2004, provided guidelines for the funding of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The majority of social workers in South Africa are employed by the government or NGOs. These NGOs receive funding from the government, more specifically the Department of Social Development, in exchange for the delivery of social work and other social services (Earle, 2008:11).

The Policy on Financial Awards (2004:7) also aims to facilitate the transformation and redirection of services and resources in the most cost-effective and efficient manner (Department of Social Development, 2004:7). Therefore, the funding of NGOs is dependent on their ability to prove that their services are rendered in a cost effectively and efficiently manner. However, Russel and Swilling (2002:90) mention that the government currently contributes approximately 42% to the budget of NGOs. As a result, NGOs are expected to deliver cost-effective and efficient social work services but lacking sufficient government funding. This results in NGOs allocating the received government funding to service delivery, and cannot afford to pay and provide their social workers with the same salaries and benefits they would receive if employed by government departments. This leads to high staff turnover as social workers leave the NGO sector to accept social work positions in government departments, which are not able to pay more competitive salaries (Department of Social Development, 2007:1).

As the inability of NGOs to pay better salaries results in difficulties to retain social work staff, the quality of social work service delivery is declining because it is expected of those social

workers staying behind to carry the full work-load in the NGO sector. The quality of social work service delivery also decreased as a result of the migration of social workers, including newly qualified social workers to countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom, in pursuit of better salaries. The migration of social workers, the high staff turnover as well as the high case-loads further expose newly qualified social workers to job insecurity and the risk of burnout (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:28). These conditions are further exacerbated by the migration of social workers from the NGO sector to government departments where they receive better salaries. A decline in the quality of social work services, burnout of social workers and the continuous migration of social workers therefore emphasise the need for quality supervision as a strategy to retain social workers in the profession.

3.2.4 Integrated Service Delivery Model (2005)

The fourth legislative document that influenced the context of social work service delivery in South Africa was the Integrated Service Delivery Model.

Both the Policy on Financial Awards (2004) and the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), require social workers to use social development as an approach in social welfare service delivery. However, the misconceptions around the social development approach as well as the inconsistent manner in which it was employed across government and NGOs resulted in negative perceptions concerning the ability of social workers to render effective services, as these social workers did not receive the necessary guidance to implement social development as an approach. In an attempt to address this, the Integrated Service Delivery Model was developed (Department of Social Development, 2005:10).

The introduction of this Integrated Social Service Delivery Model in 2006 made provision for a comprehensive national framework and clearly defines the nature and scope of services that are required from social workers as well as other social service professionals such as child and youth care workers and social auxiliary workers. It also intends to give direction to the implementation of social development as an approach (Department of Social Development, 2005:5). Moreover, the successful execution of this model required extensive financial and human resources, such as social workers. This implied the appointment of more social workers, both within the NGOs as well as in government departments. However, the shortage of social workers in South Africa as

well as the high case-loads of social workers influenced the successful implementation of the Integrated Service Delivery Model.

In addition the low morale of social workers and the poor public image of the social work profession, made it difficult for the Department of Social Development and NGOs to recruit new social workers to the social work profession as well as retain existing social workers in the country or profession. Furthermore, the inability of social service professionals other than social workers, to render much needed services such as statutory services, as well as a decrease in the quality of services to service users, reaffirmed the value and need for the employment of more social workers. It is for this reason that social work has been declared a “scarce skill” and the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers was developed (Department of Social Development, 2006:15).

3.2.5 Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers (2006)

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers has as its primary aim to determine those factors that negatively affect the recruitment and retention of new and existing social workers in South Africa. Second, it provides guidelines and strategies which focus on the improvement of the working conditions of social workers in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2005:8). These strategies include better remuneration and compensation of social workers, improved working conditions as well as career opportunities and supervision of social workers. Although the Recruitment and Retention Strategy acknowledged the critical role of social workers in South Africa, the simultaneous introduction of the Child Care Act in 2008, further revealed the critical shortages of social workers and the importance of supervision.

3.2.6 The Child Care Act (2008)

The purpose of the Child Care Act is to provide for care and protection services to children, to protect children’s rights and to make provision for statutory services to children (Government Gazette, 2006:3). However in a study conducted by Barberton (2006:XIII) to determine the costs involved in giving effect to the Child Care Act, it was found that the appointment of an additional 7000 social workers, who have to be supervised, is required to ensure the successful implementation of the Child Care Act. This implies that newly qualified social workers will,

upon their entry into the practice field be confronted with heavy case-loads due to the critical shortages of social workers in South Africa.

In conclusion, the introduction of the White Paper for Social Welfare, Social Service Professions Act, the Policy on Financial Awards, the Integrated Service Delivery Model, the Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Workers as well as the new Child Care Act, not only changed the legislative environment in which social work service delivery should be effected, but also highlighted the shortage of social workers, who are required for the successful implementation of the above-mentioned legislative documents. Furthermore, training of newly qualified social workers to enable them to operate effectively in this changing legislative context is required. One of the ways in which newly qualified social workers can attain the necessary skills for effective social work service delivery is by providing mentoring. Mentoring within the framework of supervision is promoted to ensure that newly qualified social workers attain the necessary skills for effective service delivery (Department of Social Development, 2006:19).

3.3 THE NEED FOR MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

Social workers, including newly qualified social workers, are currently expected to operate in a working environment without receiving proper support and supervision (Department of Social Development, 2006:19). The lack of quality supervision and the ongoing shortage of adequately trained supervisors may result in newly qualified social workers becoming despondent, burnt-out and incapable of meeting the expected social service delivery demands.

Mentoring to new and existing social workers is thus a way to counteract the situation (Strand & Bosco-Ruggiero, 2010:50) as it leads to improved orientation of new graduates which may result in improved working performances (Karallis & Sandeland, 2009:205). Newly qualified social workers are at the beginning stages of their careers and in need of skills and support. Mentoring will equip newly qualified social workers with the necessary skills to render quality social work services (Department of Social Development, 2006:33). However, mentoring is a relatively new concept in the social work profession (Kelly, 2001:18). It is therefore imperative that mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is clearly defined.

3.3.1 Definition of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision

Greenwood (1995:17) and Cropper (2000:600) state that mentoring is not a new concept in business. It originates from the Greek mythology (Kram, 1985:2), according to which the Mentor, who is believed to be half god and half man, was found by Odysseus to equip, motivate and coach, his son Telemachus as the future king (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:1). In addition Cropper (2000:600) mentions that mentoring as it is used in organisations today, also has its roots in African cultures, where it is grounded in the philosophy of self-help in communities. This study focuses on the South African social work context, where mentoring has been strongly influenced by its African origin.

The use of mentoring in social work is also rooted in the newly emerged social work paradigms, such as the resilience and strengths perspectives (Bein, 1999:121). Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is furthermore embedded in the psychoanalytic, interaction, systems and development theories (Kadushin, 1992:12; Munson, 1983:42; Schulman, 1993:7; Tsui, 2005:18).

Rolfe-Flett (2002:2) defines mentoring as a “one-on-one” process between a mentor and a newly qualified social worker, creating a mutual space for action, learning, and reflection. The mentor is a senior professional who shares his or her values, provides emotional support and who facilitates key networks for the benefit of the protégé (Olian, Carroll, Giannantoni & Ferrin, 1988:16). Cropper (2000:600) defines the mentor as someone who is higher up in the hierarchical structure of the organisation. Hence, the mentor can be the social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker (Turner, 2000:238). On the other hand, the protégé is an inexperienced person, to whom a mentor is assigned (Parsloe, 1995:15). The protégé can therefore be a newly qualified social worker who is also at the beginning stages of his/her career. For the purpose of this study, the term newly qualified social worker will therefore be used as a synonym for a protégé.

Tillman (2001:296) is of the opinion that the mentoring process is characterised by a professional relationship between a less and a more experienced person. This relationship serves as an instrument for the provision of guidance, support, counselling and instruction to both the mentor and the newly qualified social worker. The mentoring relationship occurs at the beginning stages of the career of an individual or during his induction (Baugh & Scandura, 1999:4; Karallis &

Sandeland, 2009:205; Strand & Bosco-Ruggiero, 2010:51). Induction, which occurs within the first few months after the appointment of the newly qualified social worker, marks the beginning of the supervisory relationship between the social work supervisor and the newly qualified social worker.

Botha (2002:13) adds that supervision is compulsory for all newly appointed and inexperienced social workers. Therefore mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is introduced during the preliminary phase of supervision. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will explore how mentoring can be executed as an activity in the engagement and assessment phase in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers, as defined in chapter 2.

The definition of mentoring as provided by Rolfe-Flett (2002:2) implies that mentoring only occurs between the newly qualified social worker and one mentor. However, authors such as Baugh and Scandura (1999:504) and De Janasz (2002:5) argue for the use of more than one mentor for newly qualified social workers. They argue that the use of more than one mentor, also referred to as multiple mentors, will ensure that the newly qualified social worker derive maximum benefit from mentoring. In addition, Connor and Pokora (2007:55) promote the use of an external mentor. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that newly qualified social workers can benefit from the use of multiple mentors as this will ensure that they acquire a wider range of skills within a shorter period.

In general, newly qualified social workers in South Africa are employed in multi-disciplinary work settings such as social service organisations, hospitals, schools as well as other government departments. Therefore the mentors may include senior employees such as the immediate social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker, senior teachers, psychologists, human relations officers as well as other social work supervisors, within the same organisation. Alternatively, the organisation at which the newly qualified social worker is employed may also appoint an external mentor such as a psychologist. Hence the researcher proposes that the newly qualified social worker will be supervised by one social work supervisor, as prescribed by the Social Service Professions Act (1998) but may have various mentors.

In this regard Meyer & Fourie (2004:140) caution against the employment of multiple mentors, as they might have different mentoring perspectives which could result in confusion as newly qualified social workers receive conflicting mentoring perspectives. The newly qualified social workers could also struggle to manage their time spent between multiple mentors. Despite these concerns, the use of multiple mentors also has the advantage of improving the self-esteem of the newly qualified social worker. This occurs due to the diverse knowledge and skills the newly qualified social worker acquires through his/her interaction with multiple mentors (Meyer, 2004:139). The concern relating to the use of multiple mentors may be alleviated if mentoring is employed as an activity in social work supervision. Social work supervision is a structured process and the social work supervisor as the immediate supervisor could apply the roles of coordination, administration, and organisation to prevent any impact which the conflicting perspectives of multiple mentors could have on the newly qualified social worker.

The relationship between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker is at the core of the mentoring process. This relationship is reciprocal, dynamic, and guided by principles such as shared learning, trust, skills development, and ethical practices (Connor & Pokora, 2007:7; Meyer & Fourie, 2004:2). The mentoring relationship will also be underpinned by the ethics, values and principles of the social work profession. These principles include confidentiality, acceptance, mutual respect, self-determination, as well as a focus on the strengths rather than the weaknesses of newly qualified social workers (Miley *et al.*, 1995:114; Sheafor & Horejsi, 2003:76-79). Mentoring also differs from social work supervision in various ways.

3.3.2 Differences between mentoring and social work supervision

In this section, the differences between mentoring and supervision will be discussed. First, the execution of social work supervision only requires one supervisor per supervisee, whilst multiple mentors may be employed during the execution of mentoring.

Second, Kadushin and Harkness (2002:203-205) mentions that the social work supervisor should focus on the development of the professional identity of the worker rather than on his/her personal identity, because supervision has a direct relation to the enhancement of effective and efficient services to the service user. In contrast, the mentoring relationship has as its goal the improvement of the professional and personal identity of newly qualified social workers. This is

especially important for supervisees in South Africa, who may be individuals, motivated to study social work due to their own personal experiences, such as impoverished and disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as may having being the recipients of social work services themselves in the past (Earle, 2008:89). Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision can therefore enhance the personal identities of these newly qualified social workers.

Third, the supervisor of the newly appointed social worker must be a social work professional (Social Service Professions Act, 1998), whilst the mentor can be any senior professional within an organisation. Fourth, the functions of mentoring and social work supervision differ. The functions of social work supervision include administration, education and support (Botha, 2002:15-254). Alternatively, the functions of mentoring include psychosocial support, career development, role modelling, as well as coaching (Kram, 1985:23; Meyer & Fourie, 2004:6; Tillman, 2001:298). The functions of mentoring will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. Lastly, the mentoring relationship in general focuses solely on the interaction between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker. However, during social work supervision, the focus of the relationship is on the interaction between four systems, namely the service user, the newly qualified social worker, the social work supervisor, as well as the organisation. Despite the differences between mentoring and social work supervision, mentoring holds various benefits for the newly qualified social worker as well as the organisation in which the newly qualified social worker is employed. These benefits will be discussed in detail in the next section.

3.3.3 Benefits of mentoring for newly qualified social workers

Mentoring is beneficial to the newly qualified social worker, as well as the organisation. These benefits will be illustrated in table 3.1, followed by a brief discussion.

Table 3.1: Benefits of mentoring for newly qualified social workers (adopted from Collins, Kanya & Tourse, 1997:145; Tillman, 2001:299; Greenwood, 2004:20-41; Meyer, 2004:12-13; Price, 2005:38; Wilson & Tilse, 2006:177; De Boer & Coady, 2007:40).

NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKER	ORGANISATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promotion of professional development. • The establishment of new support networks with other newly qualified social workers. • The development of leadership, teaching and coaching skills for successful social work practice. • Increased confidence levels of the newly qualified social workers as he/she becomes familiar with his/her new roles and the organisational culture. • Provides a forum for dialogue on professional issues and to seek and receive advice on how to balance new responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to a positive organisational climate. • Promotes a clearer understanding of professional responsibilities and expectations. • Increases employee satisfaction. • Contributes to the retention of employees by reducing a new employee's sense of isolation. • Can result in improved employee job performance. • Contributes to faster learning curves, and result in better-trained staff. • Reflects an investment in employee development and therefore can increase employee commitment and loyalty. • The development of new managerial talent and succession planning; attainment of organisational goals as well as the improvement of performance management. • Expanding the opportunities for dialogue at all levels within the organisation.

Table 3.1 illustrates the various benefits of mentoring. First, the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision enhances the professional and personal growth of the newly qualified social worker. Mentoring also assists an organisation to achieve its aims and objectives, thereby increasing the work performance of the newly qualified social worker as well as of the mentor or mentors. In addition, the increased job satisfaction which is experienced by those employees who have been included in a mentoring programme, assists the organisation with staff retention.

Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision also assists the newly qualified social worker to operationalise the dynamic legislative context in South Africa. In conclusion, the enhanced professional and personal identity brought about by the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision, leads to increased work performance. This in turn may improve the quality of social work services to the service user. However, although mentoring is associated with various

benefits, Johnson and Ridley (2004:73) caution against the risks involved in the mentoring relationships. These risks will be discussed below.

3.3.4 Risks of mentoring

The risks of mentoring are categorised according to the newly qualified social workers, the mentor as well as the organisation (Cranwell-Ward, Bossons & Grover, 2004:65). The first risk relating to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision lies in the level of commitment of the newly qualified social worker. If the newly qualified social worker demonstrates too much commitment to the mentoring process, it may encroach on the social worker's other primary responsibilities, which may affect the quality of social work service delivery. Second, the use of multiple mentors for the newly qualified social worker can be beneficial, but can also affect the time the newly qualified social worker will spend with each mentor. Newly qualified social workers in South Africa generally have high work-loads. The use of multiple mentors may require the newly qualified social worker to allocate time in his/her daily schedule to accommodate multiple mentors, which may result in less time for social work service delivery.

The third risk relates to the existing work-load and level of commitment of the mentor to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. Social work supervisors in South Africa are generally confronted with heavy work-loads which could be detrimental to the execution of the mentoring process, as the supervisor has insufficient time available to facilitate the mentoring process. Thus heavy work-loads and a lack of commitment by the mentor to the mentoring process can influence the mentoring process negatively (Johnson & Ridley, 2004:73). The fourth risk relates to conflict management within an organisation. Conflict may occur between the mentor and her/his peers; between mentor and top management of the organisation; or between the mentor and the newly qualified social workers or supervisor.

The fifth risk relates to the financial status of an organisation. Financial limitations and budget constraints in an organisation may affect the successful implementation of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. Another risk relates to the level of commitment of the top management of the organisation to the mentoring process. It is therefore crucial that the top management of an organisation drives the mentoring process, as this will ensure the successful execution of the mentoring process.

One of the roles of the social work supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process, and supported by the top management of the organisation, can be to identify these risks and to managed them accordingly. Other roles as executed by the mentor will be discussed below.

3.4 ROLES TO FULFIL IN THE EXECUTION OF MENTORING

The role of the supervisor will be to be the facilitator of the overall mentoring process. The roles of the different mentors who will be appointed for each newly qualified social worker, are discussed below.

First, the qualities of the mentors influence the roles they are expected to perform during the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision (Connor & Pokora, 2007:4). The mentor should thus have the following qualities: he or she should be respected by his/her fellow employees, be supportive, creative, open, strategic, kind as well as reasonable. These qualities can assist the mentor to perform the different roles in the mentoring process.

One of the roles of the **supervisor** as the facilitator of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision can be to use administration, coordination, and organising in the execution of the mentoring process. The supervisor as an administrator must ensure that newly qualified social workers are equipped with the necessary administrative skills for effective documenting of cases. The social work supervisor can also assume the role of overseer and coordinator to ensure that the mentoring process as performed by different mentors occurs as harmoniously as possible. In addition, the social work supervisor also has the role of enabling the newly qualified social worker to deliver quality social work services.

The role of the **mentor** is to facilitate professional development through enhancing the capacity of the newly qualified social worker to cope with difficulties as well as to develop new competencies on a personal and interpersonal level. The mentor also has the role of providing care, teaching, support, guidance and counselling to the newly qualified social worker (Kram, 1985:2; Meyer & Fourie, 2004:54).

Different roles can also be identified for the **newly qualified social worker**. These roles include learner, reflector, researcher, self-developer, communicator, listener, interpreter, implementer, innovator, problem solver (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:53-60). The successful application of these roles will ensure that the newly qualified social worker derive maximum benefit from mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

Dual roles are shared between the newly qualified social worker, supervisor and mentor (Meyer, 2007:56). These roles include being a good communicator and listener. The newly qualified social worker must be a good communicator and listener as this will enable him or her to share existing needs, concerns and problems with the mentor. Conversely, mentors and supervisors as good communicators teach the newly qualified social worker to develop good communication skills (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:48). In addition, the mentors and supervisors should be good listeners, as this will enable them to identify and address the needs, problems and concerns experienced by the newly qualified social worker. The above-mentioned roles are effected through the execution of the different functions of mentoring, which will be discussed accordingly.

3.5 FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING

The employment of the functions of mentoring is based on the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker as determined during the engagement and assessment phase of social work supervision. First, mentoring has as its function to decrease the likelihood of burn-out amongst newly qualified social workers. This function is referred to as the **psychosocial function**. Second, the psychosocial function aims to enhance the sense of identity of the newly qualified social worker, to improve professional competence as well as work-role effectiveness (Tillman, 2001:298). This in turn will enhance the ability of newly qualified social workers to cope with the demands of the social work profession.

However, Fouché and Lunt (2010:401) as well as Wright and Werther (1991:29) are of the opinion that the immediate supervisor of the newly qualified social worker should not execute the psychosocial function of mentoring, as this may compromise the work performance of the new worker. Turner (2000:237) also mentions that the support function of social work supervision (which relates to the psychosocial function of mentoring) is sometimes neglected, as

the immediate supervisor of the newly qualified social worker will pay more attention to the professional development of the worker. Another social work practitioner or senior social worker within the organisation, or a psychologist can thus perform the psychosocial function of mentoring. Alternatively, an organisation can also appoint an external mentor for the execution of this function.

The second function of mentoring relates to the **career function**. However within the context of this study the researcher will utilise the term career development function, to present the reader with a clearer understanding. The career development function focuses on those aspects which promote career advancement (Kram, 1985:23; Russel & Adams, 1997:2; Tillman, 2001:298). Any senior person appointed as a mentor, can execute the career function. This mentor will be responsible to ensure that the newly qualified social worker gain access to career opportunities and promotions. Alternatively, the social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker or a senior human resources officer appointed as a mentor, can perform the career development function.

The third function of mentoring is **coaching** (Kram, 1985:29). For the purpose of this study, coaching refers to the systematic planning and guidance of an individual with the aim to acquire new skills over a short period of time (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:5). Coaching occurs on the job and develops because of the supervisory role and those needs of the newly qualified social worker that have been identified during the engagement and assessment phase of supervision (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:6). In addition coaching also provides the newly qualified social worker with the opportunity to make mistakes during social work service delivery, thereby promoting a developmental approach to social work supervision through the use of positive reinforcement (Perrault & Coleman, 2005:51). The social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker or any other mentor can provide coaching. Clutterbuck in Meyer and Fourie (2004:3) also mentions that the mentor is required to have coaching experience and training. The social work supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process can take responsibility for the facilitation of training relating to coaching. In conclusion, the provision of coaching to the newly qualified social worker may occur during his or her first weeks as an employee and can include exposure to the practical social work environment.

Role modelling is the fourth function of mentoring. Role modelling occurs when the newly qualified social worker identifies and emulates the behaviour of respected and trusted mentors (Soshik & Godshalk, 2000:104). Botha (2002:212) is of the opinion that the newly qualified social worker may observe the behaviour and conduct of the social work supervisor, and follow this example. Furthermore, Kadushin and Harkness (2002:238) mention that the manner in which the social work supervisor deals with the service user and his/her conduct in the office have a positive impact on the behaviour and conduct of the newly qualified social worker. The conduct and behaviour of the social work supervisor or other mentors guide the newly qualified social worker as to how he/she should conduct him or herself within the organisation. As a role model the mentor can also assist the newly qualified social worker to set attainable goals, to manage his/her time effectively and how to sustain interpersonal relationships successfully (Lewis, 2000:9; Mavuso, 2007:55).

In conclusion, the functions of role modelling, coaching as well as the career development function of mentoring within the context of supervision can be effected by, but are not limited to, the immediate social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker. Furthermore, other mentors such as a psychologist, another senior social worker or any other social work supervisor who is not the immediate social work supervisor of the newly qualified social worker can execute the psychosocial support function. Lastly, the functions of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision are performed during the process of mentoring. The process of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision will now be discussed.

3.6 PROCESS OF MENTORING

Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision can be introduced as a programme, which forms part of all the phases of the supervisory process, but specifically occurs in the engagement and assessment phase of supervision, as already indicated. This statement fits with the definition of a programme as a type of plan with distinctive goals and procedures, that is part of a component of the greater organisation as provided by Weinbach (1998:91). The supervisor of the newly qualified social worker takes overall responsibility for the development, coordination, and facilitation of the mentoring programme (Bein, 1999:121); and the mentoring process is thus a unique process within the supervision process.

In addition mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is further embedded in the interactional process of social work supervision (Munson, 1983:7). Therefore, the phases of social work supervision, the relationship between the supervisor and the newly qualified social worker, the supervision contract as well as the format of supervision influence the mentoring process.

The phases of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision will subsequently be discussed. This will include the initial phase, cultivation phase, implementation phase, as well as the evaluation and termination phase (Greenwood, 1995:31; Kram, 1985:49). In addition, Meyer and Fourie (2004:184) identify the following steps in the mentoring process, namely the introduction, launch, and orientation of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision, the identification, appointment, and training of the mentors, the matching of the newly qualified social workers and mentors, relationship establishment, goal setting and plans as well as implementation. These steps will be integrated as part of the different phases of the mentoring process.

3.6.1 Initial phase

The personal development assessment as conducted by the social work supervisor, together with the newly qualified social worker, provides the foundation for the overall mentoring process. The following steps, namely the planning, introduction and launch of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision, the identification, appointment and training of the mentors as well as the matching of the newly qualified social workers will be outlined (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:184).

3.6.1.1 The planning, introduction and launch of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision

The social work supervisor should ensure that the objectives of the mentoring process are aligned to the overall objectives, goals, vision and mission of the organisation, as well as with the supervision process followed with the supervisee. The social work supervisor, if preferred, may involve other senior employers in planning of the mentoring programme. This statement supports Strand and Bosco-Ruggiero (2010:53) who note that a **mentoring committee**, comprising different selected senior staff members within the same organisation can be appointed prior to the execution of the mentoring process. These staff members can include other social work

supervisors and senior staff within an organisation, the manager of the social work supervisor as well as the director or executive manager of the organisation. It may also include external consultants. Furthermore, in those organisations which have a human resources department, the supervisor can also approach a human resources officer to assist with the identification of components for inclusion in the mentoring programme. The role of the social work supervisor or together with the mentoring committee, is to facilitate the overall execution of the mentoring process.

The social work supervisor and, if he/she has appointed a mentoring committee, will give attention to the planning and facilitation of regular meetings to be held by the mentoring committee. The focus of these meetings should be on planning of the venue, time frames, intervals, as well as the agenda for each meeting. An administrative officer can be appointed to support the supervisor and/or mentoring committee with the administrative tasks concerning the launching of the mentoring programme. This will ensure the alleviation or limitation of additional pressures relating to the administrative tasks, which may be experienced by the mentoring committee, due to the intensity of the planning of the mentoring programme. However, these functions can also be shared among the different members of the mentoring committee. Matulovich (1996:21) identifies the following functions which can be performed by the supervisor and/or mentoring committee, namely:

- to determine organisational readiness for the mentoring process;
- to obtain the identification particulars of the protégé, also referred to as the newly qualified social worker;
- the selection of the mentors;
- the provision of continuous support to the mentors and newly qualified social workers in the compilation of the mentoring contract;
- to organise training for the mentors, newly qualified social worker and other staff members involved in the mentoring process;
- to intervene when problems arise between the mentor and newly qualified social worker;
- to provide feedback regarding the progress of the mentoring programme;
- to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the mentoring programme.

In addition the social work supervisor alone or together with the mentoring committee also takes responsibility for developing a schedule to execute the different aspects of the mentoring process (Fisher, 1994:31). A schedule will ensure that adequate time is spent on the execution of the mentoring process, and will provide a sound foundation for the identification, appointment and orientation of the selected mentors.

3.6.1.2 The identification, appointment and orientation of the mentors

The identification of the various mentors is determined by the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker, based on the personal development assessment of the newly qualified social worker as determined during the assessment phase of supervision. After the selection of the various mentors, the supervisor alone or together with the mentoring committee, should ensure that training is provided to both the newly qualified social workers and their respective mentors. This training will ensure that both the workers as well as the mentors have a universal understanding of the mentoring programme and its place in the supervision process. This view also agrees with Matulovich (1996:22) who reasons that training will ensure that the participants have a common understanding of the purpose, advantages of the mentoring programme and how it fits with the organisational objectives.

3.6.1.3 The matching of the newly qualified social workers and mentors

The matching of newly qualified social workers and their respective mentors is based on the identified learning needs of the new workers. Koonce (1994:37) emphasises the importance of the relationship fit between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker, and states that it should be considered to ensure that the matching process is executed appropriately.

The social work supervisor alone or together with the mentoring committee can use different assessment instruments to ensure a successful matching process. These instruments include interviews, questionnaires and psychometric tests (Teke, 1996:37; Allan, Poteet & Russel, 2000:271; Meyer & Fourie, 2004:2-4). Interviews and questionnaires can be utilised to gather personal and professional data about all those who participate in the mentoring programme, including details of the age, race, educational background and gender of both the mentors and newly qualified social workers.

Furthermore, the matching process is dependent on the mentoring style of the mentor, the personalities of the mentor and of the newly qualified social worker, as well as on the organisational goals and objectives. The mentor should also promote an atmosphere of cultural friendliness, especially in the diverse South African social work context. The mentor should always be accepting, accommodating, sincere, open, respectful, comfortable, spontaneous, and warm. The establishment of a trusting relationship (Tsui, 2005:112) provides a solid foundation for the next step in the cultivation process.

3.6.2 Cultivation phase

The cultivation phase focuses on the following steps, as identified by Meyer and Fourie (2004:184), namely relationship establishment, planning and goal setting. The relationship between the newly qualified social worker and his or her mentor(s) should also be based on shared learning and equality (Bell, 2000:54).

The joint planning sessions between the mentor and newly qualified social worker should focus on the assessment of the specific needs of the newly qualified social worker that should be addressed. Various skills and tools can be used to ascertain the specific mentoring needs. These skills and tools include brainstorming, visualisation, role-reversal, value-clarification or a tool called the Johari window (Connor & Pokora, 2007:137-157).

The **Johari window** is a tool for increasing a person's self-awareness and understanding of their interaction with others (Luft, 1970). It is a useful tool to assist the newly qualified social workers to map how they see themselves and how they communicate with others. It might assist both the mentor and social worker to identify possible areas of interpersonal conflict or help the new workers to understand people's perceptions of them. **Brainstorming and visualisation** encourages focus on future possibilities and help to imagine an ideal future. **Role-reversal** is an opportunity for the newly qualified social worker to develop new perspectives on a problem through role-playing and him/her to challenge blind spots and test new ways of negotiating or being assertive (Connor & Pokora, 2007:153). Lastly, **value-clarification** assists the newly qualified social workers to identify what is important to them, in attaining job satisfaction and to maximise their potential. Value-clarification can be used to help understand why the worker is stressed, demotivated or demoralised at work.

The mentor can also utilise alternative tools such as mind-mapping and personal constructs as well as the SWOT analysis (Hay, 1995:81-91). **Mind-mapping and personal constructs** provide the mentor with a comprehensive picture of the manner in which the newly qualified social worker views the organisation, other people and life in general. The **SWOT analysis** allows mentors and newly qualified social workers to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing them.

Upon completion of the assessment of the specific needs of the newly qualified social workers, attention should be given to the setting of goals. The setting of goals during the mentoring process is important and must fit into the personal development plan of the worker. At this stage, individual mentors and the newly qualified social workers can initiate individual mentoring sessions. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities of the mentor and the newly qualified social workers as well as the objectives and expected outcomes of the mentoring process should be discussed and can be concluded in a written agreement (Hay, 1995:76-77; Wilson & Tilse, 2006:180).

However, the newly qualified social worker and his or her mentors will also agree upon the structure and content of the mentoring process. They will reach consensus on the time frames, intervals for mentoring sessions, as well as the venue. Lastly, it is important that the principle of confidentiality be reaffirmed at this stage. This will provide newly qualified social workers with the assurance that any non-work related issues, which may arise during the mentoring process, will not be disclosed as part of the evaluation of their work performance. The joint planning sessions are important as the mentor and new worker should determine the following: the physical setting, the contract, the agenda and recording of the mentoring process, the time factors in mentoring, and the content of the discussions during the mentoring process (Browne & Bourne, 1996:50-51; Tsui, 2005:125).

Contracting becomes a crucial step in this phase as it determines the nature of the mentoring process. A written contract which encompasses the agreed upon goals, the interval and duration of the mentoring sessions, accountability of both parties, work assignments as well as the nature

and intervals for evaluation, must be drawn up (Radebe, 2009:171). The establishment of a written contract allows for the next phase in the mentoring process.

3.6.3 Implementation phase

During the implementation phase the goals and objectives agreed upon are executed. The emphasis is on how the mentor and newly qualified social worker actively participate in the mentoring programme to resolve problems jointly.

The mentor, who is responsible for the execution of the functions of mentoring, must create opportunities for the newly qualified social worker to learn and acquire new skills. In this phase, the worker is confronted with new lessons and ways of doing things, such as how to grasp the organisational structure and how to design and present new materials (Radebe, 2009:226). Bell (2000:55) suggests that the mentor should focus on giving advice to assist the protégé to deal with opportunities and challenges. Hence, the focus during the implementation phase is on the provision of advice to the worker, rather than instruction, as well as ensuring that new challenges and opportunities are grasped and mastered successfully. Kilburg (2000:16) advocates the adoption of a permissive approach and suggests that the mentor should use words such as “could” instead of “should”. The mentor should also focus on providing the newly qualified social worker with suggestions and various options to solve specific problems.

The **functions** of role modelling, the career development function and coaching can be employed by the mentor to assist the newly qualified social worker to attain specific work-related skills (Kram, 1985:29; Soshik & Godshalk, 2000:104). During the implementation phase, the trusting relationship between the mentor and newly qualified social worker also provides for an opportunity to deal with any problems in the worker’s personal life. Hence, the psychosocial function of mentoring as an activity is executed at this stage. The execution of these functions is based on the learning needs of the worker as well as the mentoring style of the mentor.

In addition, the mentor may apply various **skills** to execute the different functions of mentoring. These include such skills as assessment, interviewing and communication skills. Assessment skills are those skills that can be used by the mentor to assist the newly qualified social worker to identify goals relating to areas for development (Sheafor & Horejsi, 2003:244-325). In addition,

the use of interviewing skills can also assist the mentor in the successful execution of the mentoring process. These include active listening, paraphrasing, summarising, reflecting, and questioning (Miley *et al.*, 1995:178; Hepworth, Rooney & Larson, 1997:151-153; Matainni 1997:125-126; De Jongh & Berg, 2002:21; Johnson & Yanca, 2007:180-181). The use of communication skills is also important (Sheafor & Horejsi, 2003:139-143). These include verbal (responses) and non-verbal communication (eye contact, voice, and posture) skills. In this chapter the mentor is defined as a senior person (Olian *et al.*, 1988:16), and not necessarily a social worker. Therefore the above-mentioned skills and how they can be employed during the execution of the mentoring programme, can be included as part of the training that mentors have to undergo in the initial phase of the mentoring programme.

The social work supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process can also assist with the development of a plan for the provision of written **feedback** for individual mentoring relationships. This responsibility can also be shared amongst members of the mentoring committee. Regular follow-up on the progress of the implementation of the mentoring process will ensure that areas for improvement are identified and addressed (Strand & Bosco-Ruggiero, 2010:64). Biannual meetings can be arranged which specifically focus on the provision of feedback and areas for follow-up. In addition, written feedback reports by newly qualified social workers as well as the mentors will provide the social work supervisor with the necessary evidence as motivation for any changes in the implementation of the mentoring process, in cases where the consent of the mentoring committee or top management of an organisation is required.

As the newly qualified social worker grows in confidence and gains experience as a professional, the need for independent functioning may develop. This independence allows for the initiation of the final phase of mentoring process.

3.6.4 Evaluation and termination phase

According to Kram (1985:49) and Greenwood (1995:33), the execution of the final phase of the mentoring relationship is determined by the extent to which the goals of the mentoring process have been attained. It is also important to conduct an evaluation of those mentoring relationships that will be terminated. Both the mentor and the newly qualified social worker must conduct this evaluation. Evaluation will determine whether the agreed upon outcomes and objectives of the

mentoring process have been achieved (Shea, 2003:203). However, the nature of the needs of the newly qualified social workers will determine the duration of each of the mentoring phases. The mentoring relationship can also be terminated in instances where the social worker leaves the organisation, ends employment or is transferred to a new position or a new job (Johnson & Yanca, 2007:297).

3.7 TYPES OF MENTORING

Meyer (2007:113-148) identifies the following types of mentoring, namely informal mentoring, formal mentoring, professional mentoring, reverse mentoring, as well as electronic-supported mentoring.

3.7.1 Informal mentoring

Informal mentoring transpires when there is no formal or structured approach to mentoring (Meyer, 2007:113). This type of mentoring is voluntary (Shea, 2003:46), thus initiated by the newly qualified social worker. In the context of social work supervision, an informal mentor can be a colleague or another social work supervisor. In multi-disciplinary work settings, such as the hospital setting, informal mentors can be a doctor or psychologist, whilst a teacher can be an informal mentor in a school setting. The advantage of informal mentoring is that the newly qualified social workers can decide when, how and from which mentor they want to learn. Meyer (2007:114) notes that the successful employment of informal mentoring is determined by the willingness, attitude and approach of the mentor.

3.7.2 Formal mentoring

Formal mentoring occurs for the advancement of those skills of the newly qualified social worker that can assist with career development. Formal mentoring is usually initiated and driven by the needs of the organisation, and thus the supervisor of the newly qualified social worker (Kelly, 2001:18). Formal mentoring is structured; hence, it is appropriate to the process of social work supervision. In the context of the social work profession, formal mentoring is characterised by a formal or written agreement between the mentor and newly qualified social worker and supervisor. The supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process takes the lead in initiating the mentoring process.

3.7.3 Reverse mentoring

During reverse mentoring, the fourth type of mentoring, the roles of the appropriate mentor and the newly qualified social worker are reversed or exchanged. This is especially valuable in cross-cultural mentoring during which the mentor and the worker learn about their respective cultures (Meyer, 2007:137). Reverse mentoring is of particular significance in the South African context. South Africa is a country of diverse cultures and characterised by a legacy of apartheid that led to the segregation of different cultural groups. As a result, a community of people exists that are not familiar with one another's cultural practices. In addition Engelbrecht (2006:256) states that the cultural backgrounds of the supervisors will most probably differ from those of their supervisees (in this chapter referred to as newly qualified social workers). This will also be the case for appointed mentors.

Reverse mentoring can assist both the newly qualified social worker and the mentor to learn about their respective cultures, and promotes a greater sense of understanding between the mentor and the social worker, and strengthens the relationship between them.

3.7.4 Situational mentoring

Situational mentoring is usually short-term and responsive to a specific and/or immediate need of the newly qualified social worker (Shea, 2003:46). The social work supervisor initiates situational mentoring based on the identification of a specific learning need of the newly qualified social worker. This type of mentoring may occur, for example where the newly appointed social worker needs to become familiar with the office technology used by an organisation. In this instance a senior staff member for example, who is appointed as an information technologist, may act as a mentor and provide technical support and training to the new worker.

3.7.5 Electronic-supported mentoring

The last type of mentoring refers to electronic-supported mentoring. This type of mentoring is becoming increasingly popular due to the availability of the electronic media. Electronic-supported mentoring transpires through computers (emails and internet), and is of advantageous in cases where the mentor and the newly qualified social worker are located in different geographical locations (Meyer, 2007:146). Electronic-supported mentoring can also help those

newly qualified social workers located in rural areas, to gain access to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. Electronic-supported mentoring is also cost-effective (Plummer & Omwenga Nyang'au, 2009:812). This is of particular significance for the social work context of South Africa, where there is a shortage of social work supervisors and limited resources (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:57). Electronic-supported mentoring may increase the number of contact sessions between a social work supervisor, mentor and the newly qualified social worker.

In conclusion, the different types of mentoring can be utilised to accomplish the overall objectives of the supervision process as well as towards reaching organisational goals. Hence, the mentoring process may result in strengthening supervision and improved worker performance because the personal as well as the professional identity of the newly qualified social worker is developed. However, the employment of different types of mentoring during the social work supervision process is also influenced by various factors. These factors are discussed below.

3.8 FACTORS IMPACTING ON MENTORING

The factors that may influence mentoring as an activity in social work supervision include the organisational culture, gender, and race (Collins, 1994; Greenwood, 1995; Kram, 1985; Meyer 2007; Tillman, 2001). These factors will be discussed in the next section.

3.8.1 Organisational context

Mentoring is influenced by the organisational context (Kelly, 2001:31; Kram, 1985:15). Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is therefore influenced by the culture, performance management systems, and the task design of the organisation, as well as the supervision model employed by the organisation. Greenwood (1995:42) and Meyer (2007:71) add that the organisational culture such as the nature of the organisation's business, the vision and mission of the organisation, the leadership style, supervision policy, management practices and structure, systems and climate all have an impact on the mentoring relationship.

Social work supervisors in South Africa are usually employed in a hierarchical structure. Hence mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is also influenced by factors such as authority and power. According to Kadushin (1992:134), the supervisor uses power and authority to attain

organisational goals. The ineffective use of power and authority may therefore have a negative influence on the achievement of the goals of the organisation and the successful execution of the mentoring process. Additionally mentoring as an activity in social work supervision is also affected by the work context of newly qualified social workers in South Africa. This context is characterised by the continuous changes in the legislative framework in which newly qualified social workers in South Africa must operate, high case-loads, poor working conditions as well as limited financial resources. These factors often lead to high turnover of newly qualified social workers as well as supervisors, which can be detrimental to the successful implementation and completion of the mentoring programme.

3.8.2 Gender

Gender also influences the mentoring process. The majority of social work supervisors are females in middle management positions (Engelbrecht, 2010; Munson, 1983:15). This implies that male social workers, at the beginning of their social work careers, will be exposed mostly to female social work supervisors as their mentors. This type of female versus male relationships is also referred to as cross-gender mentoring relationships. Cross-gender mentoring relationships have advantages as well as disadvantages (Kram, 1985:60). These relationships can be detrimental to the mentoring process due to the following reasons:

- men and women are inclined to assume stereotypical roles in relation to each other, especially in work settings;
- the role modelling function is frequently unsatisfactory to both the mentor and the newly qualified social workers;
- the mutual liking and admiration characteristics of the working relationship between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker may lead to increased intimacy and sexual tension.

However, the impact which these disadvantages may have on the mentoring process, can be limited by the application of ethical codes for social workers as developed by the South African Council of Social Service Professions (1986). These ethical codes regulate the interaction between social workers and service users, newly qualified social workers and their colleagues, newly qualified social workers and their supervisors as well as newly qualified social workers and their employers. Alternatively Kram (1985:60) and Fowler (2002:112) highlight the

advantages of cross-gender relationships as follows: attainment of diverse skills and modes of expression, together with the increased energy brought about by the positive side of intimacy. Therefore cross-gender mentoring relationships are beneficial to the newly qualified social worker, as they may lead to skills enhancement and may ultimately improve the quality of social work service delivery. Conversely, the researcher is of the opinion that the social work supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process can also purposefully appoint male mentors to provide newly qualified female social workers with the opportunities for cross-gender relationships, as the majority of social workers, inclusive of newly qualified social workers are females.

3.8.3 Race

Race is another factor that may influence the mentoring relationship. According to Collins (1994:145) and Tillman (2001:300) research relating to the impact of race in mentoring relationships is limited. Greenwood (2005:27) mentions that racial differences can negatively affect the mentoring relationship because of the differences in the values and norms of the mentor and newly qualified social workers. However Kram (1985:160) and Turner (2000:235) argue that mentoring is useful in a setting where affirmative action is an important objective, as a way to negate the disadvantages experienced by designated groups as a consequence of previous exclusions. The use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision can also play a critical role to promote equal opportunity, employment equity, and diversity management (Meyer, 2007:4). Lastly, Cropper (2000:603) mentions that the mentoring relationship provides an avenue through which issues of discrimination at work can be discussed. This will improve the trust relationship between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker.

In contrast, Tillman (2001:310) notes that those employees who have been involved in mentoring programmes, prefer to seek psychosocial support from same-race mentors. Same-race mentors can therefore be appointed to execute the psychosocial function of mentoring.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the dynamic legislative context of social work in South Africa has been discussed. This changing context has contributed to the negative state of social work service delivery. In addition poor working conditions, poor salaries, and the continuous migration of social workers to other countries, in pursuit of a better standard of living, contributed to the critical shortage of social workers and social work supervisors in South Africa. This critical shortage of social workers, inclusive of social work supervisors, has led to a decline in the quality of social work services. The South African government acknowledged the value of social workers and this led to the introduction of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy of Social Workers in 2006. One of the aims of this Strategy was to ensure quality social work supervision to all newly qualified social workers. In addition mentoring has been promoted as a strategy to improve support to social workers, more specifically newly qualified social workers. Mentoring is perceived as an activity of social work supervision. However mentoring is a relatively new concept in the milieu of the social work profession and literature pertaining to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers, is limited. This chapter therefore has provided a detailed explanation of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision and how it can be employed to enhance the skills of newly qualified social workers and ultimately improved quality social work service delivery.

A definition of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision was provided, and the need for mentoring was emphasised. The different functions of mentoring as well as the mentoring process have been discussed. It is important to recognise that a newly qualified social worker can benefit from multiple mentors and that the social work supervisor is the facilitator who assumes responsibility for the overall mentoring process. In addition the social work supervisor can also appoint a mentoring committee to assist with the facilitation of the mentoring programme.

Mentoring, if employed as an activity in social work supervision, may enhance the resilience levels of newly qualified social workers, thereby decreasing burnout amongst them. The simultaneous use of multiple mentors during the mentoring process can expedite the acquisition of those skills needed by the newly qualified social worker, to render quality social work services. The roles of the different mentors have also been outlined. The nature and duration of the mentoring process are determined by the needs of the newly qualified social worker. Lastly

issues such as gender, race and the organisational context, which can influence the mentoring process, were discussed.

In conclusion, the successful execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision can ensure the recruitment and retention of newly qualified social workers. It may also provide newly qualified social workers with the necessary skills to cope with the demands of their jobs. Mentoring may also prevent burnout amongst newly qualified social workers and increase work performance. Lastly, the retention of social workers, because of the utilisation of mentoring, may potentially enhance and improve the quality of social work services delivery to service users.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapters 2 and 3 the researcher undertook a literature review which forms the foundation for the empirical study as documented in chapter 4. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. Therefore a combined explorative and descriptive study was conducted to gain an understanding of the execution of social work supervision as well as the opinion of the respondents on the use on mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

The empirical findings of this study will be presented with the aid of tables, graphs and direct quotes. The researcher will integrate the research findings with the literature review. In this chapter the empirical investigation will be clustered in five sections. Section A focuses on the research method and provides an overview of the research methodology used in the study, to ensure that the context of the study is interpreted correctly. Section B entails the biographical information of the respondents, such as their age, gender and years of experience. Section C illustrates and interprets the exposition of the empirical findings. Section D focuses on the empirical findings in relation to the supervision of newly qualified social workers and section E illustrates and interprets the empirical findings in relation to the utilisation of mentoring. This will ensure that the information is presented to the reader in a logical manner.

SECTION A: RESEARCH METHOD

In this section the researcher presents the research method which was employed to gather data for the analysis and interpretation of the empirical study.

4.2 PREPARATION FOR THE INVESTIGATION

Prior to the study the researcher attained the consent of the Research and Ethics Committee of the Western Cape Department of Social Development as well as from the social work supervisors who were chosen as respondents.

4.2.1 Research sample

The sample of this study consisted of 20 social work supervisors who provide supervision to newly qualified social workers. Newly qualified social workers refer to all those social workers with a maximum of 24 months' experience in the profession (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:24). The supervisors are employed in the different regional and local offices of the Western Cape Department of Social Development. Respondents were chosen from the Metro North, Metro East, and Metro South regions. Interviews were conducted in English with the aid of interview schedules. The researcher utilised non-probability, purposive sampling because only social work supervisors who had the required characteristics, were included in the study (Grinnell, 1988; Strydom, 2005). The main criteria for the inclusion of these supervisors were as follows:

- supervisors are qualified social workers;
- supervisors are registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professionals (SACSSP);
- supervisors are employed by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape;
- supervisors have a minimum of three years' experience in social work as required by the Western Cape Department of Social Development.

4.2.2 Research approach, design and instrument

Interviews were conducted with the aid of interview schedules, with 20 social work supervisors (see interview schedule in addendum A). The interview schedules were based on the information gathered from the literature review in chapters 2 and 3. A combination of qualitative and

quantitative research was used as proposed by authors such as De Vos (2005b:359). In addition the exploratory design was used as it gave the researcher the opportunity to explore and gain new insights into the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers (Fouché & De Vos, 2005:134). The descriptive design as suggested by Grinnell (1988:220) was also applied to describe the nature of social work supervision and mentoring as an activity thereof. This design is also appropriate to the study given that mentoring and how it is employed as an activity in social work supervision is a relatively new concept and research relating to it is limited (Grinnell, 1988:220; Kelly, 2001:18).

4.2.3 Data gathering and analysis

The researcher conducted semi structured interviews, the duration of which was from 90 to 120 minutes. The interviews were conducted between July and August 2011. Interviews with the respondents were confidential in order to protect their identities (Rubin & Babbie, 2007). Thereafter the data attained during the interviews were interpreted and analyzed to reveal the findings of the study. These findings are presented in tubular, graphic and narrative form. First, the profile of the respondents, including their biographical details will be presented, analyzed and interpreted. Thereafter the rest of the research findings will be outlined according to six themes, as identified during the interviews, and will be discussed in detail. The narratives of the participants will be used in the analysis of the different themes, which will be further divided into subthemes and categories.

SECTION B: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

The profile of the respondents will be presented in table 4.1 as part of section B.

4.3 PROFILE OF THE SUPERVISORS

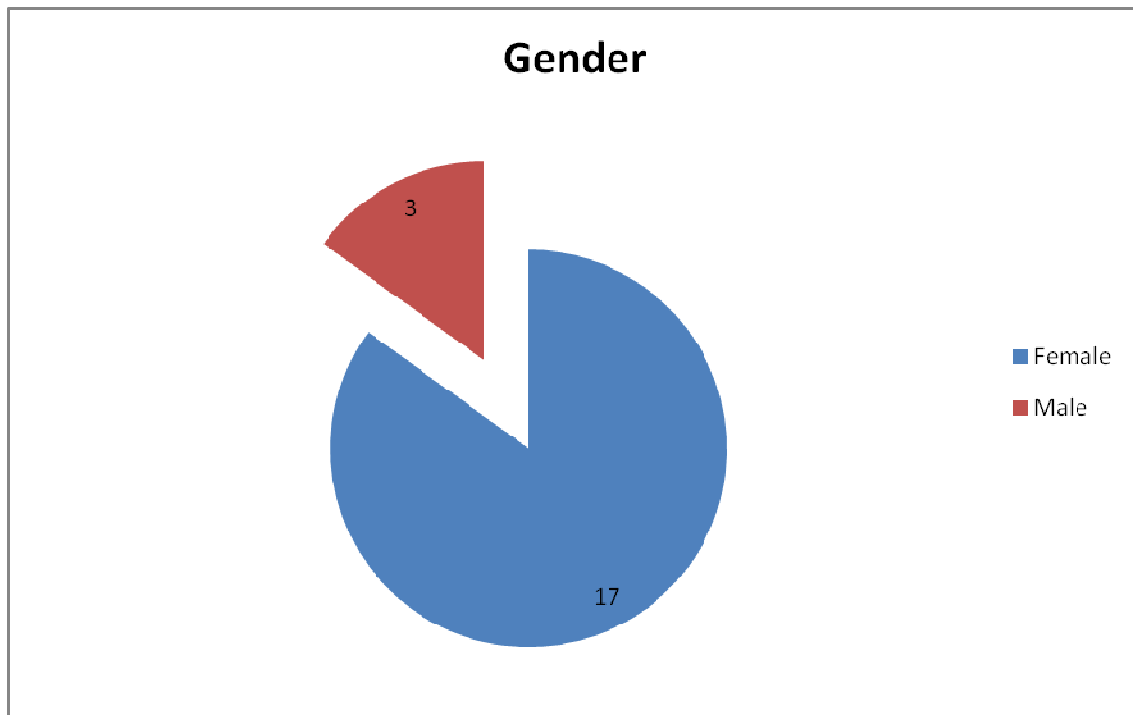
To protect the identities of the 20 respondents, a number was allocated to each respondent, and data were presented in categories such as the age of the respondents and their years of experience as social work supervisors. This protection was imperative as the presentation of the specific ages of the respondents would make the tracing of their identities effortless. The profile of the respondents will be illustrated in table 4.1, followed by an analysis and interpretation of the data. During the inception of the interviews a set of questions was posed to each respondent to build their profiles. The biographical profile of the supervisors, entails the gender, age group, highest social work qualification and the years of experience of each respondent, experience of social work supervision upon entry in the Department of Social Development, experience of supervision, formal training in supervision, years of experience as a supervisor, number of supervisees responsible for, number of newly qualified social workers as well as their responsibilities other than social work supervision.

Table 4.1: Profile of the respondents

Respondent	Gender	Age group	Highest social work qualification	Years of experience as a registered social worker	Number of years respondents were supervised	Formal training in supervision	Years of experience as a supervisor	Number of supervisees each respondent is responsible for	Number of newly qualified social workers each respondent is responsible for
1	F	Over 50 years	Degree in social work	30 years	0	No	10-20 years	3	1
2	M	30- 35 years	Degree in social work	5-10 years	2-3 years	No	0- 5 years	7	3
3	F	30-35 years	Degree in social work	5-10 years	N/A	No	0-5 years	6	3
4	F	45-50 years	Diploma in social work	20-30 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	6	3
5	F	45-50 years	Masters degree in social work	20 -30 years	N/A	No	0-5 years	7	4
6	F	35-40 years	Degree in social work	10-20 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	24	6
7	M	45-50 years	Masters degree in social work-supervision and consultation	10-20 years	N/A	No	5-10 years	8	3
8	F	35-40 years	Degree in social work	20-30 years	N/A	No	0-5 years	7	4
9	F	35-40 years	Diploma in social work	10-20 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	8	4
10	F	45-50 years	Degree in social work	20-30 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	8	6
11	M	35-40 years	Degree in social work	10-20 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	11	8
12	F	45-50 years	Diploma in social work	20-30 years	More than 3 years	No	5-10 years	8	5
13	F	35-40 years	Honors degree in social work	10-20 years	More than 3 years	No	5-10 years	8	5
14	F	45-50 years	Diploma in social work	20-30 years	0-1 years	No	5-10 years	7	7
15	F	45-50 years	Masters degree in social work	20-30 years	2-3 years	No	10 -20 years	9	2
16	F	40-45 years	Degree in social work	10-20 years	More than 3 years	No	0-5 years	7	4
17	F	35-40 years	Honors degree in social work	10-20 years	N/A	No	0-5 years	18	3
18	F	40-45 years	Degree in social work	10-20 years	N/A	No	5-10 years	7	1
19	F	45-50 years	Degree in social work	20-30 years	N/A	No	5-10 years	4	2
20	F	45-50 years	Diploma in social work	10-20 years	N/A	No	5-10 years	7	3

4.3.1 Gender

In this section the researcher investigated the gender of each respondent. These findings are illustrated in figure 4.1. below:



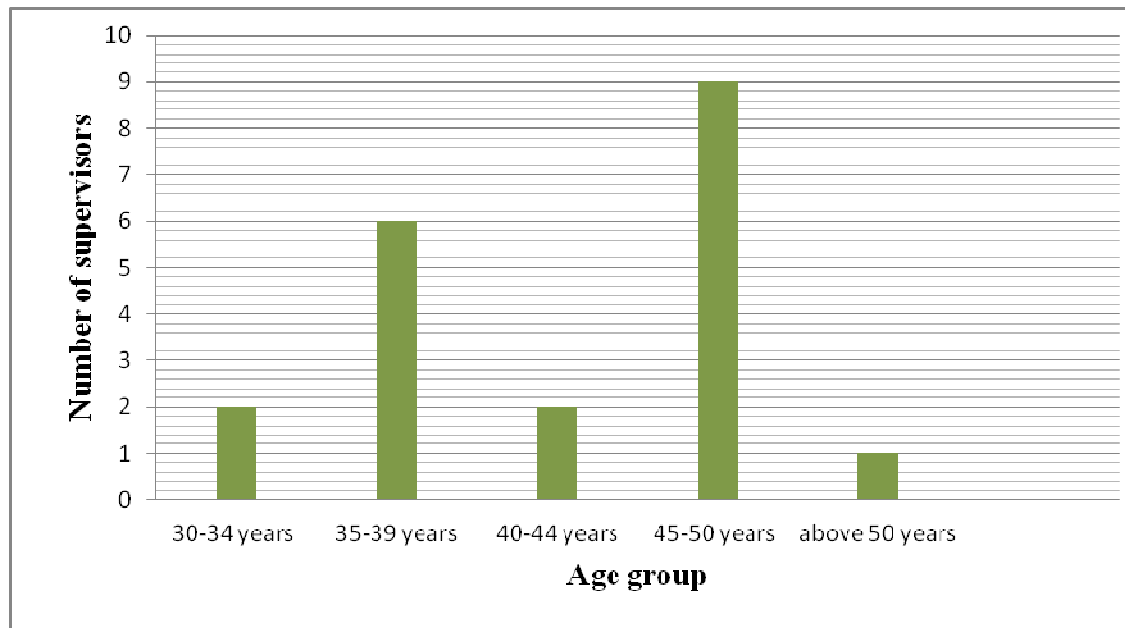
N=20

Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents

Of the 20 respondents interviewed 17 (85%) were female and 3 (15%) were male. Hence these findings show that the majority of the social work supervisors are females. This supports the statement by Munson (1983:15) that social work is a female-dominated profession, whilst Engelbrecht (2010:780) also mentions that in South Africa, most social workers are female.

4.3.2 Age group

In this section the researcher explored the age groups of the respondents. The research findings are illustrated below in figure 4.2.



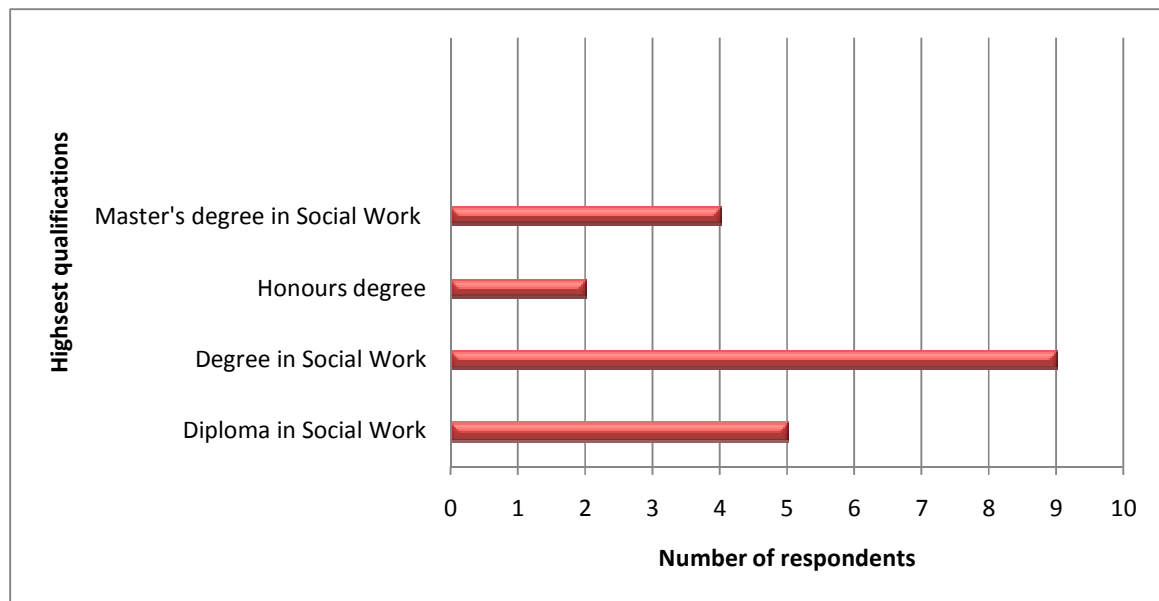
N=20

Figure 4.2: Age groups of respondents

The ages of the respondents range between 30 years to above 50 years. Only 1 (5%) respondent is above 50 years. Two (10%) of the respondents are aged between 30-34 years. Another two (10%) respondents are aged between 40-44 years. Nine (45%) respondents are in the age group 45-50 years. Six (30%) respondents are aged between 35-39 years. This means that the majority of the respondents are over 40 years. These findings correlate with Munson (1983:15) and Engelbrecht (2010) who found that supervisors are mostly in their 40s.

4.3.3 Highest social work qualifications

In this section the researcher gathered information regarding the highest social work qualifications of each respondent. The research findings are illustrated in table 4.3.



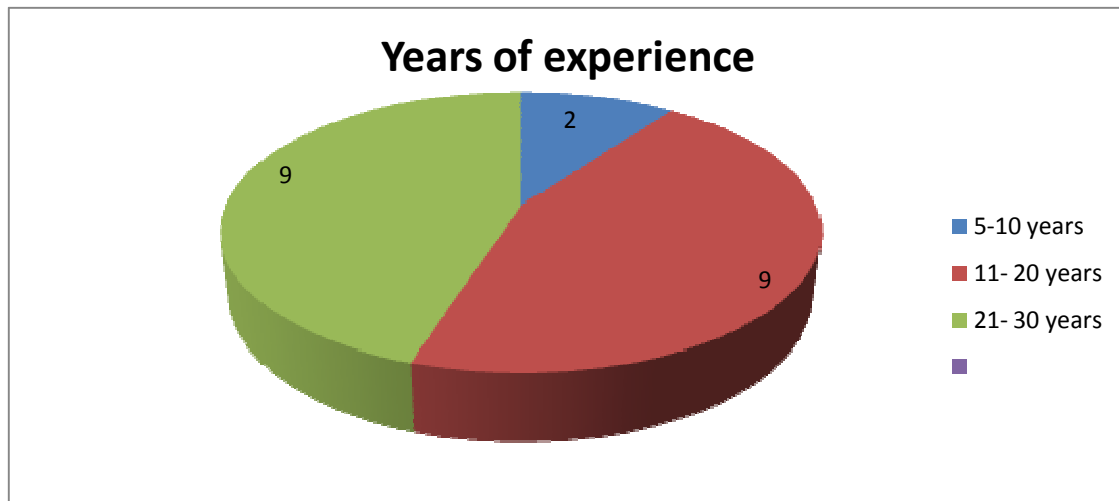
N=20

Figure 4.3: Highest qualifications in Social Work

The research findings indicate that 9 (45%) respondents obtained their qualification through a 4-year BA degree in social work, whereas 4 (20%) attained their social work qualification through a diploma in social work. Two (10%) respondents attained an Honours degree in social work, whilst another 4 (20%) are in possession of a Master's degree. Hence more than a quarter of the respondents hold post-graduate degrees in social work, which is an indication of their drive and motivation for personal growth.

4.3.4 Years of experience as a registered social worker

The researcher questioned the respondents to ascertain their years of experience as social workers. The research findings are illustrated in figure 4.4. below.



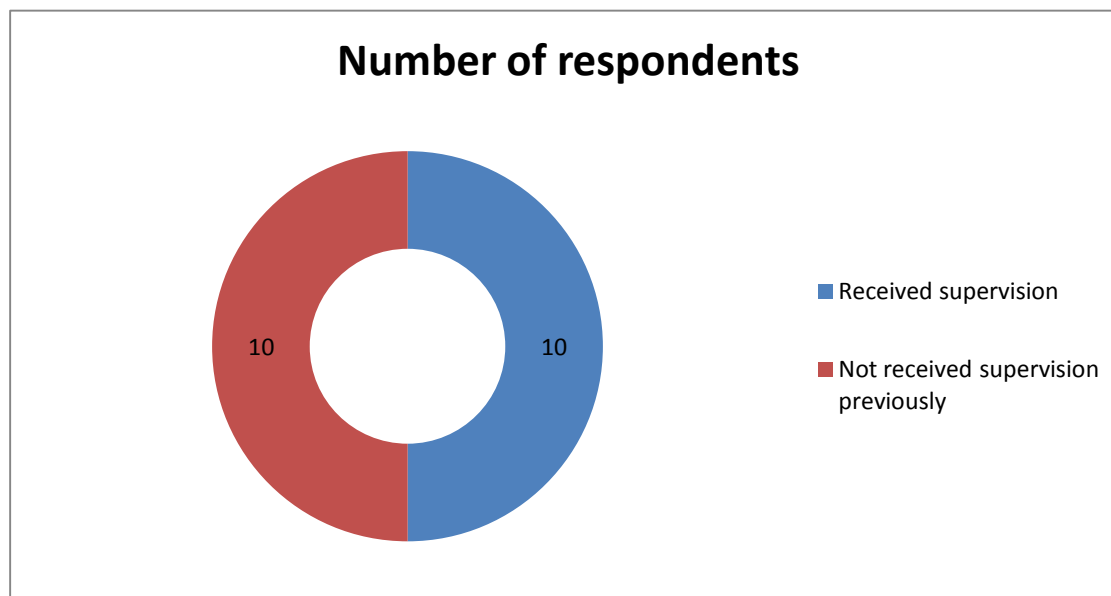
N=20

Figure 4.4: Years of experience as social workers

Two (10%) of the 20 respondents have between 5 years' to 10 years' working experience as registered social workers. Nine respondents (45%) have between 11-20 years' working experience, whilst another 9 (45%) respondents have between 21-30 years' experience. These findings correlate with Engelbrecht's (2010:780) opinion that social work supervisors should have sufficient working experience. These findings also signify that respondents are experienced professionals, hence also appropriate to be appointed as mentors as stated by Cropper (2000:600) that mentors must have sufficient experience in their field of work.

4.3.5 Respondents' experience of social work supervision

In this section the researcher investigated the number of years of supervision each respondent received when they were frontline social workers. The findings are presented in table 4.5, followed by a discussion.



N=20

Figure 4.5: Respondents' experience of social work supervision

According to figure 4.5 half of the 20 respondents indicated that they received supervision when they were frontline social workers. The other half (10) indicated that they did not receive any supervision. Some of the reasons provided by the respondents included:

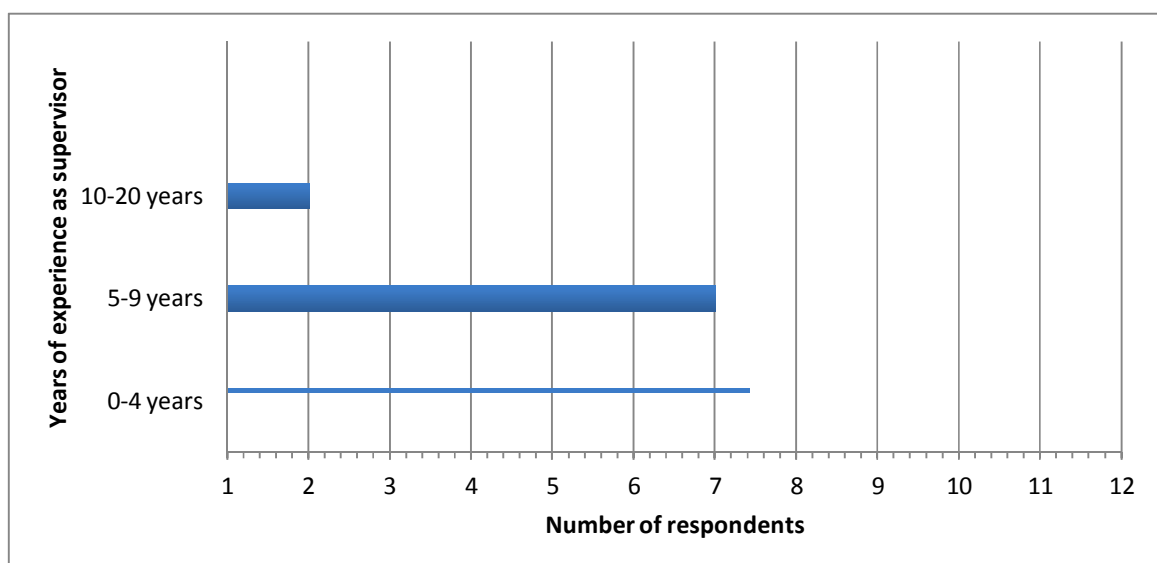
- *"I already had **years of experience as a social worker**, hence I did not need supervision."*
- *"I do not think the Department had **any policy for the practice of supervision** in place."*
- *"I do not know why I did not receive supervision, guess there are **no guidelines or policies** in place";*
- *"Although I had a supervisor, I had no supervision, as the **work-load** of my supervisor was too great".*

In addition one of the 10 respondents who received supervision as a frontline social worker, stated that the duration of supervision was less than 1 year. Two of the 10 respondents indicated that the duration of their supervision was between 2-3 years. Seven of the 10 respondents stated that supervision lasted for more than 3 years.

In conclusion, 50% of the respondents stated that they received no supervision as frontline social workers. The reasons provided by the respondents included, their *ample years of experience* upon their appointment as social workers in the Department of Social Development, the fact that there were *no guidelines and policies* for the execution of supervision in place and the *heavy work-load* of social work supervisors, which impacted on the quantity and quality of supervision. These findings support Botha's opinion (2002:vi) that supervision has lost significance and value in the social work field and that no policies are in place to guide supervision in South Africa.

4.3.6 Years of experience as a supervisor

The researcher posed a question to each respondent regarding the number of years' experience as a supervisor. The responses are presented in figure 4.6. below, followed by a brief analysis.



N=20

Figure 4.6: Years of experience as a supervisor

Eleven (55%) of the 20 respondents have between 0-4 years' experience as social work supervisors, 7 (35%) of the 20 respondents have between 5-9 years' experience, and 2 (10%) of the 20 respondents have between 10-20 years' experience as social work supervisors. These findings reveal that the majority of the respondents have between 0-10 years' experience as

social work supervisors, which suggests that most of the respondents have ample years of experience as social work supervisors, enabling them to reflect on their experiences.

4.3.7 Type of training as a social work supervisor

The researcher investigated the type of training which respondents were exposed to when they were appointed as supervisors in the Western Cape Department of Social Development. The research findings in table 4.1 confirm that none of the respondents had received any training in social work supervision to prepare them for their responsibilities as supervisors. This is evidence of Botha's (2002:vi) concern that no formal training is provided to social work supervisors. Additionally authors such as Kadushin and Harkness (2002) support the provision of training in supervision of social work supervisors. This will ensure that newly qualified social workers receive quality supervision which will prepare them for their responsibilities and will ensure that they reach a level of independent functioning within a reasonable space of time.

4.3.8 Number of supervisees each respondent is responsible for

This division focused on exploring the number of supervisees for which each respondent is responsible.. The supervisees in this context refer to all those social workers who receive supervision, irrespective of their years of experience. Table 4.1 illustrates that the majority of the supervisors are responsible for an average of seven supervisees. The number of supervisees which supervisors are responsible for varies between three and 24. Only one respondent is responsible for a total of 24 supervisees. These findings illustrate that most of the supervisors are responsible for an average of 7 supervisees.

4.3.9 Number of newly qualified social workers each respondent is responsible for

The researcher investigated the number of newly qualified social workers for which each of the respondents was responsible. All the respondents indicated that they were responsible for the supervision of at least two newly qualified social workers. Ten (50%) respondents are responsible for between three to four newly qualified social workers. Table 4.1 illustrates that the supervisee load of only one respondent consists only of newly qualified social workers.

In conclusion the findings in Table 4.1 also suggest that the supervisee load of the majority of social work supervisors consists of mostly newly qualified social workers. These workers form 50% or more of the overall supervisee load of 13 (60%) of the 20 supervisors. This supports the statement by the researcher that there recently has been an influx of newly appointed social workers in the social work practice field in South Africa, as referred to in chapter 1.

4.3.10 Responsibilities other than supervision

During the interviews with the 20 respondents the researcher gathered data regarding responsibilities other than the supervision of social workers. The following table illustrates the categories of responsibilities as attained from the interviews with the 20 respondents, and also presents the total number of supervisors involved in each of the identified categories.

Table 4.2: Responsibilities other than social work supervision

Categories of responsibilities: Excerpts from the interviews	Number of supervisors involved in each of the categories of responsibilities
<i>“Supervision of social auxiliary workers, community development workers, assistant probation officers, early childhood development practitioners.”</i>	19 (95%)
<i>“Acting in the position of the social work manager, when required.”</i>	10 (50%)
<i>“Case-work.”</i>	9 (45%)
<i>“Programme coordinator for different programmes of the Department, inclusive of coordinating the current foster care backlog.”</i>	15 (75%)
<i>“Managing ministerial enquiries – cases where public complain directly to Ministry.”</i>	7 (35%)
<i>“Performance management of staff.”</i>	20 (100%)
<i>“Stakeholder meetings, inclusive of NPO sector.”</i>	10 (50%)

N=20

Table 4.2 reveals that all of the supervisors are involved in at least one activity other than the supervision of social workers. All the respondents are involved in the managing of the performance of staff, including those other than social workers. Nineteen (95%) of the respondents are responsible for the supervision of staff other than social workers. Fifteen (75%)

of the respondents are involved in programme management. Ten (50%) of the respondents are involved in each of the following categories of responsibilities, namely:

- Stakeholder meetings;
- Office management;
- Acting in the position of the social work manager, when required.

A further seven (35%) of the respondents are responsible for the management of ministerial enquiries, while a significant number of 9 (45%) respondents also have their own case-load. According to Botha (2002) the majority of social work supervisors in South Africa are expected to deal with case-work and other management responsibilities. This affects the quality of social work supervision provided to supervisees. The additional responsibilities executed by supervisors can therefore impact negatively on the quality of supervision rendered to newly qualified social workers.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the presentation and interpretation of the data collected during the empirical investigation and will be supported with the literature review as portrayed in chapters 2 and 3.

SECTION C: EXPOSITION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This section will focus on an exposition of the different themes, subthemes and associated categories by means of a table, which emerged from the research findings and as expounded by Bless and Higson-Smith (2004:140).

4.4 THEMES, SUBTHEMES AND CATEGORIES

Six themes emerged from the interviews which were conducted. The themes were divided into subthemes, which in turn were divided into different categories. The presentation follows below in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Themes, subthemes and categories

THEMES	SUBTHEMES	CATEGORIES
1. Supervision functions	1.1. Execution of the functions of supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions of supervision mostly executed by supervisor
2. Methods of supervision	2.1 Execution of methods of supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method of supervision mostly executed by supervisor
3. Phases of supervision	3.1 Engagement and assessment Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical setting: Comfort • Physical setting: Confidentiality • Physical setting: Communication • Physical setting: Compatibility • Personal development assessment
	3.2 Planning phase of supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined drafting of personal development plan by supervisor and newly qualified social worker • Combined drafting of supervision contract
	3.3 Working Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency and duration of supervision sessions • Actual supervision session as well as the aspects which are the focus of supervision sessions • Skills employed during the execution of the supervision phase
	3.4 Evaluation and Termination Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occurrence and manner in which evaluation phase is executed • Occurrence and manner in which termination phase is executed
	3.5 Activities of supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities of supervision mostly executed by supervisor
4. Mentoring	4.1 Features of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference between mentoring and social work supervision • The appointment of mentor/s • Persons to be appointed as mentors • Qualities of mentors
	4.2 The benefits and risks of mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of mentoring for an organisation • Benefits of mentoring for newly qualified social workers • Risks relating to the execution of supervision
	4.3 Qualities of mentors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualities of mentors for the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision
	4.4 Roles of parties during the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles of the mentor • Roles of the newly qualified social workers
5. Functions of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision	5.1 Execution of functions of mentoring in social work supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Function of mentoring mostly executed during mentoring as an activity in social work supervision
6. Mentoring process	6.1 Execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor's execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision • Training as a requirement for the execution of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision • Training aspects to be included in a mentoring programme in social work supervision • The necessity of a relationship during the execution of the mentoring process in social work supervision
	6.2 Types of mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of mentoring to be executed during the mentoring process in social work supervision
	6.3 Factors impacting on mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors which may impact on the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision as identified by social work supervisors

SECTION D: SUPERVISION

In section D the researcher will interpret the research findings according to the different functions, methods, the process and the activities in supervision. These will be outlined according to the different themes, subthemes and categories as illustrated in table 4.3.

4.5 THEME 1: SUPERVISION FUNCTIONS

The first theme in this study deals with the supervision functions. Kadushin (1992), Botha (2002), and Tsui (2005) are of the opinion that the following three functions of supervision are important namely the administrative, educational and support functions. The subtheme focuses on the investigation of those functions of supervision which are executed by the respondents. All of the respondents (100%) indicated that they carry out all of the functions of supervision. One category was identified, namely the functions executed most often by the respondents. The research findings are illustrated below.

4.5.1 Subtheme 1.1: Functions of supervision as executed by respondents

All the respondents mentioned that they are implementing support, education and administration as functions of supervision.

4.5.1.1 Category: Functions of supervision executed most often by the supervisor

In this category the researcher investigated which one of the three functions the respondents executed the most. The research findings relating to this question are illustrated in table 4.4 below, followed by a brief analysis of the research findings.

Table 4.4: Functions executed most often by respondents

Functions of supervision executed most often by respondents	
Function of supervision	Number of respondents
Administrative	14 (70%)
Education	4 (20%)
Support Function	2 (10%)

N=20

The research findings reveal that 14 (70%) of the 20 respondents execute the administrative function most of the time. These research findings agree with Tsui (2005:64) who notes that supervisors spend a large amount of time on the execution of the administrative function of supervision. Four (20%) respondents carry out the educational function most of the time, while the remaining 2 (10%) execute the support function most often. Reasons for the execution of each of the functions as given by the respondents are illustrated in table 4.5, where the heading for each function and narratives attained from the interviews, are presented.

Table 4.5: Reasons provided by respondents for the execution of each function

Administrative	Educational	Support
<p><i>“Most of my time is spent on the registration of individual case-loads on the databases.”</i></p> <p><i>“The allocation of files to each supervisee takes a considerable amount of time.”</i></p> <p><i>“Because these social workers are new, most of my time is spent on reading, editing of reports and monitoring of the progress of each individual file.”</i></p> <p><i>“The Department is compliance-driven, hence most of my time is allocated to the administrative function to ensure that deadlines are met.”</i></p>	<p><i>“The newly qualified social workers are not familiar with the processes in the Department, therefore I spent a lot of time to educate them about the organisational structure of the Department.”</i></p> <p><i>“The new social workers do not know how to write problem-specific reports, such as a child court enquiry and I therefore focus a lot on educating them regarding report writing.”</i></p> <p><i>“The introduction of the new Child Care Act requires the supervisor to educate and guide the newly qualified social workers on how to write specific reports and what aspects to focus on in their reports.”</i></p> <p><i>The newly qualified social workers do not understand the filing system and the importance of filing in the management of their case-loads and I spent a lot of time on this activity. ”</i></p>	<p><i>“Newly qualified social workers need a lot of support as they feel overwhelmed with their case-loads.”</i></p> <p><i>“Newly qualified social workers need a lot of support both in their personal and professional life. I spent a lot of time on supporting my newly qualified social workers with their personal problems.”</i></p>

The majority of the respondents indicated that they execute the administrative function of supervision most of the time. These findings correlate with the opinion of Tsui (2005:61) that the administrative function receives the most attention in the supervision process. First, respondents indicated that they carry out the administrative function to ensure the *registration of individual case-loads*, for the *allocation of files*, the *reading, editing of reports* and to *ensure that deadlines* are met. Kadushin (1992:51) mentions that supervisors focus on the division of the work-load of the supervisee, according to the resources available during the execution of the administrative function. The division of the work-load of supervisees by the supervisor would thus entail the *registration of each of the individual case-loads* as well as the *allocation of files*. The *reading, editing of the reports* as well as ensuring that supervisees are meeting the deadlines agreed upon are in line with the promotion of good organisational standards, which is the ultimate goal of the administrative function in social work supervision (Tsui, 2008:486).

Second, the respondents indicated the reasons for the execution of the educational function in social work supervision as follows: *to educate supervisees about the organisational structure*, and to educate and guide them in *writing specific reports*. The educational function thus equips the supervisee with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to effect service rendering (Botha, 2002; Kadushin, 1997; Tsui, 2005). Third, the execution of the support function of supervision as indicated by the respondents ensures that newly qualified social workers receive the necessary *support* in their *personal and professional lives*. In addition the respondents also provide *support* to newly qualified social workers who usually feel *overwhelmed* by their case-loads. These findings confirm Tsui's (2005:81) opinion that supervision provides the time and place for the supervisees to receive support from their supervisors. In addition, Kadushin (1992:227) is of the opinion that supportive supervision aims to improve the productivity of the supervisees by decreasing the stressors they are experiencing. Hence by executing the support function in supervision, the overall work performance of supervisees is enhanced.

4.6 THEME 2: METHODS OF SUPERVISION

In chapter 2, the three methods of supervision namely the individual, group and peer supervision have been discussed in detail. In chapter 4 the researcher focuses on the exploration of the methods of supervision as executed by the respondents.

4.6.1 Subtheme 2.1: Execution of methods of supervision

In this category the researcher explored the method of supervision most often executed by the respondents. These findings are presented in table 4.6 below, followed by a brief discussion.

4.6.1.1 Category: Methods of supervision employed most often

In this category the researcher explored which methods of supervision are employed most often by the respondents.

Table 4.6: Methods of supervision

Method of supervision employed most often by respondents	
Method of supervision	Total number of respondents
Individual supervision	18 (90%)
Group supervision	2 (10%)
Peer supervision	0 (0%)

N=20

Eighteen (90%) respondents indicated that they employ individual supervision most of the time in the supervision of newly qualified social workers. Only 2 (10%) of the respondents indicated that they execute group supervision. The research findings therefore reveal that most of the respondents employ individual supervision during the supervision of newly qualified social workers. Some of the responses, as extracted from the interviews, are as follows:

- “Because they are new, they need a lot of **individual attention**.”
- “Newly qualified social workers have specific **individual needs**, hence one-on-one sessions work the best.”
- “Newly qualified social workers **feel less intimidated** in individual supervision.”
- “They are new and insecure and individual supervision makes them **feel less exposed**.”

The above-mentioned research findings confirm that individual supervision is the most commonly used method of supervision (Kadushin, 1992:9). Individual supervision therefore promotes the provision of *individual attention* and focuses on *individual learning needs* (Young & Walter, 1999:81). In addition the respondents are also of the opinion that individual supervision allows newly qualified social workers to develop at their own pace, as they feel less exposed and intimidated.

4.7 THEME 3: PHASES OF SUPERVISION

In theme 3 the different phases of supervision and the research findings relating to each phase will be discussed. The researcher probed respondents to uncover how the different phases of the supervision process as outlined in chapter 2 are executed by the respondents. The findings of theme 3 will be presented according to the subthemes and categories identified during the interviews with respondents.

4.7.1 Subtheme 3.1: Execution of the engagement and assessment phase

The engagement and assessment phase is dependent on the supervisor to ensure that the assessment and treatment plans of the service user are appropriately executed. The formation of a trusting relationship is the focus during this phase. Hence the empirical study in this section focused on the investigation of those aspects, namely the physical setting and the development of a personal development plan. The research findings are presented below.

In this section the researcher gathered data on the manner in which the respondents ensure that the physical setting in which the supervision process is performed, is comfortable. The research findings relating to subtheme: Execution of the engagement phase, are presented in four categories as illustrated in table 4.3 (Tsui, 2005:125).

4.7.1.1 Category: Physical setting: Comfort

In this category respondents were asked how they go about to ensure that newly qualified social workers are comfortable during supervision sessions. The responses are outlined in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Physical setting: Comfort

Subtheme: Physical setting	Category	Excepts from interviews	Number of respondents
Engagement and assessment phase: Physical Setting	Physical setting: Comfort	<i>"I put my do not disturb sign on my door."</i>	17 (85%)
		<i>"I ask the switchboard operator to put all my calls on hold."</i>	16 (80%)
		<i>"I make sure that my office always looks organised, so that the newly qualified social workers can see that I am in control. This will give them a sense that I will know how to guide them."</i>	7 (35%)
		<i>"I always offer them coffee or tea."</i>	3 (15%)

N=20

It emerged from the highlighted sections of the narratives that the participants are aware of the importance to ensure that the physical setting is comfortable. An average of 16 (82%) of the 20 respondents indicated that they ***do not allow any interruptions*** while they are engaged in a supervision session, while 7 (35%) of the 20 respondents ***organise their office*** to present a picture of "control". A further 3 (15%) of the 20 respondents ***offer refreshments*** to make the newly qualified social worker feel relaxed and comfortable during the supervision session. These findings correlate with Tsui's (2005:125) opinion that comfort in the physical setting is achieved through the avoidance of noisy backgrounds and the provision of sufficient privacy. Consequently the next category, which relates to confidentiality, will be discussed, and presented in table 4.8.

4.7.1.2 Category: Physical setting: Confidentiality

Table 4.8: Physical setting: Confidentiality

Subtheme	Category	Excerpts from the interviews	Total of respondents
Engagement and assessment phase: Physical setting	Physical setting: Confidentiality	<i>“I keep the personal files of each newly qualified social worker locked up and lock my office.”</i>	12 (60%)
		<i>“I reiterate the issue of confidentiality at the beginning of each supervision session.”</i>	10 (50%)
		<i>“If personal issues arise during supervision sessions I do not make notes.”</i>	10 (50%)
		<i>“I remind newly qualified social workers about confidentiality as part of the code of ethics of social workers. “</i>	12 (60%)

N=20

In chapter 2 the importance of *confidentiality* during each supervision session is highlighted as it allows the supervisor and newly qualified social worker the atmosphere to discuss sensitive issues. This is confirmed by the research findings in table 4.8. Twelve (60%) of the 20 respondents mentioned that they ensure that the personal files of newly qualified social workers are *locked up* and that they always *lock* their *offices*. This is indicative of the importance supervisors place on confidentiality. It further emerges that 10 (50%) of the 20 respondents emphasised the importance of confidentiality at the beginning of each supervision session and they *do not make notes when personal issues are discussed* during these supervision sessions. Twelve (60%) of the respondents also remind newly qualified social workers of confidentiality in the code of ethics for social workers. The research findings suggest that supervisors place an important emphasis on the principle of confidentiality as outlined by Miley *et al.* (1995:114) and Sheafor and Horejsi (2003:76-79).

4.7.1.3 Category Physical setting: Communication

Table 4.9: Communication

Subtheme	Category	Excerpts from the interviews	Total of respondents
Engagement and assessment phase: Physical setting	Physical setting: Communication	<i>“I have an open door policy. Newly qualified social workers are aware of the fact that I am always available if they need me.”</i>	18 (90%)
		<i>“I always make an effort to listen attentively and am mindful of my body language.”</i>	19(95%)
		<i>“As far as possible I try to communicate in the mother tongue of newly qualified social workers.”</i>	17 (85%)

N=20

The value of communication in the physical setting as highlighted in chapter 2, is confirmed by the research findings in table 4.9. Most of the respondents have an ***open door policy*** (95%), apply ***communication skills*** (90%) and ensure that they accommodate the ***mother tongue*** of newly qualified social workers where possible (85%), during supervision sessions. The research findings therefore show that the respondents make sure that communication during the supervision session is open and clear. This finding correlates with Botha’s (2002:51) view.

4.7.1.4 Category: Physical setting: Compatibility

Compatibility is the last factor which influences the physical setting of the supervision session. Compatibility as described in chapter 2 refers to the manner in which the physical setting of the supervision session reflects the organisational, structure and processes of the organisation. The research findings relating to the category are outlined in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Compatibility

Subtheme	Category	Excerpts from the interviews	Total of respondents
Engagement and assessment phase: Physical setting	Physical Setting: Compatibility	<i>“The goal of supervision is to enable the newly qualified social worker to render quality services, which in turn is also the goal of the Department.”</i>	16 (80%)
		<i>“The content of supervision is in line with the vision, mission, goals of the Department and are aligned with the operational plans we are expected to draw up on a quarterly basis.”</i>	16(80%)

N=20

The responses of the participants as regards to compatibility, were categorised according to *quality service* delivery, which is the goal of supervision as well as of the Western Cape Department of Social Development. Sixteen (80%) of the respondents are of the opinion that the manner in which they conduct supervision as well as the goal of supervision is to ensure that quality services are rendered. In addition 16 (80%) respondents are of the opinion that the content which of discussions during supervision, *reflects the goal, vision and mission* of the Department.

4.7.1.5 Category: Personal development assessment

In this section the researcher investigated which respondent conduct a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker as well as which respondents do not conduct a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker. The research findings are illustrated in table 4.11, followed by an analysis of the findings.

Table 4.11: Personal development assessment

Subtheme	Category	Number of respondents that conduct a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker	Number of respondents that do not draw up a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker
Engagement and assessment phase	Personal development plan	16 (80%)	4 (20%)

N=20

The research findings reveal that 16 (80%) of the 20 respondents conduct a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker. Further exploration reveals that the personal development assessment is executed in the manner as highlighted below, attained from the narratives and extracted from the interviews:

- *“I first give the newly qualified social worker a few files to work on. During this time I take the opportunity to observe the **strengths and weaknesses** of the worker. After about two weeks I arrange for a formal supervision session.”*
- *“Thereafter I sit down with the newly qualified social worker and discuss his/her **strengths and weaknesses**.”*
- *“I view **the newly qualified social workers as adults** and conduct this assessment together with them as I think they know their own strengths and weaknesses.”*
- *“After we **have agreed on this**, we draw up the personal development plan for each new worker.”*

The above-mentioned narratives indicate that the majority of the respondents conduct a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker. The narratives also confirm that a personal development assessment is important to assess the abilities, competencies, learning needs and **strengths**, and to assist the newly qualified social worker (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011). One of the respondents also views the newly qualified social workers as **adults**. This view supports Botha (2002:90) who

notes that the educational evaluation (personal development assessment) of the newly qualified social worker should be based on the principles of adult education.

However, 4 (20%) of the 20 respondents indicate that they do not conduct a personal development assessment. Reasons provided by the respondents include the following:

- *“I do **not have time** for this. There are too many demands and emergencies which I am expected to deal with.”*
- *“**Modernisation** caused too much shifting in the posts. We are sometimes expected to move to other offices, due to staff shortages and high supervisor vacancies. I do not get time to settle down and focus on my tasks as a supervisor.”*

Although only a small number of the respondents do not conduct a personal development assessment, these findings are of great concern as the personal development assessment provides the foundation for the supervision process. It also appears that the time constraints and the Department’s modernisation policy hamper important tasks in the execution of supervision.

4.7.2 Subtheme 3.2: Planning phase

During the interviews in this section, the researcher explored two questions. First, the researcher probed whether the supervisor conducted a personal development plan together with the newly qualified social worker. Second, the researcher asked whether the supervisor has drawn up a supervision contract.

4.7.2.1 Category: Personal development plan

In this category the researcher asked the respondents whether they draw up a personal development plan together with the newly qualified social worker. The findings are illustrated in table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Personal development plan

Subtheme	Category	Number of respondents who conducted a personal development plan together with the newly qualified social worker	Number of respondents who did not draw up a personal development plan together with the newly qualified social worker
Planning phase	Personal development plan	18 (90%)	2 (10%)

N=20

The personal development plan is important as it provides the context for the working phase of the supervision process. Eighteen (90%) of the respondents indicated that they do draw up a personal development plan. When asked about the manner in which they do this, respondents provided information, illustrated by the following excerpts:

- *“Usually after we have done the assessment, we discuss the **issues to be included** in the personal development plan.”*
- *“Aspects for inclusion will be any **training needs** we have identified during the assessment of the strengths and development areas of the newly qualified social worker.”*
- *“We then complete the personal development plan on PERMIS (Performance Management System). This plan is **reviewed every quarter**.”*

In addition 2 (10%) of the respondents indicated that they do not draw up a personal development plan. Reasons for this, as extracted from the narratives are as follows:

- *“I am **new** in the position of **social work supervisor** and as yet did not have time to conduct an assessment or draw up a personal development plan. ”*
- *“I am still observing the strengths of the newly qualified social worker. I will most probably draw up the personal development plan **after three months**.”*

It is evident that the responses in the category “personal development assessment” and the category “personal development plan” do not correlate. Whilst only four respondents admitted that they did not conduct a personal development assessment, only two respondents did not draw

up a personal development plan. This indicates that at least two of the respondents do draw up a personal development plan, without conducting an assessment. However the assessment of the newly qualified social worker's learning needs is critical as it provides the foundation for the personal development plan. In addition the assessment of the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker is based on the formation of a trusting relationship between the newly qualified social worker and the supervisor (Tsui, 2005:112). Hence the inability of 4 (20%) of the respondents to do a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker, is detrimental to the establishment of a trusting relationship. This in turn impacts negatively on the development of a personal development plan. The personal development plan is important as it is a tool that clearly indicates identified learning needs in priority order, based on the personal development assessment (National Task Team for Management and Supervision, 2011). Eighteen (90%) of the 20 respondents indicated that they do draw up a personal development plan, which in turn provides a basis for the supervision contract. This will be discussed below.

4.7.2.2 Category: The supervision contract

In this category the researcher gathered data regarding the number of respondents who draw up a supervision contract, as well as those who do not. The research findings related to this question are presented in table 4.13.

Table 4.13: The supervision contract

Subtheme 2	Category	Number of respondents that conducted a supervision contract together with the newly qualified social workers	Number of respondents that did not draw up a supervision contract together with newly qualified social workers
Planning phase	Supervision contract	3 (15%)	17 (85%)

N=20

According to the research findings, only three (15%) participants draw up supervision contracts. Excerpts from the interviews reveal that the following aspects are included in the supervision contracts:

- “I include the **mutual roles and responsibilities**.”
- “I focus on mutual roles and responsibilities, **tasks** as well as the **frequency and duration of supervision sessions**.”
- “I focus on mutual roles and responsibilities, timeframes agreed upon for supervision sessions and then we both (supervisor and newly qualified social worker) **sign the contract**.”

The aspects highlighted above, are included in a supervision contract. These findings confirm of Munson’s (1983:176) opinion that the supervision contract should entail mutual roles and responsibilities, the frequency and duration of supervision sessions, the supervision outcomes and should be concluded in a written format.

However 17 (85%) of the respondents do not draw up supervision contracts as shown by the research findings in table 4.12. The following excerpts from the interviews illustrate some of the motivations:

- “I **do not have time** to focus on a supervision contract. I discuss my expectations of the newly qualified social workers verbally and give them the opportunity to do the same.”
- “I have **too much work**.”
- “I see the performance agreement of the newly qualified social worker as captured on PERMIS (Performis Management System) as the supervision contract.”
- “I guess **management never told me** to do it.”

It can be concluded from the research findings above that the majority of the respondents do not draw up supervision contracts, due to their **heavy workload, time constraints** and **a lack of guidance** from their management. This can be detrimental to the overall supervision process. Although some respondents indicated that they verbally discuss the mutual roles and responsibilities, nothing is written down and a skewed picture of the progress of the newly qualified social worker may emerge. It can also contribute to confusion as newly qualified social workers, who are already overwhelmed by the new working environment, are confronted with

unclear expectations during supervision. A written supervision contract which clearly outlines the *mutual roles and responsibilities* as well as the *duration* and *frequency of supervision sessions* provides a solid foundation for the working phase in supervision (Munson, 1983:176).

4.7.3 Subtheme 3.3: Working phase

In the working phase of the supervision process, focus was placed on the gathering of data regarding the frequency, duration and actual execution of the supervision process. The research findings will be presented in two categories namely the frequency and duration of supervision sessions, and the actual manner in which supervision is conducted, including those aspects on which the supervisor focuses during the execution of the supervision session. The first category emerging from the interviews with respondents, is further separated into two subcategories, namely structured and unstructured supervision. The second category focuses on outlining the manner in which an actual supervision session is conducted as well as on aspects which focus on the supervision session.

4.7.3.1 Category: Frequency and duration of the supervision session

In this category the researcher explored the frequency and duration of supervision sessions as executed by each respondent. The responses are presented in table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Frequency and duration of supervision

Subcategory: Structured Supervision		
Frequency	Duration	Total number of respondents
Daily	15-30 minutes	2 (10%)
Weekly	0-30 minutes	2 (10%)
Weekly	30-45 minutes	1(5%)
Weekly	45-60 minutes	3 (15%)
Biweekly	45-60 minutes	2(10%)
Monthly	0-30 minutes	2(10%)
Monthly	45-60 minutes	3(15%)
Monthly	90-120 minutes	4 (20%)
Bimonthly	45-60 minutes	1(5%)
N=20		
Subcategory: Unstructured: Daily	15-30 minutes	20 (100%)

N=20

In terms of the subcategory: structured supervision, 7 (35%) respondents provide monthly supervision sessions of between 45 minutes to 90 minutes, while 4 (20%) of the respondents provide weekly supervision sessions lasting between 30 minutes and 60 minutes. Two (10%) of the respondents provide structured daily supervision sessions of between 15 minutes to 30 minutes. The research findings indicate that the majority of the respondents execute supervision on a monthly basis. However Tsui (2005:134) recommends that each supervision session should last between 90 and 120 minutes. The research findings therefore suggest that insufficient time is allocated to the supervision of newly qualified social workers on a structured basis.

In the subcategory: unstructured supervision 20 (100%), i.e. all of the respondents, have executed unstructured supervision of sessions between 15 and 30 minutes. The above-mentioned research findings indicate that supervisors in general make provision for both structured as well as unstructured (daily) supervision. Although Tsui (2005:134) recommends that supervision sessions should be on average 90 minutes per session, the combined nature of structured and unstructured supervision is evidence of the efforts of supervisors to make themselves available to newly qualified social workers, irrespective of other pressing demands. The use of unstructured daily supervision sessions is not favourable as the quality of supervision provided to the newly qualified social worker, will have a direct impact on the quality of services delivered to the service users. In addition insufficient time is allocated to structured supervision. The lack of sufficient supervision as well as the inadequate time allocated to supervision can be detrimental to the work performance of newly qualified social workers as well as impair the quality of services rendered to service users. Therefore structured supervision is required to ensure that newly qualified social workers are provided with the necessary support and guidance to provide quality services to the service users.

4.7.3.2 Category: Aspects of supervision sessions

In this category the researcher probed the aspects on which the respondents focus during the supervision sessions. The second category, dealing with the manner in which an actual supervision session is conducted as well as with those aspects which are the focus of supervision sessions, will be illustrated by the identified themes, as they emerged from the interviews

conducted with the respondents. These research findings represent the responses of all supervisors:

- “I start the supervision session with asking newly qualified social workers about their **wellbeing**. This includes personal and professional.”
- “I always begin the session with a **summary of previous sessions**.”
- “I have an **agenda** for each meeting and always discuss it with my newly qualified social workers. I also give them an opportunity to add items for discussion to the agenda.”
- “I expect newly qualified social workers to prepare files for discussion during the supervision sessions. As most of the work is statutory in nature, we discuss those files with the relevant **return dates**.”
- “I then discuss the **progress on each file** as well as any **administrative issue** such as the quality of reports, the filing system. We also agree on new return dates for discussions.”
- “Newly qualified social workers then get the opportunity to highlight any **challenges they experience with their interventions**. I offer advice and guidance and sometimes make phone calls to assist with any problems they may experience.”
- “We discuss and highlight any **resources and related challenges** that the newly qualified social worker may experience. These include transport, stationery, computers, etc.”
- “We also discuss **work ethics** as well as any **problematic collegial relationships**.”
- “I give them the opportunity to share any **personal issues** they may deal with at that moment and offer advice, guidance and solutions. If needed I also arrange for time off, if they need to attend to family problems.”
- “We then discuss **training needs**, which are based on the challenges they experience with their individual cases.”

The research findings support Tsui’s (2005:134) view that supervisors in general start the supervision session with a supportive discussion through focusing on the **wellbeing** of the newly qualified social worker. This allows the worker to be more receptive to guidance during the supervision session. The supervisors then **focus on summarising previous supervision sessions, the supervision agenda and filing systems**. This suggests that supervisors give attention to the administrative function of supervision. Discussions on **the progress of cases** as well as the **quality of written reports and challenges related to each case** confirm the execution of the

educational function of supervision. The *work-related stress issues* relate to the support function of supervision. The three functions of supervision and their value in the supervision process are advocated by authors such as Kadushin and Harkness (2002), Botha (2002) and Tsui (2005).

It is evident from the research findings that the majority of the supervisors execute the three functions of supervision namely the administrative, educational and support functions, during the working phase of the supervision process. The administrative function of supervision is important as it ensures good organisational standards (Tsui, 2008:487). The educational function of supervision enhances the professional development of social workers and equips the newly qualified social worker with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills for effective service rendering (Botha, 2002; Kadushin, 1992; Middleman & Rhodes, 1985; Tsui, 2005). The support function focuses on improving the the productivity of the supervisee by decreasing the stressors they are experiencing (Kadushin, 1992:227). In conclusion the research findings confirm that the supervisors execute the working phase within the theoretical framework of supervision.

Furthermore the research findings in table 4.6.1 indicate that the respondents execute the administrative function of supervision the most. However the research findings linked to the subtheme “working phase” provides evidence that the respondents try to integrate the three functions of supervision, namely the administrative, educational and support functions during the execution of the supervision sessions.

The third category relates to the skills employed during the execution of the supervision process and will be presented, analyzed and interpreted accordingly.

4.7.3.3 Category: Skills employed during the execution of the supervision process

In this section the researcher asked which skills are used by the respondents during the execution of the supervision process. The responses are illustrated in table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Supervisory skills as utilised by respondents

Skills	Total number of respondents (percentage)
Assertive skills	20 (100%)
Elaborating skills	0 (0%)
Empathic skills	20 (100%)
Sharing skills	0 (0%)
Skills in sharing data	0 (0%)

N=20

The table above illustrates that the respondents utilise skills such as assertive and emphatic skills to ensure the successful execution of the working phase (Shulman, 1993:79-133). The use of these various skills by the supervisors contributes to the successful outcome of the supervision process and therefore ensures that newly qualified social workers are enabled to deliver quality services to the service user. However none of the respondents indicated that they are aware of other skills such as elaborating, sharing skills or skills in sharing data. This may be due to the lack of formal supervision training of the respondents as indicated by the research findings in table 4.1 and concurs with Botha (2002:vi) who notes that formal training is not that common for social work supervisors in South Africa.

4.7.4 Subtheme 3.4: Evaluation and termination phase

The final subtheme of the phases of supervision is referred to as the evaluation and termination phase. The two categories which emerged from the subtheme will be presented and discussed accordingly.

4.7.4.1 Category: Evaluation phase

The researcher asked the respondents to provide information about the aspects they focus on during the execution of the evaluation phase in supervision. The findings are illustrated in table 4.16, followed by a brief analysis.

Table 4.16: Evaluation Phase

Execution of the evaluation phase	Total number of participants	Aspects focused on during evaluation and reasons for non execution of the evaluation phase: Excerpts from interviews
Yes	11 (55%)	<p><i>"I conduct quarterly evaluation sessions which are linked to the performance management system of the Department."</i></p> <p><i>"I focus on the progress of the newly qualified social worker and his/her overall performance."</i></p> <p><i>"I focus on the performance of the newly qualified social worker as well as progress made in terms of administrative requirements, such as filing and compliance to agreed upon return dates."</i></p>
No	9 (45%)	<p><i>"I do not have time to conduct evaluations as my workload is too heavy."</i></p> <p><i>"I am new in the position of social work supervisor and am still busy finding my feet."</i></p>

N=20

In this section the researcher asked whether or not respondents execute the evaluation phase of supervision. Those respondents who do execute the evaluation phase were required to provide the researcher with information regarding the aspects they focus on. In addition those respondents who do not execute the evaluation phase were required to provide the researcher with reasons for this. Eleven (55%) of the respondents indicated that they execute the evaluation phase. Aspects on which the supervisors focused during the evaluation phase are provided in table 4.16 above. The following aspects emerged: evaluations of the *work performance*, *progress*, *compliance* with return dates and the *interval for evaluations* (quarterly) were highlighted.

Hence *time constraints*, *work-load management* and the *period of employment* have an impact on the ability of 9(45%) supervisors to execute the evaluation phase. Authors such as Botha (2002:228) mention that although evaluation is one of the most important phases, it is the most neglected phase in the supervision process. The inability of supervisors to give attention to evaluation in supervision is underpins Botha's concern. Evaluation is important in the execution of the supervision process as it not only monitors the newly qualified social worker's performance, but also determines his/her readiness to be promoted to consultation status.

4.7.4.2 Category: Termination phase

The researcher requested the respondents to provide information regarding the aspects on which they focus during the execution of the termination phase in supervision. The findings are presented in table 4.17. followed by an interpretation thereof.

Table 4.17: Termination phase

Execution of the termination phase	Total number of participants	Aspects focused on during termination and reasons for not executing the termination phase: Excerpts from interviews
Yes	4 (20%)	<p><i>“During modernization I received a supervisor’s post at another office. This compelled me to terminate my supervisory relationships. I had individual sessions with all of my supervisees. I also took them out to lunch.”</i></p> <p><i>“During the termination sessions I focused on the reason for me leaving the office, our mutual experiences of the supervisory relationship and the way forward in preparation of the new supervisor.”</i></p>
No	16 (80%)	<p><i>“I am new in the position as a supervisor and did not have the opportunity yet to terminate supervision session.”</i></p> <p><i>“The newly qualified social workers have an obligation in terms of their bursaries to work for a few years for the Department. I guess that is why they do not resign as much as the more skilled and experienced social workers.”</i></p>

N=20

The research findings suggest that only four (20%) of the respondents had the opportunity to terminate supervision of newly qualified social workers. Themes identified during the interviews with the respondents include the **relocation of social work supervisors**, due to the Department’s **modernization policy**. These aspects correlated with the reasons for the termination of supervision as outlined Tsui (2005:117).

However the majority of the respondents did not have the opportunity to terminate supervision sessions. This may be proof that the efforts of the Department to retain social workers in the organisation, as transcribed in the Recruitment and Retention Strategy (Department of Social Development, 2006) are succeeding. Additionally newly qualified social workers are inexperienced, thus requiring supervision.

4.7.5 Subtheme 3.5: Activities in social work supervision

In this division the researcher explored the activities of social work supervision executed the most by the respondents.

4.7.5.1 Category: Activities executed most often in supervision

The researcher posed a question to determine which of the activities of supervision are performed by the respondents. The research findings are illustrated in table 4.18 followed by an analysis of the research findings.

Table 4.18: Supervision activity most often executed by respondents

Activities most often executed	Number of respondents agreed	Motivation: Excerpts from interviews
Teaching	7 (35%)	<p><i>“Newly qualified social workers need a lot of new skills and on the job training.”</i></p> <p><i>“The introduction and implementation of the Child Care Act forces me to spend a lot of time on training newly qualified social workers on how to implement the required legislation.”</i></p>
Staff development	1 (5 %)	<p><i>“Staff development allows me to focus on a wider number of social workers and allows me to address specific learning needs in bigger groups, for example, the structure of the Department as well as the Older Persons Act.”</i></p>
Mentoring	11 (55%)	<p><i>“Because they are new they are so overwhelmed and in need of personal and professional guidance.”</i></p> <p><i>“I see mentoring as a combination of both teaching and training as it gives me the opportunity to assist the newly qualified social worker on a daily basis.”</i></p> <p><i>“Newly qualified social workers need constant coaching and on the job training.”</i></p> <p><i>“Mentoring is more developmental and allows me to address the learning need of the newly qualified social worker in a positive manner.”</i></p> <p><i>“I believe the newly qualified social worker also possesses new knowledge and theory, which I can use. I see the supervision of newly qualified social workers as a relationship based on mutual learning.”</i></p>

N=20

During the interviews with the respondents the majority indicated that they utilise all of the above-mentioned activities during the execution of supervision. However when asked which activity they utilised most, 7 (35%) of the 20 respondents indicated that they mostly utilise training as an activity in social work supervision. Reasons as outlined in the excerpts attained during the interviews include the newly qualified social worker's need to acquire *new skills* and the know-how to implement *new legislation*. One respondent uses staff development as a means to address specific learning needs of bigger groups. The use of training and staff development is advocated by Weinbach (1998:158-159) who states that staff development focuses on addressing problem situations or in providing newly qualified social workers with new or updated learning required to function in changing work environments.

The majority (55%) of the respondents mostly utilise mentoring to assist the newly qualified social worker on dealing with the demands of their job. Reasons provided by the respondents and as highlighted in table 4.17 include: mentoring which is based *on mutual learning*; the fact that newly qualified social workers need a lot of *personal and professional guidance*; the fact that they view *mentoring as a combination of both teaching and training*; the occurrence of constant *coaching and on-the-job training* as well as the *developmental nature of mentoring*. The researching findings support the opinions of authors such as Connor and Pokora (2007:13), and Ralph (2002:193) who are of the opinion that mentoring assists a person to make a specific transition in knowledge, promotes the acquisition of job-related skills over a shorter period of time and entails coaching which addresses specific development areas of the supervisee. These research findings also provide evidence that the exploration of the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers is of critical importance.

SECTION E: MENTORING

In section E the following aspects of mentoring, according to the research findings, will be presented and analyzed: the differences between mentoring and supervision, the appointment of mentors, persons to be appointed as mentors, the benefits of mentoring, the risks relating to the execution of mentoring, the qualities and roles of mentors, the different functions of mentoring, the mentoring process in social work supervision, the different types of mentoring as well as the factors which impact on the successful execution of mentoring. The different aspects of mentoring will be illustrated and analyzed according to the different themes, subthemes and categories as outlined in table 4.3.

4.8 THEME 4: MENTORING

As noted in chapter 3 the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision are dealt with in this section. During the interviews the opinions of the respondents regarding the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision were investigated. These findings will now be presented, discussed and analyzed according to the relevant subthemes and categories as outlined in table 4.2.

4.8.1 Subtheme 4.1: Features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision

The subtheme namely the features and use of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision was divided into four categories.

4.8.1.1 *Category: Differences between mentoring and social work supervision*

An open-ended question was posed to respondents to ascertain their opinions regarding the differences between mentoring and social work supervision. These opinions, as extracted from the narratives of the interviews are presented below:

Table 4.19: Differences between social work supervision and mentoring

Social work supervision	Mentoring
“Supervision is more structured and formal and focuses on social work specific issues. ”	“Mentoring is less structured and informal and focuses on broader development issues. ”
“Supervision is more theoretical. ”	“Mentoring is more practical and focuses on on-the-job skills acquisition.”
“Supervision focuses on the work environment. ”	“Mentoring focuses on the person as well as the work environment. ”
“Supervision is based on the needs of the organisation. ”	“Mentoring is based on the needs of the individual. ”
“Supervision is more instructional and one-sided. ”	“Mentoring is two-sided and more holistic. ”
“In social work the supervisor must be a registered social worker. ”	“The mentor does not have to be a social worker. ”
“Supervision is compulsory. ”	“Mentoring is voluntary. ”

N=20

The differences between mentoring and social work supervision as highlighted by the respondents, correlate with some of the differences highlighted throughout chapter 3. Seventeen (85%) of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that **social work supervision is more structured than mentoring**. Sixteen respondents are of the opinion that **mentoring is more practical** and occurs **on the job**. Fifteen (75%) of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that **mentoring is two-sided** and more **holistic** whilst supervision is **instructional, rigid** and **one-sided**. This correlates with the opinion of Rolfe-Flett (2002:2) that mentoring is a process which creates a space for mutual learning. Ten (50%) of the respondents considered **mentoring** to be **voluntary** whilst **supervision** is **compulsory**. Sixteen (80%) of the respondents are of the opinion that the **supervisor must be a social worker** whilst a **mentor does not have to be a social worker**. The differences between mentoring and social work supervision as highlighted by the respondents correlate with the literature review as outlined in chapters 2 and 3. Engelbrecht (2010:780) for example mentions that the supervisor is a social worker registered with the South African Council for Social Service Professionals, whilst the mentor is a senior professional (Olian *et al.*, 1998:16). It can therefore be concluded that a significant number of social work supervisors have a clear understanding of mentoring and how it differs from social work supervision. The main difference between social work supervision and mentoring therefore is **that only a registered**

social worker can be appointed to supervise a newly qualified social worker in South Africa, whilst the mentor can be any more experienced person, preferably in his/her field of practice.

4.8.1.2 Category: Multiple mentors vs. one mentor

In this category the respondents were asked whether they would appoint one or more than one mentor for each newly qualified social worker. The responses are indicated in table 4.20 followed by an analysis of the findings.

Table 4.20: Multiple mentors versus one mentor

Mentors	Number of respondents agreed (percentage)	Excerpts from interviews
One mentor	2 (10%)	<p><i>“In my opinion the use of more than one mentor may cause role confusion.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think the supervisor must take sole responsibility for the role of mentor, otherwise she will have no control over the outcomes of the mentoring process.”</i></p>
More than one mentor	18 (90%)	<p><i>“You can appoint a mentor based on each of the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker.”</i></p> <p><i>“Another supervisor in the office can also act as a mentor depending on how comfortable the newly qualified social worker feels with the person.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think most of my staff will first go to senior social workers before approaching me for guidance. That’s why I view my senior staff as mentors.”</i></p> <p><i>“Due to the specialist nature of probation work, I have built good relationships with the magistrates and prosecutors. We are at that stage where I have appointed them as mentors for each of the newly qualified social workers. It makes things easier and the magistrates are keen to mentor, because at the end we all benefit from it.”</i></p> <p><i>“I think one needs to appoint a mentor who focuses on the personal development of the newly qualified social worker and one who focuses on the professional development of the newly qualified social worker.”</i></p> <p><i>“I do not think the supervisor should assist the newly qualified social worker to solve personal issues. I think a mentor should be appointed to assist the newly qualified social worker with personal issues. It’s the job of the supervisor to focus on the work performance of his/her staff.”</i></p> <p><i>“In my opinion a psychologist must be appointed to assist the newly qualified social worker with his/her personal problems. This psychologist could be appointed on an ad-hoc basis.”</i></p>

N=20

Eighteen (40%) of the respondents indicated that in their opinion multiple mentors can be allocated to each newly qualified social worker. Only two (10%) of the respondents indicated that they prefer to have one mentor. The research findings confirm the literature review. For example one of the respondents indicated that the *social work supervisor should be the only mentor* of the newly qualified social worker. This supports Turner (2000:238) who mentions that the supervisor can be the only mentor of the newly qualified social worker. On the other hand 4 (20%) of the respondents who support the appointment of multiple mentors are of the opinion that the *social work supervisor should not provide the newly qualified social worker with psychosocial support*, which is one of the functions executed during the mentoring process. This concurs with authors such as Fouché and Lunt (2010:401) as well as Wright and Werther (1991:29) who mention that the immediate social worker should not provide psycho-social support to the newly qualified social worker as this may compromise their working relationship; the immediate supervisor should focus on the work performance of the newly qualified social worker. Furthermore one respondent shares the opinion of Connor and Pokora (2007:55) that an external mentor can also be appointed.

One respondent is of the opinion that the appointment of multiple mentors may *cause role confusion*; a concern shared by Meyer and Fourie (2004:140). However this concern can be eliminated if the social work supervisor is the facilitator of the overall mentoring process, in the allocation of multiple mentors. One respondent is also of the opinion that other senior social workers and other social work supervisors can be appointed as mentors. In conclusion the majority of the respondents are in favour of the appointment of multiple mentors for each newly qualified social worker as this can enhance their work performance and will ensure the acquisition of skills over a shorter period of time, allowing them to grow personally and professionally. The appointment of multiple mentors also allows the social work supervisor to focus on the work performance of the newly qualified social worker, whilst another mentor such a psychologist can give assistance with any personal problems he/she may experience. The appointment of specific persons as mentors was also explored and will be presented in the next category.

4.8.1.3 Category: Persons to be appointed as mentors

In this category the researcher focused on the opinions of the respondents regarding the appointment of certain professionals, such as the immediate social work supervisor, other senior professionals as well as mentors outside the organisation. These findings are illustrated in table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21: Persons to be appointed as mentors

Specified persons	Number of respondents agreed	Excerpts from interviews
Immediate social work supervisor	18 (90%)	<p><i>"I see the newly qualified social worker as the internal client of the Department. The social work supervisor is the most appropriate mentor as he/she is best placed to connect the history of the social work profession with the present."</i></p> <p><i>"The immediate social work supervisor knows the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker."</i></p>
Other senior professionals in the organisation	18 (90%)	<p><i>"My senior staff are already mentoring the newly qualified social workers.</i></p> <p><i>Senior social workers within the organisation possess of a variety of skills and expertise which they can share with the newly qualified social workers."</i></p> <p><i>"Sometimes the newly qualified social workers feel more comfortable with the senior staff than with the supervisor."</i></p>
Other social work supervisors	9 (45%)	<p><i>"In my opinion other supervisors are already mentors to my staff as they assist when I am on leave."</i></p>
External person	16 (80%)	<p><i>"In my opinion senior social workers from the NGO sector sometimes have more experience than us in the Department. They can really add value as mentors."</i></p> <p><i>"I do not think we have any adoption specialists within the Department. With the new Child Care Act the appointment of an external adoption specialist can assist the newly qualified social worker with her statutory responsibilities."</i></p>

N=20

The research findings reveal that 18 (90%) of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that the **immediate supervisor** should be appointed as a mentor. Reasons for this as indicated during the interviews and summarised in table 4.21 are that the social work supervisor is best placed to

know the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker and also has the institutional knowledge to connect the changes in the field of social work with the history of the social work profession. These opinions agrees with Turner (2000:238). Additionally 18 (90%) of the respondents are of the opinion that any other senior social worker can be appointed as a mentor, due to their *expertise and years of experience*. Sixteen of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that an external mentor such as an *adoption specialist or senior social worker in the NGO sector* can be appointed as a mentor, owing to *their skills and expertise*. The appointment of senior social workers, employed in the NGO sector, can thus be of great value for newly qualified social workers. However this may have practical implications, as the organisational structure of the Department differs from that of organisations in the NGO sector.

Only 45% of the respondents though, are of the opinion that another social work supervisor within the same organisation can be appointed as a mentor. The majority of the respondents felt that another supervisor within the same organisation should not be appointed as a mentor, as this may cause *role confusion*. However these concerns can be alleviated if the social work supervisor is appointed as the facilitator of the overall mentoring process.

It is clear from the above-mentioned excerpts that mentoring can be beneficial to the newly qualified social worker and can be utilised in a number of creative ways. The benefits of mentoring will therefore be categorised, presented and analyzed accordingly.

4.8.2 Subtheme 4.2: The benefits and risks of mentoring

The following two categories, namely the benefits of mentoring for the newly qualified social worker and the benefits of mentoring for the organisation as highlighted by the respondents will be presented separately and analyzed.

4.8.2.1 Categories of benefits for the newly qualified social worker as illustrated with excerpts from the interviews

- “Mentoring focuses on both *the personal and professional development* of the newly qualified social worker.”
- “It leads to *increased self-confidence and self-image*.”

- “Mentoring **increases** the newly qualified social worker’s **knowledge base**.”
- “It gives the newly qualified social worker the chance to build closer relationships with their colleagues, which leads to increased **networking**.”

4.8.2.2 *Categories of benefits of mentoring for the organisation as illustrated with excerpts from the interviews*

- “Mentoring leads to **increased work performance**.”
- “Staff are happier if they receive the necessary support, hence mentoring leads to the **retention of staff**.”
- “If work performance increases, **organisational goals are reached**.”
- “Mentoring leads to **an improvement in the quality of services** therefore the **reputation of the Department in communities may improve**.”

The research findings above agree with authors such as Collins *et al.* (1997:145), Tillman (2001:299), Greenwood (2004:20-41), Meyer and Fourie (2004:12-13), Price (2005:38), Wilson and Tilse (2006:177) and De Boer and Coady (2007:40), to the extent that mentoring leads to an increased **knowledge base, enhanced self-image, increased network opportunities** for newly qualified social workers as well as placing the focus on both the **personal and professional development** of the newly qualified social worker. In addition the respondents in the study are of the opinion that the benefits of mentoring for the newly qualified social workers, may have a positive impact on the organisation. It may lead to **increased work performance, the retention of staff, the achievement of organisational goals** and an **improvement in the quality of services** rendered to service users. Hence mentoring canals improve the **reputation of the organisation** in the communities. However although mentoring have various benefits, authors such as Cranwell-Ward *et al.* (2004:65) caution against the risks relating to mentoring. The research findings dealing with the risks of mentoring will be presented and analyzed next.

4.8.2.3 *Categories of risks of mentoring*

In this category the opinions of the respondents regarding the risks of mentoring have been categorised as follows:

- “*Time constraints* can impact negatively on the mentoring process.”
- “*Interpersonal conflict* in the organisation can prevent the successful execution of the mentoring process.”
- “*Lack of resources* and *work overload* can pose as a risk to mentoring.”
- “If the mentor is *not a specialist* in his/her field or *does not know the structure of the Department*, then the mentoring process can be at risk.”

The respondents in this study are of the opinion that *time constraints, interpersonal conflict, lack of resources, work overload, mentors who do not have sufficient expertise or do not know the organisational structure*, can have a negative impact on the successful execution of the mentoring process. These opinions concur with Cranwell-Ward *et al.* (2004:65) and Johnson and Ridley (2004:73). Furthermore respondents considered that those mentors who are not familiar with the organisational structure and who are not specialists in their field can also impact negatively on the mentoring process. It is therefore imperative that the selection and appointment of mentors should be done with the utmost care and that mentors should be familiarised with the organisational structure of the Western Cape Department of Social Development.

4.8.3 **Subtheme 4.3: Qualities of mentors during the execution of the mentoring process**

In this section the opinion of the respondents was asked regarding the qualities they think a mentor should have. The researcher also explored the roles a mentor should fulfil during the execution of the mentoring process. The research findings which emerged from the interviews with the respondents will be presented in two categories.

4.8.3.1 *Category: Qualities of a mentor for the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision*

In addition to the list of qualities as presented in chapter 3, respondents were also requested to provide any additional qualities they think mentors should have. The findings are presented in table 4.22 below, followed by an analysis of the findings.

Table 4.22: Qualities of a mentor

Qualities	Number of respondents (percentages)
Respected by his/her fellow employees	17 (85%)
Supportive	19(95%)
Creative	18 (90%)
Open	18 (90%)
Strategic	19 (95%)
Kind to others and self	18 (90%)
Just	18 (90%)
Additional qualities	
Responsible	7 (85%)%)
Accountable	7 (85%)
Humble and honest	5 (25%)
Passionate about what they do	2 (10%)
Sense of humour	2 (10%)

N=20

The research findings indicate that more than 85% of the respondents agree with authors such as Connor and Pokora (2007:4) that a mentor should be respected by his fellow employees, and must be supportive, creative, open, strategic and reasonable. In addition 7 (35%) of the respondents noted that a mentor should be responsible, while 7 (35%) of the respondents agree that a mentor should be accountable. Five (25%) of the respondents mention that a mentor should be humble and honest, and 2 (10%) that a mentor should be passionate about his/her work. Lastly 2 (10%) of the respondents consider a sense of humour to be important. Although the following qualities, namely: responsibility, accountability, passion and sense of humour, are not highlighted in the literature review, the respondents clearly indicate that these additional qualities are important to enable the mentors to execute their roles successfully in mentoring as an activity of social work supervision.

4.8.4 Subtheme 4.4: Roles for the successful execution of the mentoring process

The researcher explored which roles each respondent considers important to execute during mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. The research findings are presented below.

4.8.4.1 *Category: Roles for the mentor in the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision*

The researcher explored the opinions of the respondents regarding which roles a mentor should fulfil during the execution of the mentoring process. Respondents were also given a list of roles and requested to add any roles, they consider important.

Table 4.23: Roles of a mentor

Roles of mentors	Number of respondents (percentages)
Facilitator	17 (85%)
Administrator	17(85%)
Coordinator	17 (85%)
Enabler	17 (85%)
Guide	17(85%)
Counsellor	17 (85%)
Teacher	17 (85%)
Additional qualities	
Good leader	4 (20%)
Good advocator	7 (35%)

N=20

The research findings indicated that more than 17 (85%) of the 20 respondents agree with Kram (1985:2) and Meyer and Fourie (2004:54) that the mentor should fulfil the following roles: facilitator, administrator, coordinator, overseer, enabler, guide, counsellor and teacher. The successful execution of these roles by the supervisors would ensure that newly qualified social workers acquire the necessary skills and competencies to enable them to deliver quality social work services.

Although not highlighted in the literature review, 4 (20%) of the respondents think that a mentor should also be a good leader, whilst 7 (45%) is of the opinion that the mentor should be a good

advocator, as these roles will allow them to facilitate career opportunities and access to resources for the newly qualified social worker.

4.8.4.2 *Category: Roles for the newly qualified social worker, for the successful execution of the mentoring process*

In this category respondents were asked to highlight the roles they think a newly qualified social worker should fulfil for the successful execution of the mentoring process. The research findings are categorised and presented below in table 4.24.

Table 4.24: Roles of the newly qualified social worker

Roles of newly qualified social workers to fulfil during the mentoring process	Number of respondents
learner	18 (90%)
networker	12 (60%)
presenter	15(75%)

N=20

Eighteen (90%) of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that the newly qualified social worker should be a learner. One (5%) of the respondents motivates his answer by stating that “*in order for the mentoring process to work, the newly qualified social worker should be a good **learner**, if they expect the supervisor to be a teacher*”. The role of a learner for the newly qualified social worker also concurred in the literature review with Meyer (2007:53-60). Twelve (60%) respondents state that the newly qualified social worker should be a good networker and motivate this as follows:

- “*The newly qualified social workers are expected to deliver quality services. To enable them to do this means that they should know how to access the limited pool of resources. This means that they should be able to **network**.*”

Fifteen (75%) of the respondents indicated that newly qualified social workers should also be good presenters. Some of the motivations are stated below:

- “*Newly qualified social workers are expected to be leaders and they should be able to **present** to bigger groups.*”

- “*We are the leaders of the Department and as such are expected to do **presentations** to the NGO sector and to management.*”
- “*Our work as social workers requires us to do group and community work, so we must be **good presenters** to carry the message across.*”

It can therefore be concluded that newly qualified social workers should be good networkers and presenters as this will enable them to deliver effective services to the communities which they serve. In addition 4 (20%) respondents are of the opinion that the newly qualified social worker should also fulfil the roles as expected from a mentor, as illustrated in table 4.24. One (5%) respondent motivates her choice as follows: “*We are mentors and newly qualified social workers are groomed to be the next generation of supervisors.*” *If we want them to excel as supervisors and mentors we should train them to **mirror our roles** in the performance of their daily duties.*” This is significant as some of the newly qualified social workers will be promoted to supervisors if they gain the necessary experience and it will be expected of them to be mentors.

4.9 THEME 5: FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING

Theme 5 contains one subtheme which will be discussed below.

4.9.1 Subtheme 5.1: Execution of functions of mentoring in social work supervision

This subtheme of theme 5 is divided into two categories, as emerged from the research findings. First, the respondents were asked which of the four functions of mentoring they would execute during the mentoring process. All the respondents indicated that they would execute all four functions, namely the psychosocial, career, coaching and role modelling functions. These findings correlate with the research findings which indicated that the psychosocial, career, coaching and role modelling functions are functions which are executed during the mentoring process (Kram, 1985:23; Russel & Adams, 1997:2; Soshik & Godshalk, 2000:104; Tillman, 2001:2980). Second, the respondents were asked to indicate which of the above-mentioned functions they think are most important and to motivate their choice. These findings are presented in table 4.25 and will be analyzed accordingly:

Table 4.25: Functions of mentoring as executed in social work supervision

Functions of mentoring used the most	Number of respondents (percentages)	Motivation for choice: Excerpts from interviews
Psychosocial support	7(35%)	<p><i>“Because they are new and working in their community of origin they need a lot of emotional support.”</i></p> <p><i>“My new staff are so overwhelmed with the work and adjusting to the life of working people, they feel very insecure and need a lot of support and reassurance.”</i></p> <p><i>“If my staff are happy in their personal lives and can cope, they perform better at work.”</i></p>
Career function	3 (15%)	<p><i>“The newly qualified social workers need a lot of career guidance.”</i></p> <p><i>“They are career orientated and want to know where they will be in 5 years.”</i></p>
Coaching	7 (35%)	<p><i>“Because they are new they need to acquire a lot of job related skills within a short period of time.”</i></p> <p><i>“Newly qualified social workers need a lot of guidance and practical advice.”</i></p> <p><i>“They not only need to know what to do, you should also show them how to do it.”</i></p>
Role modelling	3 (15%)	<p><i>“I want to be a role model to my staff. If they see my behaviour and if I uphold a good reputation, they will do the same.”</i></p> <p><i>“I lead by example.”</i></p> <p><i>“Newly qualified social workers should mirror my behaviour. I don’t sit and gossip with staff, hence I believe they will learn from me and copy my behaviour.”</i></p>

N=20

Table 4.25 illustrates that 7 (35%) of the 20 respondents are of the opinion that the psychosocial support function is the most important. Another 7 (35%) respondents are of the opinion that coaching is the most important function. Three (15%) of the respondents consider the career function to be the most important in the mentoring process. Another 3 (15%) respondents think that role modelling is the most important function. These findings agree with Botha (2002:212) and Kadushin and Harkness (2002:238) that the newly qualified social worker may observe the behaviour and conduct of the social work supervisor and follow this example, or that the manner

in which the social work supervisor deals with the service user and his/her conduct in the office have a positive impact on the behaviour and conduct of the newly qualified social worker.

Although the literature review does not make a distinction between which functions are more or less important, it is clear that the majority of the respondents consider the psychosocial support function and the coaching function to be the most important. The motivation for their choices as extracted from the narratives includes the fact that newly qualified social workers feel *overwhelmed*, need a lot of *on-the-job training* (“the *what* to do and *how* to do it”), and need *constant assurance* and *emotional support*.

4.10 THEME 6: PROCESS OF MENTORING

The analysis of theme 6 yielded one subtheme, which was further divided into three categories. The opinions of the respondents regarding the following were explored:

- First, how they would execute the mentoring process.
- Second, respondents should indicate whether they thought the training of mentors of newly qualified social workers was necessary. If not, they should motivate why; or they should elaborate on which aspects should be included in training if they thought it was necessary.
- Third, whether they thought a relationship fit between the mentor and newly qualified social worker was necessary.
- Fourth, they should indicate which skills they thought a supervisor should possess in the application of the mentoring process, and how these related to those they have identified during the execution of the supervision process.

4.10.1 Subtheme 6.1: Execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision

This division explores the execution of mentoring in social work supervision by the respondents.

4.10.1.1 Category: Supervisor’s execution of the mentoring process in social work supervision as indicated by the respondents

The respondents were asked how they would go about in their execution of the mentoring process. These responses were categorised and are presented below, followed by an analysis:

- “I will first look at the **assessment** that I have done with each newly qualified social worker as this will give me an opportunity to identify their **learning needs**.”
- “Dependent on the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker, I will do research and source the **appropriate mentors**. For example we have to implement the Child Care Act, so I would **appoint an adoption specialist** to train and mentor the newly qualified social workers. In terms of the reports that they need to write I will appoint one of the **senior social workers** within my team.”
- “I will also **appoint a person from the Human Resources Department** to mentor them about leave and policies and procedures in the Department.”
- “I will appoint a psychologist or social worker or **someone in the Employment Assistance Programme** to help them with their personal issues.”
- “I will ask an administrative officer, the office manager and other seniors to be part of a **committee** to assist me with the facilitation of the mentoring programme.”
- “After I have appointed the mentors, I will most probably find an organisation to **train** us all **on mentoring** and also how the Department operates.”
- “I will then arrange for the **mentors and newly qualified social workers to meet and to discuss their roles, expectations, and how they will provide me with feedback**. I will expect them to give me **written reports on a monthly basis**.”
- “I will **meet** with each of them on a regular basis, say **monthly**, to **discuss progress and to see what is working and what is not working**.”

It can be concluded from the excerpts above that the majority of the respondents will execute the mentoring process as noted by authors such as Meyer and Fourie (2004:184). The different phases of mentoring can also be identified from the responses of the respondents. First, the respondents state that they will conduct a needs assessment to determine the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker. This correlates with the opinion of the researcher that **the assessment of the specific learning needs** of the newly qualified social worker, should be conducted during the execution of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision. Second, respondents are of the opinion that, based on the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker, they will **appoint** appropriate **mentors** such as other senior social workers, a specialist as well as a human resources officer. This suggests that the respondents are in favour of the

appointment of *multiple mentors*, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. However the literature review in chapter 3 also reveals that the supervisor should ensure that the goals of the mentoring process, which are based on the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker, should be in line with the overall objectives of the mentoring process.

Third, the research reveals that respondents will appoint a mentoring committee to assist with the facilitation of the mentoring process. These findings are in line with Strand and Bosco-Ruggiero (2010:53) who states that a *mentoring committee*, comprising different selected senior staff members within the same organisation can be appointed, prior to the execution of the mentoring process. The respondents mentioned that they will appoint an administrative officer as well as other senior staff as part of their mentoring committee. The functions of the mentoring committee will for example be to determine organisational readiness for the mentoring process; to obtain the identification particulars of the protégé, also referred to as the newly qualified social worker; the selection of the mentors; to intervene when problems arise between the mentor and newly qualified social worker; and to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the mentoring programme (Matulovich, 1996:21).

Third, respondents mention that they would organise *for all involved* in the mentoring process *to be trained* regarding the mentoring process as well as the internal operations of the Department. The training of mentors also forms part of the *initial phase* of the mentoring process. The training of mentors as well as of the newly qualified social workers is advocated by Matulovich (1996:22) who argues that training would ensure that the participants have a common understanding of the purpose, advantages of the mentoring programme and how it fits into the organisational objectives. Respondents are of the view that upon completion of the mentoring training programme mentors and the newly qualified social workers should *meet to discuss their roles and expectations*, as part of the *cultivation phase* of the mentoring process. The researcher is of the opinion that the mentor and newly qualified social worker should also do *a joint assessment* of the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker. These learning needs are based on the specific needs to be addressed during each mentoring relationship. Various tools such as the Johari window, mind-mapping and personal constructs as well as the SWOT analysis

can be utilised to assist the mentor and newly qualified social worker with the joint assessment process (Connor & Pokora, 2007:137-157; Hay, 1991:81-91).

Fourth, the respondents mentioned that they would expect *written feedback* regarding the progress of the newly qualified social worker and would also arrange for monthly reports to determine whether the goals of the mentoring process have been met. This forms part of the *evaluation and termination phase* in the mentoring process. However, prior to the evaluation and termination phase, the *implementation phase* should be executed as suggested by Kram (1985:49) and Greenwood (1995:31). The implementation phase focuses on the execution of the *functions of mentoring* and provides the foundation for the next phase, which was previously discussed, namely the evaluation and termination phase.

It is therefore evident from the research findings that the opinion of the respondents on the execution of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision closely correlates with the postulations of authors such as Kram (1985:49), Greenwood, (1995:31), and Meyer and Fourie (2004:184).

4.10.1.2 Category: Necessity of a relationship fit

The second category focuses on the opinion of the respondents on the importance of a relationship fit in the mentoring relationship. The research findings are presented below:

Table 4.26: Relationship fit

Necessity of a relationship fit in the mentoring process	Number of respondents
Yes	16 (80%)
No	4 (20%)

N=20

Four (20%) respondents felt that a relationship fit between the mentor and newly qualified social worker is not necessary as “*mutual respect should form the basis of any professional relationship*”. However 16 (80%) of the respondents are of the opinion that a relationship fit

between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker is important. Excerpts from the responses show that:

- “*There must not be any **personality clashes**.*”
- “*The mentor and newly qualified social worker must at least have **some level of understanding**.*”
- “*The personalities of the parties involved in the mentoring relationship should more or less be the same to **avoid conflict**.*”

These views of the respondents support Koonce (1994:37) who emphasises the importance of the relationship fit between the mentor and the newly qualified social worker for the successful execution of the mentoring process.

4.10.1.3 Category: Training of mentors and aspects of mentoring to be included in a mentoring programme

The respondents were asked whether they were of the opinion that training of mentors was necessary and also to name the aspects of the training which should be included in the mentoring programme. All the respondents are of the opinion that the training of mentors is necessary. The following aspects, according to suggestions from the respondents, should be included in a mentoring programme:

- “***definition of mentoring***”.
- “*how to execute the **mentoring process***”.
- “*the **qualities of a mentor***”.
- “*what **roles** a mentor could fulfil*”.
- “*what is the different **types of mentoring** I can use*”.
- “***background information** about the Department so that the mentors could be aware of our policies and procedures*”.

The training of mentors will ensure that all parties involved in the mentoring process will have a common understanding of mentoring and how it should be executed. Of significance is the view of respondents that mentors should also be trained to gain an understanding of the organisation’s functioning and structure. This is important as it will ensure the successful execution of the

mentoring process within the framework of the policies and procedures of an organisation (Matulovich, 1996:22).

4.10.1.4 Category: Skills needed by mentors and how they relate to those identified skills of supervisors

Respondents were asked which skills they thought a mentor should possess to successfully execute the mentoring process and how this related to those skills a supervisor applies during the execution of the mentoring process. The research findings were categorised and are illustrated below:

- *“In my opinion mentors should have all the **skills required of a social worker** to ensure that they successfully execute the mentoring process.”*
- *“Although I believe a mentor does not need to be a social worker, I do believe he/she should be trained to **acquire all those skills which we use in the social work profession.**”*
- *“All those **skills that will assist them to communicate effectively** with the newly qualified social worker. These include interpersonal skills, listening skills, etc.”*

The research findings clearly indicate that all respondents are of the opinion that mentors, although they do not need to be social workers, should receive training regarding the field of social work as well as those skills necessary to enhance communication with the newly qualified social worker. Hence the mentors should be trained to apply various skills such as assessment, communication and interview skills to ensure the successful execution of the mentoring process. These skills are advocated by Sheafor and Horejsi (2003:244-325) in the execution of the social work process.

4.10.2 Subtheme 6.2: Types of mentoring

Respondents were asked to indicate which types of mentoring they would apply during the execution of the mentoring process and to provide a motivation for each type. The research findings were categorised as illustrated in table 4.27 and will be analyzed accordingly.

4.10.2.1 Category: Types of mentoring to be executed during the mentoring process in social work supervision

In this section the researcher asked respondents which of the types of mentoring they would use during the execution of mentoring as an activity of social work supervision.

Table 4.27: Types of mentoring

Types of mentoring	Number of respondents	Motivation: Excerpts from interviews
Informal mentoring	10 (50%)	<p>“My staff already use senior social workers as informal mentors as they feel more comfortable with them and in cases where I am not available.”</p> <p>“One of my staff members acknowledged that she approached a retired social worker to be her mentor, as this person is a friend of her mother.”</p> <p>“Informal mentoring is not so rigid as social work supervision.”</p>
Formal mentoring	20 (100%)	<p>“Formal mentoring may prevent role confusion.”</p> <p>“It is appropriate to use as it is also just as structured as supervision.”</p> <p>“The supervisor will have more control of the mentoring outcomes.”</p>
Reverse mentoring	15 (75%)	<p>“It will assist me to learn more about other cultures, such as the Sotho culture and traditions.”</p> <p>“It will be nice to give both of us an understanding of our respective roles and job responsibilities.”</p> <p>“The newly qualified social worker comes with new theory and knowledge. In return I have the experience.”</p>
Situational mentoring	20(100%)	<p>“This will be of value especially with the implementation of the new Child Care Act and the Older Persons Act.”</p> <p>“This could assist newly qualified social workers with the skills required to write professional reports.”</p> <p>“Newly qualified social workers will learn more about adoption as well as how to mediate during family conferences.”</p>
Electronic-supported mentoring	20 (100%)	<p>“It enables me to reach a larger group of people at one time.”</p> <p>“It ensures that the newly qualified social workers always have access to me.”</p> <p>It allows for easier access to the supervisor.”</p>

N=20

It emerged from the research findings that 10 (50%) respondents would make use of *informal mentoring*, as it allows the newly qualified social workers to approach a person they feel comfortable with, it is voluntary (“*she approached*”) and less structured (“*not so rigid*”) (Meyer and Fourie, 2004:114). Informal mentoring is also less structured. The respondents are of the opinion that informal mentoring may cause role confusion, hence it is not appropriate to execute during mentoring as an activity of social work supervision. However the successful execution of informal mentoring depends on the willingness and attitudes of the mentor. All of the respondents are of the opinion that they would utilise *formal mentoring* as it allows the supervisor to have control over the mentoring outcomes and it is applicable to supervision which is a structured process. It can therefore be concluded that the majority of the respondents prefer to use formal mentoring instead of informal mentoring in the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

Fifteen (75%) of the respondents are of the opinion that *reverse mentoring* is of value as the parties involved in the mentoring process can learn more about each other’s cultures. This shares the view of (Meyer, 2007:137). Respondents note that reverse mentoring can also allow the supervisor and newly qualified social worker to gain insight into their respective roles. This in turn may lead to an increased understanding of each other’s roles and responsibilities which may improve the relationship between the supervisor and newly qualified social worker.

All of the respondents are of the opinion that *situational mentoring* will assist the newly qualified social worker to successfully acquire those skills needed to implement new legislation (such as the new Child Care Act and the Older Persons Act), and skills required to write professional reports, specialist skills as well as how to mediate during family conferences. These views are supported by Shea (2003:46) who mentions that situational mentoring is usually short-term and responsive to a specific and/or immediate need of the newly qualified social worker. Additionally all of the respondents view the use of *electronic-supported mentoring* as valuable as it allows them to reach a larger group of newly qualified social workers at the same time, especially those who are located in rural areas, and it enhances access to the supervisor. The literature review reveals that electronic-supported mentoring is cost-effective (Plummer &

Omwenga Nyang'au, 2009:812). It may increase the number of contact sessions between a social work supervisor, mentor and the newly qualified social worker. The different types of mentoring can thus be utilised to accomplish the overall objectives of the supervision process.

4.10.3 Subtheme 6.3: Factors impacting on mentoring

In this division the factors which may have an impact on the execution of the mentoring process were investigated.

4.10.3.1 Category: Factors which influence the mentoring process

The respondents were requested to express their views on how the organisational structure, gender and race may impact on the successful implementation of the mentoring process. The research findings were categorised and will be presented and analyzed accordingly.

Factors which may impact negatively on the mentoring process: Excerpts attained from the interviews

- *“**Modernization** definitely had an impact on my responsibilities as well as my inability to provide the newly qualified social worker with the necessary support. It also affected my role as a mentor as I am constantly dealing with the issue of lack of resources. Some of the staff do not have access to a computer.”*
- *“The constant change in **political leadership** in the Western Cape impacts severely on my responsibilities as a supervisor. We must always attend to pressing political agendas and it leaves us no time to mentor the newly qualified social workers effectively.”*
- *“I am sharing an office with the newly qualified social workers. We cannot even have individual sessions. This also impacts on my role as a supervisor and mentor.”*

All of the respondents indicated that the organisational structure negatively affects the execution of the supervisory responsibilities and thus may also have a negative effect on the successful implementation of mentoring in social work supervision. Changes in the work culture of an organisation (“**modernization**”), the political context (“**change in political leadership**”) of the organisation as well as a lack of resources (“**sharing office space**”) may prevent the supervisor from successfully achieving the mentoring goals and objectives (Greenwood, 1995:42). A lack of

resources and high case-loads can also affect on the successful execution of the supervision process (Department of Social Development, 2006).

More than 18 (90 %) of the respondents are of the view that race or gender does not impact on the mentoring relationship due to the fact the social workers are guided in their conduct by the Code of Ethics and that the newly qualified social workers grew up in a more diverse environment, hence adjusting better to the multiracial working environment. The research findings are illustrated below according to the excerpts from the interviews:

- *“I do not think **cross-gender mentoring** relationships have an impact on the mentoring process.”*
- *“In my opinion **race does not have an impact** on the mentoring relationships. The newly qualified social workers grew up in a more diverse society and seem to respect people rather than the colour of their skin.”*
- ***Race or gender does not impact on mentoring relationships** as we are guided by the **code of ethics for social workers** which states that we may not discriminate against people based on their gender, culture or race.”*

These findings are of specific significance in South Africa, with its legacy of apartheid, characterised by discrimination based on race and gender. Authors such as Kram (1985:60) and Greenwood (2005:27) note that gender and race can impact negatively on the mentoring relationship as males and females and people from different cultures have different views and values, which they bring to the mentoring relationship; others such as Fowler (2002:112) are of the opinion that cross-gender mentoring relationships have the advantage of allowing the newly qualified social worker to attain a diversity of skills.

In addition Cropper (2000:603) mentions that mentoring can be used to develop minority groups in a work setting. Therefore the matching of mentors and newly qualified social workers from different races, allows them to learn about one another's racial and cultural backgrounds. In conclusion the research findings suggest that **race** and **gender** do not significantly impact on the mentoring relationships of South African social workers, as they are guided by the Code of Ethics as developed by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (1986) which

regulates the conduct and interaction between social workers and their colleagues, social workers and their service users and social workers and their employers.

4.11 CONCLUSION

The discussion in this chapter is based on the narratives of the respondents attained during the interviews with the 20 respondents. The profiles of the respondents were highlighted first. Thereafter six themes which were extracted from the gathered data were presented and interpreted.

Second, the manner in which respondents executed the social work supervision process was presented and discussed. The research findings in general indicated that social work supervisors execute supervision within the theoretical framework as presented in chapter 2.

Third, the opinions of the respondents were investigated in terms of the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. The research findings in general indicated that social work supervisors execute mentoring on an informal basis, but do express a need to be trained in the execution of mentoring as a process, and a need to gain a better understanding of how they can use mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. The conclusions and recommendations based on the research findings will be discussed subsequently in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of chapter 4 was to investigate the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. The aim of chapter 5 is to present the conclusions based on the findings and to make appropriate recommendations. These recommendations can be used as guidelines for social work supervisors in both the public and private sector in the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. This aim was achieved through the following goals:

- In chapter 1 an introduction to and motivation for the study were provided.
- In chapter 2 a theoretical overview of social work supervision was provided. This gave a clear picture of social work supervision and its current context.
- In chapter 3 the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision were described.
- In chapter 4 the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision was empirically investigated.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section the researcher will draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the literature study and empirical investigation.

5.2.1 Profile of the supervisors

The findings of this study regarding the profile of the supervisors are as follows:

All the respondents in this study were appointed as social work supervisors. Most of the respondents were female, ranging in age from 30 years to above 50 years. The majority of the

respondents have a four-year degree in social work. Nearly half of the respondents have more than 5 years of supervision experience. This means that most of the respondents have sufficient experience as social work supervisors. All of them were expected to perform duties other than the supervision of social workers (inclusive of newly qualified social workers), which has a negative impact on their execution of supervision. Significantly is the fact that half of the respondents have not received supervision themselves. Reasons for this include the heavy case-loads of their supervisors, and the fact that there were no policies and guidelines in place for the execution of supervision. These supervisors have thus no role models regarding the utilisation of supervision.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Consideration should be given to the appointment of more male mentors during the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision. This would be of particular significance, especially during the matching process of mentors and newly qualified social workers, ensuring that more heterogeneous mentoring relationships could be formed. Newly qualified social workers from both genders will therefore benefit from the positive outcomes of cross-gender mentoring relationships as they will attain more diverse skills.
- In terms of the lack of supervision policies and guidelines it is recommended that a supervision policy together with guidelines is developed by organisations to provide social work supervisors with a framework to guide the execution of supervision.

5.2.2 Responsibilities other than social work supervision

The respondents indicated that they have responsibilities other than supervision of social workers. These include the supervision of staff other than social workers, acting as social work managers, case-work, being a programme coordinator for some of the eight different programmes of the Western Cape Department of Social Development, managing ministerial enquiries, performance management of staff, stakeholder meetings and office management. This impacts negatively on the provision of supervision to newly qualified social workers, as a result of the insufficient time allocated for social work supervision. It can therefore be concluded that

the work-load of social work supervisors is heavy and that insufficient time is allocated for the supervision of newly qualified social workers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the work-load of supervisors be reviewed, to enable them to focus on and effectively execute their supervisory duties as it is evident that supervision is a specialised social work management function, which determines the quality of social work services rendered to service users. This review is imperative for the benefit of the social work profession as a whole in social development.

5.2.3 Training of social work supervisors

The majority of the supervisors had received no training in social work supervision to prepare them for their responsibilities. The conclusion can therefore be reached that most of the social work supervisors do not have the academic supervisory skills and knowledge, and they execute supervision the way in which they were supervised by their supervisors, which may not be efficient. Some were not even supervised when they were frontline social workers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that social work supervisors receive accredited training, mandated by organisations and academic institutions for the execution of social work supervision. The exposure to social work supervision training will equip social work supervisors with those skills and knowledge specific to social work supervision and will ensure the successful execution of the supervision process. This training will provide a solid foundation for the employment of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

5.2.4 Number of newly qualified social workers for whom supervisors are responsible for

The supervision load of social work supervisors consists mainly of newly qualified social workers. The conclusion can be reached that supervisors should focus specifically on supervision of newly qualified social workers, as these social workers are not only a substantial category in the social work workforce, but are also most in need of guidance and support to enable them to

render effective social work services. This category of social workers are the most vulnerable because of their transition to professional work .

Recommendation

Mentoring as an activity in social work supervision should be promoted by organisations to assist newly qualified social workers, who constitute most of the supervisee load of social work supervisors, in order to make a smoother transition from student to social worker and to provide them with the necessary support to render social work services effectively. The various benefits of mentoring will ensure the retention of newly qualified social workers and improvement in their work performance, which will ultimately lead to the achievement of organisational goals and enhance the reputation of organisations amongst service users. The employment of mentoring in supervision of newly qualified social workers, should also be endorsed by organisations as an activity, which may help and support supervisors to manage their workload.

5.2.5 Functions of supervision

The social work supervisors indicated that they execute the administrative function most of the time, followed by the educational function and lastly the support function. The support function is thus the most neglected function in social work supervision. Indeed, social work supervisors are aware of the need for newly qualified social workers to receive more support, yet most of their time is spent on the execution of the administrative function because of statutory processes for which they are co-responsible.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- Social work supervisors be exposed to training pertaining to the different functions of social work supervision. This training, as part of an overall supervision training programme, will enable supervisors to attain in-depth knowledge of the process and execution of all three functions of social work supervision. This will ensure that social work supervisors allocate more time to the support and educational function in social work supervision.

- The integrated use of the different functions of supervision by social work supervisors should be promoted:
 - The proper execution, and a sound theoretical knowledge of the administrative function, will assist the Western Cape Department of Social Development and other organisations with the promotion and maintenance of good standards of work and adherence to organisational policies. This will enable supervisors to organise the work place, facilities, and human resources to achieve agency goals and objectives.
 - The employment of the educational function should be founded on the principles of adult education and the application of the different educational models and approaches for the enhancement of the professional development of newly qualified social workers.
 - The support function of supervision should be promoted to ensure that sufficient emotional support is rendered to the newly qualified social worker as this may lead to enhanced work productivity, help prevent burn-out and ensure retention.

5.2.6 Methods of supervision

Individual supervision is the most commonly used method of supervision of newly qualified social workers. Individual supervision focuses on the individual learning needs of newly qualified social workers and also provides them with a space to develop at their own pace. However, supervisors do not employ group supervision or peer supervision as a method in their supervision of these workers. It is therefore concluded that social work supervisors do not expose newly qualified social workers to the benefits which may arise from the execution of group supervision.

Recommendation

The use of group supervision by social work supervisors is recommended. Group supervision will assist supervisors to address commonly identified needs of newly qualified social workers in a group setting and may be more cost effective.

5.2.7 Process of supervision

Social work supervisors are able to execute the overall supervision process, without any formal training in social work supervision. However when social work supervisors were probed about the execution of each of the phases of social work supervision, the following emerged:

5.2.7.1 Engagement and assessment phase

The social work supervisors indicated that although they conduct a personal development assessment of the newly qualified social worker, it is not in a written form and attention is only given to it when they have to conclude the performance agreement, as required by the Department on the Performance Management System of the Department. The supervisors could also not indicate which tools they use as part of the assessment of the newly qualified social worker supervision.

Recommendation

It is recommended that social work supervisors receive exposure to the different tools and skills they can utilise to conduct the personal development assessment of the newly qualified social workers.

5.2.7.2 Planning phase

Supervisors draw up a personal development plan, based on the personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker. However, a smaller percentage of the respondents also indicated that they do not draw up a personal development assessment together with the newly qualified social worker, due to other more pressing job responsibilities. It can therefore be concluded that the allocation of other duties and the appointment of new social work supervisors, who need the same support as newly qualified social workers, impact negatively on the core responsibilities of the supervisor.

Social work supervisors indicated that they do not draw up a written supervision contract together with the newly qualified social worker. The supervision contract is at the core of the supervision process as it clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities agreed upon, defines the nature and frequency of the supervision sessions, as well as the manner in which the progress of

the newly qualified social worker will be reviewed. Planning is also essential and enables the supervisor to allocate the work-load of the newly qualified social worker based on the available resources. Hence the failure of some supervisors to conduct a personal development assessment together with a personal development plan, can lead to a skewed allocation of the work-load and the resources. This in turn affects the rendering of quality and cost-effective services to service users.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- The work-load of existing social work supervisors as well as the type of support that is currently provided to newly appointed social work supervisors be investigated. This is important as the planning phase of the supervision process, which the social work supervisor is expected to execute, determines the nature and success of the overall supervision process.
- Social work supervisors should include the use of written supervision contracts as part of their supervision responsibilities. This would ensure that supervisors and newly qualified social workers have clarity about their expected roles and responsibilities, hence preventing role confusion. It will also ensure that the aim of social work supervision is achieved, namely the delivery of quality services.

5.2.7.3 Working phase

The social work supervisors make provision for both structured and unstructured supervision. The following aspects are covered during supervision: the allocation of individual cases and files as well as a discussion of the progress on each file, work-load and resource management, general work-related issues as well as the provision of emotional support. However, insufficient time is allocated for the provision of supervision to newly qualified social workers. Furthermore, social work supervisors have no uniform action in terms of the frequency and duration of supervision. In terms of the skills used by social work supervisors in carrying out supervision, all the supervisors mentioned the use of assertive and empathic skills.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- The frequency and duration of supervision sessions across the Department and organisations be standardised.
- It is further recommended that supervision sessions of newly qualified social workers should initially be conducted on a weekly basis and that a minimum of an hour be allocated to each supervision session.

5.2.7.4 Evaluation phase

The social work supervisors do perform evaluation sessions. However, a significant number of them have time constraints. It can therefore be agreed that evaluation of supervision sessions does not receive adequate attention. Evaluation is an important part of the supervision process as it provides a picture of the work performance of newly qualified social workers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- The goals, roles and responsibilities as well as the outcomes of the supervision sessions be included as part of the quarterly evaluations conducted by the supervisors through the Performance and Management System of the Department and organisations. This can be valuable, as evaluation determines what works and what needs to be reviewed.
- The work-load of those social work supervisors who do not conduct evaluations be reviewed and that the necessary support systems be put in place to enable supervisors to carry out performance appraisals effectively.

5.2.7.5 Activities in social work supervision

Social work supervisors utilise all the activities of supervision, but mostly execute mentoring to provide newly qualified social workers with adequate support and guidance. However, mentoring and its use in the context of social work supervision is new and is done by supervisors on an informal basis.

Recommendation

It is recommended that mentoring be formally introduced as part of the duties of the social work supervisors. A policy regarding mentoring as an activity of social work supervision of newly qualified social workers should be promoted in the Department and other organisations and should be integrated with the proposed supervision policy.

5.2.8 Mentoring

The findings relating to mentoring as an activity in social work supervision were as follows:

5.2.8.1 The appointment of mentors

In the opinion of the social work supervisors newly qualified social workers can be allocated more than one mentor at a time as long as the supervisee stays the responsibility of a specific supervisor, who acts as the facilitator. The appointment of multiple mentors by the supervisor will enable newly qualified workers to attain a variety of skills over a shorter period of time. This will lead to an improvement in their work performance, which will ultimately lead to the achievement of organisational goals. It thus can be concluded that the appointment of more than one mentor per newly qualified social worker has various benefits. In addition the social work supervisors are of the opinion that the following are the most appropriate persons to be appointed as mentors: other social work supervisors within the Department or organisation, senior social workers within the Department or NPO sector, and external mentors such as psychologists, prosecutors and magistrates.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Consideration should be given to the appointment of multiple mentors for each newly qualified social worker.
- The social work supervisor should be appointed as the facilitator of the mentoring process.
- A senior social worker, another social work supervisor or an external mentor (such as a psychologist, magistrate, prosecutor or an external social work supervisor) should be

appointed as a mentor for the execution of the psychosocial support function of the mentoring process.

- Senior social workers within the Department or in the NPO sector should be appointed as mentors, especially to assist newly qualified social workers with the acquisition of those skills required to write professional reports.

5.2.8.2 Benefits and risks of mentoring

The social work supervisors were able to identify some of the benefits and risks which mentoring could have if it is executed as an activity in social work supervision. The following benefits of mentoring were identified, namely: improved work performance, retention of staff, achievement of organisational goals, improved quality of service delivery as well as improved reputation of the organisation. In addition the following risks relating to the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision were identified: time constraints, lack of resources, interpersonal conflict, work overload, mentors who are not specialists in their field or mentors who are not familiar with the organisational structure of the Department or organisation.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the risks relating to the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision be limited through:

- The prioritisation of the allocation of sufficient resources during the appointment of newly qualified social workers as well as the mentors.
- Structures that are put in place by the supervisor as the facilitator of the mentoring process and/or the mentoring committee, to deal effectively with the impact interpersonal conflict may have on the execution of mentoring in social work supervision.
- The identification of criteria for specialist mentors by the supervisor and/or the mentoring committee.
- Background information about the structure and function of the Department and organisations which should be included as part of the mentoring training programme.

5.2.8.3 The qualities and roles of a mentor

Social work supervisors are of the opinion that the following qualities of a mentor are important for the successful execution of the mentoring process, namely, they should be respected by their fellow employees, and they should be supportive, creative, open, strategic, kind and reasonable. In addition a mentor should be responsible, accountable, passionate and have a sense of humour. The following roles have been deemed essential: facilitator, administrator, coordinator, overseer, enabler, guide, counsellor and teacher. Most importantly a mentor should be a good leader as well as a good advocator. It can therefore be concluded that mentors should possess specific qualities and fulfil specific roles to ensure the successful implementation of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision.

Recommendation

It is recommended that consideration be given to specific qualities which a mentor should possess for the execution of specific roles. These roles and qualities should be based on the organisational context and the personal development plan of the newly qualified social worker.

5.2.8.4 Mentoring process

It is evident that social work supervisors were executing mentoring in an informal way without following a specific process. It can be concluded that the execution of the different phases of mentoring may enhance a positive outcome of supervision.

Recommendations

It is recommended that mentoring be formalised as an activity in social work supervision in the Department and other organisations. The following phases of mentoring should be included as part of the mentoring process in social work supervision:

- The initial phase, which includes the assessment of the learning needs of the newly qualified social worker, planning, introduction and launch of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision, the identification, appointment and training of the mentors as well as the matching of the newly qualified social workers, as it provides the basis for the execution of the mentoring process.
- The cultivation phase, as it focuses on relationship establishment, planning and goal setting.

- The implementation phase, because it entails the execution of the goals and objectives agreed upon.
- The evaluation and termination phase, when the achievement of goals agreed upon have been achieved or when the newly qualified social worker or mentor resigns from the Department or organisation to ensure that the agreed upon goals and objectives are measured and achieved.

5.2.8.5 Training of supervisors in mentoring as an activity in social work supervision

The social work supervisors are of the opinion that they should be exposed to training in the mentoring process. The respondents also identified the following aspects for inclusion in a mentoring programme, namely: the features and use of mentoring; execution of the mentoring process; the qualities of a mentor; the roles of a mentor and newly qualified social worker; the different types of mentoring; and training on background information about the Department or organisations for externally appointed mentors.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a training programme in mentoring be developed for social work supervisors based on specific organisational needs such as the roles of mentors, types of mentoring and the mentoring process. The integration of the mentoring process with the supervision process should be a specific focus area of the training.

5.2.8.6 Skills required by a mentor for the execution of the mentoring process

Social work supervisors indicated that although a mentor does not need to be a social work supervisor, he/she should be aware of the skills utilised in the social work profession. It is therefore concluded that mentors should acquire those skills as utilised by social workers in the execution of their duties.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the different skills as required for the successful execution of the roles of a mentor be identified by organisations and promoted for use by the mentors. The following skills are promoted:

- Assessment skills which can be used by the mentor to assist the newly qualified social worker to identify goals relating to areas for development as identified in the personal development assessment of newly qualified social workers.
- Interviewing skills such as active listening, paraphrasing, summarising, reflecting, and questioning.
- Communication skills such as assertiveness and empathic skills.

5.2.8.7 Types of mentoring

Social work supervisors are in favour of employing the different types of mentoring, namely: informal, formal, situational, reverse, and electronic-supported mentoring. Social work supervisors are also of the opinion that informal mentoring, although being utilised by the newly qualified social workers, is less structured, voluntary and may cause role confusion. Social work supervisors are thus in favour of the use of formal, situational, reverse and electronic-supported mentoring.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- The employment of all the types of mentoring, namely informal, formal, reverse mentoring, situational and electronic-supported mentoring, is promoted for use during the mentoring process.
- In instances where formal mentoring occurs, the social work supervisor is to be the facilitator of the overall mentoring process which can consist of the initial, cultivation, implementation and evaluation and termination phases.
- In cases where informal mentoring is employed the supervisor should guard against role confusion.
- Situational mentoring should be employed to assist newly qualified social workers to learn and implement specific task-related functions such as the implementation of new legislation and the acquisition of skills needed for the presentation of professional reports.
- Reverse mentoring should be promoted to assist both the mentors and newly qualified social workers to learn about each other's cultures. This is of great importance in South Africa, which consists of diverse communities and cultures. Newly qualified social workers are

recent graduates and possess current social work theory and knowledge, whilst the mentors have the experience needed by the new social workers to deliver quality social work services to service users. Reverse mentoring is appropriate as newly qualified social workers can share new and updated theory regarding the social work process with mentors, whilst mentors, including supervisors, may share the depth of their experience of the practice field with newly qualified social workers.

- The use of electronic-supported mentoring is promoted, especially by social work supervisors and senior social workers who are appointed as mentors. This is of special significance in the South African context where social workers and social work supervisors are overburdened with heavy case-loads. The use of electronic-supported mentoring may enable mentors to reach more newly qualified social workers at the same time and makes the mentor more accessible. Electronic-supported mentoring also enhances access to supervision and mentoring for those newly qualified social workers who are located in the rural areas.

5.3 FURTHER RESEARCH

In light of the lack of research on mentoring as an activity in social work supervision, the following recommendations are made:

- The experiences of newly qualified social workers of social work supervision should be investigated.
- The perceptions of newly qualified social workers regarding mentoring as an activity in social work supervision should be explored.

5.4 SUMMARY

It can therefore be concluded from the research that the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision will be beneficial to the newly qualified social worker as well as to the organisation. Mentoring of newly qualified social workers may lead to their enhanced self-image, improved knowledge base, and improved work performance. This in turn would benefit the organisation as the improved work performance of the newly qualified social worker leads to the attainment of organisational goals. Mentoring also focuses on the personal and professional development of newly qualified social workers and assists with a smoother transition from

student to professional. This may lead to the retention of newly qualified social workers in the work setting. This is very important in South Africa, which suffers a critical shortage of social workers. These shortages are caused by a lack of adequate and quality supervision and support. Therefore mentoring, if employed as an activity in social work supervision can potentially halt the migration of social workers out of the profession and can enhance the quality of services rendered to service users by newly qualified social workers. Moreover, mentoring of newly qualified social workers may support supervisors to manage their workload more effectively.

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ADDENDUM A

**UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

THE FEATURES AND USE OF MENTORING AS AN ACTIVITY IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS

The purpose of this interview schedule is to gain an understanding of the features and use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

1. Identifying particulars

1.1. What is your gender?

MALE	
FEMALE	

1.2. How old are you currently?

Between 25 to 29	
Between 30 to 34	
Between 35 to 39	
Between 40 to 44	
Between 45 to 50	
Over 50 years	

1.3. What is your highest social work qualification?

Diploma in Social Work	
Degree in Social Work	
Honours degree in Social Work	
Masters degree in Social Work	
Doctor's degree in Social Work	

1.4. How many years of experience do you have as a registered social worker? Please provide the exact number of years for each of the following, where applicable:

Years of experience	0-4	5-10	11-20	21-30
Department of Social Development (Provincial Office)				
Department of Social Development (District Office)				
Other government departments: (please specify)				
Welfare Organisations (NGO sector)				

2. SUPERVISION

2.1. EXPERIENCE OF SUPERVISION

2.1.1. Did you receive any social work supervision as a social worker during your first years of employment as a social worker in the Department of Social Development? If yes, go to question 2.1.3., If no please go to question 2.1.2.

Supervision	Yes	No

2.1.2. If no, please explain:

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2.1.3. What was the duration of your supervision upon your entry in the Department of Social Development?

Period of Supervision	(X)
0 to 1 years	
1 to 2 years	
2 to 3 years	
More than 3 years	

2.1.4. If more than three years please state the reason(s) in the space provided.

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3. SUPERVISION TRAINING

3.1. Did you receive any training when you were appointed as a supervisor and what were the type and duration of the training?

Type of training	Duration of training			
	Days	Weeks	Months	Years

4. EXPERIENCE AS A SUPERVISOR

4.1. How many years of experience do you have as a supervisor? This is inclusive of your experience as a supervisor of social workers outside the Department of Social Development.

Years of experience	Department of Social Work	Outside the Department of Social Development
0 to 5		
5 to 10		
10 to 20		
20 to 30		

5. NUMBER OF SUPERVISEES RESPONSIBLE FOR

5.1. How many supervisees are you responsible for?

(Supervisees refer to those social workers to whom you provide supervision, irrespective of their years of experience in social work).

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6. NUMBER OF NEWLY QUALIFIED SOCIAL WORKERS.

6.1. How many newly qualified social workers are you responsible for?

(Newly qualified social workers refers to those social workers with up to 24 months experience as a social worker)

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7. RESPONSIBILITIES OTHER THAN SUPERVISION

7.1. What are your responsibilities other than supervision?

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8. FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

8.1. Which of the following functions of supervision do you perform during the execution of the supervision process of newly qualified social workers?

Administrative: The administrative function is concerned with the promotion and maintenance of good organizational standards and policies.	
Educational: This function is concerned with the enhancement of the professional development of supervisees.	
Support function: Occurs when the supervisor provides supervisees with emotional support	

8.2 Which of the functions do you employ the most in supervision with newly qualified social workers – and why?

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9. METHODS OF SUPERVISION

9.1. Which of the following methods of supervision do you employ in supervision of newly qualified social workers?.

Individual supervision: One-on-one supervision sessions	
Group supervision: Occurs when supervisor uses group setting to implement the responsibilities of supervision	
Peer supervision: Supervisees participate equally. Supervisor is not the leader	

9.2. Which of the supervision methods do you employ the most in supervision of newly qualified social workers – and why?

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10. SUPERVISION PROCESS

10.1. PHASES OF SUPERVISION

Please indicate which of the following phases of supervision you employ in your supervision of newly qualified social workers

PHASES OF SUPERVISION	(X)
Engagement and assessment phase	
Planning phase	
Working phase	
Evaluation and termination phase	

10.1.1. Engagement and assessment phase

10.1.1.1. Physical settings

The physical setting refers to the location and setting in which supervision sessions occur. Please indicate how you go about to ensure the following aspects which ensure that successful physical settings are achieved:

a. Comfort

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b. Confidentiality

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c. Communication

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d. Compatibility

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c. Which skills do you employ during the execution of the supervision process?

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10.1.4. Evaluation and termination phase

a. Do you conduct evaluations of the work and performances of newly qualified social workers? If no, explain why and if yes, explain when, how and on what aspects you are focusing:

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b. Indicate whether you ever terminate your supervision of newly qualified social workers. If you do not terminate, explain why and if you do terminate, explain when are you terminating supervision and how you are conducting it?

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11. ACTIVITIES OF SUPERVISION

11.1 Which of the following activities of supervision are used in your supervision of newly qualified social workers (can provide more than one answer)

Teaching refers to the process of providing for a learner what is regarded as important by a specific learning theory. The focus on teaching is on the provision of new knowledge and education. Teaching is more long-term and theoretically orientated.	
Training is more practically orientated and focuses on skills transfer. Training is also more short-term and teaches supervisees to act according to a prescribed manner, through the employment of tools and techniques.	
Staff development focuses on addressing problem situations or in providing supervisees with new or updated learning required to function in changing work environments.	
Mentoring: refers to help by one person to another in making specific transition in knowledge work or thinking.	

a. Indicate what activity you are using MOST of the time in supervision of newly qualified social workers and motivate why:

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12. MENTORING

Mentoring is a ‘one-on-one’ process between a mentor and a protégé, which creates a mutual space for action, learning, and reflection. The mentor is the more senior, more experienced person, whilst the protégé is the less experienced person in the organisation. For the purpose of this study the protégé refers to the newly qualified social worker, whilst the mentor could be any senior person in the organisation. A mentor can also be someone who is appointed internally or externally.

12.1. In your opinion what is the difference between mentoring and social work supervision?

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12.2. In your opinion how many mentors can a newly qualified social worker have?

One mentor	
More than one mentor	

12.3. Please motivate your answer:

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12.4. Which of the following persons can be appointed as mentors (s). Can select more than one person (?)

Immediate social work supervisor	
Other senior professional in your organisation. Please specify	
Other social work supervisor in your organisation	
External person: please specify	

Motivate your choice of each person:

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12.5. Benefits of mentoring

12.5.1. In your opinion what are the benefits of mentoring for a newly qualified social worker?

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12.5.2. In your opinion what are the benefits of mentoring of a newly qualified social worker for an organisation?

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13. Risks involved in the execution of mentoring

In your opinion which risks are involved in the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers?

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14. **QUALITIES OF A MENTOR**

14.1. Please indicate with an (X) which qualities you think a mentor (s) should have. Can give more than one answer.

Qualities	(X)
Respected by his/her fellow employees	
Supportive	
Creative	
Open	
Strategic	
Kind to others and self	
Just	

14.2. Which other qualities can you think of?

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15. ROLES TO FULFILL DURING THE EXECUTION OF MENTORING

15.1. Which of the following roles can the mentor execute during the mentoring process?

Facilitator	
Administrator	
Coordinator	
Overseer	
Enabler	
Guide	
Coach	
Counsellor	
Teacher	

15.2. Can you think of any other roles?

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15.3. Roles of the newly qualified social worker.

15.3.1. Which roles do you think a newly qualified social worker should fulfill during the mentoring relationship?

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16. FUNCTIONS OF MENTORING.

16.1. Which one of the following functions do you think is the MOST important during the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers?

Psychosocial function: The provision of emotional support for both work and personal related problems	
Career function: Focus on those aspects which enhance the career of a protégé	
Coaching: Focus on the acquisition of work-related skills over a shorter period of time	
Role modelling: Mentor’s behaviour and conduct are modelled/ mirrored by the newly qualified social worker	

16.2. Please motivate your answer

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17. Process of mentoring

17.1. Elaborate how you would execute the process of mentoring of the newly qualified social worker.

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17.2. Do you think that training of mentors of newly qualified social workers is necessary? Motivate if training is not necessary and elaborate on what aspects should be included in training if you think it is necessary.

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17.3. In your opinion, is a relationship fit between the mentor and newly qualified social worker necessary? Please motivate your answer.

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17.4. In your opinion which skills do you think are important for a supervisor to possess in the execution of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers. Motivate your choice of skills and indicate the relation with the skills a supervisor should possess in supervision – point 10.1.4.3.4).

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18. Types of mentoring

18.1 Please indicate the types of mentoring which you may want to execute during the use of mentoring as an activity in social work supervision of newly qualified social workers.

<p>a. Informal mentoring: Occurs when the newly qualified social worker initiates the mentoring process. This type of mentoring is not structured, the newly qualified social worker is a voluntary participant. In this instance a colleague or another supervisor can be an informal mentor to the newly qualified social worker</p>	
<p>b. Formal mentoring: Which assists the newly qualified social worker with career development, is initiated by the supervisor and is more structured. The newly qualified social worker is not necessarily a voluntary participant, as mentoring is part of the overall supervision process, which is compulsory in the social work context of South Africa. In this instance the supervisor and/or the mentoring committee selects the mentors.</p>	

<p>c. Reverse mentoring: Occurs when the roles of the mentor and newly qualified social worker are reversed or exchanged. This is of value in cross-cultural mentoring during which the mentor and newly qualified social worker learn about each other's culture</p>	
<p>d. Situational mentoring: This type of mentoring is usually short-term and responsive to an isolated need by the newly qualified social worker.</p>	
<p>e. Electronic-supported mentoring. This type of mentoring transpires through the use of computers (emails, etc.).</p>	

18.2 Factors impacting on the mentoring process

In your opinion how does each of the following factors impact on the mentoring process:

a) Organisational context

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b) Gender

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c) Race

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THANK YOU