

Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care
placement in the Bojanala district of the North West
province, South Africa

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Social Work, in the Social Work Programme, at the North-
West University (Mafikeng campus)

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APRIL 2017

DECLARATION

I, Keoagile Abel Mmolokoe, hereby declare that this research report is my own original work, and that all sources that consulted have been duly acknowledged. I further declare that this research has not been submitted for a degree at any other University.

Signature.....

Date.....

DEDICATION

The study is dedicated to the Department of Social Development and all the participants who sacrificed their time to participate. This study is also a tribute to my late parents for their parental guidance and their willingness to give me education as a legacy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the success of this study. I would first and foremost give thanks to God who gave me the strength and courage to complete this journey.

A special thanks to my supervisor Dr. M De Chavonnes Vrugt, for her patience, guidance and unwavering support. Her critical comments have been valuable and a most important for the success of this research study.

I am indebted to extend my gratitude to all the participants who were generous with their time and willingness to participate in this research study. I would also like to thank the Department of Social Development in the Bojanala District of the North West Province for giving me the opportunity to conduct my study in their district. Special thanks to the North West University Postgraduate bursary for providing me with the funding to undertake this study.

Finally, a very special thank you and gratitude to my family they are the reason for my perseverance. Thanks to my brother Kgosietsile David Molokwe Mmolokoe for his belief in me.

ABSTRACT

The main focus of this study was on exploring social work intervention in foster care placement. A qualitative method was adopted to obtain descriptive data about the social work intervention process in foster care services with specific reference to implementation of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended. In-depth interviews were conducted with the participants (social workers, foster parents and foster children) to gather qualitative data. Data from foster care files was also collected using a checklist to verify indicators for quality foster care.

A non- probability sampling was used for the selection of twenty- five foster care files, twenty-five foster parents, twenty-five foster children and five social workers for the study. The document study was compared to the participant's point of view.

The findings of the study provide knowledge of understanding social work intervention process in foster care placement and how the best interest of children can be served in foster care placements. Some gaps in foster care policies and practice have been identified.

This study found that the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended is not fully implemented by social workers who render foster care intervention at Bojanala District of the North West Province. It was revealed that most of the sections in the Act are violated by social workers. It was found that section 155 (2) which directs that foster care applications should be attended and finalised within 90 days from the reporting period is not implemented in the majority of cases. The study also revealed that foster care monitoring and supervision is not adequately done, which is a deviation to the foster care norms and standard that direct that foster care monitoring or supervision should be done by a social service professional after every six months. The study also found that sections 159 and 186 of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended have not been fully implemented as most of the cases expire before they can be reviewed.

The ecological environment from which social workers practice, appeared to be a contributory factor to the violation of the Act. The study revealed that social workers practice in the environment where there is lack of office space, high caseload amongst social workers and lack

of transport. The study also revealed that inadequate implementation of relevant sections in the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended contributed to the many challenges that are experienced by foster care system today. Challenges such as foster care backlog, dysfunctional relationship between foster parents and foster children, mismanagement of foster care Grants and children displaying anti- social behaviour in foster care placement were discovered by the study.

To improve quality of social worker's intervention in foster care placement, the ecological environment from which social workers practice need to be improved. This study recommends that: The Department of Social Development should consider allocating resources, including increasing manpower, and provision of office accommodation, transport and electronic equipment to social workers.

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ACRONYMS

- HIV- Human Immune Virus.
- AIDS- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
- SA- South Africa.
- SASSA- South African Social Security Agency.
- DSD- Department of Social Development.
- SACSSP- South African Council for Social Service Profession.
- NGO- None Governmental Organisation
- CBOs- Community based Organizations
- FBO- Faith Based Organizations and communities.
- HCBC- Home Community- Based Care

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

This chapter entails the background of the study which provides clarity on the circumstances of foster care intervention in South Africa. The problem statement, research questions, significance of the study, aim, objectives and assumption of the study are also discussed in this chapter.

1.1. Introduction and Background of the Study

Foster care has long been one of the measures employed to assist children in need of care as an alternative to institutional care (Law, 2009:3). It is a way of providing a family life for children who cannot, for whatever reasons, live with their parents. Usually, these children have been removed from their parents due to abuse or neglect and placed in foster care in terms of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended (Law, 2009:3). The HIV/AIDS pandemic and its devastating consequences have resulted in a huge increase in the number of children in need of care and contributed to the bottleneck in the fostering process (Law, 2009:3).

Social workers are expected to render quality services to all the foster care beneficiaries. Their intervention is guided by the specific acts, regulations and policy on child care services, while demonstrating their excellence in the application of human behaviour and social systems theories. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No 108 of 1996 guide's society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights and seeks to improve the quality of life of all citizens and to free the potential of each person. Every child has special rights set out in terms of section 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No 108 of 1996. The Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended came into full operation on the 1st of April 2010 after the Child Care Act no 74 of 1983 was repealed. It gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution. It places an obligation on all sectors of the Government in any sphere of government and all officials, employees, and representatives of Government departments to respect, protect and promote the rights of children.

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005, as amended, seeks to afford children the necessary care, protection and assistance to develop to their full potential. It upholds the protection of children and seeks to provide assistance to children to fully assume their responsibilities within the community. Child maltreatment including child abuse, neglect and exploitation is one of the social ills which is sought to be addressed through legislated interventions in the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended.

The Department of Social Development is the custodian of Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended through its implementation by provincial, district and local offices with social workers as engineers in the process. Foster care placement is one of the statutory intervention programs legislated in the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended. Section 181 of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005, as amended, outlines the aims of foster care placement as being to protect and nurture children by providing a safe environment with positive support and to promote the goals of permanency planning first towards family reunification and respect the individuals and families by demonstrating a respect for cultural, ethnic and community diversity.

Foster care like any statutory service is fundamentally procedural and derived from legislative processes. According to the Department of Social Development (2013b:9), Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, this service need to be guided and practised with caution, prudence and discretion. It is therefore imperative for social workers to be well informed regarding correct processes and procedures when implementing the provisions of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended.

This study focuses on exploring of social work intervention process in foster care placement. The researcher's interest was to acquire more insight on social work intervention in foster care placement. The study was conducted in the North West Province Department of Social Development (DSD), Bojanala District.

1.2. Problem Statement

Evidence shows that foster care is faced with a number of challenges. Bungane (2007: 26) discovered that the number of foster care applications is multiplying rapidly. The rate, at

which the demand of foster care is growing, makes it difficult for social workers to manage their workload. The problem that social workers are faced with is of foster care backlog of lapsed cases and new foster care applications. Lapsed cases refer to the cases that have not been reviewed after two years of placement. According to section 159(1)(a)(i) of Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, an order made by the children's court lapses after two years from the date the order was made. According to the statistical data from the quarterly report by South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) in Bojanala District released in the December 2014, South African Social Security Agency has a total number of 5364 lapsed foster care cases. According to Bungane (2007: 26), social workers are unable to perform their normal social work services such as home visits, individual and group therapy due to work load. The researcher's experience in the workplace is that social workers often call foster parent to the office to collect information either for foster care placement or foster care review. Most children never had the opportunity to contribute information to the report that is presented at court. The majority of children need therapy to help them deal with the loss of their parents and due to their workload; social workers are unable to render therapeutic services. "In October 2005, the South African Council for Social Service Profession (SACSSP) presented at total number of 11 111 registered social workers. The SACSSP further highlighted that there is no guarantee that the registered social workers are living in the country or practicing the profession as some may be non practicing without changing their registration status while others may be out of the country, practicing their profession abroad" (Earle, 2008: 10). According to Waters (2013: 01), in South Africa the shortage of social workers is at 77%. Waters attest that South Africa needs 68 498 social workers but there were only 16 164 registered with South African Council for Social Services Professions as at June 2013.

Looking at the rapid increase in the demand of foster care services and the challenges experienced by the foster care programme, the main purpose of this study was to uncover the reality of social work intervention process in foster care placement.

1.3. Research Question

The research question for the purpose of this study was:

- What is the quality of social work intervention in foster care placements?

1.4. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to evaluate the quality of social work intervention process in foster care placement. This is an exploratory study and is aimed at generating further hypothesis for future research.

The objectives of the study were:

- To evaluate the quality of social work intervention process in foster placement.
- To evaluate the views of foster parent and foster children regarding the quality of social worker's intervention in foster care placement.
- To recommend strategies to improve the quality of social work intervention process in foster care placement.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Unlike adoption, foster care is a placement which warrants for review after two years of placement when family reunification will not serve the best interest of the child. It prepares for permanency planning. Section 181 of Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended outlines the aim of foster care as being to protect and nurture children by providing a safe healthy environment with positive support. Research studies indicate that the family is in the spotlight of considerable interest to social workers and the public (Mkhize, 2006: 9). The researcher's view is that in foster families, both foster children and foster parents are faced with situations where the social worker's role is of critical importance to bring change to those situations. Bungane (2007:23) discovered in his research that in most cases family members in foster families are unemployed and foster care grants as well as old age pensions of foster parents must provide the financial needs of other family members. According to Mkhize (2006: 8), social workers are expected to ameliorate the unpleasant elements in the individual's social environment. Depending on the client's needs, direct service practices ranging from a broad spectrum of approaches are used by social workers. Khoza (2011:79) has discovered that using developmental assessment tools as part of social work intervention process can encourage a developmental approach to Social Welfare in the provision of foster care services.

The researcher identified that several studies in the field of foster care have been completed in South Africa. Some of the studies are: Foster care of AIDS orphans: social worker's perspectives by de Jager (2011), an exploration of the life- experiences of AIDS orphans in Kinship foster care in South Africa (2008) by Tissiman (2008), a contextually appropriate protocol in social work for the assessment of prospective foster parents in South Africa by Carter (2013) and an exploratory study done by Khoza (2011) on developmental assessment by social workers practicing foster care in Far East Rand of Ekurhuleni on application of developmental strategies in upgrading foster families. However, there seem to be an absence of exploratory and descriptive studies on Social Work intervention in foster care placement in South Africa. This study is focused on exploring Social Work intervention process in foster care placement to provide an insight on how social workers are helping foster care beneficiaries. The findings of the study will provide an improved knowledge of understanding social work intervention process in foster care placement and how the interest of children are best served in foster care placements. It aimed at extending the body of knowledge and application of theory in practice as far as social work intervention in foster care is concerned. The findings of the study can also be used to identify gaps in practice and inform the foster care policy as well as creating the room for improvement in the one that already exists. This study can stimulate research in the future about foster care, child care and the effectiveness of social work intervention.

1.6. Assumption of the Study

The following was the assumption of this study:

Social Work intervention process can improve the quality of foster care placement.

1.7. Definition of Concepts

The following are definitions of the central terms that are used in this study:

1.7.1. Child

According to section 1 of Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, child means a person under the age of 18 years.

1.7.2 Foster care

According to section 180 (1) of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, foster care means care and protection of a child if the child has been placed in the care of a person who is not the parent or guardian of the child.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (Department of Social Development, 1997: 63) defines foster care as a child centred service. Foster care should also be the cost effective, family centred and community based way of caring for children whose parents are unable to do so adequately.

Section 181 of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended outlines the aim of foster care placement as to protect and nurture children by providing a safe environment with positive support; promote the goals of permanency planning first towards family reunification and respect the individuals and families by demonstrating a respect for cultural, ethnic and community diversity.

1.7.3. Kinship foster care

Kinship care refers to the care of children by relatives. Relatives are the preferred resource for children's connections with their families. It is often considered a type of family preservation services (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016: 01)

1.7.4. Foster parent

Foster parent means a person who has accepted foster care of the child by order of the children's court (Section 1 of Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended). Not more than six children may be placed in foster care with a single person or two persons sharing a common household, except where the children are siblings or blood relatives or where the court considers this to be in the best interest of all the children Section 185(1)(a)(b) of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

1.7.5. Social Work

Social work can be described as a profession which promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance

wellbeing. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the point where people interact with their environment. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work (International Federation of Social workers cited in Zastrow, 2007:03).

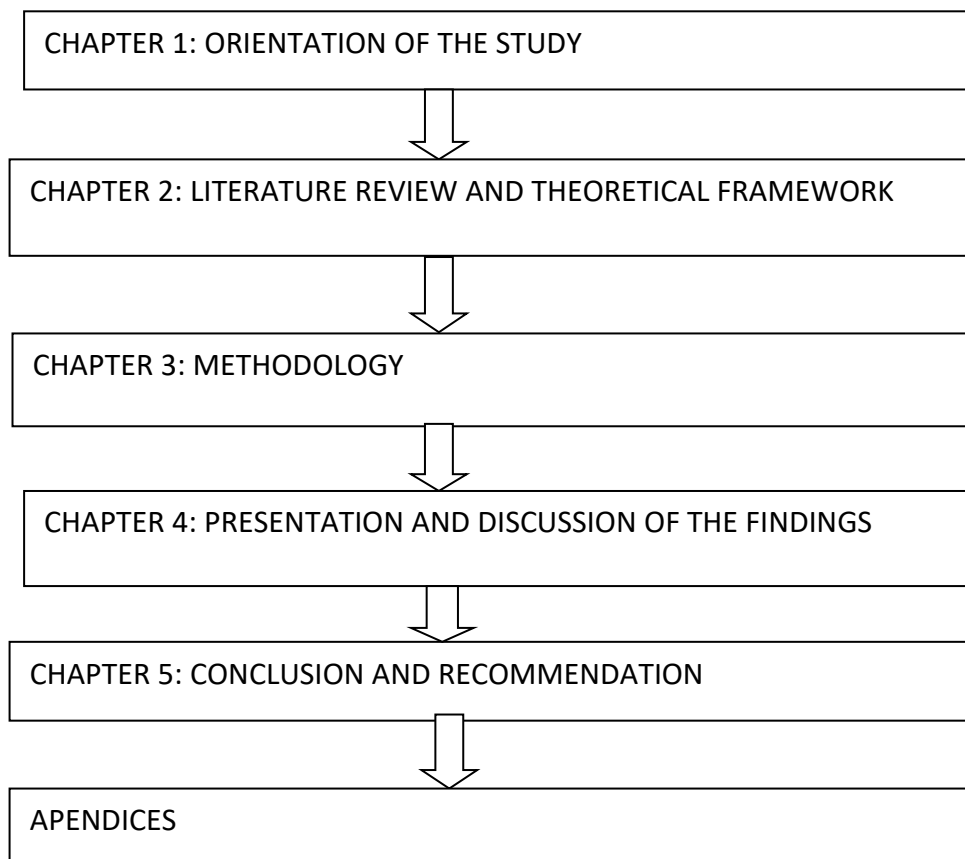
1.7.6. Social Work intervention

Social Work intervention is a process whereby a social worker within a professional relationship uses specific methods and techniques, performs functions and tasks and utilises resources to prevent, alleviate or eliminate social problems to promote the social functioning of a client system (Le Roux, 1995: 61).

1.7.7. Quality

The standard of something when it is compared to other things like it, how good or bad something is (Oxford dictionary, 2006: 1187). Quality for the purpose of this study refers to the standard of social work intervention process in foster care placement.

1.8. Organisation of the Study



1.9. Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a brief summary of the research study by highlighting the contents of research reports that includes the reasons for conducting the research study aims and objectives of the study. It also presented the structure of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reflects on information gathered from different literature sources on the research topic. Theoretical framework in this chapter reflects on theories and approaches adopted for the purpose of this study.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The complexity of foster care placements requires that social workers consider several systems influencing the placement in a holistic way. Ecosystems perspective which includes ecological theory and systems theory assist professionals to evaluate individuals and families in a holistic manner. The following are discussions of the Ecosystems perspective in foster care placement:

The Department of Social Development (2013a:20) in the Social Welfare Services Framework document indicated that an understanding of the practice for social welfare services and social service providers entails recognising the relationship between the socio-economic factors that affect people's lives, the complexity of social needs, challenges facing social welfare services and different role players in the system. Social welfare services are rendered in a variety of settings by wide spectrum of practitioners. The focus point of the services may be the community at large or the specific target groups in the community. A community can be described in terms of a geographic location or specific confined space such as hospital, residential facility, workplace or correctional facility. The services may also respond to all the needs in the community or the specific focus area. The specific description of the community, target group and focus area guide the involvement of the relevant collaborative partners and spectrum of practitioners in service delivery (Department of Social Development, 2013a: 20).

Mincus and Minahan as cited by Payne (2005:145) present basic social work systems that social workers use as part of their practice as follows:

- Change agent system- Social workers and the organizations that they work for.

- Client system- People, groups, families, communities who seek help and engage in working with the change agent system.
- Target system- People whom the change agent system is trying to change to achieve its aims.
- Action System- People whom the change agent system works to achieve its aims .

Social systems theory assumes that a system is a system through including other sub-systems. When one part of the system is dysfunctional, the whole system gets affected. The centre of attention of this theory is on the expansion and renovation of systems and the relations between them (Barbra, 2010: 17). The researcher is of the view that the application of the social systems theory to foster care placement enables social workers to understand the relationships that exist within the foster families including their respective environment and design intervention strategies that are aimed at enhancing an expansion in foster children's lives. Respective environment in ecological theory highlights that individuals have a greater influence to their social environment and various context of social environment influence one another. The ecological model also considers the interaction between individuals and their spheres of influence (or the places they inhabit) at multiple levels: individual, relationship, community and society throughout their lifetime (Department of Social Development et al, 2012a: 5). The researcher's view is that when applied to foster care, this model provides a framework for understanding the factors that promote or decrease effectiveness in foster placement.

In South Africa social workers place children in foster care with both related families systems and cluster foster care families (professional foster care registered with the Department of Social Development). According to the Department of Social Development (2012a: 5) in the early years, a child's most important face of orientation is persons in its immediate family environment. As children grow older, the range of socialising agents increases as they get in touch with individuals in society at large. Thus educators, principals and other learners shape socialization. Within the community, broader socialising factors such as the media, religious, cultural and traditional actors and institutions as well as politicians, socialise children directly as well as indirectly and children are also influenced by

their friends and peers. The foster children are also not immune to the influences of the available socialising factors in the society.

According to Germain and Gitterman as cited in Barbra (2010: 25), the role of the social worker based on the ecological perspectives is to advance the connections between persons, families, groups and communities, which can need intervention in the person and environment or both. The social worker who is intervening in foster care placement needs to work with individual foster children to enhance their confidence, self-image, coping skills, self-sufficiency and ability, or to relief distress. Interventions in foster families help members to recognise and advance their relations and communication patterns. The researcher's view is that on the other hand, interventions into the foster family environment can improve the wellbeing of every individual involved and reduce the challenges that might occur to prevent people from meeting their specific needs.

During foster care intervention with foster children and families, the social worker needs to view the family as a social system in which each parts or elements, interact with each other in an organised way. Motepe, Spies and Delport (2013:14) state that families like other systems, have family members such as parents, siblings, and kin, who stick together to perform a variety of functions in the family. Members of the family system influence each other to make a system with properties of its own, governed by the rules that specify roles, power structures, forms of communication and ways of problem solving and negotiating. Roles, power structure, and communication patterns are the active processes of the system and its interconnected and interdependent component part (Motepe et al 2013: 14).

According to Fulcher et al (2011:19), the White Paper for Social Welfare promotes the provision of developmental welfare services in order to promote developmental outcomes with children and to nurture positive health and well-being. In foster care, social workers need to direct professional attention towards both child and his/her daily living environment(s) at home, at school and in local neighbourhoods in which they live. When viewed from ecological perspectives, foster care environments are presented conceptually as a nested cluster of settings ranging from neighbourhood to organisational contexts holding statutory duty of care for children assigned looked after status, along with national policies and statutes which frame foster care environment (Fulcher et al, 2011: 19). The

researcher agrees with Fulcher et al that social workers must monitor the socialization of children in foster care to ensure positive developmental outcomes of the child.

2.3. Challenges affecting children in South Africa

According to Berry (2007: 168), South African children keep on suffering from the consequences of apartheid. Unpleasant inequalities and poverty continue due to the high unemployment rates and poor access to resources for the marginalised. A rapid assessment of the situation of children in South Africa conducted in 2003 revealed that the role players in the field of children's rights recognized poverty, child abuse, and violence, HIV/AIDS and a lack of access to services as the major challenges facing children (Berry, 2007: 168). The disintegration of the family unit and the loss of parents were also painted as challenges.

Berry (2007:169) further states that child neglect, abandonment and exploitation are additional challenges that interfere with recognition of children's rights in South Africa. These offences normally happen within the child's family environment, indicating the vulnerability of the family and break down of this basic social unit. Following is a discussion of some of the issues that affects South African children.

The World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen defined poverty "as a situation characterized by rigorous scarcity of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information" (UN as cited in Khoza, 2011: 12).

Literature confirms that poverty and unemployment are widespread in South Africa. According to Khoza (2011:10), globalization had contributed to poverty amongst other social ills. Globalization is described by Patel cited in Khoza (2011: 10) as the "fundamental, rapid and complex social changes in contemporary societies that have far reaching consequences for people". These consequences can be seen from the nature of the global economy which is capitalistic as it promotes the concentration of wealth by limited group of population, resulting in the majority of population being poor as they do not have economic power in terms of opportunities and resources used to uplift their standard of living. This view is confirmed by Appeal as cited in Khoza (2011: 10) saying that " while many poor South

Africans were lifting themselves from abject poverty, the rich in South Africa were getting richer, most likely due to access to economic opportunities.

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are two regions in the world that are mostly affected by poverty. Sub-Saharan Africa has lower income as compared to South Asia. Statistics as presented by World Bank (2008), sub-Saharan Africa had 376 millions of the poor and South Asia had 546.5 millions of poor people (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2012: 3).

The September 2014 Quarterly Employment Statistics report, released on the 11 December 2014, shows that total formal non-agricultural employment decreased by 129 000 jobs from 8 67 million in June 2014 to 8, 54 million in September 2014. 132 000 jobs were lost in the government sector, 9 000 jobs were lost in the manufacturing industry and 3 000 jobs were lost in both the construction and transport industry (Statistics South Africa, 2014a: 1). In the North West Province, the poverty line as compared from 2006 to 2011 has significantly declined from 45,2% to 37,2% (Statistics SA, 2014b:45).

According to the Department of Social Development (2012a:18), financial stress may add to the likelihood of violence against children in families. Fathers, in particular, may suffer from anger and frustration when they are unable to provide for their families as per societal expectations; this is seen to be part of the traditional masculine role. It further indicates that, women who are economically dependent on the men find it difficult to leave their abusive partners. In poor families it is most likely that people live in overcrowded conditions, which results in children sharing bedrooms with sexually active adults. In doing so, children become aware of sexual activity. These put children at risk of sexual abuse by adults or older children in the home. The Department of Social Development (2012a:18) emphasises that there is a link between poverty and children's injuries due to insufficient safety provisions in the home and in the community. In addition, parents often work long hours in low-paying jobs while children are left unsupervised due to lack of after school programmes.

2.3.1 Child Abuse

According to Section 1 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, child abuse means any form of harm or ill-treatment intentionally inflicted on a child. Several literature present different forms of abuse that may result in the child being placed in foster care.

2.3.2 Sexual Abuse

The Department of Social Development (2012a: 15) indicated that in South Africa approximately 55 000 women and children who were raped reported it at the police. In 2010/2011 a total of 28 128 sexual offences against children under 18 years were reported to the police. The Teddy Bear Clinic in Johannesburg dealt with 1 979 cases of sexual abuse in 2010 (Department of Social Development (2012a: 15).

In a national survey of 11 735 South African women, 153 (2%) reported being raped when they were between the ages of 10 – 14 years and in Gauteng approximately 3% of victims were reported to be aged 1-3 years in 2003 (Department of Social Development report on Violence against children in South Africa, 2012a:15). It is also reported that women are not the only victims of rape as even men are raped. In 2009 it was found that 3.5% of young men were victims of rape (Department of Social Development report on Violence against children in South Africa, 2012a:15). According to crime statistics record for 2012/2013, sexual offence cases shot up from 64 514 to 66 387 - an increase of 2.9%. During the same period, sexual offence rates increased from 125, 1 per 100 000 to 127, 0 per 100 000 population, which is an increase of 1.5% (Leseding News, 2014: 05)

The Department of Social Development (2012a:19) suggests that social norms and values that place children in an inferior spot in the home can add to violence. Adults may make use of violence to abuse their authority over children. Patriarchal values suggest that men have biologically-driven sexual rights which may put children at risk of sexual abuse and societal expectations can also contribute to stop women from reporting abuse. For example, women may believe that their femininity is called into question when the partner sexually abuses the child in the family and may therefore remain silent about the abuse of the child.

2.3.3 Physical abuse

According to the Department of Social Development (2012:16), the rate of domestic violence is extremely high in South Africa. There is evidence to suggest that children who witness physical violence directed to their mothers, shows psychological difficulties as children who are themselves abused. Further, children in families where there is physical violence are at greater risk of physical abuse, as the co- morbidity between domestic violence and child abuse has been found to be close to 40% (Department of Social Development (2012: 15). In addition to direct violence against children that is linked to intimate partner violence; close to 50% of head injuries in children have been found to occur when the children were caught in the crossfire of adult violence (Department of Social Development, 2012a:15).

2.3.4 Emotional Abuse

According to the Department of Social Development (2012:17), unlike other forms of child abuse, emotional abuse is generally integrated in a relationship over a period of time. According to the World Health Organisation as cited in the Department of Social Development (2012a: 17), emotional abuse is the failure to offer developmentally suitable, accommodating environment, together with the availability of a most important affectionate figure, so that the child can develop a full range of emotional and social competencies equal to his or her personal potentials and in its context of society in which the child dwells. The report further states that there may also be acts towards the child that cause or have a high possibility of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Acts include restrictions of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing or other non-physical form of hostile or rejecting treatment.

According to the Department of Social Development (2012a:17), emotional abuse is often inherent in other forms of child abuse. Thus sexually or physically abused children may also experience emotional abuse. In practice, discovery of emotional abuse is largely reliant on the discovery of other forms of abuse that the child is experiencing. Child line as stated in the report on violence against children in South Africa (Department of Social Development,

2012a: 17), has seen as substantial increase in reported emotional abuse, with the number of cases doubling from 2065 in 2006 to 4827 in 2008.

2.3.5 Neglect

According to the Department of Social Development (2012a:17), neglect involves lack of provision of basic needs for a child's development and or the failure to provide the child with basic requirements such as health, nutrition, shelter, safe living conditions and education. Not complying with a health care practitioner's advice, failing to seek appropriate health care, exposing children to alcohol and drugs, inadequate protection of children from environmental dangers, poor hygiene of children, depriving children of education, and inadequate supervision all constitute neglect of children.

These actions (lack of action) constitute neglect when caregivers have the resources which would allow them to provide for the child's needs but do not do so. Neglect can be a deliberate act of depriving children of their needs or it can occur by default, for example when parents or other caregivers abuse substances or are mentally ill (Department of Social Development report on Violence against children in South Africa , 2012a:17).

2.3.6. Self-harming behaviour and suicide

According to the Department of Social Development (2012a:18), self-harming behaviour constitutes violence against self. It tends to be associated with adolescents rather than younger children and reported cases are often concentrated on adolescents in a particular school or area. According to the Department of Social Development (2012a: 18), the 2008 National Youth Lifestyle study found that 5% of youth aged 12 to 22 years had seriously considered suicide in the 12 months preceding the study. Of these youth, 26% had attempted suicide two to three times and 6% attempted suicide on four or more occasions. Parental substance abuse, marital problems, peer pressure and poor academic achievement have all been implicated as risk factor for suicide in children.

2.3.7 Orphans and child-headed households

According to Holborn and Eddy (2011: 1), the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a profound effect on family life in South Africa and Sub- Saharan region of the African continent. Of the 9.1

million double orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2005, around 5.2 million (almost 60%) had lost at least one of their parents to AIDS. In South Africa itself, there were 859 000 'double orphans' (children who lost both parents), 2 468 000 paternal orphans, and 624 000 maternal orphans in 2008. A total of 3.95 million children had lost one or both parents in 2008, an increase of about a third since 2002 (Holborn et. al, 2011: 1)

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) cited by Holborn et al. (2011: 1) estimated that since 2007, some 2 500 000 children in South Africa had lost one or both parents due to several causes. Of these children, more than half has lost one or both parents as a result of AIDS. Some 510 000 children had lost both parents (Holborn et. al, 2011: 1). Some 3 100 000 children under 18 years would be maternal orphans, and 4 700 000 would be paternal orphans, (Medical Research Council cited by Holborn et. al, 2011: 1). According to Holborn et al (2011:1), although HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa has stabilised, and the infection rate is now starting to decline, the number of orphans will continue to grow or at least remain high for years, reflecting a time lag between HIV infection and death. This means that although HIV infections are decreasing, the people that are already infected will continue to die once they progress to full-blown AIDS.

Orphaned children are at a significantly high risk of missing out on school; living in household that have less food security; suffering from anxiety and depression; and being exposed to HIV infection. These risks are higher if a mother, rather than a father died. Widowed mothers are more likely to assume responsibility for the care of their children than widowed fathers- making children who have lost their mothers less likely to live with the surviving parent, compared to those who lost a father (Holborn et al., 2011:2).

Holborn et al. (2011:3) reveal that in 2008 some 98 000 children were living in child headed households in South Africa (where all members are younger than 18 years old). Between April 2007 and March 2008, some 23 898 child headed households received services such as psycho-social support, linking children with relatives and family or facilitating access to official documents, social grants and food parcels from the Department of Social Development (Holborn et al, 2011:3).

One assumes that children living in child-headed households do not have either of their parents alive. However, an article in the journal AIDS Care cited by Holborn et al. (2011:3)

found that 62% of the approximately 122 000 children living in child headed households had one or both parents alive. Some 81% of children in child headed households had a living mother. The article said that the most likely explanation for this was that parents were living their children to travel to other provinces to find work. Children in child- headed households are also assumed to have much lower school attendance rates than children living with parents or other caregivers. However, AIDS Care cited by Holborn found that rates of school attendance were not significantly lower for child- headed households. Holborn et al, (2011:3) attest that a level of poverty is higher among child headed households.

The researcher is of the opinion that each of these issues can be regarded as the conditions outlined in section 150 of the children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended to declare the child in need of care and protection. In South Africa there are programs that are aimed at addressing the challenges that affect children. Some of these programmes include Adoption, Temporary Place of Safety, Child and Youth Care Centre, Drop- in Centre, Parenting Plans, Partial Care, Early Childhood Development, Assignment of Guardianship by Order of Court, Assignment of Contact and Care to interested person by order of court and Foster Care. All these programmes are governed by relevant legislations and for the purpose of this study the researcher will only discuss legislative framework that governs foster care placement as it is the main focus in this study.

2.4. Foster Care Legislative Framework

The Department of Social Development, Social Welfare Services Frame-Work (2011: 30) acknowledges children as one of several vulnerable specific groups. Within the nature of services outlined by the framework, only protection and statutory (court) services aim towards having individuals and families living in a safe and nurturing environment where their rights are protected and their wellbeing is ensured. These services are usually provided within the context of a policy and legislative framework that prescribe when and how to intervene. The policy and legislative framework empower designated people and or institutions to take the required action necessary to protect the wellbeing of the individual within the social context of the family and community (Department of Social Development, Social Welfare Services Frame-Work, 2011: 33).

2.4.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996

According to Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 contains the bill of rights and amongst them in Section 28 children's rights are outlined as follows:

Every child has the right:

- a) To a name and a nationality from birth;
 - b) To family care or parental care, or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment;
 - c) To basic nutrition, shelter, basic health care services and social services;
 - d) To be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation;
 - e) To be protected from exploitative labour practices;
 - f) Not to be required or permitted to perform work or provide services that –
 - i. Are inappropriate for a person of that child's age or
 - ii. Place at risk the child's well-being, education, physical or mental health or spiritual, moral or social development;
 - g) not to be detained except as a measure of last resort in which case, in addition to the rights of the child endures under section 12 and 35, the child may be detained only for the shortest appropriate period of time and has the right to be-
 - i. Kept separately from detained persons over the age of 18 years and
 - ii. Treated in a manner, kept in conditions that take account of the child's age;
 - h) To have a legal practitioner assigned to the child by the state and at state expense, in a civil proceedings affecting the child, if substantial injustice would otherwise result, and
1. not to be used directly in armed conflict and to be protected in times of armed conflict

2. the best interest of the child is of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child

3. in this section the child means the person under the age of 18 years.

The researcher's view is that the constitution has the leading role in the development of policies and programs that are aimed at addressing issues that affect children. Foster care placements ensure that children's rights are well protected as outlined in the constitution.

2.4.2. The Children's Act No.38 of 2005 as amended

The Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended gives effect to certain rights of children as contained in the constitution. It places an obligation on all Government Departments and all officials, employees and representatives of state to respect, protect and promote the right of children (Department of Social Development, Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005, 2013b: 9).

2.4.2.1 Child in need of care and protection

According to section 156(1)(e)(i) & (ii) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, if the children's court finds that a child is in need of care and protection, the court may make any order which is in the best interests of the child, which may be an order if the child has no parent or caregiver or has parents or care giver but that person is unable or unsuitable to care for that child, that the child be placed in foster care with suitable foster parent or foster care with a group of persons or organization operating a cluster foster care scheme.

Section 150 (1) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended emphasizes that the child is in need of care and protection if the child:

- a) Has been abandoned or orphaned and is without any visible means of support.
- b) Display behaviour which cannot be controlled by the parent or caregiver.
- c) Lives and works on the streets or begs for living.
- d) Is addicted to dependence producing substance and without any support to obtain treatment for such dependency.

- e) Has been exploited or lives in circumstances that expose the child to exploitation.
- f) Lives in or is exposed to circumstances which may seriously harm that child's physical, mental or social wellbeing.
- g) May be at risk if returned to the custody of the parent, guardian or care-giver of the child as there is a reason to believe that he or she will live in or be exposed to circumstances which may seriously harm the physical, mental or social wellbeing of the child.
- h) Is in the state of physical or mental neglect, or
- i) Is being maltreated, abused, deliberately neglected or degraded by a parent, care giver, a person who has parental responsibilities and rights or a family member of the child or by a person under whose control the child is.

According to Section 150 (2) a child found in the following circumstances may be found in need of care and protection and must be referred for investigation by a designated social worker:

- a) A child who is a victim of child labour; and
- b) A child in a child headed household.

The Children's Act no 38 of 2005 is a comprehensive legislation that seeks to afford children the necessary care, protection and assistance to develop to their full potential. It upholds the protection of children and seeks to provide assistance to children to fully assume their responsibilities within the community. Foster care is a legislated program within the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

2.4.2.2 Foster care in terms of Children's Act No38 of 2005 as amended

According to section 180 (1) (a) and (b) of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended a child is in foster care if the child has been placed in the care of a person who is not the parent or guardian of the child as a result of-

- a) an order of a children's court; or

- b) a transfer in terms of section 171 of the children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended

In subsection (2) (a) and (b) foster care excludes the placement of a child-

- a) in temporary safe care; or
- b) In the care of child and youth care centre.

Subsection (3) (a) (b) and (c) indicate that a children's court may place a child in foster care-

- a) with the person who is not a family member of the child;
- b) with the person who is not the parent or guardian of the child; or
- c) In a registered cluster foster care scheme.

2.4.2.3 Purpose of foster care

Section 181 (a) (b) and (c) of Children's Act 38 of 2005 outlines the purpose of foster care are to:

- a) Protect and nurture children by providing a safe, healthy environment with positive support;
- b) promote the goals of permanency planning, first towards family reunification, or by connecting children to other safe and nurturing family relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- c) Respect the individual and family by demonstrating a respect for cultural, ethnic and community diversity.

2.4.2.4 Number of children to be placed in foster care per household

According to section 185 (1) (a) and (b) of the Children's Act No 38 of 2005 as amended not more than six children may be placed in foster care with a single person or two persons sharing a common household, except where-

- a) the children are siblings or blood relations; or

- b) the court considers this for any other reason to be in the best interest of all the children

In subsection (2) more than six children may be placed in foster care in terms of a registered cluster foster care scheme.

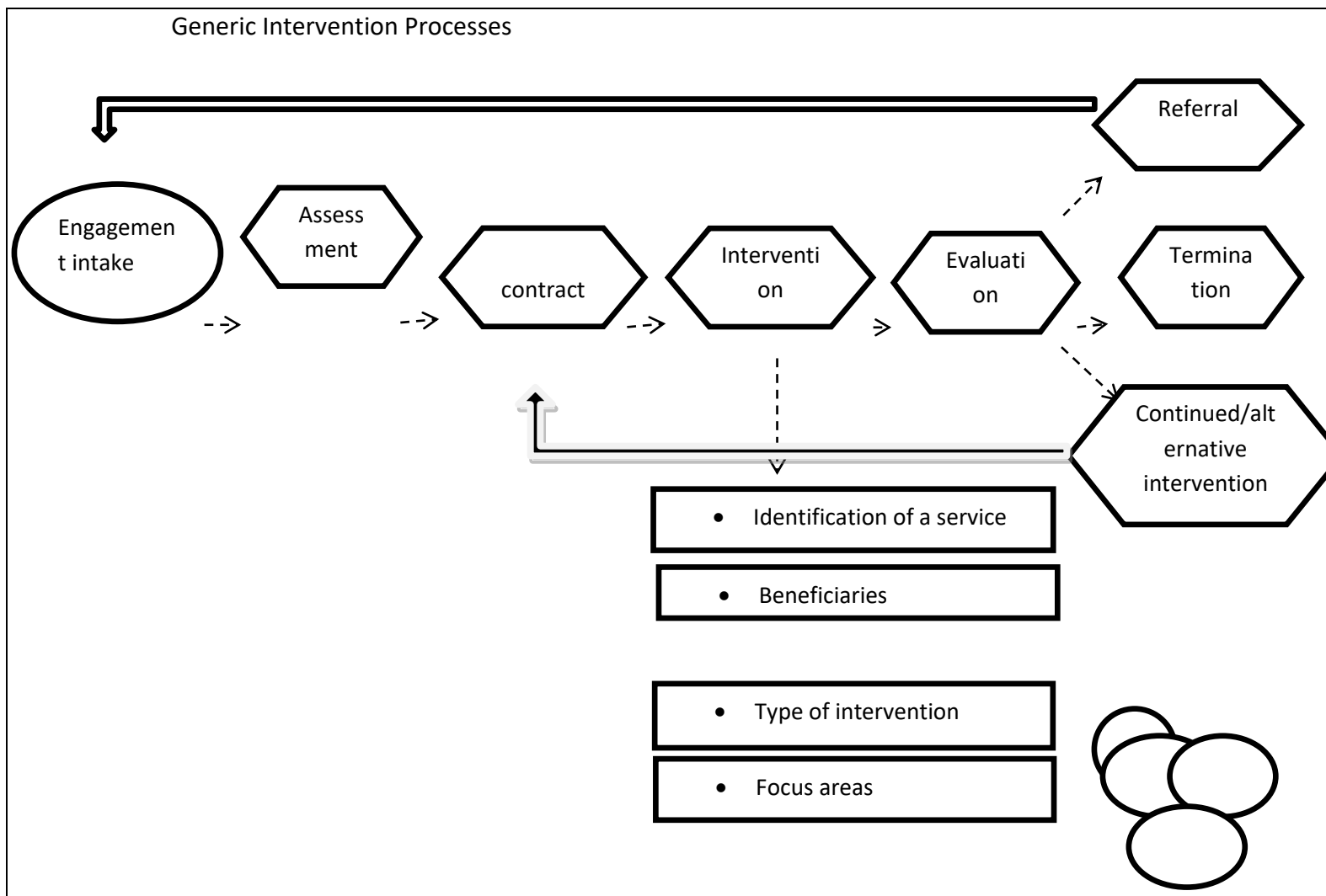
2.5. Social Work intervention processes in foster care placement.

The Department of Social Development developed a Framework for Social Welfare services (2013). This framework presented an opportunity to enhance the nature, scope, extent and level of integrated social welfare services that social service practitioners should be delivering (Department of Social Development, Framework for Social Welfare services, 2013a: 9). In order to improve social functioning and quality of life, services rendered at different levels with a specific outcome in mind. These levels are prevention, early intervention, statutory intervention/ alternative care/residential care, reunification and after care service (Department of Social Development, Framework for Social Welfare services, 2013a: 29).

The researcher is of the view that as foster care is part of statutory intervention within social welfare service, it is seen crucial that social workers to consider integration of guidelines on management of statutory interventions in terms of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, within the frame work for social welfare services. The two policy documents have a strong complement to each other in leading effective foster care service delivery to service beneficiaries.

The Department of Social Development (2013a: 37) outlines generic social welfare intervention processes to be considered by social service professionals when rendering social service interventions. The following is a generic intervention process model for social welfare of services by the Department of Social Development (2013a: 37). Critical elements of the model are identification of processes, defined activities; process control forms (SWS 01-11) and process enablers (people/ professionals/ occupations responsible for the process or activities). As indicated in the following diagram, processes are identified as screening, intake, assessment, intervention planning and contradicting, actual intervention, evaluation and termination.

Figure 1 Generic service delivery model and generic intervention processes



(Source: Department of Social Development, 2013a:39 Framework for Social Welfare services).

Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development (2016: 11) outlines an alternative care business process that provides a structure of activities to be undertaken for provision of alternative care services in compliance with the legislative framework as follows:

2.5.1. Phase 01: Preparatory phase

According to the Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development (2016: 11) this phase has to be initiated long before a child is in need of care and protection, and before a prospective foster parent is requested to perform this role.

2.5.1.1. Recruitment and Screening.

According to section 182(2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, prospective foster parent must be properly assessed by designated social worker to ensure that they are fit and proper to be entrusted with the care of the child. According to De Jager (2011:65), one focus of the assessment is to determine whether the prospective foster parent is prepared to carry out the responsibilities of a foster parent and has the capability to put this eagerness into action. The primary responsibilities of a foster parent are to provide care, to co-work with the child protection agency and an action system and to undertake commitment to the child.

In London, in order to identify a suitable foster family assessment are carried out according to the format provided by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 7). All relevant checks are carried out and references taken up. A report is prepared outlining the suitability of the prospective carers to carry out the tasks of fostering (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 7).

De Jager (2011: 69) states that in South Africa prospective foster parents apply for official recognition of caregiver relationship to the child; this is done through court processes. The law dictates that, "before any person can be appointed as a foster parent, screening must be done against part B of the National Child Protection register to establish if the prospective foster parent is fit and proper to work with children in terms of Section 126 (1) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. In Scotland, fostering panels have been an effective way of assessing the suitability of potential foster carers and act as a powerful support system in the matching of foster families with children in need of care. Every fostering agency must, by law set up a fostering panel to recommend whether prospective foster carers should be approved (Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 21).

2.5.1.2. Training of foster parents

According to Durand (2007: 41), "training of foster parents is a very practical form of support system for foster parents that can provide them with information and skills in order to ensure that they are able to cope with the issues that might arise in any given foster placement. It helps foster parents to use the skills they develop through trainings to meet

the needs of the child as well as improve placement stability. Durand further attests that training of foster parents does not only focus on the skills development of the foster parents but also have a positive reward towards the relationship between the foster parent and the foster child”.

Foster parents’ training is also promoted internationally. In terms of the Fostering service statement of purpose (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 08) “a training manual is provided to all new carers, which includes essential information and policies, procedures and guidelines for foster parents. Barnet Children’s service has a Children’s Workforce Development Team that commissions training courses for staff including foster parents. Additionally, staff in Children’s Service led some training and training is available through reciprocal arrangements with five other London Boroughs, through the North London Fostering Consortium” (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 08). In Australia, foster care applicants are required to undertake an initial training program before being approved as foster parents (McHugh, 2013: 15). Social workers in Botswana also render education and training roles, Child line has modules that focus on child abuse, children’s rights, disciplining children, children and feelings, children and trauma (Maundeni, 2009: 03). Since 2006, social workers working for child line-Botswana have also been training prospective foster parents on foster care (Maundeni, 2009: 03).

Foster care regulation of Ghana, Department of Social Services (2007: 05) outlines that at time of licensing, foster parents should have knowledge about skills to protect and nature children in a safe, healthy environment with unconditional positive support, support relationships among children and their parents , siblings and kin. Meet the developmental needs of the child by:

- Helping them to cope with separation and loss;
- Helping to build trusting relationship;
- Building self-esteem;
- Affording positive guidance;

- Promoting cultural identity;
- Using discipline appropriate to the child's age and development harsh, humiliating or corporal punishment;
- Supporting intellectual development and educational growth; and
- Encouraging and modelling positive social relationship and responsibilities.

Mdletshe (2008: 37) emphasize that to design and organize a training programme for foster parents a number of questions require answers. This involves:

i What do foster cares need to know.

ii What it is that needs to be put into a basic programme.

iii What teaching method will be appropriate and effective.

iv What material will promote understanding, enhance and maintain the participant's interests.

v What organizational issues need to be taken into account.

2.5.2. Phase 02: Intake phase.

According to Cummins Sevel and Pedrick (2012: 5), the first step of the helping process is intake and engagement. During engagement phase, the change agent system who is the social worker makes initial contact with the client system and begins to establish the framework for helping relationship. Professional helping relationship with client system is a foundation of foster care intervention process. Many helping professionals consider it more important than the helping strategies used to address the client systems' problems (McClam and Woodside, 2005:119). According to Grafton et al (2004: 24), regardless of whether you pursue micro, mezzo, or macro change you must establish rapport or harmonious relationship with clients system and target systems in order to communicate and get things done. This is based on the implementation of social work skills and social work principles such as empathy, non- judgmental attitudes, client-self determination, individualization and confidentiality (Grafton et.al, 2004:24).

Reports about child protection concerns are most often received from the public or other societal systems such as community agencies and are initially assessed by an intake officer. If concerns suggest that a child as a client system has been significantly harmed or is at risk of harm, the matter will be recorded and allocated for assessment (Wilson and Tilbury 2009: 07). According to the Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development (2016: 11), the social worker acting as a change agent system needs to make an initial assessment of the child's current circumstances, biological parents, prospective foster parent and initial investigation into validity of care. If the child is brought by a member of public or police official, the social worker must obtain full particulars of the person as he/she serves as on action system, affidavit on circumstances under which the child was found. If the child is brought by the police officer completed form 36 and affidavit attached by police officer, and the child is in temporary safe care.

Foster care applicants are given more information at engagement phase with regard to the role and need for foster care, for them to make realistic decisions about whether to proceed or not (Queensland government, the Department of Child Safety, 2005: 03). In terms of the Framework for Social Welfare services (2013a: 6), the social worker who is assisting the foster care applicant at intake phase should conduct intake interview, administer referral where applicable, complete intake form and process note, capture and file intake form and process notes.

2.5.3. Phase 03: Assessment phase

Assessment includes a process of investigating the developmental needs of a child, including his or her family's ecological environment or any other circumstances that may have a bearing on the child's need for protection and therapeutic services (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 27

Compton, Galaway and Cournoyer (2005: 194) see assessment as involving "the collection, exploration, organization and analysis of relevant information for use in decision making about the nature of the problem and determine the needed input". According to Ellis, Dulmus and Vordaski as cited in Mdletshe (2008: 36), assessment considers every aspect of the child's life but focuses primarily on the strengths and needs of children and their family system. The primary goal of assessment is the identification of problems that have caused

or contributed to maltreatment and the strength that can be building upon to ensure that there is proper renovations and expansion in the child's life. Another goal of assessment is to recognize specific needs of the child and to provide a basis for planning ways in which these needs can be met. All these are done to ensure that equilibrium is reached in the child's life.

According to the Department of Social Developments' (2013b:25) assessment is part of early intervention services. A multi-disciplinary team, with members depending on the presenting problem, may perform a holistic assessment of a child's ecological environment in order to determine phenomena that may risk the well-being of the child. If a multi-disciplinary team is utilised, each professional should undertake a specialist assessment or contribute specialist knowledge or advice to the social worker who is the case manager.

Various organizations and professional groups in America (child welfare league of America; American Academy of child and adolescent psychiatry; American Academy of Paediatrics) endorsed the concept that children entering foster care should be assessed for physical, developmental and mental health problems so that appropriate interventions can begin early for the child's adaptation (Grayson, 2012:3).

Hepworth, Rooney and Larsen as cited by Khoza (2011:22) identify series of processes to engage in, during holistic assessment process that include "determining the unmet needs, considering the developmental stage of the client system, determining if the agency or social worker is suited to provide services responding to the client system's needs, identifying eligibility for services, making appropriate referral to other resources within the network of change, developing intervention plan or goals, identifying resources available and those required to meet the goals and identifying skills to execute activities". In Scotland clinicians are often required to make assessment of children before they enter alternative care, and the child's apparent profile of needs inform the decision of where they should be placed and the support they would need from different support systems (Pritchett et.al 2016: 02).

The Department of Social Development's Information guide (2013b: 27) emphasises that, if statutory intervention is inevitable due to the fact that a child has been abused or deliberately neglected, the broad risk assessment framework outlined in regulation 35

pertaining the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended must be used to guide decision-making in the provision of designated child protection services and to support the decision as to whether a child is in need of care and protection or not. Section 110(5) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 obliges the designated social worker to conduct safety and risk assessment to assess the safety and wellbeing of a child who is reported to be abused, neglected or in need of care and protection from his/ her ecological environment.

The Social Welfare Services Framework, (2013a: 38) emphasise that during the holistic assessment phase the social worker should schedule an appointment if not yet done, conduct assessment by applying different techniques. For instance, standard tests, drawings and interviews, in order to compile assessment report which includes identify need for service and recommend plan of action for specific intervention.

2.5.4. Phase 04: Statutory phase

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 31), statutory intervention becomes unavoidable when initial preventive or early intervention services to preserve the family system fail. At this level, the child has either become involved with the court process or is no longer able to function optimally. The child may have to be removed from his or her normal place of origin, either by court order or on the recommendation of a social worker, to alternative care. Statutory intervention is a legislative process that designated social worker initiates by bringing a matter before a presiding officer who is acting as an action system to determine whether a child is in need of care or not.

Statutory intervention with the court order in terms of section 151 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the case is reported to children's court. Presiding Officer receives evidence under oath with supporting documents attached, issues an order and request the social worker to investigate. Statutory intervention without court order in terms of section 152 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. The social worker or police officer removes a child with completion of form 36. Provide the copy to the care giver or parent, Remove the child to temporary safe care (Person or facility), or remove the child to an approved residential care facility and submit the form 36 report to the Children's Court within 48 hours (Government Capacity Building Support Programme, Department of Social Development, 2016: 12).

2.5.5 Phase 05: Investigation phase

During this phase, the social worker is expected to obtain information regarding the circumstances that gave rise to investigation and secure all documentation relevant to the investigation. Interviews should be held with the child in terms of section 10 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended to determine strengths and weaknesses and also be held with the family members to verify information (Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development, 2016: 12). The investigation would also include the following:

2.5.5.1. Advertisement to trace biological parents

According to regulation 56 (1) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, if it appears to a designated social worker that a child has been abandoned or orphaned, whether for the purpose of determining if such child is in need of care and protection or if such child can be made available for adoption or foster care placement, the social worker must place an advertisement in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area where the child has been found calling upon any person to claim responsibility for the child.

According to section 56 (2) (a) (b) (c) and (d) of the regulation in determining whether a child has been abandoned or orphaned for purposes of section 150 (1) (a) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, a presiding officer must-

- a) be satisfied that the child has been abandoned or orphaned;
- b) be furnished with a copy of the advertisement contemplated in sub-regulation (1) and be satisfied that, for the purpose of-
 - (i) section 150 (1) (a) of the Act, a period of at least one month has lapsed since the publication of the advertisement; or
 - (ii) section 157 (3) of the Act, a period of at least three months has lapsed since the publication of the advertisement, and that no person has claimed responsibility for the child;

- c) have regard, in the case of an orphaned child, to the death certificate or certificates of the child's parents, guardian or care-giver, obtainable by the social worker concerned, or, if such certificate cannot be obtained, to an affidavit by a person or persons who can testify to the death of the child's parent, guardian or care-giver; and
- d) have regard, in the case of an abandoned child, to an affidavit, setting out the steps taken to trace the child's parent, guardian or care-giver, by the social worker concerned to the effect that the child's parent, guardian or care-giver cannot be traced and an affidavit by any other person, if any, who can testify to the fact that the child has had no contact with his or her parent, guardian or care-giver for a period of at least three months.

2.5.5.2. Professional report writing

According to Wilson and Tilbury (2009: 03), "social workers write different kinds reports, such as report on outcome of child protection investigation or person's suitability to become a foster parent. Writing the report is a similar process to assessment": the practitioner considers working with informal systems within the child's ecological environment such as family, friends and fellow worker as well as societal systems such as schools and hospitals, hence ecosystems perspective (Payne 2005: 145). He/she pays home visits or school visits to gathers information on psycho-social circumstances of the child, organises and logically presents information and concludes. The conclusions that one makes are critical- they draw all information together, presenting the practitioner's deductions about the significance of what the practitioner have found, and making recommendations about necessary future action (Wilson and Tilbury 2009: 03).

Form 38 is compiled in terms of Section 155(2) of the children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended is the prescribed form to be used by social workers in compiling the report. The report should present the client system's situation holistically and should comply with conditions outlined in regulation 55 pertaining to the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. When placing the child in foster care, the social worker has an obligation to thoroughly work through the report before the court hearing with the prospective foster parent(s)/caregiver(s). If it is in the best interest of the child in terms of section 7 of the

children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the child and his or her family system should participate in any future plans regarding reunification or permanency placement in terms of section 10 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

2.5.5.3. Supervision

The supervision framework for the social work profession in South Africa (2012b: 18) defines Social Work Supervision as an interactional process with a positive harmonious relationship between the supervisor and supervisee based on theories, models and perspectives on supervision whereby the supervisor is responsible for guiding the supervisees by performing educational supportive and administrative functions to ensure compliance with social work theory, standardized knowledge, skills, competency and applicable ethical content in the practice setting for quality service delivery. There are three types of supervision, namely: administration supervision, supportive supervision and educational supervision.

According to the Aotearoa (2015:03), New Zealand Association of social workers, most of social service agencies employing social workers and educational providers have clearly stated policies regarding supervision (Social Worker's Registration Board, 2015: 03). The common principle in New Zealand social work supervision is that, professional supervision is available for all practicing social workers (Social Worker's Registration Board, 2015: 03).

Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, before submitting a report to court, when satisfied that the report is of the required quality, the social worker should submit it to his or her supervisor (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 30). In accordance with the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 30) The supervisor should check the report for proficiency and countersign it (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 30) . Seymour et al. (2011:73) emphasise the importance of equal supportive supervision and preparation to assist social workers to anticipate questions that might be asked at court and can be in the position to give informed responses. In the researcher's view when referring to system's theory, supervision is one form of support system to social workers during foster care interventions.

2.5.5.4 Recommending the right placement for the child in terms of section 46 read with section 156 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

Nigel as cited in Mdletshe (2008:34) emphasizes that the right placement can ensure that a child is happy and fulfilled and creates a social basis for the child's development into adulthood. The wrong placement can disturb the client system's state of equilibrium, it leave the child unhappy or emotionally stuck which can trigger educational or other developmental difficulties or can lead to a pattern of instability that may last throughout childhood and beyond. The researcher views ecological environment as one of the key factors that determines the right placement. Nigel (2005: 73) further mentions some important facts the social worker should consider in placements which involve among other things, the type of care that will meet the child's priority needs, the main tasks of the carers in order to meet the aims of care, length of stay, proposed contact between the child and the birth parents and many others. According to Bungane (2007: 26), the choice of placement of the child should be influenced primarily by the needs of the child and not merely by available resources. Although grandparents are the best placement, their age and living standards should be taken into consideration to prevent the child from being transferred to another placement after the death of the grandparents. The South African National Council for Child and Family Welfare as cited by De Jager (2011: 69) indicate that, the decision to place a child in foster care is followed by the process of matching a child with a suitable foster family.

A positive aspect of kinship care is that the cultural, religious and linguistic background of the child and that of the foster carers are very likely to match (Child Welfare League of America, in Scannapieco and Hegar cited in De Jager, 2011).The researcher is of the view that in some instances kinship placement is convenient to children as they already understand the functionality of the family system they live with. The child in foster care in Georgia says... *"it is always a difficult time before you get used to your new family. You feel uncomfortable and embarrassed, but if you stay with your grandparents- you do not have to change everything completely"* (Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 14). Internationally there is also an increased emphasise among policy makers and practitioners on placing children with kin. Kinship care is generally believed to preserve continuing contact with the family system, help maintain identity, keep siblings groups together, decrease trauma and stress

following the separation or death of parents and reduce likelihood of multiple placements and minimise placement adjustment problems (Roby, Iglehart, O' Brien as cited by Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 14).

2.5.5.5. Considering the likely effect of any change in the circumstance of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others.

The Department of Social Development (2013b:32) stated that “the social worker should also consider the likely effect of any change in the circumstance of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others when preparing for foster placement”. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013:4) emphasises that “ sibling relationships are emotionally powerful and important not only in the childhood but over the cause of a lifetime as they look up to each other and typically spend more time together than with anyone else”. The researcher is with the view that siblings form part of the family system, separating them without good intentions might pose a risk to a broken family.

2.5.5.6. Considering the educational needs of the child and the likely effect of change in schools.

School is one of the societal systems that have a positive influence towards the child's development. The Legal Centre for foster care and education (2007: 1) states that frequent school changes have an impact on the child's educational progress. The Department of Social Development (2013b: 32), encourages social workers to take into consideration the educational needs and the likely effects of change in schools when placing children. Other organizations in the world prefer to place children locally to avoid disrupting a child's education and for contact arrangements with birth family members (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 07).

2.5.6. Phase 06: Finalization of the Children's Court Hearing

According to section 184 (1) (a) (b) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the court must consider a report by designated social worker about the cultural and linguistic background of the child and the availability of the suitable person with similar background to that of the child, who is willing and able to provide foster care to the child. The clerk of children's court who is also part of action system, will on receipt of the social workers report

issue the date of the court hearing and also notify all relevant parties to attend the hearing. The social worker will present his/her report and ensure that a copy of the court order is placed on the file (Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development, 2016: 13).

2.5.6.1. Court preparation

Court preparation is the process of preparing children and/or their families for appearance at court, as well as detailing, explaining and discussing the expectations of the court and procedures that are followed during the court hearing or process.

The Department of Social Development's (2013b: 30) the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended indicates that, court appearance may be a daunting experience for adults and even more so for children. It is therefore the duty of the social worker to address any fears, apprehension or lack of information, as well as to sort out practical issues of court appearance. Court preparation aims to increase the parties' knowledge of the court's ecological environment by familiarising them with surroundings, persons who will be attending the proceedings and their roles, as well as the rules of the court. The social worker should do this by providing them with information of what is likely to occur in the court setting. Section 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended recognises children's right to participate in any matter concerning them and to have their views given due consideration. Children should be allowed to participate fully and effectively if required to do so in court. When preparing children to participate, social workers should ensure that they adhere to the professional code of ethics; for example, guarding against coaching or coercing children on what to say.

It is important that a child does not wait for prolonged periods at court to avoid the need for refreshments and increased anxiety, especially if there are no facilities to keep the child occupied. Where possible, the social worker may arrange with the court to attend to children's court cases earlier in the day, or work on an appointment system (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 30 in the information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended).

The Department of Social Development's (2013b:30) further emphasizes that, the social worker is responsible for providing professional support and protecting the child against any undue harm, which may come from the perpetrator, media, and disgruntled parents, among others. If a child shows any signs of trauma or anxiety, the social worker should provide the necessary professional intervention. It is also beneficial to prepare the child's carer so as to enable them to respond to the child's anxieties and fears, especially during the period prior to the hearing. If a child or one of the parties needs the services of an interpreter, the social worker should inform the court in advance to allow for arranging such services.

If the removal of a child is inevitable, the social worker should address the emotional and psychological anxieties associated with separation. Biological parents, foster parents and foster children need to be made aware of their rights and responsibilities and any plans for family reunification (if possible) or any permanency plan.

2.5.6.2 Court appearance

Worldwide, District of Columbia, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands limit attendance to parties (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012: 02). In child welfare proceedings, the term "parties" generally includes the child, the parent or guardian of the child, the agency or department having custody of the child. Other persons who have an interest in the child's welfare such as foster parent, pre-adoptive parent, and relative currently providing care for the child are allowed to attend court hearing (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012: 02). Section 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 recognises children's rights to participate in any matter concerning them and to have their views given due consideration. The guidelines on the management of statutory services in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, Department of Social Development (2013b:30) states that the social worker should notify the court to arrange an interpreter if the clients require the services of an interpreter. According to Lee (2008: 5) the primary role of interpreter is to support and strengthen relationship between the client and the service provider.

2.5.7. Phase 07: Application for foster child grant

According to Government Capacity Building Support Programme of the Department of Social Development (2016: 13) “if the social worker has recommended that the child be placed in foster care of suitable foster parents, the foster parents become part of action system and he/she should be advised to personally report to the local SASSA offices that are also identified as action system to apply for a foster child grant.

Previous research have revealed that the main reason the majority of relatives apply for legal foster care of orphaned children is to access a foster care grant which serves as a poverty eradication strategy for poor families (Social Security for children in the context of AIDS as cited by Manukuza, 2013: 22 and Ngwenya 2011: 03). According to Mdletshe (2008: 35), the social worker should determine whether foster parents are in need of resources to support either themselves or children in their care. If needs are identified, the case worker should identify resources within the systems of network to meet those needs, provide referral to resources and arrange transportation or financial assistance where needed. De Jager (2011: 70) states that the foster parent is assisted with the foster care grant that will enable him/her to provide for the child’s needs.

Morgan (2012: 10) shows that “foster parents receive a fostering allowance for each looked after child in their care. This allowance is based on the age of the child and is reviewed annually”.

2.5.8. Phase 08: Foster care supervisory services

The frame work for Social Welfare Services (Department of Social Development 2013a: 38) emphasises that monitoring and evaluation must take place throughout the process with the beneficiary to determine if the desired outcome is achieved. Social workers monitor foster care placement

To ensure that a child placed in alternative care is adequately cared for and the conditions of care as defined in section 1 of the Children’s Act 38 of 2005 are complied with. The social worker should ensure that the child:

(a) Is provided with:-

- (i) A suitable place to live.
- (ii) Living conditions that are conducive to the child's health, well-being and development; and
- (iii) The necessary financial support.
- (b) The well-being of the child is safeguarded.
- (c) The child is protected from maltreatment, abuse, neglect, degradation, discrimination, exploitation and any other physical, emotional or moral harm or hazards.
- (d) The child's rights set out in section 28 of the Constitution and the principles set out in the Children's Act are respected, protected and not infringed upon.
- (e) The social worker should ensure that the child's caregiver fulfils the following:

Guides, directs and secures the child's education and upbringing, including religious and cultural education and upbringing, in a manner appropriate to the child's age, maturity and stage of development.

Guides, advises and assists the child in taking decisions in a manner appropriate to the child's age, maturity and stage of development.

Guides the behaviour of the child in a humane manner.

Maintains a sound relationship with the child. If reunification is sanctioned by the social worker and the children's court, allows reasonable contact between the child and his or her family or parents.

It is also a norm that supervision services should be rendered at least once in six months by social service professionals, and the standard is that foster care plan must be reviewed every six months. Care plan must be updated in line with assessment and capacity building responsive to the needs of foster care parents should be designed.

According to Ellis, Dulmus and Vordaski as cited in Mdletshe (2008:35), the duties of a social worker in foster care supervision requires regular visits of the homes to both children and foster parents. The visits are intended to assess feedback on the child's adaption to new

environment and the feedback on environmental adaption in the child's presence hence reciprocity, how effectively the problems identified during assessment are being addressed; to what degree are the strengths being utilized and what progress the family system is making towards the goals identified in the case plan hence "through put". Law (2009:03) states that foster placement requires supervision and regular progress reports to the Children's Court. Social Workers should visit the children regularly and maintain contact with the child's parents to assess whether or not family reconstruction is possible (Law, 2009: 03). According to the Nigel as cited in Mdletshe (2008: 36) maintains that in supervision foster care reviews should be done at least at intervals prescribed by law and guidance but should be remembered that these are maximum intervals and reviews should be held more often if the child's needs require it. Law (2009: 03) emphasises the need for availability of support services to the foster parents.

2.5.8.1. Contact between children with their biological parents.

The social workers are expected to encourage the foster parents to allow foster children to have contact with their biological parents. The sense of belonging with these parents is good for the child's psychological development (Bungane, 2007: 24). As outlined in the UN Convention of the Rights of child and the guidelines, caring for a child in their family is paramount to the development and best interest of the child. This suggests that foster care should not and cannot replace supporting family systems to care for their own children Keshavarzian and Bunkers (2015: 12). Children in Malawi say... *"No one will love you like your mother, she gave birth to you so you are part of her. "A mother will care for you better than anyone else"* (Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 12).

The family system is seen as a very important unit in South African society and thus families are encouraged to stay together. The Department of Social Development emphasizes a Statutory Developmental approach i.e. placement of a child in alternative care is considered as last option because children can be emotionally abused if attachment with primary care givers are severed and orphaned children also have the right to grow up under the custody of their relatives in order to inherit the fit to their cultural background (Manukuza, 2013: 21).

2.5.8.2. Therapeutic support

According to the Morgan (2012: 09), Children in Kinship placements have often experienced abuse and neglect and consequently often have emotional and behavioural needs which require therapeutic intervention. The local authority is committed to making sure that each child has the appropriate emotional and psychological support system that they need in order to assist them with emotional or behavioural needs. The specifics of the support system are discussed as part of social work assessment.

Brown, Sebba and Luke (2014:19) conducted an international literature review on the roles of the supervising social worker in providing the support and supervision to foster families. Emotional support was rated highly, alongside more practical elements. Foster parents appreciated social workers who were reliable and available particularly at times of crisis or stress, for example, around allegations and foster placement disruptions. Home visits as well as telephone contact were also valued. Foster carers appreciated support in relation to problematic contact for a foster child with their birth family.

Bungane (2007: 26), suggests that in strengthening of the support system volunteers should be trained to help the social worker to meet the needs of foster children and their foster parents. Social workers should work closely with the volunteers because, if strategically involved, the volunteers will minimize the challenge of social workers of not being able to identify suitable foster parents for children in need of care. These volunteers can also help in identifying the foster care placements which are characterized by child abuse and mismanaged foster care grants. What is needed to address the impact of HIV/AIDS and poverty on children is a set of collective community programme responses that acknowledges support and strengthen the commitment and care of families. Members of the community are in the best position to know which households are most severely affected and which kind of help is appropriate.

Social workers should effectively and efficiently make use of the resources made available to them. The Department of Social Development has established partnership with stakeholders such as NGOs; Community based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and communities. The Home Community- Based Care (HCBC) Organizations consist of volunteers. These organizations are funded to identify and provide

services to orphans and vulnerable children. Unfortunately these volunteers do not have Social Work background but are guided by common sense and intuition to their attempt to address the social needs of orphans and vulnerable children (Bungane, 2007: 26).

2.5.8.3. Contribution of social auxiliary workers

According to Racionzer (2010: 60), social auxiliary work is “an act or activity practised by social auxiliary worker under the guidance and control of a social worker and as a support system to achieve the aims of social work”. Social auxiliary workers are registered with SACSSP in terms of section 18 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 as amended. Their duty is to assist the work of social service professionals by providing services and counselling support to individuals, families and communities (Department of Social Development, Draft report on school social work model, 2014: 12). In the field of protection and care the social worker is responsible for the therapeutic and statutory services and the social auxiliary worker can assist with primary care such as practical assistance and support services (Racionzer, 2010:65).

2.5.8.4. Review of foster care placement

According to section 159 (1) of Children’s Act 38/2005 as amended, an order by a children’s court in terms of section 156 lapses on expiry of two years from the date the order was made; or such shorter period the order was made and may be extended by children’s court for a period of not more than two years.

Section 186 (1) (a) (b) and (c) of the Children’s Act No 38 of 2005 as amended, dictates that a children’s court may, despite the provisions of section 159 (1) (a) regarding the duration of a court order, after a child has been in foster care with a person other than a family member for more than two years and after having considered the need for creating stability in the child’s life, order that-

- a) no further social worker supervision is required for that placement;
- b) no further social worker reports are required in respect of that placement; and
- c) the foster care placement subsists until the child turns 18 years, unless otherwise directed.

In subsection (2) (a) (b) (c) and (d) a children's court may, despite the provisions of sections 159 (1) (a) regarding the duration of a court order and after having considered the need for creating stability in the child's life, place a child in foster care with a family member for more than two years, extend such an order for more than two years at a time or order that the foster care placement subsists until the child turns 18 years, if-

- a) the child has been abandoned by the biological parents; or
- b) the child's biological parents are deceased; or
- c) there is for any other reason no purpose in attempting reunification between the child and the child's biological parents; and
- d) it is in the best interest of the child.

Subsection (3) state that despite the provisions of subsections (1) and (2), a social service professional must visit a child in foster care at least once every two years to monitor and evaluate the placement.

According to subsection (2), when deciding on an extension of the period of a court order in terms of subsection (1), the court must take cognisance of the views of the child, the parent and any other person who has parental responsibilities and rights in respect of the child.

According to subsection (3) despite the provisions of subsection (1) and (2), a social service professional must visit a child in foster care at least once every two years to monitor and evaluate the placement.

The case manager, who finalised the children's court proceedings, where applicable, is responsible for the process of the review of court orders, family reunification services, and any movement of the child within or out of the foster care home. In Scotland the panel reviews the performance of existing foster carers at certain intervals and makes recommendations about whether they should continue to be approved (Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 21).

2.5.9 Phase 09: After care services

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b:35) Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, after care services are supportive services provided to a child and his or her family system after reunification or discharge from alternative care. The purpose of after care services is to assess, monitor and evaluate progress with regard to the child's adjustment to reunification. These services may include prevention services, as well as family preservation services to prevent the recurrence of problems that led to the initial removal of the child or to prevent the occurrence of new problems.

Services should be planned and rendered before a child is discharged from the provisions of the Act. They should systematically aim to prepare the child to assume self-reliance or to integrate fully into the community. After care services for 'children' over 18 or 21 years must focus on independent living.

2.5.9.1. Independent Living program

The purpose of the program is not only to provide guidance and support, but also to lay the foundation and prepare for the successful transition of the child placed in alternative care from their teenage years (15 years) to adulthood (Government Capacity Building Support Program, Department of Social Development, 2016: 14)

It is imperative for social workers and social service professionals to advocate for these children and liaise with other societal systems such as government department, business and relevant stakeholders to offer assistance to these 'children' (Department of Social Development, 2013b:36 Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended).

The duration of after care services must be determined by the level of support and services that the child and the family system require, but should not be less than six months. The social worker or social service professional, whoever is responsible, must submit quarterly progress reports on the results of reunification and after care services provided to the family system (Department of Social Development, 2013b:36, Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended).

In the United State of America different programs are made available for youth who are aging out of foster care (Dworsky, Dillman, Dion, Coffee-Borden & Rosenau, 2012: 14). Programs such as Chafee foster care independence program, administered by Department of Health and Human services to provide funds to youth who have aged out of foster care and are not yet aged 21, or exited foster care through adoption or kinship guardianship when they were at least 16 years old. Education and Training Voucher program provides up to \$5,000 in assistance each year to youth eligible for Chafee-funded services who are attending a qualified post secondary institution until they aged 23. Independent Living Skills program provide trainings in topic such as budgeting, time management, health, nutrition, hygiene, and conflict resolution. Life skills specialist or other program staff member delivers the training (Dworsky et al, 2012: 14).

The Government Capacity Building Support Programme, Department of Social Development (2016: 14) outline programmes that should be provided to a foster child as follows:

- Mentorship/ Counselling
- Developmental programmes which include:
 - Strengthening social and emotional skills
 - Vocational training
 - Employment opportunities
 - Career path that would include access to bursary schemes and scholarship programmes
 - Self – care (looking after their health and well-being)
 - Building networks for support and navigating community resources
 - Accommodation that facilitates re-integration into communities
 - Preparation for employment in the open labour market.

2.5.9.2. Family reunification services

Nigel, as cited in Mdletshe (2008:38), mentions that termination of foster care can include a number of different things such as returning to biological family, adoption or it can be independent living.

Family reunification services in terms of section 187(1) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended are goal-directed services that are planned and rendered to the child, parent, guardian, or caregiver in order to support and empower them to allow and facilitate the restoration of the child to the care of such parent(s), guardian(s) or caregiver(s). According to the guidelines, family reunification services aim to reunite the child when the issue(s) that led or contributed to the removal of the child into alternative care have been addressed. It is the responsibility of the social worker to facilitate visitations and leave of absence from alternative care if it is in the best interest of the child, with the aim of family reunification. The court must issue the placement order subject to conditions providing for a designated social worker to facilitate such reunification as contemplated in section 156 (3) (a) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

According to section 187 (1) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, if a children's court placing a child in foster care is of the view that reunification between the child and the child's biological parents is possible and in the best interest of the child, the court must issue the placement order subject to conditions providing for a designated social worker to facilitate such reunification as contemplated in section 156 (3) (a) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. According to section 187 (2) (a) and (b) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, if the child has not been reunited with his/her biological parents two months before the expiry of the initial court order or any extension of the order, the designated social worker appointed to facilitate the reunification must submit a report to children's court, explaining why the child was not reunified with the biological parents and recommending any steps that may be taken to stabilise the child's life. According to section 187 (3) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the children's court considering the report may order that the designated social worker must continue facilitating reunification, or order the termination of reunification services if there are no prospects of reunification.

Sciamanna (2013: 02) reflects on the study undertaken by the National Resource Centre for Foster Care and Permanency planning to examine some programs and approaches to

strengthen the reunification process in a way that is both safe and lasting. It highlights key practices that appear to be important factors to successful reunification outcomes:

- Placement decision making;
- Parents- child visiting;
- Intensive services;
- Resource parent/ birth parent collaboration; and
- After care services.

2.5.9.3. Termination of foster care

According to section 189 (1) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, foster care may be terminated by a children's court if it is in the best interest of the child. In subsection (2) (a) and (b) before terminating the foster care of a child, the court must take into account all relevant factors, including-

- a) the bond that exists between the child and the child's biological parent, if the biological parent reclaims care of the child;
- b) the bond that developed between-
 - i) The child and the foster parent; and
 - ii) The child and the family of the foster parent; and
- c) the prospects of achieving permanency in the child's life by-
 - i) Returning the child to the biological parent;
 - ii) Allowing the child to remain permanently in foster care with the foster parent;
 - iii) Placing the child in any other alternative care; or
 - iv) Adoption of the child

2.6. Client – Worker partnership in foster care placement

“Social work by nature is a helping profession. One may become well versed in assessing risk factors, identifying clients’ needs and linking people with the resources necessary to help them empowered to be members of society” (Vasquez, 2013: 01). According to Compton and Galaway (2005:81) “without a strong sense of partnership both the process and outcome of helping process are jeopardised”.

2.6.1 Negotiating Decisions

“Partnership means that client and social worker jointly draw a contractual agreement to problem solving. They agree on identification and definition of the problem, set goals and plans to accomplish those goals. Social workers work within client’s conception of the problem and wants when they appear consistent with the helper’s professional responsibilities” (Compton and Galaway, 2005:81).

2.6.2 Different but Equal Contributions

According to Compton and Galaway (2005:83) “Although client and social workers do not unusually bring the same things to the problem-solving work, their respective contributions are equally important to the process. In general, clients bring:

- Knowledge regarding themselves and the situation.
- Knowledge about the origin and development of the problem.
- Expectations regarding how you can help.
- Network of social relationships.
- Views about what they would like to accomplish.
- Strength for use in pursuing goals.

Social workers usually bring:

- Expert knowledge to help assess the situation and select service plans most likely to resolve problems and accomplish goals.
- Skills in the problem solving process.

- Professional opinions and ideas for consideration by the client.
- Skills to help clients formulate solvable problems.
- Skills to help clients in mobilizing internal and external strengths for use in pursuing goals.
- Skills to create a relationship context in which clients can actively participate.
- The resources of your agency and connections to other community resources”.

2.6.3 Partnership and Professionalism

The concept of collaborative partnership with clients may require the social worker to consider popular views about professionals’ role and function. Given the specialized education and professional status, professional helpers may sometimes be tempted to conclude that they know what the best is for their clients and impose their knowledge or to use their expertise to control clients (Compton and Galaway, 2005: 83). Compton and Galaway (2005:83) present several qualities and characteristics exhibited by social workers seem to contribute to the development off effective and beneficial client worker partnerships:

- Genuine concern for clients, purposeful expression of feelings and optimistic attitude that encourages clients to create change for themselves.
- Acceptance – a non-judgemental attitude; recognition of other’s dignity; equality and uniqueness; sensitivity to clients’ feelings; and respect for clients’ wants and preferences.
- A sense of commitment or loyalty to the plan. Such fidelity is needed if goals are to be achieved.
- Empathy , by seeing and expressing understanding of the problem from clients’ point of view, empathetic workers demonstrate respect and acceptance and discover strengths, assets, resources and options.

- Authority- recognition of and comfort with your role and position as a professional social worker, including your right and obligation to contribute to decisions regarding issues pertinent to the client- worker partnership. Authority does not mean authoritarian, the decisions affecting clients require their informed consent.

2.7. Social work values

A value may be viewed as “something intrinsically valuable or desirable”. Social workers share several values that are reflected in social work code of ethics, educational standards and other formal documents. Social workers tend to believe strongly in human dignity and uniqueness and self-determination. One other social work value as presented by Compton and Galaway (2005:94) is legal authority and self determination.

2.7.1. Human Dignity and uniqueness

According to Compton and Galaway (2005: 85), “social workers believe that each person deserves respect as a unique individual with an inherent human dignity. People must not be treated as objects or as means to an end. Diversity is welcomed”. They emphasize that social workers can operationalize this value in practice by:

- Treating people as individuals and recognizing the risks associated with labels and classifications.
- Encouraging risks associated with labels and classifications.
- Encouraging active participation throughout all phases of the problem solving process.
- Discovering and making use of client strengths.
- Holding people including ourselves accountable.
- Carefully considering what our communications convey about dignity and respect.

2.7.2. Self – Determination

Barsky (2016: 01) attests that “Social workers believe in client self-determination, meaning that they respect the foster care client system to make decisions on their own behalf”.

According to NASW as cited by Compton and Galaway (2005:91) "Social workers only assist client systems in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals". It is the researcher's view that when applying self-determination, social workers establish the prospective foster parent's level of willingness and motivation to be appointed as a foster parent. No one should be forced to play the role of foster parent. Children are also given opportunity to participate in the selection of the foster family in terms of section 10 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. "Self-determination is empowering and acknowledges that client systems are the best resource on their own needs" (Akbar, 2011:02).

2.7.3. Legal authority and self – determination.

"Social worker's commitment to self-determination may prove especially complex in certain fields of practice. In some contexts and under certain circumstances, social workers may possess legal authority to force clients to modify their behaviour or take out penalties if they fail to comply. Such legal authority is typically mandated to protect vulnerable people, including minor children, persons with developmental disabilities and infirm older people." (Compton and Galaway, 2005: 94).

"During foster care intervention the social worker may be looking forward to fulfil the protective function, however one should also consider helping responsibilities as well. Children may be encouraged to participate in decision making regarding the alternative living arrangement. They might assist in deciding the best option to meet their needs." (Compton and Galaway, 2005: 94).

2.8. Roles of Social Work in foster care intervention.

Mkhize (2006: 53) emphasizes that "social workers in their intervention with client systems must take cognisance of characteristics of the client and the influences from the client system's environment. They perform a wide range of roles that define responsibilities for social workers and their client systems. These roles clarify the nature of the relationship between clients and social workers at different system levels". The researcher therefore realised that social work is the only profession that is trusted with the responsibilities of driving the wheel of the foster care program. The main purpose of foster care is to provide care and protection to the needy children. Social workers are there advocating for child justice during

foster care intervention. Following are the roles that social workers would have to perform throughout their interventions in foster care placement.

2.8.1. Advocacy Role

Social workers have the responsibility to advocate fostering care beneficiaries when providing foster care services. According to Compton et al (2005: 127) in social work, advocacy involves goal- oriented activity carried out on behalf of clients and aimed at influencing systems that threaten or impede the survival, freedom, equal opportunity or dignity. They describe case advocacy as a biased intervention on behalf of a particular client in effort to improve services and resources". Mkhize (2006: 53) states that "in performing advocacy role the social worker engages in a process of working with and or on behalf of clients to obtain resources or services that would not otherwise be provided. Social work as a profession, advocates for the poor, the disadvantaged and the oppressed as its purpose is to enhance the social functioning and facilitate personal development". Social workers take advantage of advocacy role to ensure that the aim of foster care as outline in Section 181 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended is fulfilled.

Mkhize (2006: 56) further indicates that "Social workers hold a belief that the environment should provide the opportunity and resources for the maximum realization of the potential and aspiration for all individuals. Individual human needs should therefore be provided within the persons' immediate social environment. The family is the primary social unit that that meets the need of its members". This shows that social workers have a crucial role to play when rendering foster care interventions.

2.8.2. Facilitator Role

"The primary concern of the facilitator is to help clients make rational decisions, to enable them to participate fully, to assist them in taking initiatives, to help them to discover their resources and to help them to plan and implement" (Swanepoel et al., 2006: 56). "Social workers would therefore have to motivate for the involvement of people in a change determination hence the significant of facilitator role" (Mkhize 2006: 57). According to the new Dictionary for Social Work (1995: 24), facilitator role is the "role of the social worker to accelerate the process of social change by bringing together people and communication

structures, stimulating activities, developing and channelling resources and ensuring access to expertise". Mkhize (2006: 57) attests that, "no social workers have all the necessary expertise and resources to help with all the problems people may experience. Social worker therefore deals with other professionals from various resource systems. Foster children and foster parents are linked with various systems that are deemed relevant to respond to the identified needs. This includes schools, hospitals, municipalities, tribal authorities and churches to mention the few".

2.8.3. Adviser role

Swanepoel et al (2006:54) is of the view that social workers, "because of their greater knowledge and broader view on the subject of foster care, must give advice. The role advisor is also limited; its sole purpose is to motivate and enable therefore this advice should be in the form of information on the possible choices clients can make and the probable consequences of each choice".

2.8.4. Enabler role

Social workers enable the people to fulfil their human needs, to enhance their learning process and help them gain meaningful empowerment. They foster climax for people to act and create space for people to move forward (Swanepoel et al, 2006: 55). According to Durand (2007:41), "capacity building enable foster parents to use the skills they develop via training to meet the needs of foster children as well as improve stability in the placement. Egan (2007: 4) states that, empowerment means helping clients identify, develop, and use resources that will make them more effective agents of change in their everyday lives.

2.8.5. Leadership role

"Leadership is the process of guiding the development of people. The goal of effective leadership is twofold: to help clients to achieve goals that are consistent with the value based social work practice and to meet the socio emotional needs of clients" (Toseland and Rivas (2005: 92). Burke (2011: 330) says, "Leadership is about setting goals and objectives and generating enthusiasm and motivation amongst people to work towards those objectives. The relevance of a social worker as a leader in foster care placement is that

he/she works with both foster parents and foster children to formulate life changing goals towards human development, effect energy and motivation to achieve the set goals”.

2.9. Communication in foster care interventions

Communication in foster care interventions is important as social workers engage and interact with foster children, foster parents and other support systems within the sphere of child care and protection. “Verbal and nonverbal communication are components of social interaction” (Toseland and Rivas, 2005: 65). “Engagement requires communication and interactional process that involves sending, receiving and feedback. Feedback provides a way of overcoming problems created by sound, by insufficient encoding or decoding, or by faulty transmission or reception. “Feedback occurs in various ways within the communication process” (Compton and Galaway, 2005: 159).

Egan (2007: 74) attests that, “even when people are together in silence, the atmosphere can be filled with messages. Sometimes clients’ facial expression, bodily motions, voice quality and physiological responses communicate more than their words”. Egan (2007: 74) presents the following factors that play important role in interaction on the part of both social worker.

- Bodily behaviour, such as posture, body movements and gestures;
- Eye behaviour, such as eye contact, staring, eye movement;
- Facial expressions, such as smiles, frowns, raised eyebrows and twisted lips;
- Voice related behaviour, such as tone of voice, pitch, volume, intensity, inflection, spacing of words, emphases, pauses, silences and fluency;
- Observable autonomic physiological responses, such as quickened breathing, blushing, paleness and pupil dilation;
- Physical characteristics, such as fitness, height, weight, and complexion;
- Space, that is, how close, how far a person chooses to be during conversation; and
- General appearance, such as grooming and dress.

“People constantly “speak” to one another through their non-verbal behaviour. Social workers learn this “language” and how to use it effectively in their interactions with foster care clients and other people who are involved in the intervention process. They also learn how to read relevant messages embedded in the non-verbal behaviour of their clients” (Egan, 2007: 74). The Unit Assignment Centre (2016: 02) emphasize that social worker should also use body language to make clients feel more comfortable but also pay attention to whether the client is displaying signs of aggression, trying to hide something or seems happy in the situation.

2.10. Social Worker as a skilled helper in foster care placement

“Helpers are goal oriented – the goal is relating to client managing specific problems in living more effectively and developing unused or underused resources and opportunities more fully. The result to this goal is that helping is about constructive changes that lead to life enhancing results, outcomes, accomplishments and impact. Helping includes a series of activities in which helpers and clients engage. As stated by Egan (2007:4), “these activities, however, have value only to the degree that they lead to valued outcomes in client’s lives” Social work intervention in foster care placement is therefore aiming at affecting constructive change that lead to life enhancing results to the lives of foster care beneficiaries.

Sakamoto and Pitner, as cited in Khoza (2011: 31), argue that “social work practice can be informed by the context within which the practice is located which could include political, social or multicultural influences. An important aspect raised in their discussion is that critical consciousness is central to social work practice and involves continuously examining how own biases, assumptions and cultural world views affect the ways we perceive different power dynamics”. According to Khoza (2011: 31) “ this approach can assist social workers to continuously review their approach to service delivery and whether it contributes towards the present socio- cultural and political demands placed on the communities and if ultimately contributes towards their social development”.

Egan (2007: 27) emphasizes that “helpers need to be wise, and part of their job is to impart wisdom, however indirectly to e foster care client systems”. Baltes and Staudinger as cited in Egan (2007:27) define wisdom as “an expertise in the conduct and meaning of life” or “an

expert knowledge system concerning the fundamental pragmatics of life". The following are the possibilities of what characterizes wisdom (Sternberg, 1990, 1998):

- Self-knowledge, maturity;
- Knowledge of life's obligations and goals;
- An understanding of cultural conditioning;
- The guts to admit mistakes and the sense to learn from them;
- A psychological and a human understanding of others, insight into human interactions;
- The ability to "see through" situations; the ability to understand the meaning of events;
- Tolerance for ambiguity and ability to work with it;
- Being comfortable with messy and ill-structured cases;
- An understanding of the messiness of human being;
- Openness to events that don't fit comfortably into logical or traditional categories;
- The ability to frame a problem so that it is workable; the ability to reframe information;
- Avoidance of stereotypes;
- Holistic thinking; open-mindedness; contextual thinking;
- "meta-thinking", or the ability to think about thinking and become aware about being aware;
- The ability to see relationships among diverse factors; the ability to spot flaws in reasoning ; intuition; the ability to synthesize;
- The refusal to let experience become a liability through the creation of blind spots

- The ability to take the long view of problems;
- The ability to blend seemingly antithetical helping roles- being one who cares and understands together with being one who challenges and frustrates; and
- Understanding spiritual dimensions of life.

'If social- emotional intelligence is about leading a good life, then wisdom is about excellence in living. As such, it focuses on knowing "how" (the procedural dimension) rather than merely knowing "what" (the factual dimension)" (Egan, 2007: 27).

It is the researcher's view that duty of the skilled social worker in foster care is to facilitate life of excellence in foster children's lives.

2.11. Foster care as alternative care for children

The White paper for Social Welfare (Department of Social Development, 1997: 63) defines foster care as a child centred service. Foster care should also be the cost effective, family centred and community based way of caring for children whose parents are unable to do so adequately. According to Ngwenya (2011: 1), foster care is a child centred service to children in difficult circumstances regulated by the Children's Act 38/2005, which is the basic instrument of the protection of children in need of care. Section 155 (2) of the children's Act place the child's best interest at the forefront.

Skelton (2012:1) indicates that the term 'foster care' was first included in the law in the Children's Act of 1960. Foster care was originally a 'classic' foster care model in which children who were found to be in need of care were placed by children's court into foster care with foster parents who usually not related to them. Skelton further states that foster care is "cost effective form of alternative care" which is subsidised by the government through the monthly payment of cash grant. The foster care grant is free from any means test. It is viewed as a preferred form of alternative care for children who are not living with their parents and for whom adoption is not appropriate. This form of care was utilised in a stable manner over a number of decades from 1960 onwards and the numbers of children into foster care never rose above 40 000 (Skelton, 2012:1).

However, in the last decade the situation has changed dramatically, with the numbers of children in foster care showing a marked increase from 2002 to 2012, tapering off since 2010 when the new Children's Act came into operation. During June 2015, 519,031 foster parents are receiving foster care grant (SASSA statistical report no 6 of June, 2015: 1). The sudden rise in the number of children being fostered is closely linked to the HIV/ AIDS pandemic and the concomitant rise in the number of orphans, but government has also punted the foster child grant as a poverty alleviation solution (Skelton, 2012: 1). Ngwenya (2011:4), also discovered that in South Africa the scourge of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the high rate of unemployment and poverty contribute to the increase in foster care placements. Khoza (2011: 1) indicates that there is an increasing demand of foster care services because there are many orphaned children in South Africa. Bungane (2007:26) also discovered that the main focus of service delivery by the Department of Social Development in the Motheo district exclusively falls on financial assistance in the form of foster care grant.

Johnson (2005: 4) asserts that foster care is practised in many different ways throughout the world, depending on the needs of the child, the culture and the systems in place. In UK (United Kingdom), there is an organization called Foster Care UK which is a specialist fostering provider providing vulnerable children and young people a safe, secure and loving home in Kent, London and Hertfordshire. Their contribution to foster care involves recruiting and training of foster carers and provision of therapeutic services to foster children Johnson (2005: 4). Johnson (2005: 6) further indicates that not all foster care is formalised with legal action. Fostering is formal when children are placed with the community member, outside his family for a stipulated period of time by the social worker or a private agency deciding who, when and why. A child can also be fostered informally by a relative and probably without an influence of any professional in the situation. Literature study to follow will discuss formal and informal foster care with specific reference to South Africa and other countries.

2.11.1 Formal foster care

Section 1 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended refers to this kind of care as cluster foster care which means the reception of children in foster care in accordance with a

cluster foster care scheme registered by the provincial Head of Social Development. The management of a cluster foster care scheme must be monitored by the provincial head of Department of Social Development in terms of section 183 (1) and (2) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005. Johnson (2005: 7) discovered that foster care in South Africa is also the placement of the child, who needs to be removed from the parental home, into the custody of a suitable family or person willing to be a foster parent. This is done by order of the Children's Court.

In South Africa, the assessment of foster parents is done by social workers employed at welfare organisations. Factors in the foster family system taken into account in the screening include the age of the prospective foster parents, their health, the family composition and income, the suitability of accommodation, general environment and closeness of the schools and public transport. Foster parents attitudes towards certain topics are also discussed, such as child rearing and education, their ability to accept responsibility, their attitude towards the natural parents, and their motivation to foster a child who is not their own. From there they are either accepted by the agency or not. These agencies are in contact with courts which decide that children need to go into foster care. Foster parents must be resident in South Africa at the time of making the application. However, they don't have to be South African citizens (Johnson 2005: 09).

The obligations of each party are agreed to before each placement begins. Foster carers are obliged to maintain and care for the child and grant reasonable access to the child's parents. Amongst other things, they are not given the rights to deal with any property belonging to the child, consent to an operation or medical treatment of the child which involves serious danger to life, or to remove a child out of South Africa without the approval of the Minister for Social Development. All foster parents are entitled to a foster care grant paid by the government but not all foster parents apply for the grant. Some biological parents contribute to the maintenance of the child or foster parents cover all expenses. The parents of the child also have a duty to contribute to the child's maintenance, through an order of court called a contribution order (Johnson, 2005: 13). The foster child grant is free from any means test (Skelton 2012: 1).

2.11.2 Informal fostering, care in communities and with extended families

Informal fostering is applied by many families and communities, sometimes without even knowing they are fostering. Many people are simply caring for children who need a home and love. Informal foster care happens mostly without legal intervention and any of the procedures that formal care carries (Johnson, 2005: 16). Informal foster care by family and friends for shorter or longer periods without legal involvement happens across the world.

According to Johnson (2005: 16), governments are rarely able to provide for financial support to all people providing care within the extended family. Vulnerable children and orphans in developing countries often live in the local community with their extended families. The way in which this is done varies in some places this is the responsibility of father's family and in other places the mother's family. Johnson (2005:15) further indicates that there has been rapid increase in the proportion of children in kinship foster care, which is often considered to be the preferred option of alternative care for children in Australia. Kinship foster care is also common in South Africa as most children are placed in foster care with their relatives or with their immediate family members as a way to maintain stability in the child's life. Literature also supports that most foster parents in South Africa are grandparents of foster children who receive foster care grants and old age pension (Delpont and Gleenson as cited in Bungane, 2007:23)

The article by Marc et al (2008: 1) indicates that the primary influence on the growth of this placement option include a policy towards treating kin as appropriate care-givers with all of the legal rights and responsibilities of foster parents. The perceived benefits are that kinship reduces trauma children may experience when they are placed with persons who are initially unknown to them, and reinforces children's sense of identity and self-esteem which flows from their family history and culture.

In Colorado it has been recognised that kinship care helps to maintain family relationships and cultural ties while providing children with the opportunity for permanency, safety, wellbeing and stability (Marc et al. 2008: 1). Kang (2007: 1) states that the primary practice assumptions made by advocates for kinship care helps children ease the pain of losing biological parents because it offers social relationships of extended kin networks and familial and cultural continuity. In addition, biological ties and established bonds between kin caregivers and children are expected to increase the caregiver's commitment. Kang

further assumed that advantages of kinship care could be conceptualized as a resource of social capital. Social capital can be defined as social relationships, psychological bonds, solidarity or feeling of closeness. Like human capital (example, knowledge and skills) and physical capital (example, tools or equipment), social capital is reliant on the structure of relationship and amongst others. It is generated by changing relations among people.

The phrase, kinship care, was influenced by the anthropological work by Stack cited in Kang (2007 1974: 1), who reported extensive supporting networks within African American extended families (Kang 2007: 1). Such kinship networks can be described as complex exchange systems displaying a collective adaptation to urban poverty. Participants in this kind of exchange relationship are relatives and close friends who are defined as kin, who share a sense of obligation to and reliance on one another. Crucially a domestic network that provides food, shelter, clothing and most importantly child care, demonstrates localized coalition, collective power and stability of family life (Kang 2007: 01)

In South Africa, the majority of children are placed with their families and relatives when their biological parents die of AIDS related diseases and other causes and lesser percentage are placed in unrelated foster care (Ngwenya, 2011: 3). Children are found eligible for placement in foster care on the basis that the child declared to be in need of care and protection. Children who are without surviving parents are, in terms of children's Act 38/2005 as amended, considered to be in need of care and protection, and therefore eligible for foster placement and grant. According to section 150(1) (a) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 the child who has been orphaned or abandoned and without any visible means of support is regarded as a child in need of care and protection.

According to the research done by Social Security for children in the context of AIDS in 2004, cited in Ngwenya (2011: 3), the purpose of processing foster care placements for orphans seems to be less about legalizing placement of children but about accessing foster care grant for financial support for the children and the poor households in which they resides. This is supported by a significant number of children's court presiding officers who read the statement " orphaned or abandoned and without visible means of support" with the meaning that if a child is already being cared for by extended family members, no foster care order should be made and family can simply access the child support grant. A decision

along those lines made by the Presiding officer in the Krugersdorp Magistrate was taken on appeal by the Centre for child law and resulted in a High Court judgement (Skelton, 2012: 02).

Child Welfare information Gateway (2013:1) indicates that Child Welfare professionals can make critical contributions to the wellbeing of children who require care by preserving their connections with their brothers and sisters. Sibling's relationship is emotionally powerful and critically important not only in childhood but over the course of lifetime. As children, siblings form a child's first peer group, and they typically spend more time with each other than with anyone else. Children learn social skills particularly in sharing and managing conflict from negotiating with brothers and sisters. Sibling relationships can provide a significant source of continuity throughout a child's lifetime and are likely to be the longest relationship that most people experience.

According to Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013: 4), in many families involved with child welfare sibling's relationship take more importance because they can provide the support and nurture that are not consistently provided by parents. For children entering care, siblings can serve as a buffer against the worst effects of harsh circumstances. Since children in foster care experience more losses of significant relationships, siblings are often their only source of continuity of important attachments. For children entering care, being with their brothers and sisters promotes a sense of safety and wellbeing and being separated from them can trigger loss, grief and anxiety (Folman, Herrick and Piccus cited in the Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013: 5). Therefore, it is especially important to protect these ties that offer support to children removed from their original families.

The researcher is of the view that the child is placed in the foster care of extended family members because in practical terms the most appropriate support for young children comes from their families. Informal fostering, home-based, family-oriented and community care strategies are sometimes preferred options for coping with the social consequences the child might be exposed to. However, these strategies do not provide opportunity for these children to benefit from the grant because the placement is not legally approved. Certain civil society organisations such as the Children's Institute, Black Sash and the Centre for Child Law have been lobbying with the Department of Social Development to come up with

a solution without court intervention that links extended family care-givers of children to social assistance that is higher in value than the child support grant, but is similarly easy to access (PAN: Children/Centre for Child Law, 2012: 2). The researcher is of the view that should the request of these civil society organizations be approved, it will enhance informal placement to be the best model to children in need of care and protection and in reducing pressure experienced by foster care system as majority of children are going to benefit from the model.

Formal foster care service plays a critical role in the lives of children in need of care and protection. The proposed kingship grant might provide opportunity for the two systems (formal and informal foster care) to complement each other for the best interests of the children in need of care and protection.

2.12. Chapter Summary.

This chapter presented the theoretical framework in terms of Ecosystem's perspective which described the influence of the environment on children in foster care placement. Reference was also made to issues that affect children in South Africa to understand the influence of the environment in this regard. South African Child Care and Protection was also discussed with special reference to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act no 108 of 1996 and the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. The constitution gave a list of children's rights in South Africa. The children's Act no 38 of 2005 gave description of different programs legislated in it to ensure that all the rights of children are protected.

More detailed discussions about foster care were presented in this chapter to provide description of foster care program. The social worker's interventions in foster care as it is the core of this study were also discussed referring to the available tools that guide's social worker's intervention. Statutory intervention process in terms of the information guide on management of statutory services in terms of the children's Act no 38 of 2005, Regulations in terms of Children's Act and foster care norms and standard. Generic intervention process is also described in this chapter as it is developed as a tool to lead the social work interventions.

Literature review presented the theoretical framework and body of knowledge on foster care based on the previous studies conducted on the subject. Literature revealed that foster care was initiated to cater for children who cannot be cared for by their own parents. Literature further revealed that foster care is faced by number of challenges which includes challenges faced by foster parents, foster children and social workers. Some of challenges formed part of motivation for this study to be conducted as they raised the question that “what is the quality of social worker’s intervention in foster care placement”. The answers to this question will be presented in chapter four where data from all the respondents will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the research design and methodology used to achieve the objectives of the research study. Procedural information include research design of the study, sampling procedure, method of data collection, research instrument and data analysis. It also outlines the limitations experienced during the course of the research study. Lastly it makes reference to the ethical research considerations.

3.2. Research Design

A Qualitative method was used to obtain more complete and in-depth understanding and analysis of research problem was adopted in this study. Purposeful conversations using interview schedules were done with research participants. Social workers had the opportunity to give accounts of their experiences in their intervention process during foster care placements. Foster parents and foster children were also able to share their experiences in their reception of foster care services. Qualitative data from social workers, foster parents and foster children as research participants were analysed in the narrative format. It was used to understand foster care intervention status and recommendations based on the scientifically tested evidence done. Data from foster care files was also collected using a checklist of indicators for foster care interventions. A document study of annual reports, minutes and information on official websites were done to ensure that qualitative data is analysed, organised, and presented to complete the description of the foster care intervention.

Since the aim of this study is to evaluate the quality of social work intervention in foster care placement, the researcher used evaluative design as a strategy to critically analyse the research question. According to De Vos et al (2011: 464), evaluative design refers to the way in which the ingredients are put together in an attempt to answer questions. Process evaluation design was adopted, even though De Vos et al (2011:465) explain that process evaluation not only look at formal activities and anticipated outcomes, but also investigate informal patterns and unanticipated interactions, for the purpose of this study only formal

activities of social work intervention process in foster care placement were evaluated. Details of foster care programme's implementation were described as indicators that served as measures of evaluation in this study. This met the requirements as set out in De Vos et al (2011: 465) that a process evaluation requires sensitivity to both quantitative and qualitative changes in programmes throughout their development, which typically means monitoring and describing the details of the programme implementation.

3.3. Population

According De Vos et al (2002: 198) population is the total set out of which individuals for the study are chosen. The target population for this study was all social workers and all foster parents and foster children involved in foster care placements finalised within a three years period i.e. from April 2010 to April 2013 in Bojanala District. There is no available statistics on the total number of foster care placements in last three years at neither Bojanala District nor the whole province. The available statistics is inclusive of all foster care placements done prior 2010 for the whole country and the province. During this three year period, 169 social workers were employed by the Department of Social Development in the five service points in the Bojanala District and were involved in foster care placement interventions.

3.4. Sampling

For the purpose of this study, non-probability sampling was used and specifically the purposive sampling in identifying and selecting participants in this study. Purposive sampling is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population that serve the purpose of the study best (De Vos et al., 2011: 392). Document sampling, sampling for interviews with social workers and sampling for interviews with foster parents and foster children was done. This is because data collection was done utilising document study, interviews with foster parents, foster children and social workers. The researcher selected Twenty five foster families through purposeful selection of 25 foster care files that were used for document study. Foster parents and foster children of the studied foster care files were chosen for an interview. Five social workers, one from each service points in the district were also selected purposefully and five foster families were purposefully selected from each one of five service points (Rustenburg, Moses Kotane,

Madibeng, Kgetleng and Moretele) in Bojanala District of the Department of Social Development to obtain data from 25 case files. They were all selected because they meet the selection criteria as outlined in the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. The researcher had expectations that the selected foster families and social workers can provide first hand and direct information about their experience of foster care and that their reflection can be compared to the casework file content.

The following sampling criteria were used to select foster families at Bojanala district where foster care is legally done:

- The 25 foster care recipient families caring for male or female foster children between the ages of 12 to 18 years. The reason behind this criterion was that these children were able to verbalise and communicate their views as part of research participants.

Foster care placements during the last three years since the implementation of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended was implemented for the first time in 2010, the placement with selected foster families are done under the Children's Act. The researcher selected kinship foster care purposefully because majority of children are placed in kinship placements.

The researcher requested that all the available foster care files of the foster families that are inclusive of the above stated criteria be made available in one office. The first five foster families' files in each one of the five regions opened by the researcher were regarded to be part of a sample for this study.

The information in the files of foster families sampled gave the researcher guidance of which key informants to be interviewed. The key informants comprised different social workers from five service points. One social worker from each of the five service point was sampled purposefully to share professional experience about social worker's intervention in foster care placement. Foster children and foster parents of the same 25 sampled foster families were also sampled for the study.

Only the eldest child who falls within the age criteria was interviewed. This is because the researcher was aware of the fact that in some foster families more than one foster child are

accommodated. Interviewing all children in one foster family was going to be time consuming. In the foster families only foster mothers participated in the study.

3.5. Data Collection

In this section different aspects of data collection are explored e.g. Document study, interviews with key informants and measuring instrument.

3.5.1. Document Study

Data was obtained from foster care annual reports and official websites to obtain statistics and 25 foster care files using a document check list from the Department of Social Development. The researcher measured the data in the 25 foster care files against foster care intervention indicators as set out in foster care norms and standards, policy documents, social work text books. This was done for the researcher to identify and analyse the practical activities that social workers should engage on in their intervention foster care placement. According to Ritchie and Lewis as cited in De Vos et al (2011: 377), documentary analysis involves the study of existing documents, either to understand their substantive content or to illuminate deeper meanings which may be revealed by their style and coverage.

3.5.2. Semi-structured interviews with key informants (social workers) and participants (foster parents and foster children).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants including one social worker involved in foster care from each of five service point in Bojanala district. This was done to verify data collected from the studied foster care families' case files. According to Babbie and Mouton, as cited in De Vos et al (2011: 380), the researcher can verify data by interviewing other informants, persons in the same roles or persons knowledgeable on the subject or who were personally involved in the event. The content of the document is verified with the external source. The interview with social workers focused on foster care intervention process as outlined in literature review section.

Semi-structured interviews with foster parents and foster children from the selected foster care files were conducted. Foster parents and foster children were interviewed separately

for the purpose of acquiring honest and genuine information from the participants about the services they receive from social workers. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to gain data about social work intervention in foster care placements. De Vos et al (2011: 351) support that the researcher use semi structured interviews in order to gain a detailed picture of a participant's belief about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic. The researcher is able to follow up particular interesting avenues that emerge in the interview and the participant is able to give a fuller picture.

Prior to commencing interviews, all participants were informed of the nature of the study, that participation is voluntarily and that they can withdraw from the study at any stage. The interview with foster children and foster parents was conducted in the home of the participants and interview with social workers was conducted in their offices. This was done to make the participants feel comfortable during the interview. The interview with foster parents and foster children approximately took one hour. This length is typical of semi-structured interviews, which generally last an hour or more, Smith and Osborn as cited in Korevaar (2009: 59). Every interview was tape recorded after getting permission from participants and gate keepers. Tape recording was preferential to note taking as it decreases the risk of interviewer bias and ensures that complete data is available for analysis (Greef cited in Korevaar; 2009:59). Tape recording enhances the flow of interview in that the researcher is not distracted by detailed note- taking and can be more attentive to the participant (De Vos et al 2011: 103). The focus of interviews with foster parents and foster children was on foster care intervention processes as outlined in literature review and theoretical frame work chapter 2 of this document.

The researcher developed the following instruments attached as addendum to collect data:

- Document check list to collect data from 25 Files (Annexure A).
- Interview schedule for interviews with social workers (Annexure B).
- Interview schedule for interviews with foster parents (Annexure C).
- Interview schedule for interviews with foster children (Annexure D).
- Consent form for social workers (Annexure E)

- Consent form for foster children (Annexure F)
- Consent form for foster parents (Annexure G)
- Request for permission to conduct research (Annexure I)
- Approval from the Department of Social Development (Annexure J)

3.6. Data Analysis

The data obtained from both documents and interviews with foster parents, foster children and social workers was analysed. The researcher followed the steps derived from Terre Blanche (2006:323) & De Vos et al (2011: 410) below to analyse and compare data in this study:

3.6.1. Preparing and organising the data

- Familiarisation and immersion

After data collection was completed in this study, the researcher started by transcribing the interviews verbatim. The researcher went through each script so as to familiarise himself and gain an overview of the raw data collected. According to Blanche, as cited in Korevaar (2009: 63), the first step is to return to the interview transcripts and notes and totally immerse oneself in the material. This was achieved by reading interview transcripts and notes several times. mind maps were drawn which assisted in extracting what the researcher beliefs to be important information from each interview and case studies and then linked it to important themes from data gathering.

3.6.2. Reducing the data

Data were categorised into themes to reduce raw data in a logical manner. According to De Vos et al (2011:410), the process of categories of generation involves noting regularities in the setting or people chosen for study. In order to uncover the themes, the researcher compared the used data obtained from the documents, files and interviews. Qualitative data is presented in words/ texts.

The semi-structured interview allowed the participants to give detailed information and the researcher to seek clarity where applicable. To uncover subthemes that emerged, the researcher coded data by underlining words, phrases, sentences and paragraph from each interview that he perceives to be important. The material from each individual interview was scrutinised to establish emergent themes. Flick, Kreuger, Neuman, Grinnel and Unrau cited in De Vos et al (2011: 410) regard categorisation and coding of data as motivational actions to reflect the hard work of reducing a unrefined data into manageable piles. Once each individual case for this study was viewed, common categories and themes across the interviews and documents were highlighted, each in different colour. Themes were formulated based on patterns of experiences noted in transcribed interviews. Material that was coded the same colour was copied and pasted into separate documents. From there the commonalities were identified and appropriate were created.

3.6.3. Interpreting and developing typologies

For the purpose of this study, the researcher concluded data analysis by discussing descriptions of the researcher's interpretation of the data. The themes and subthemes identified and their connectedness serve as compass point in the discussion. The researcher's interpretations were scrutinised for weak points, inconsistencies, contradictions and instances where the researcher have over interpreted material. As social systems theory and ecological perspectives to foster care focuses on the whole rather than on parts, the researcher contextualized the categories of information so that the phenomenon can be understood holistically. The ecosystem analysis requires that there be a focus on the dynamic interrelationships between the identified themes and systems so that a holistic and contextual picture could be obtained (Korevaar, 2009: 65).

3.7. Ethical Considerations

As a qualified and registered social worker with the South African Council for Social Services Professions (SACSSP), the researcher was obliged to work under the code of ethics of the SACSSP when interacting with client systems, which include foster parents, foster children, as well when taking part in a research study.

3.7.1 Avoidance of harm

The fundamental ethical consideration of social work research is that it must not bring harm to participants (Babbie cited in De Vos et al, 2011:115). The assumption was empirically tested in the field through all the data collected. The researcher ensured that this research does not cause any emotional or physical harm to participants. He employed his professional skills to engage with participants. A non-judgemental attitude and non-interrogative questioning prevented any emotional harm to the participants the priority as a way of preventing emotional harm to participants. Interviews with foster parents and foster children were conducted at the social worker's office and at their homes to allow them to freely participate. According to Creswell, as cited in De Vos et al (2011:115), the researcher has ethical obligations to protect participants within all possible reasonable limits from any form of physical discomfort that may emerge from the research project. The researcher arranged with the Department of Social Development in different service points where the study was conducted for referral of research participants for services that will help them to incur emotional harm. However, it was not necessary to refer any participant as there was no emotional harm experienced throughout the study.

3.7.2. Voluntary participation

Participation in this study was at all times voluntary and no one was forced to participate in a project (Rubin and Babbie cited in De Vos et al, 2011: 116). This study focused on social workers, foster parents and foster children as participants. The researcher ensured that their participation is voluntary by informing participants that their participation is voluntarily, and they are free to withdraw their participation at any time. This was done to ensure willingness of participants and that more reliable data is obtained. Written consent forms were made available to the participants to sign prior data collection. The foster parents were requested to grant permission for the foster children under the age of 18 years to participate in the study, children who are over 18 years were given an opportunity to give consent to participate in the study. The provincial head office of the Department of Social Development gave consent for the study to be conducted. The aim of the study was briefly explained to the participants to ensure they understand the nature of this study so that they can make informed decisions of participating in the study.

3.7.3. Violation of privacy/ anonymity/ confidentiality

The researcher is of the view that disclosure of identities would be a violation of privacy. Moris (2006:246) asserts that this principle can be violated in a number of ways, and it is imperative that the researcher be reminded of the importance of safe guarding the privacy and identity of respondents, and act with the necessary sensitivity where the privacy of subject is relevant. It is for this reasons that the researcher used labels to identify the cases to be studied. The researcher referred to participants as participant one, participant two etc. rather than identifying cases by names or surnames. This idea is supported by Mkhize (2006:2) in her argument that though relative confidentiality is sometimes applied in social work practice, social workers use pseudo-names to conceal the identity of the participant. The justification for concealing identity in this study is that people's sensitive issues might arise in case studies. The informed consent was signed by participants after the researcher reassured them about confidentiality and that the data obtained will be used for the purpose of the study. It will be unethical of the researcher to reveal the identity of the participants.

3.8. Limitations of the study

The following are limitations that might have hindered the process of this study:

- Some of the documents such as social worker's files, annual reports and minutes were incomplete and did not provide all the expected data.
- Some social workers were not familiar or experienced with the norms and standards stipulated by the Department of Social Development and the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amendment was implemented in 2010.
- The study is limited to Social Development offices in Bojanala District and the information cannot be generalised.
- Only female foster parents participated in this study.
- Some of the foster parents and foster children have been hesitant to be completely honest as they wanted to give social workers positive impression that foster care is a success.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter described the research methodology and research design that was used for this study. It also described the strategy that was used to conduct the study, which was best suited to the nature of the research topic. The research design provided opportunity for the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of the respondents. The instrument and interviews conducted facilitated the process of data collection. The method used to analyse data was effective in presenting the data in a way that would give it a meaning. The following chapter will present data and discuss the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

4.1. Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the data emanating from the study. The presentation and discussion of data is linked to the literature review presented in chapter two. The main aim of the presentation of the data is to provide an answer to the research question through data collected from documents and the participants. The research data give demographic information about the respondents and presents the main data which are grouped according to the developed themes. The main aim is to respond to the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are: to evaluate the quality of social work intervention process in foster placement; to evaluate the views of foster parents and foster children regarding the quality of social worker's intervention in foster care placement; and to recommend strategies to improve the quality of social work intervention process during foster care placements.

The intervention by social workers at Bojanala District was explored by studying 25 foster care files, conducting interviews with 25 foster parents, foster children and five social workers. In all the studied files, nine foster care placements were done in 2010, 13 placements in 2011 and three placements were done cases in 2012. The total of 25 studied foster care placements were documented in social workers reports and formalised with court orders for foster care placements.

4.2 Demographic data of foster parents

4.2.1 Gender of foster parents

Only female foster parents participated in this study. Several studies proved that most of the foster parents in South Africa are females. In the study conducted by Bungane (2007: 09), all the foster parents who participated were females. In the study conducted by Durand (2007: 107), the majority (81.48%) were female foster parents.

4.2.2 Relationship of participating foster parents to foster children

In Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, 60 per cent of orphans and vulnerable children are cared for in grandparent headed family systems. Other typical kinship cares includes aunts and uncles, and older siblings. The culture in different countries determine who is likely to look after the kin child (Broad, 2007: 02)

All participants in this study were relatives of the foster children. 13 of the foster mothers were grandmothers to the foster children, six were the aunts of foster children and the other six were biological sisters of foster children.

The researcher is of the view that grandmothers are often left with the responsibilities to care for their grandchildren. This implies that grandmothers have a powerful contribution in ensuring that the future of South Africa remains secured. Literature also supports that most foster parents in South Africa are grandparents of foster children who receive foster care grants and old age pension (Delpont and Gleenson as cited in Bungane, 2007:23).

4.2.3 Marital status of participating foster parents

Five of the 25 foster parents who participated in this study were married while 80 % of the foster children were placed with single mothers. While it is mostly thought that it is best for children to have two parents, there are some cases where a single parent is advisable. For example, If the child has been abused by a man he/ she might find difficult time living with a man (Maralee, 2014: 1).

4.2.4 Educational level of participating foster parents

Nearly half (48%) of the 25 foster parents included in this study had more than secondary school training. South African Census (2011:34) revealed that the black African population group has more than doubled the proportion of persons with higher education between 1996 and 2011.

4.3. Demographic data of foster children

4.3.1 Age group distribution of foster children in terms of gender

Foster children aged 12 to 18 years old were purposefully selected for the purpose of this study. The children selected and the time they spent in foster care is indicated below:

- Foster child # 1- 14 years old girl staying in foster care of her grandmother in the last three years.
- Foster child #2- 16 years old girl staying in foster care with her grandmother in the last three years.
- Foster child # 3- 13 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.
- Foster child # 4- 12 years old boy stayed in foster care of his sister in the last three years.
- Foster child # 5- 13 years old girl staying in the foster care of her sister in the last two years.
- Foster child # 6- 18 years old boy staying in the foster care of his grandmother in the last three years.
- Foster child # 7- 15 years old girl staying in the foster care of her maternal aunt in the last two years.
- Foster child # 8- 16 years old girl staying in the foster care of her aunt in the last three years.
- Foster child #9- 15 years old girl staying in the foster care of her aunt in the last two years.
- Foster child# 10- 13 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last three years.

- Foster child # 11- 16 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.
- Foster child # 12- 12 years old girl staying in foster care of her grandmother in the last three years.
- Foster child # 13- 17 years old girl staying in foster care of her sister in the last three years.
- Foster child # 14 – 14 years old girl staying in foster care of her aunt in the last three years.
- Foster child 15- 18 years old boy staying in foster care of his sister in the last three years.
- Foster child 16 - 13 years old boy staying in foster care of his sister in the last two years.
- Foster child # 17- 17 years old girl staying in foster care of her aunt in the last three years.
- Foster child # 18- 14 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last one year.
- Foster child # 19- 15 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.
- Foster child # 20- 16 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.
- Foster child # 21- 12 years old boy staying in foster care of his aunt in the last three years.
- Foster parent # 22- 16 years old girl staying in foster care of her sister in the last three years.
- Foster child # 23- 12 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.

- Foster child # 24- 18 years old girl staying in foster care of her grandmother in the last three years.
- Foster child # 25- 12 years old boy staying in foster care of his grandmother in the last two years.

Foster children who are placed in a kinship foster care system were selected for the purpose of this study. The age of foster children is in line with the children's Act no 38 of 2005. The selected foster children's age ranges from 12 to 18 years. According to section 1 of Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, child means a person under the age of 18 years. Section 176(2)(a) &(b) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended states that a provincial head of social development may on application by the person placed in alternative care as a child, allow that person to remain in that care until the end of the year in which that person reaches the age of 21 years if, the alternative caregiver is willing and able to care for that person and the continued stay in that care is necessary to enable that person to complete his/ her education or training.

4.3.2. Educational level of foster children

Because children between 12 and 18 years were selected they were mainly in high school.

4.4. Demographic data of social workers

4.4.1.. Educational level of social workers

All social workers participated in this study had obtained a social work degree and none of them had post graduate qualifications.

4.4.2. Social worker's years of work experience.

Four social workers participated in this study had less than seven years of work experience, Only one participant had more than seven years of experience.

4.5. Social Work intervention in foster care placements

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 18) Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005, "statutory intervention is a specialised field in social work that aims to improve the social functioning

of individuals, families and by applying administrative procedures prescribed by the law. It embraces different interventions in different categories of cases, including those aimed at court-ordered prevention and early intervention, those arising from crises, reported cases that brought before the court and those resulting in a child being placed in alternative care or adoption". Care and placement of the child into alternative care by court order is ranging from placement into foster care, temporary safe care or placement in child and youth care centre.

The focus of this study was on foster care as one placement method within statutory service. The Department of Social Development (2013b: 9) Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, emphasises the procedures and processes that social workers should be well informed about when implementing statutory provisions of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 20) Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, social welfare intervention services in relation to children and their families incorporate a wide range of services, such as prevention and early intervention services, assessments, statutory intervention, protection, counselling, care, rehabilitation, therapeutic services, family reunification and after care services. These services are aimed at optimising and improving the functioning of individual children and families through various intervention strategies, techniques and approaches. The services are rendered by different professionals and role-players and should be aimed at family preservation and upholding the rights of children as set out in the Constitution and the Children's Act.

Services are rendered at different levels of intervention. The levels are not hierarchical and do not follow a linear process. Rather, they are on a continuum and often overlap. Clients may enter and exit the system at any level, depending on their needs, level of social functioning, outcome of assessment and intervention strategies that have been developed and applied to enhance their social functioning (Department of Social Development, 2013b: 30) Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38

of 2005 as amended. The next discussion gives a detailed analysis of social worker's interventions in foster care placements.

4.5.1. Phase 01: Preparatory phase

According to the Government Capacity Building Support Program, Department of Social Development (2016: 11) this phase has to be initiated long before a child is in need of care and protection, and before a prospective foster parent is requested to perform this role.

4.5.1.1. Recruitment and Screening of prospective foster parents

According to section 182(2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, prospective foster parent must be properly assessed by designated social worker to ensure that they are fit and proper to be entrusted with the care of the child. According to De Jager (2011:65), one focus of the assessment is to determine whether the prospective foster parent is prepared to carry out the responsibilities of a foster parent and has the capability to put this eagerness into action. The primary responsibilities of a foster parent are to provide care, to co-work with the child protection agency and to undertake commitment to the child.

In London to identify a suitable foster family assessment of non- kinship carers are carried out according to the format provided by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 07). All relevant checks are carried out and references taken up. A report is prepared outlining the suitability of the prospective carers to carry out the tasks of fostering as an action system (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 07). De Jager (2011: 69) states that in South Africa prospective foster parents apply for official recognition of caregiver relationship to the child; this is done through court processes. Section 126 (1) of the children's act no 38 of 2005 as amended, before any person can be appointed as a foster parent, screening must be done to establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the child protection register. The purpose of Part B of the register in terms of section 118 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended is to have a record of persons who are unsuitable to work with children and to use the information in the register in order to protect children in general against abuse from these persons. The written response on part B in terms of Section 126 (5) (a) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended must be received within 21 working days.

Only three files of the 25 studied foster care files contained screening reports from part B of the child protection register. The report in file # 19 states that *the name of foster parent does not appear on part B of the child protection register.*

During interviews three foster parents indicated that they applied to check if their names appear on Part B of the child protection register. Foster parent # 19 said *“the social worker provided me with the form that I was suppose to complete, she helped me to complete the form and asked me to buy envelope and I should put the form on the envelope written the address where the form should be send. The social worker wrote my address on the separate page, she told me to attach copy of my identity document and I have done exactly what the social worker asked me to do. She then told me that I must submit the report once I received it as she indicated that it will be posted back into my postal box. After two months I went to check post and I found the report and according to the post stamp it was received the same week I went to check the post. I then took the report to the social worker and she started working on it so that we could go to court”.*

A total of 22 foster parents indicated that they have never done applications to check if their names appear on the child protection register. The foster parent # 13 said *“The social worker told me about the register and she promised to provide me with the form that I should complete and post them. At the time she was telling about the forms, she couldn’t give it to me as she indicated that their photocopy machine is not working as she didn’t have enough copies. From there she never gave me the form until she called me to attend court”.*

All the 25 foster children outlined that they don’t know anything about the child protection register. The foster child # 19 said *“I don’t know anything about child protection register”.*

Only two social workers indicated that they help foster parents to check if their names appear on Part B of the child protection register. The social worker # 4 said *“I acknowledge that not all the social workers screen foster parents against part B of the child protection register. Some of the social workers assist the clients to apply and continue with the process to court, once the report is available even if it is after the case is finalised at court we are able to get indication of the kind of person we have placed the child with. When it comes before the case is finalised at court, it still helpful because social worker goes to court with a comprehensive report. This is done to avoid the delay in finalization of placement saying we*

still waiting for part B reports while the child has no food, because we have to keep in mind that the foster care grant assist so much in terms of ensuring that children have something to eat”.

Three social workers indicated that they never screened foster parents against the child protection register. The social worker # 5 said *“Majority of children who are placed in foster care were actually found cared for by the foster care applicants that also motivate for the suitability of the applicant to be foster parents, they just need the grant to enable them to provide for the children. To this kind of cases screening of Part B is not much necessary. Moreover, the report from the child protection register takes a long time which delays the progress of the case, since we still faced with the challenge of backlog we are forced to push cases without considering to make use of information about foster parents from the child protection register”.*

The general finding in this regard is that, the decision of recommending the foster parent is based on the fact that the person has been living with the child. De Jager (2011:65) states that the reason kinship carers do not go through the same assessment as non-relative family foster carers is that the child might already be living with the kinship carer. The researcher is of a different view based on the fact that it seems like the decision of recommending foster parents is based on the assumption that if the person has been living with the child then is suitable. Bungane (2007: 1) indicates that many foster cares placements are characterized by problems such as dysfunctional relationships between foster children and foster parents.

4.5.1.2 Training of foster parents

According to Durand (2007: 41) *“training of foster parents is a very practical form of support for foster parents that can provide them with information and skills in order to ensure that they are able to cope with the issues that might arise in any given foster placement. It helps foster parents to use the skills they develop through trainings to meet the needs of the child as well as improve placement stability. Durand further attests that training of foster parents does not only focus on the skills development of the foster parents but also have a positive reward towards the relationship between the foster parent and the foster child”.* In Australia, foster care applicants are required to undertake an initial training program before being approved as foster parents (McHugh, 2013: 15). In Botswana, Child line has modules

that focus on child abuse, children's rights, disciplining children, children and feelings, children and trauma (Maudeni, 2009: 03). Since 2006, social workers working for child line-Botswana have also been training prospective foster parents on foster care (Maudeni, 2009: 03).

All foster parents indicated that they have never attended training since they became foster parents. Foster parent # 19 said *"social workers are not supportive; we don't have information that can assist us to care for the foster children. Children are informed more than us as parents hence they are able to manipulate us. They learn things from school, social networks, internet, television and friends. We also need workshops to be able to parent our foster children"*

Foster parent # 25 said *"even though these children know us and we know them as we are aunts, grandmothers, brothers and sisters. The fact remains they are not our biological children and it is difficult to parent the other person's child. We do our level best to raise them the same way we raised our children. My foster child once told me that I am abusing him because his mother is deceased. Social workers need to teach us how to deal with these children, every foster parent is crying about the behaviour of these children"*.

All the social workers confirmed that no training is provided to foster parents. Social worker # 5 said *"social workers want to support foster parents but the conditions do not allow them to perform their best. There is a shortage of social workers and tools of traits such as, transport are hindering factors to service delivery. Social worker # 03 said "foster care training manuals are also needed to make the training more effective"*

The study reveals foster parents training would be beneficial input in equipping foster parent with skills to protect and nature children in their care. Unavailability of trainings to foster parents is identified as a gap in this study. Social worker's concern in this study is shortage of manpower and foster care training manuals to be used in the trainings of foster parents. In London, in terms of the Fostering service statement of purpose (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 08) *"a training manual is provided to all new carers, which includes essential information and policies, procedures and guidelines for foster parents. Barnet Children's service has a Children's Workforce Development Team that commissions training courses for staff including foster parents"*.

4.5.2. Phase 02: Intake phase.

De Jager (2011: 69) states that prospective foster parents apply for official recognition of caregiver relationship to the child; this is done through court processes. According to Cummins, Sevel and Pedrick (2012: 25), the first step of the helping process is intake and engagement. Cummins et al (2012: 5) states that, during engagement phase, the social worker as change agent system makes initial contact with the client system and begins to establish the framework for helping relationship. Professional helping relationship with client system is a foundation of foster care intervention process, many helping professionals consider it more important than the helping strategies used to address the client's problems (McClam and Woodside, 2005: 119). Part of the engagement process during foster care intervention requires understanding of what brought the client system to the social worker and some general history of the problem and previous circumstances that led to the problem (Cummins et al., 2012:25).

The researcher studied 25 foster care file during document study, the files did not provide information on how social workers established a helping relationship with client during their first engagement. Majority of foster parents (15) indicated that they have a good working relationship with social workers. Foster parents # 3 indicated that: *"I went with the child to the social workers office to apply for foster care. When we got there we waited for few minutes at a desk and the social worker called us in the office. The social worker introduced herself to us and gave me the opportunity to introduce myself and the child. After introducing ourselves the social worker gave me the opportunity to explain why I came to her office. I told her I came to apply for foster care placement as I am living with my sister's child, her mother is deceased and I don't know her father. The social worker completed the forms; she was writing what I was telling her while she was asking me questions. The social worker asked me to produce death certificate of the mother, my identity document, birth certificate of the child and gave me a form so that I can ask the school principal where the child is attending school to complete it for me. She then told me that I should wait for the social worker to call me as she will take my application to the social worker who is responsible for our area. I had anxiety the day I went to social worker's office to apply for foster care as it was first time experience for me. The social worker was very much friendly with me, her smile made me feel free to present my story"*. Foster child # 3 indicated that *"I*

went with my grandmother to social worker's office to apply for my foster care grant as she indicated to me that she wants the social worker to see me. At social worker's office, the social worker greeted me and asked for my name. She asked me who my father is. I told her that I don't know him, the social worker wrote what I was saying and she told me that I should work hard at school and respect my grandmother".

A minority (ten) of foster parents indicated that they were not treated well by social workers. Foster parent # 20 said *"I nearly gave up because of the way social worker spoke to me when I was applying for foster care. She was very much aggressive to me when I told her that I don't know the father of my grandchild saying I am not telling her the truth".*

All the five social workers indicated that they work with clients to establish a working relationship during their first contact. Social worker # 4 said *"I always make sure that I establish a professional working relationship with my clients. I first start by welcoming clients with a smile, introducing myself and allowing him/her to introduce him/herself and reassure them about confidentiality. Once I realize that the client becomes relaxed, I move to the next step which gives them opportunity to tell their story".*

The study reveals the importance of establishing a professional helping relationship with foster care client systems. It highlights that social workers who establish helping relationship with client system succeed in client's problem identification as the client system feel free to tell the story. It also stimulates client system's willingness to engage in the helping process. Hence McClam and Woodside (2005: 119) say helping professionals consider it more important than helping strategies to address the client system's problems. The study further shows that professional helping relationship should be continuously maintained throughout the helping process. It is proven in this study that, social workers attitude towards the client systems determines the kind of helping relationship to prevail and the success of intervention hence reciprocity in terms of system's theory.

The framework for Social Welfare (Department of Social Development, 2013a: 37) indicates that the point of entry or engagement could be at a formal service point of any collaborative, inter-sectoral and interdepartmental partners or at outreach points where a practitioner interacts with communities. During the intake phase the critical information about the foster care beneficiary is recorded and captured. In terms of the Framework for

Social Welfare services (Department of Social Development, 2013a: 6), the social worker who is assisting the foster care applicants at the reception stage should perform the following activities; conducting intake interview, administer referral where applicable, complete intake form and process note, capture and file intake form and process notes.

During the document study the researcher studied 25 foster care files and 12 of studied foster care files had complete intake information. Five files had incomplete intake information. Inside the file # 4 the *intake form indicates that the client came to apply for foster care placement, and the intake form does not reflect date of service and signature of the social worker who was assisting the client.* The researcher's view is that the fact that the intake form was not signed by anyone there is no accountability and even the information about the client cannot be treated as legit. The British Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as cited by British Psychological society (2009:18) support that signing documents is to ensure continuity of the service and it establishes accountability and evidence of the services rendered by an individual.

Social worker # 5 said *"clients comes in large numbers at intake office; I always got to see more than 15 people presenting different problems. I then decide to just complete few things in the intake form such as the client's names and presented problem and hope that I will finalise everything afterwards. When I have to now finalise everything something else come up and as a result I end up forgetting to go back to intakes"*. According to Cummins et al (2012:5), good quality recording of the client's information is crucial as it will help in moving forward with the case. As a result the researcher suggests that it is better to help few people and record all the required information than to help too many people and have incomplete work.

In the studied files eight files had no intake forms and only two files had process notes that were fully completed for intake phase. The process notes in the two files outline all the course of intervention, evaluation of the session and plan of action. The report is also signed and dated by the social worker who was assisting the foster care applicant at intake phase. One file had a process note that was not fully completed. The process note outlined the course of intervention, evaluation is not written but plan of action is indicated in the report. Moreover, 22 files had no process notes. However, during the interviews foster parents and

foster children gave an impression that social workers are performing their roles as expected during engagement phase.

Foster parent # 10 said *“the social worker completed forms as she was interviewing me in the office”*. Foster child # 10 said *“social worker was asking me questions and she was completing forms while I was answering the questions”*.

Social worker # 4 said *“social workers are not doing well in record keeping, most of intakes and other important documents disappear before they can be filed properly and also due to insufficient office space and high workload, it is quite easy to forget where you put the documents”*.

Based on the social worker’s opinion, it could be that confidentiality is compromised which is unethical according to the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP, 2012: 14). Confidentiality must be understood in the context of the right to privacy. Cognisance should also be taken of the fact the right to privacy is enshrined in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (section 14 of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996). The ethical standard aimed at protecting the privacy of the client system must be held in the highest regards (SACSSP, 2012: 14).

With regard to the above deliberations compared to the literature as presented from the above, the researcher’s view is that there is limitations in the Bojanala District in the North West Province in terms of record keeping management. Reamer (2005: 325) indicates that comprehensive recording of the client system’s information is necessary as it does not only support quality service delivery to the individuals but it is also a basis for collaboration and coordination of services hence networking with other societal systems. Cummins et al (2012:5) further emphasises the importance of comprehensive recording that information collected during intake process is used as a foundation to proceed to assessment phase.

4.5.3. Phase 03: Assessment phase

This section of the study wants to establish the assessment and investigation processes taken in the 25 studied foster placements. The Framework for Social Welfare services (Department of Social Development 2013a: 38) emphasise that during the assessment phase the social worker should schedule an appointment if not yet done, conduct

assessment by applying different techniques. For instance, standard tests, drawings and interviews, in order to compile assessment report which includes identify need for service and recommend plan of action for specific intervention.

In all the 25 studied foster placement files, the dominant assessment techniques were interviews. All the 25 foster parents indicated that they had interviews with social workers. The foster parent # 9 said *"the social worker interviewed me in her office, she indicated that she want to write the report that will be used by court to decide on the case, we had a very long session since the questions were many and I was expected to answer all of them."*

Majority of foster children (18) also confirmed that they participated in interviews with the social workers. Only minority of foster children (seven) revealed that they never had interviews with social workers. The foster child # 9 said *"I went with my aunt to the social worker's office and she asked me questions in a separate room. One of the questions that the social worker asked me was "who my father is?"* The foster child # 10 said *"I only saw the social worker for the first time when we were attending court"*.

Most of the social workers (four) of the social workers indicated that they do assessments as expected, while one indicated that they are not conducting assessment as expected due to shortage of transport and office space. The social worker # 2 represents the majority that indicated that social workers are doing assessment and she said *"We have been conducting assessments as expected, we always make sure that we conduct interviews with both foster parents and foster children with the aim of gaining comprehensive information that enable us to decide on the case. Initially we were only using form 38 as a guiding tool as there was no prescribed assessment tool, but currently that the assessment tool has been introduced to us with the generic norms and standard, we are using it."*

Social worker # 5 said *"We conduct interviews with clients in our office or we conduct home visits. Challenges that we experience as social workers are the shortage of transport hence other social workers are unable to conduct home visits. Office space is also a problem because social workers who are unable to conduct home visits are calling clients to the office. They are forced to conduct interviews with clients in front of other colleagues because we share offices and most of our clients are not comfortable to discuss their issues in front of other people"*.

The study revealed that social workers use only interviews as a technique of assessment. Other techniques such as the standard tests and drawings are never used. Compton et al (2005:207) state that interviews are only viable if the environment is conducive for the participants. Ecological theory emphasise the power of environment in the influence of people. It is the researches opinion that even during assessment, the ecological environment where assessment is conducted with client system determines the nature of client's honest participation. The study shows that social workers are faced with challenges that restrain them from doing quality assessment. Shortage of resources such as transport and limited office space available to social workers were established as hindering factors to foster care assessment.

Moreover, the research also revealed that the principle of client system's confidentiality has been compromised as clients are interviewed in front of other staff members. This can result in foster care applicants to be hesitant to provide information. The researcher's concern is that information gathered from mainly prospective foster parents and foster children might not be the true reflection of the client system's situation as it might not provide a true picture of the client's environmental paradigm. Compton et al (2005:132) also emphasise that confidentiality is important as it improves the confidence of client systems in providing information. As a result, assessment need to be seen vital to foster care, if it is not properly done relevant service cannot be provided. In terms of ecosystems perspectives assessment is a holistic process. According to the The Department of Social Development (2013b: 23), in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, assessment requires a synthetic analysis of information collected from the child, the family system and other sources. A multidisciplinary team depending on the presented problem may perform holistic assessment of a child and ecological environment. No evidence was provided on the involvement of multidisciplinary team in assessing children. Various organizations and professional groups in America (child welfare league of America; American Academy of child and adolescent psychiatry; American Academy of Paediatrics) endorsed the concept that children entering foster care should be assessed for physical, developmental and mental health problems so that appropriate interventions can begin early (Grayson, 2012: 3).

The delay in the introduction of assessment tools such as developmental assessment tool that must be utilized during this process includes SWS 05 assessment form, Risk and Safety Assessment tools and Developmental Assessment tool left social workers an option of utilising form 38 that is used to compile statutory report in conducting assessment. This has compromised the quality of assessment.

4.5.4. Phase 04: Statutory Phase

Statutory intervention is a legislative process that designated social worker initiates by bringing a matter before a presiding officer to determine whether a child is in need of care or not. Statutory intervention with the court order in terms of section 151 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the case is reported to children's court. Presiding Officer receives evidence under oath with supporting documents attached, issues an order and request the social worker to investigate. Following presentation expose activities that are performed by social workers during investigation phase:

4.5.5. Phase 05: Investigation phase

4.5.5.1. Advertisement to trace biological parents

According to Regulation 56(1) and (2) (c) and (d) pertaining the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, if there is allegations that the child has been abandoned; the social worker must place an advertisements in the local news paper to verify the allegations. This study revealed that 68% of studied foster care cases were placed in foster care as a result of the death of the biological mothers of the foster children and because the whereabouts of the biological fathers' were unknown. This implies that these children were abandoned by their biological fathers while their mothers are deceased. Section 1 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended define abandonment in relation to the child as a child who has been deserted by the parent, guardian or care- giver or who has for no apparent reasons had no contact with the parent, guardian or care-giver for the period of at least three months.

The studied foster care files did not contain the proof that advertisements were done for the cases (68%) where the fathers of foster children were alleged to be unknown.

The report in file # 5 states that *“the mother to the child is deceased and the identity of the father is unknown. Death certificate of the mother is available and death certificate of the father is not available. Affidavit was also available where the foster parent indicated that she doesn’t know the father’s identity. The report also indicates that information was derived from the foster parents and foster child”*. The foster child # 5 indicated that *“the social worker came at home and she asked me about the father of my younger sister and I told her we never met our fathers”*. The foster child no # 5 said *“The social worker asked me about my father and I told her I never met my father”*. The social worker # 3 *“ the children’s act dictates that as we deal with cases of foster care applications were other parents are alleged to be unknown we must advertise, I once attempted to do advertisements but I was informed that the Department of Social Development did not allocate a budget for advertisements”*.

The report in file # 17 indicates that *“the mother to the child is deceased and the father’s whereabouts is unknown, the file contained death certificate of the mother only. The report indicates that information was derived from foster parent only”*. The foster parents # 17 said *“the social worker interviewed me and she also asked me to provide her with contact numbers of the friends to the child’s mother indicating that she need to ask them if they know anything about the father of the child”*.The social worker # 4 said *“South Africa is a borderless country, people travel to other provinces which means the parent of the child might be living in the other province. When the advertisement is done in the local newspaper, possibilities are that information might not reach the parent who is being traced”*.

The researcher’s view in this regard is that several children at Bojanala District are placed in foster care due to the death of parents and the abandonment of children. According to Regulation 56(1) and (2) (c) and (d) pertaining the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, if there are allegations that the child has been abandoned; the social worker must place advertisements in the local news paper to verify the allegations. This is the limitation due to the fact that the advertisements are limited to the local newspapers only and the Department of Social Development does not even have budgets for the advertisements.

4.5.5.2. Professional report Writing

According to Wilson and Tilbury (2009: 03), “social workers write different kinds reports, such as report on outcome of child protection investigation or person’s suitability to become a foster parent. The Department of Social Development (2013b: 31) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended, states that during the court preparation phase, the social worker is required to compile a professional report based on the outcome of the investigation. The report should reflect the client system’s situation and should comply with the conditions in regulation 55 in terms of the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. The social worker has an obligation to thoroughly discuss the report before the court hearing with the child’s foster parents or caregiver(s) and where the child is mature enough to understand, must also be part of the discussion.

All the studied foster care files contained the social worker’s reports.

The evidence in File# 15 contained social worker’s report which is written and signed by the social worker. It also shows that the social worker discussed the report with the foster parent and the child. The child was part of the discussion due to the fact that the child was 15 years old and deemed matured to understand the report.

The evidence in file # 4 contained social worker’s report which is written and signed by the social worker. It also shows that the social worker discussed the report with the foster parent. The child was not part of the discussion due to the fact that was 9 years old and deemed not matured enough to understand the report.

The social worker # 3 stated that “there is a misconception that *the Children’s Act only allows the social worker to discuss the report with the children who are 10 years and above as it is believed that they can be in the position to understand the importance of their contributions without being influenced*”.

The researcher is of a concern that the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005 as amended is not clear when describing the child participation in terms of maturity. Section 10 of the children’s act no 38 of 2005 as amended states that every child is of such an age, maturity and stage of development as to be able to participate in any matter concerning that child has the right to

participate in an appropriate way and views expressed by the child must be given due consideration.

According to section 155 (2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, before the child is brought before the children's court, a designated social worker must investigate the matter and within 90 days compile a report in a prescribed manner on whether the child is in need of care and protection.

The studied files revealed that 16% of studied foster care placements were finalized within three months, 56% placements were finalised after six months and 28% of the studied foster care placements were finalised after two years. 84% of foster parents and foster children also confirmed that it took long time for their foster care application to be finalised.

File # 1 was opened in 2011, it had a social worker's report dated 2011/05/15 and the intake was dated 2009/07/18". The foster parent # 1 said "I waited for two years before the social worker could assist me, I had already lost hope and I just had to use my old age grant to support my grandchild". The foster child # 1 said "my grandmother used to tell me that she is waiting for the social worker to come at home".

The foster care placement of file # 7 was opened in 2010, the social worker's report is dated 2012/09/05 while intake form is dated 2012/09/18" the foster parent # 7 said that "I first applied for foster care in 2011 January and I was told that the social worker will come at home, the social worker never came. In 2012 September I came to make a follow up since I waited for so long, I was told that my application form and all the documents I have submitted have disappeared. I was then asked to submit other documents and new forms on my application were completed. On that day the social worker collected information and she compiled a report, two weeks later I was called to attend court". The foster child # 7 said "my aunt is the one who was working with the social worker".

All participating social workers revealed that there is a delay in completing foster care applications as a result of work load. Social worker # 1 said *"over and above 198 foster care placements caseload, I am sitting with 27 new foster care applications that are awaiting investigations. On the other hand I have to render case work to other families including child neglect, substance abuse, and people living with disabilities, services to older persons,*

awareness campaigns and attend workshops just to name few. Social workers are seen to be jack of all trades and master of none. Social workers are faced with many responsibilities as a result they are unable to render quality interventions as expected. More specializations should be granted and foster care is one of the areas that need specialization”.

The social worker # 2 said *“there are number of reasons why social workers do not assist clients on time; foster care applications comes in large numbers to the office. Currently I am sitting with 28 foster care applications that I have never attended to and seven placements that I am still busy preparing for court. I also have caseload of 170 foster care placements that I should monitor. Over and above foster care caseload, I have about 98 intakes of other clients (marital disputes, Social Relief of Distress, children with anti social behaviour, family conflicts, substance abuse, parenting plans) that I need to work on and new cases are reported in the office on a daily basis. I render crisis interventions, also have a target for awareness campaigns; I supervise auxiliary social workers and also expected to provide support in coordination of the program. I applied for subsidised car in 2010 that I never received”.*

The social worker # 5 said *“many foster care placements that are attended on time are those of the children who lost both parents through death. The families where only one parent is deceased and the other one is alleged to be unknown takes time as foster care applicants do not want to tell the truth about the other parent’s whereabouts because they want the grant. In our office we work with a magistrate who is very strict, she refuse to grant these foster care placements unless advertisement is done of which is currently not possible as we were told that the budget for advertisement is not available.*

The plan by the Department of Social Development to deal with fast-tracking the management of foster care cases backlog at Bojanala District shows that in December 2014 social workers at Bojanala District were faced with 5 364 foster care backlog. In the Department of Social Development Bojanala District, the concept backlog describes all the cases not attended to in 90 days (Department of Social Development, 2014: 01).

The general finding from the aforementioned is that only few foster care applications tend to be finalised within the recommended time. This is attributed to the fact that social workers are faced with the high caseload which delays completion of many cases. The

researcher is of the view that the high case loads makes it difficult for the social workers to monitor all the cases because they have other commitments besides foster placements.

4.5.5.3. Supervision.

The supervision framework for the social work profession in South Africa, Department of Social Development (2012b: 18) defines Social Work Supervision as an interactional process with a positive relationship between the supervisor and supervisee based on theories, models and perspectives on supervision whereby the supervisor is responsible for guiding the supervisees by performing educational supportive and administrative functions to ensure compliance with social work theory, standardized knowledge, skills, competency and applicable ethical content in the practice setting for quality service delivery.

None of the studied foster care files did reflect supervision functions performed, besides supervisors countersigning the reports that should be presented at court. All the social workers revealed that there are many challenges related to supervision of social workers who are rendering foster care intervention. One of the main challenges was that the supervisors have several responsibilities which sometimes make it difficult for them to carry out their supervision functions as expected. Foster parents and foster children could not give an input on the aspect of supervision as they have indicated that they only worked with social workers and they never met supervisors of social worker's who were assisting them with their foster care applications.

According to the Department of Social Development: Supervision framework for the social work profession in South Africa (2012b: 25) there are three types of supervision, namely: administration supervision, supportive supervision and educational supervision. All participants' social workers (**ten**) indicated that they benefit in administrative supervision. Majority of participants' social workers (**four**) indicated that they do not receive supportive supervision and (**three**) reported that they are not receiving educational supervision. This shows that administration supervision receives more attention.

The social worker # 3 said *"there are no appointed supervisors, supervision functions are performed by program coordinators. Each coordinator supervises about two to three social workers. This is too much work to be handled by one person. Coordinators have the*

responsibilities of ensuring that the program activities are performed as expected. They spend most of their time out of the office attending program meetings, training and workshops as a result they are unable to implement supervision framework, they only sign the reports that are already written to be presented at court. This challenge is worse to the newly appointed social worker's as they are normally subjected to frustration due to lack of supportive supervision".

In this regard the researcher is of the view that it is of the utmost importance that all types of supervision be allocated equal time. This view is supported by Seymour et al (2011:73) that equal supportive supervision and preparation would assist social workers to anticipate questions that might be asked at court and can be in the position to give informed responses. The Department of Social Development in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended (2013b: 31) also emphasises that supervisor should verify the report for proficiency and countersign it before submission to the court. The common principle in New Zealand social work supervision is that, professional supervision is available for all practicing social workers (Social Worker's Registration Board, 2015: 03) Supervision Expectations For Registered Social Work: Policy statement.

The SACSSP remains committed to expand management and supervision as areas of specialization in social work (SACSSP, 2010: 8). This implies that coordinators are holding two positions. The study also discovered that supervision is done by program coordinators. As a result this does not respond to the demand of the work to be done in terms of Chapter three of supervision framework, Department of Social Development in Supervision framework for social work profession in South Africa (2012b: 21) which negatively affect the desired outcomes of social worker's intervention in foster care placement.

4.5.5.4. Recommending the right placement for the child in terms of section 46 read with section 156 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

Nigel, as cited in Mdletshe (2008:34), emphasizes that the right placement is a powerful input to ensure that a child is happy and fulfilled; it creates a social basis for the child's development into adulthood. The decision to place a child in foster care is followed by the process of matching a child with a foster family system (South African National Council for

Child and Family Welfare cited by De Jager, 2011: 69). According to section 184 (1) (a) (b) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the court must consider a report by designated social worker about the cultural and linguistic background of the child and the availability of the suitable person with similar background to that of the child, who is willing and able to provide foster care to the child. De Jager (2011: 69) indicates that "once this legal requirement has been met, the child can be placed in that foster home, but ideally, the social worker should consider finer details to try and ensure a good match and a successful placement. The information obtained during assessment can prove valuable here".

In this study all studied foster care placements are kinship placements. Children are placed in foster care with related families. Marc et.al (2008: 1) recognised that kinship care helps to maintain family relationships and cultural ties while providing children with the opportunity for permanency, safety, wellbeing and stability.

In file # 12 *the foster child is placed in foster care of her grandmother*. Foster parent # 12 said that *"I am the only person to take care of the child as the grandmother; I raised him from when his mother was still alive"*. The foster child # 12 said *"the social worker said my grandmother will be legally approved by court to be my care giver and she will be receiving foster care grant"*. The social worker # 1 said *"matching of foster parents and foster children is not a challenge as majority of them is found living together"*.

In file # 13 *the foster child is placed in foster care of her sister*. The foster parent # 13 said *"the social worker encouraged me to take a good care of my younger sister and she promised me that once the case is approved at court, I will be assisted with the grant so that I can be able to provide for my younger sister. She also said to me she will support me until the child is discharged from my care"*. The foster child # 13 said *"the social worker told me that during her interview with me and my sister she realised that my sister is the right person to be trusted with the responsibility to care for me, hence she want to assist me with grant that will be paid to my sister"*. The social worker # 3 said *"it is the duty of the social worker to explain the kind of support that will be offered to foster parents and foster children once their placements are finalised at court"*.

In file # 14 the foster child is placed in foster care with her aunt. The foster parent # 14 said *"The social worker told me that since I am the one who came to apply for my nephew, I am*

the right person to care for her. The foster child # 14 said “my aunt told me that the social worker told her that since she has been caring for me my grant will be paid to her after the court’s approval”. The social worker # 5 said there is no need to remove the child from the person who has been caring for her more especially if there are no risks identified for that child to stay with that person.

The researcher is of the view that kinship placement is dominant care at Bojanala District as children in all the studied foster care placement are placed with their related family systems. A positive aspect of kinship care is that the cultural, religious and linguistic background system of the child and that of the foster carers are very likely to match (Child Welfare League of America, in Scannapieco and Hegar cited in De Jager, 2011).The researcher is of the view that in some instances kinship placement is convenient to children as they already understand the functionality of the family system they live with.

4.5.5.5. Considering the likely effect of any change in the circumstances of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others.

The Department of Social Development (2013b:32) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended, states that “the social worker should also consider the likely effect of any change in the circumstance of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others when preparing for foster placement. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013:4) emphasises that “ sibling relationships are emotionally powerful and important not only in the childhood but over the course of a lifetime as they look up to each other and typically spend more time together than with anyone else.

The document study of 25 files confirmed that social workers prefer not to separate brothers and sisters during alternative care. File # 09 “three siblings were placed together in one foster family”. Foster parent # 6 said “*as the family we wanted to share the children as we wanted to help each other, the social worker then refused and she advised us not to separate children, that is why the family elected me to take all the children*” foster child # 09 said: “*we are staying with my two little brothers who are currently attending pre-school. The social worker # 2 revealed that “we don’t allow children to be separated as children get frustrated when they are separated and it also destroys their bond as siblings”.*

File # 07 “the child is placed in foster care within the same families where the siblings are living”. Foster parent # 07 said *“There was no one in the family who could care for the child in the family. The social worker encouraged his sister to assist him with school home work. His sister assists as she also attends meetings for him at school. The foster child # 07 said “my sister is assisting me with home-work and also encourages me to do well in my studies. I look up to her as she obtained her degree and currently looking for employment. The social worker # 1 said “placing the children in foster care where their elder siblings’ lives provide opportunity for children to learn from their siblings. As social worker we see this as an opportunity towards the child’s positive development.*

File # 05 “the two children are placed with their elder sister”. The foster parent # 05 indicated that *“after the passing of our parents I decided to stay with my siblings and it is not easy to care for them as they are teenagers. They don’t listen to me, it is really stressful to deal with them, and really losing parents is painful, I am only 21 years old and faced with responsibilities that are too big. My siblings are teenagers, the other one is 15 years old and the other one is 17 years old. I am unable to discipline them, but since the social worker made me aware about these challenges before we go to court, they never shocked me I just said to myself this is what the social worker was talking about hence I got strength to hold on because the social worker also gave me information on the ways to handle those kind of challenges once I start experiencing them. The foster child # 05 said we are cared for by our elder sister, we normally have a fight when she refuses to buy us clothes. The social worker # 4 said “families are not supporting each other; social workers do their level best to link families that are under leadership of youth (youth headed families) with other community structures as support system to the family”.*

The researcher is of the view that siblings appeared to be benefiting positively when living together although the youth headed families are faced with the challenges.

4.5.5.6. Considering educational needs of the child and the likely effect of change in schools

The Legal Centre for foster care and education (2007: 1) states that frequent school changes have an impact on the child’s educational progress. The Department of Social Development (2013b: 32) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children’s Act 38 of 2005 as amended, encourages social workers to take into consideration

the educational needs and the likely effects of change in schools when placing children. According to the London Borough of Barnet fostering service, (2015: 07) other organizations in the world prefer to place children locally to avoid disrupting a child's education and for contact arrangements with birth family members.

All the foster parents and foster children (25) confirmed that foster care placements did not affect the children's education in terms of movement from one school to the other. Foster parent # 8 said *"the social worker said placing the child with me will also be good because the child will not change the school"*. Foster child # 8 confirmed that *"I didn't change school because I was staying with my aunt"*. The foster parent # 11 said *"the child has changed school when we were relocating to our new house in Tlhabane from Sunrise Park. The foster child # 11 confirmed that "I moved to the new school after we moved to the other house in Tlhabane"*. The social worker # 4 said *"movement of the child from one school to the next affect the child's educational stability as they are faced with the responsibility of establishing new friends, learning new teachers while they are still missing their friends from the previous school. Movement of children is only considered to be the last resort when all other avenues have been exhausted."*

The researcher is of the opinion that social workers are doing their best to ensure that the educational stability of children is maintained when they organise foster care placements. The study shows that it is only when it is in the best interest of the child that change in the child's education system is allowed by social workers in the Bojanala District.

4.5.6. Phase 06: Finalization of the Children's Court Hearing

The Clerk of children's court as part of an action system will on receipt of the social workers report issue the date of the Court hearing and also notify all relevant parties to attend the hearing . The social worker will present his/her report and ensure that a copy of the Court order is placed on the file (Government Capacity Building Support Program, Department of Social Development, 2016: 13).

4.5.6.1 Court Preparation

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 30) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended,

court preparation is the process of preparing children and/or their families for appearance at court, as well as detailing, explaining and discussing the expectations of the court and procedures that are followed during the court hearing or process. It is the duty of the social worker to address any fear, apprehension or lack of information. Court preparation aims to increase the parties' knowledge of the court by familiarising them with surroundings, persons who will be attending proceedings and their roles, as well as the rules of the court. If the child shows any signs of trauma or anxiety, the social worker should provide the necessary professional intervention. It is also beneficial to prepare the child's carer so as to enable them to respond to the child's anxieties and fears, especially during the period prior to the hearing.

None of the studied 25 files had proof on how the foster parents and foster children were prepared for court. All the social workers revealed that foster parents are prepared from the beginning about the court, but they do not keep records of the whole preparation process. All the foster parents verbalised that they were prepared for court appearance. The foster children revealed that they were told by the foster parents that they will be attending court.

The evidence in File # 20 *did not provide records on activities performed by the social worker when preparing clients for court appearance*. Foster parent # 20 indicated that *"immediately when the social worker was done with the report she called me and asked me to make the arrangement at school where the child was attending as he will be needed at court. The social worker called me two days before court date which gave me enough time to prepare myself. I was very happy when the social worker called me"*. The foster child # 19 said *"my grandmother told me that the social worker said we must attend the court so that government can be able to assist us with the grant, my grandmother went to school to arrange for me to be allowed opportunity to go with her to court"*.

The social worker # 1 said *"we make foster parents aware about court attendance before we engage in the process of report writing. When we start to prepare the report, the foster parents already know that we are going to court"*.

File # 21 also did not contain the proof on how the foster parents and foster children were prepared for court. Foster parents # 21 stated that *"during the court day we arrived at social workers office and she went with us to court, the social worker told us that she is not saying*

anything to us as the magistrate will talk to us. I was very scared as it was for the first time I was attending court and people told me that magistrate will ask us difficult questions". Foster child # 21 indicated that "we went to court with the social worker. The social worker did not say anything to me". The social worker # 5 said "foster parents are prepared for court the first day when they apply for foster care placement through explaining the procedures of foster care interventions to them"

File # 13 did not *"contain the proof on how the foster parents and foster children were prepared for court"*. Foster parent # 13 indicated that *"I am afraid of officers because officials in government offices are not speaking with people in a respectful way hence I never slept the night before we went to court. The foster child #13 indicated that "I realised that my sister was scared and I also started to be scared as I didn't know what was going to happen at court"*. The social worker # 1 indicated that *"I always make sure that I prepare my clients to address the anxiety feelings amongst them, it is just that it is normal to be nervous when you do something for the first time but I always make sure that I am available for my client to support them"*.

The study revealed that although social workers made claims that they prepare the client systems for court hearing, there is no proof on how they prepare them. This poses a challenge on the fact that the method they use to prepare the client system for court is unknown.

4.5.6.2. Court appearance

Worldwide the people who attend children's court procedures are limited (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012: 02). In child welfare proceedings, people generally include the child, the parent or guardian of the child, the agency or department having custody of the child. Only people who have an interest in the child's welfare such as foster parent, pre-adoptive parent, relative currently providing care for the child to attend court hearing (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012: 02).

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 30) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, it is important that the child does not wait for prolonged period at court to avoid the needs for

refreshments and increased anxiety, especially if there are no facilities to keep the child occupied. Where possible, the social worker may arrange with the court to attend to clients that involve children earlier in a day or work through appointment system. Section 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 recognises children's rights to participate in any matter concerning them and to have their views given due consideration.

The Department of Social Development (2013b: 30) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, emphasises that "children should be allowed to participate fully and effectively if required to do so in court. When preparing children to participate, the social worker should ensure that they adhere to the professional code of ethics; for example, guarding against coaching or coercing children and what to do" Department of Social Development (2013b:30) emphasize that "the social worker is responsible for providing professional support and protecting the child against any undue harm, which may come from the perpetrator, media, disgruntled parents.

File # 17 had a court order as a proof of the court proceedings to finalise foster care placement. The foster parent # 17 said *"we were many at court and we stayed for the long time, the child was then crying as he was hungry. The magistrate called us in after a while and she told me that I will be assisted with the grant for me to be able to provide for the child. She also said to me I must keep contact with social workers, when I experience challenges I must communicate with the social worker. The magistrate said I must open a savings account and save the other portion of the grant for the child's education. She instructed me to save R250.00 for the child every month and that I should not withdraw the money unless if I have discussed with the social worker and got the social worker's approval. We then signed some forms and we were told to wait for the social worker outside. The social worker came and gave me orders for me to submit at SASSA for the grant to be paid in my name"*.

The foster child # 17 said *"I was hungry at court that is why I was crying. The magistrate told me that I should study hard, she said I must not demand expensive clothes from the foster parents as the grant I am receiving will be meant to assist with education expenses hence the parents are expected to open a savings account for me. The social worker # 3*

stated that *“social workers go to court with several prospective foster parents hence clients are waiting for long time at court. The other challenge is that magistrates are not giving children’s court first priority. They always give lawyers priority i.e. when there is a case where lawyers are involved during the day of children’s court, they are given priority.*

The file # 18 contained a court order signed by the magistrate. There are no minutes of court proceedings in the file. The foster parent # 18 said *“we didn’t stay for the long time at court. We arrived at 9:00 and the social worker showed us a desk where we waited for her while he went inside to check if the magistrate is ready. I was going with four other women who also came with children to court. After a few minutes the social worker came and told us that we must come to the desk next to the magistrate’s office. She started to call us one by one, when we got inside the magistrate’s office we found the magistrate, the social worker showed me and the child the chairs where we were suppose to sit and the social worker sit next to us. The magistrates asked the social worker to introduce the clients to her. The social worker started by introducing himself and he told the magistrate the reasons why I should be made the foster parent to the child. The magistrate asked me to stand up and asked me to tell my name and I told her my name, she asked me how do I relate with the child and I told her. She asked me if I was forced to apply for the foster care of the child or I applied willingly and I told her that I applied willingly. She then signed the papers and told me that she approved my application and that I will receive the grant that I must use for the child’s needs and that I must open a savings account for the child’s education. I signed a contract that outlines all that is expected at me as a foster parent. The social worker told us to wait for him outside. He came again within few minutes and told me the dates that I should come to apply for the grant at SASSA. I took the child and we went home. Around 10:30 we were already done at court”.*

The foster child # 18 said *“the magistrate told me that I must go to school and study very hard. She said the grant that will be paid is not for me hence it will be given to my grandmother to take of me. She said I must respect my grandmother.”* The social worker # 1 said *“in our office we have arranged with children’s court for children’s court days. We have been allocated two days in a week to bring foster care clients to court. During those days it is children’s court only. The other courts will follow when the magistrate is done with the children’s court. We also agreed on the number of cases that must be brought to court in a*

day so that children are not for the long time at court, since our children's court is not user friendly for children to be kept for the long time".

The file # 19 contained a court order. The file did not contain minutes of court proceedings. The foster parent # 19 said "we were many when I went to court. We were with other social workers who also came with other people to court; however we didn't wait for long time at court. When we arrived at court the social workers called us in one big court room. The magistrate came and she called us all to the front, she started to tell us that as we have been caring for the children we must continue to do that. She also said the government will be assisting us with the grant so that we can be able to provide for the children's basic needs. She told us to open savings account for the children's education and we must not allow the children to control us by demanding unnecessary expenses. She said we must be in control as parents and encouraged us to keep contact with the social worker as they will be supporting and offering proper advice throughout the placement. She told us that we are expected to come back after two year when the progress of placement will be reviewed. She gave us opportunities to ask questions and we did ask questions and she responded to our questions. She also spoke to children in a group and encouraged them to respect parents and work hard in their studies. She then signed the papers and we also signed and the social worker also signed. The social worker gave us court orders and I went to SASSA immediately to apply for the grant".

The foster child # 19 said "the magistrates said we must respect parents and work hard in our studies. She asked us one by one what we want to become when we grow up and said to us all that we want to become will come true only when we listen to the elders. We didn't stay for long time at court". The social worker # 4 said "the magistrates are not reading social worker's reports; social workers are not given opportunity to present their reports. That is not good; children's court should be taken serious like other courts proceedings. Cases should be presented one by one under oath and foster parents should also speak under oath".

The study reveals that the way courts are organised differs from one office to the other. At some of the offices clients are kept for long time at court while others are not. The social workers feel that magistrates are giving priority to lawyers during children's court days. It is

important for social workers to understand that magistrates and lawyers are their colleagues and they need to work together in the interest of the client system. The researcher is also of the opinion that the high number of cases that are brought to court in one day are faced with the risk of not receiving quality attention hence magistrates end up talking to foster parents and children as groups. Presenting these cases one by one will be time consuming and that will keep children waiting for a long time at court. Some of the social workers have arranged with their children's courts and the study reveals that in those offices court attendance runs smooth.

The guidelines on the management of statutory services in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, Department of Social Development (2013b:30) states that the social worker should notify the court to arrange an interpreter if the clients require the services of an interpreter. According to Lee (2008: 5) the primary role of interpreter is to support and strengthen relationship between the client and the service provider.

The studied foster care files did not provide information on the language that was used in court to communicate to interact with both foster parents and foster children. Most of the foster parents (18) in this study revealed that the language that was used in court was Setswana and they didn't need interpreter. Foster parent # 21 explains "*I speak Setswana so it was easy for me to understand everything that was said in court without interpreter's assistance*". Foster child # 21 said "I understood everything that was said at court because the magistrate was speaking Setswana".

The minority of foster parents (28) revealed that they were helped by the interpreter as the magistrate was communicating with them in English. Foster parent # 23 said "we were assisted by an Indian magistrate who was speaking English but the interpreter was able to explain everything that was said by the magistrate. The foster child # 23 said "*even though there was no interpreter I understood the magistrate since I know English*". Foster parent # 24 said "the magistrate was speaking English and we were helped by an interpreter who speaks Setswana. Foster child # 24 said the interpreter was interpreting what the magistrate was saying in Setswana.

All the social workers confirmed that the court organise the interpreter if the magistrate is not speaking the language that clients will understand. The social worker # 5 indicated that

“my role is to make follow-ups to ensure that there is available interpreter as I don’t want my clients to be frustrated”.

It is the researcher’s view that the language that is used in court is accommodating to both foster parents and foster children. Children’s court hearing should be conducted in the manner that allows all the parties attended to understand and participate in court proceedings. There is no language barriers as the interpreter is always there to help and other magistrates are communicating to foster parents and children with the language they understand.

4.5.7. Phase 07: Application for a Foster Child Grant

De Jager (2011: 70) states that the foster parent is assisted with the foster care grant that will enable him/ her to provide for the child’s needs. According to Morgan (2012: 10), “foster parents receive a fostering allowance for each looked after child in their care. This allowance is based on the age of the child and is reviewed annually”.

All the foster parents in this study revealed that they are receiving the foster care grant. Foster parent # 4 said *“the social worker gave me the orders and I submitted them at SASSA. I waited a long queue at SASSA before I finally managed to get help on the same day and I was told that I will receive the grant the following month. I then went back to the social worker and I told her that I am done at SASSA. The social worker asked me that once the grant is paid I must report to her so that she can assist me with budgeting”.* The foster child # 4 said *“I was at school when my sister went to apply for foster care grant at SASSA. She told me when I come back from school that the grant will be paid the following month, but she will report to the social worker before using the money”.* The social worker # 2 said *“social workers work with foster parents to draw up a budget to ensure that they are able to save as well be able to provide for the foster child”.*

Foster parent # 11 said *“The only challenge I had when I was applying for the grant was that the official at SASSA wanted me to provide certificate of divorce which I don’t have because me and my husband got separated long time ago, he just disappeared, I don’t know where he is and we never initiated the process of divorce. When I explained that to SASSA official, she returned me saying she can’t help me. I went back to the social worker who went with*

me to SASSA and the problem was addressed and I got help. The social worker told me that when the grant paid I must come to his office to draw up a budget". The foster child # 11 said "my grandmother went alone to SASSA to apply for the grant and I went to school because the social worker said I must go to school". The social worker # 5 said "social workers continue to support foster parents in every action that is meant to make the placement a success".

The study reveals from the studied foster care placements that social workers play different roles to assist the foster parents to access the foster child grant at SASSA. The social worker serves as a broker by linking the foster parents with SASSA. They also advocates for the client systems in the events where there is a challenge experienced by foster parents at SASSA. The relevance of ecosystems perspectives is integration of services through referral of client systems to other societal system relevant to provide services that will benefit the client system. Unfortunately the social workers did not record these activities in the client files that were studied.

4.5.8. Phase 08: Foster Care Supervisory Services

The framework for Social Welfare Services (Department of Social Development 2013a: 38) emphasises that monitoring and evaluation must take place throughout process with the foster care beneficiary to determine if the desired outcome is achieved. Mdletshe (2008: 20) discovered that though social workers are expected to render foster care monitoring services after every three months, due to the workload social workers visit foster family systems once in two years when the case has to be re- evaluated in court.

None of the 25 foster care placement files that were studied for this research contained recordings of monitoring and supervision of the foster care placement. Majority of foster parents (17) indicated that they meet with social workers in community meetings, five participants' foster children revealed that they still have contact with the social worker. Two social workers indicated that they are holding foster care groups with both foster parents and foster children.

Toseland and Rivas (2005:12) define group work as a goal- oriented activity, which refers to planned, orderly worker activities carried out in the context of professional practice with

people. The findings from both clinical and empirical literature suggest that social workers should consider recommending group treatment for individuals who have difficulties with interpersonal relationships (Toseland and Rivas, 2005: 19). Lindsay (2013: 94) supports that groups offer learning opportunities as the group members have the opportunity to learn from each other, people who share problems can learn from each other about effective ways of dealing with the situations that arise.

As demonstrated in this study, there are social workers who are meeting with foster parents and foster children in community meetings and are able to make an impact. Both foster parents and foster children benefit from social work empowerment programs through community meetings. The study reveals that other groups are not organised as per schedules due to the dynamics within the department at Bojanala district.

In file # 8 *there is no group work report in the files*. Foster parent # 8 indicated that *“we meet with the social worker once in three months as a community of foster parents. In a year we meet four times with the social worker. Our meetings with social worker as foster parents gives us a platform to voice out our challenges, we also interact and give each other support in terms of how to cope with the challenges that we experience”*. Foster child # 8 indicated that *“the social worker meet with us during school holidays, we meet with her four times in a year during our meetings the social worker gives us opportunity to talk about things that makes us happy at home and those that does not makes us happy, she check our books for those who have home work she organise someone to help with home work after that she motivates us and encourages us to prioritise our studies”*.

File # 6 *does not provide information on monitoring done by the social worker*. *“Foster parents said “we meet with the social worker once in three months. The social worker helps us with advice that helps to go on with caring for the children even though its feels difficult sometimes”*. The foster child # 6 said *“we meet with social worker in the group during school holidays, we meet only once in three months”*. . The social worker # 4 said *“social workers do not have to interfere with the child’s academic syllabus hence they only hold meetings with foster children during school holidays”*. The social worker # 3 said *“It is impossible to meet with foster parents and foster children individually in their respective foster homes due to other responsibilities that social workers are faced with. Group work makes it possible for*

social workers to monitor the placements in large numbers. The challenge still remains with families that need individual attentions as they have never been attended properly”.

File # 7 does not provide information on monitoring done by social workers”. The foster parent # 7 said “I can’t remember how many times we had a meeting with the social worker, because we agree on the date and she postpone due to other work commitment. Sometimes we meet once in six months and at times we meet once in a year”. The foster child # 7 said “since the case was finalised at court me and other children met with the social worker four times. We learn life skills from the social worker, she teaches us to see ourselves as great people in the future”. The social worker # 5 said “the mandate in our department does not always favour our daily activity plans. At times we schedule appointments with foster parents, the very same day when you have to attend the appointments you get the mandate to deviate and attend to other things. This happens more often and that makes clients to lose trust in us”.

The minority of foster parents (eight) have indicated that they had individual contact with social workers. Only three foster children indicated that they had individual contacts with social workers. Most of the social workers (three) revealed that it is difficult to render monitoring supervision services to all foster families. All the studied foster care files do not provide any information about monitoring of foster care placement by social workers.

File # 10 did not provide information in monitoring done by the social worker. The foster parent # 10 said “I saw the social worker three times I had one meeting with the social worker because of the challenges I had with SASSA. The grant was suspended after a year when I went to SASSA they asked me to request copy of court order from the social worker. The social worker provided me with the order and I submitted it to SASSA and the grant was reinstated. The other meeting I had with the social worker in the social worker’s office after she called me to collect information as we had to go back to court. The other contact was when we were going back to court for magistrate to extend payment of foster care grant”. Foster child # 10 said. I had one contact with the social worker when we were going back to court”.

File # 20 does not provide record of the activities performed by social workers to monitor the foster care placement. Foster parents # 20 said “the social worker has never visited us since

we went to court until we had to go back to court, the social worker called me to the office to collect information from me. The second contact was when we were going back to court.

The foster child # 20 stated that *“the social worker has never visited us since we went to court. I saw her again when we were going back to court”*. The social worker # 5 said that *“I only get a chance to meet with foster parents during the time of review. In most instances I discovered that the placement has been faced with challenges that needed my attention. After I have discovered those challenges, I was unable to attend them as I had to work on other cases.*

File # 21 did not provide information on monitoring done by the social worker. The foster parent # 21 said *“I had four contacts with the social worker. The first one was telephonically when the child’s paternal families were giving me challenges. I called her to inform her about my challenge and she promised to organise the meeting in the office which she did and the second time was when we had meetings with the child’s paternal families. The social worker managed to help us resolve our problems. The child’s paternal aunt was trying to influence the child to stay with them without discussing it with me. The third contact was when the social worker called me to her office to collect information as we had to go back to court. The fourth contact was when we were going to court. The foster child # 21 said “I only had one contact with the social worker when we were going to court for the second time”*.

The social worker # 1 said *“in some cases social workers organise group meetings, foster parents do not attend social worker’s group work meetings and in some of the cases social workers do not organise group work meetings with foster parents. We normally advise foster parents to keep contact with social workers once they realise that social workers are not communicating with them. This is because social workers are faced with more responsibilities”*.

The data above clearly indicate that social worker’s individual contact with foster children is minimal. Foster parents mainly maintain contact with social workers through community work programs. The study reveals that in most cases foster parents initiates contact with social workers due to the challenges they come across during the period of foster care placement. Social workers only manage to initiate individual contact with foster parents when they have to review the case.

4.5.8.1. Contact between foster children and their biological parents

The social workers are expected to encourage the foster parents to allow foster children to have contact with their biological parents. The sense of belonging with these parents is good for the child's psychological development (Bungane, 2007: 24). The studied 25 files did not provide information on foster children's contacts with their biological parents.

18 foster children reported that they lost one of their biological parents and they don't know the whereabouts of the remaining parents. Two foster children reported that they are denied opportunity to have contact with their biological fathers by the foster parents

File # 6 *Indication is that the identity of the father to the foster child is unknown to the family.* The foster parent # 6 indicated *"I don't know the father to my foster child; you can ask her as I once heard her telling me that she knows where her father is. I don't know where he (the father) was when I was struggling alone after her mother's death. I never saw him bring some food and even clothes for the child, now that the child grown up he knows that he has a child"*. The foster child # 6 said *"I went out to look for my father since my grandmother was refusing to tell me his name, I asked one of my mother's friends in the village and she is the one who gave me directions to my father and I found him. I introduced myself to him and currently we are having a good relationship I just wanted to know my true identity but my (my grandmother, my aunt and my uncles) is angry with me.* The social worker # 3 said *"foster parents are not telling the truth when they apply for foster care placement. Majority of cases where fathers are reported to be unknown is not the truth. Foster care applicants just need the grant"*.

The file # 12 indicated that *"the whereabouts of the father to the child is unknown to the family"*. The foster parent # 12 indicated that *"ever since this child started to visit his father, he started to be disrespectful to me. I told him that I will never allow him to visit his father again.* Foster child # 12 *my grandmother always refuses when I ask her to give me money to go and see my father.* The social worker # 1 said *"social workers are unable to investigate contacts of children and their father with relatives due to their workload and shortage to transport.*

The file # 23 indicated that *“the whereabouts of the father to the child is unknown to the family. The foster parent # 23 said “the mother of the child came home pregnant, I tried so many times to ask her about the father to the child and she never answered me”. The foster child # 23 said “I never met my father, I was still young when my mother passed away hence I never found opportunity to ask her about my father. The social worker # 5 said “foster parents are just interested in accessing foster care grant hence they don’t tell the truth about the father’s identity and whereabouts.*

The data indicate that foster parents and foster children withhold information about the biological fathers of the foster children before and after foster care placements. Foster parents react differently when foster children request contacts with paternal relatives. When foster children grow up, they take initiative of wanting to have either of their parents in their life, without a proper guidance from a professional social worker who should guide the process of considering the child’s best interest irrespective of the differences. The study reveals that children love their parents. International literature suggests that foster care should not and cannot replace supporting families to care for their own children Keshavarzian and Bunkers (2015: 12). Children in Malawi say... *“No one will love you like your mother, she gave birth to you so you are part of her. A mother will care for you better than anyone else”* (Keshavarzian and Bunkers, 2015: 12).

4.5.8.2. Therapeutic support

According to Morgan (2012: 09) *“Children in Kinship placements have often experienced abuse and neglect and consequently often have emotional and behavioural needs which require therapeutic intervention”.*

All the studied foster care files did not present the report on therapeutic interventions rendered to foster children. All the foster parents and foster children indicated that foster children had never received counselling from the social workers. Foster parent # 16 said *“social workers are not helping us, I have problems about the behaviour my foster child, he is always moody and he is not respecting me, after school he goes out with friends and come back home during the night around 20:h00. I have never seen him doing home work and or studying and we fight over the grant, He once stole a post bank book and withdrawn the money from it. He wants expensive clothes and phones when I tell him that we can’t afford it*

we fight. I reported the child's behaviour several times to the social worker, she (the social worker) promised me that she will come to my family to talk to the child but she never came."

Foster child # 16 said "social workers never helped me, my *grandmother is not treating me the same as other children in the family. She always shout at me, I am always accused when something is missing in the family and my grandmother threaten me with the social worker, when I ask her to buy me clothes she refuse. I don't have proper clothes; I don't know what my grant is used for in the family. There is a time where I asked her to give me money so that I can visit my father to ask for money for clothes, she refused saying the social worker will be angry at her. Social worker is not aware of my problem because she never visited us; I never had contact with social worker since I was placed in foster care"*.

All social workers feel that more social workers are needed to render foster care interventions. The social worker # 2 said "*we need more manpower for social workers to give attention to all the work they need to do. Foster care also needs to be a specialization that will facilitate quality foster care intervention throughout the process. The majority of foster children have lost parent through death. Therapeutic services are needed to help these children deal with the loss. Foster parents also need support, since the majority of them are relatives and even family members to the foster children, they lost children, sisters, brothers, uncles, and parents. Reality is that, social workers are not rendering therapeutic interventions to foster care beneficiaries"*

Brown, Sebba and Luke (2014:19) conducted an international literature review on the roles of the supervising social worker in providing the support and supervision to foster family systems. Emotional support was rated highly, alongside more practical elements. Foster parents appreciated social workers who were reliable and available particularly at times of crisis or stress, for example, around allegations and foster placement disruptions. Level of contact was experienced in the main as indicating interest on behalf of the fostering services. Home visits as well as telephone contact were also valued. Foster carers appreciated support in relation to problematic contact for a foster child with their birth family.

The study reveals that therapeutic intervention is critical to address emotional and behavioural needs to both foster children and foster parents. Foster children are placed in foster care because to abuse, neglect and death of parents. With kinship placements foster parents are also dealing with the loss. Therapeutic interventions are therefore critical to both the foster child and foster parent. Literature revealed that availability of social workers to provide emotional support is highly appreciated by foster parents. The researcher is of the view that emotional support can help to strengthen a working relationship between the social worker, foster children and foster parents.

4.5.8.3. Contribution of social auxiliary workers.

According to the Department of Social Development in the Draft report on school social work model (2014: 12), the description of social auxiliary worker is to assist the work of social service professionals by providing services and counselling support to individuals, families and communities. Social auxiliary workers are registered with SACSSP in terms of section 18 of the Social Service Professions Act 110 of 1978 as amended.

All social workers indicated that social auxiliary workers are assisting with monitoring; however they depend on social workers to transport them to the communities to meet with foster parents and foster children. Eight foster parents and three foster children confirmed that they use to have contacts with social auxiliary workers. In all the studied foster care files, there is no information about the contact between the foster parents, foster children and the social auxiliary workers in monitoring.

Foster parent # 23 confirmed that *“every time we go with the savings books when we have meetings with the social worker, she comes with her assistant who checks our books to see if we are saving as expected.* The foster child # 23 said *“The social auxiliary worker used to talk with us during our meeting with the social worker”*.

Social worker # 4 said *“my social auxiliary worker does not have a car that she can use as transport to the clients; she depends on me to transport her to the communities which also delay service delivery as she can’t visits the clients on her own. She does have driver’s licence but she is not allowed to use a pool car. The role that is played by social auxiliary worker in monitoring is to check if foster parents have opened a savings account for the children and if*

they are saving as expected". Social auxiliary workers also assist to render awareness to the communities about foster care and with information gathering for review of foster care placement. The social worker # 1 indicated that "I work on my own without any assistance like other social workers. The department did not employ enough social auxiliary workers so that each social worker can have an assistant". The social worker # 5 said "not all the social workers are assisted by social auxiliary workers. There is a shortage of social auxiliary workers"

From the data available, it is clear that the social workers included in this study appreciated the assistance of social auxiliary workers but the support is limited due to transportation problems.

4.5.8.4. Review of foster care placement

The social worker, who finalised the children's court proceedings, where applicable, is responsible for the process of the review of court orders after two years, family reunification services, and any movement of the child within or out of the foster care home depending on the client system's steady state and its equilibrium (Department of Social Development, 2013b:33 stipulated in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended). During the review of court order foster care, placement can be extended in terms of section 159, 186, or section 176 of the children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. On the 14th of April 2015, the Social Pension system managed by SASSA released a total of 6 628 foster care placements that has lapsed at Bojanala district. The researcher studied 25 foster files and following are the findings:

Seven foster care placements where placed in 2010 and they were reviewed as required. 10 foster care placements were placed in 2011 and nine of them were reviewed as required while one placement was not reviewed on time hence it was reopened. Eight foster care placements were placed in 2012 and only four of them were reviewed as expected and the other four placements were not reviewed on time hence it lapsed and were reopened.

File # 2 contained extension orders and reports. The report states that the case is extended for two years in terms of section 159 children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended. The foster

parents # 2 said: *"The social worker came to my house, she interviewed me, she asked me about the challenges I had with the foster child and whether I am I still interested in caring for the child. I answered all the questions that were asked by the social worker and I said to her I still want to take care of the child. She then gave me school form to be completed by the school and I submitted it to the social worker after it was completed as the proof that the child is attending school. She then told me that she will write the report and will submit it at court but she said me and the child won't be needed at court. After two weeks the social worker called me and told me that the order is received from court and I should come to apply for the grant at SASSA. I went to the social worker's office, she gave me orders and copy the child's birth certificate, copy of my identity document, death certificates of parents and completed proof of school attendance. She then told me that the grant is now extended for two years. I took all the documents and submitted at SASSA and the grant continued to be paid."*

The foster child # 2 confirmed that *"I only heard my grandmother telling me that she is going to renew the grant at SASSA, the social worker did not inform me"*.

Social worker # 4 indicated that *"during the review of foster care placement, we interview both foster parents and foster children but in the event where we had opportunity to conduct meetings with foster parents and foster children during monitoring it is not necessary to collect information from the scratch with both foster parents and foster children as we know what have been happening with the placement. The only thing that we do is to verify with foster parents, at times we don't even consult the children but we only consult the foster parents. We also need the school form to be completed at school outlining the children's academic progress and the child's behaviour at school. The only challenge that we have with schools is that at times teachers are not disclosing the truth about the child. I discovered this after I realised that one child has been repeating the grade many times while the school reports from school indicated that she was progressing well. When I interviewed the teachers about it, one teacher indicated to me that the as school is afraid that the grant will be cancelled if they that the child is not doing well or if her behaviour is not good at school"*.

File # 5 also contained extension report and extension order, the report indicates that the placement is extended for a five year period. Foster parent #5 said the social worker called me and asked to collect school form from the our community development worker (CDW) and I should get it completed at school and submit it together with the child's birth certificate, death certificates of parents and my identity document. She informed me that we should renew the grant. She asked me about the child's educational progress telephonically and I told her she was doing grade 09. I then submitted the documents as he asked me. After one week we went to court and I was told to go to SASSA to apply for extension of grant with new orders. The social worker told me that I will receive the grant for 5 years.

Foster child # 5 said "the social worker asked my sister to go to court with me and the magistrate told me that my sister is saving money for me so that I can go to university when I finish matric. She encouraged me to study very hard".

Social worker # 1 indicated that "extension of foster care for five years period is aimed at promoting stability in the child's life. When foster parent is cooperative and doing what is expected of her in terms of caring for the child, it means she can continue caring for the child without social worker's monitoring services. We then extend the foster care placement that for five years. This happens when family reunification or adoption as forms of permanent placement are not possible"

Five of the 25 files (five) indicated that the foster care reviews were not done within the two year time limitation. These foster care placements had lapsed and they were reopened. (five) of foster parents confirmed that they were not aware that they have to review their cases. Foster children (five) indicated that their foster care grants were cut at SASSA. File # 10 contained the report of opening and finalisation (form 38) and new court order that was issued again after two years. Foster parent # 10 said "the social worker did not tell me that I have to come to renew the case, the last time I saw the social worker was when we were at court. Foster child # 10 indicated that "I was going to school without a lunch box; my grandmother told me that the grant has been cancelled". Social worker # 5 indicated that "foster parents only need the grant from the Department of Social Development, when social workers call them to the meetings they don't come, when they are called by social workers

to the office they don't come until the placement lapse, when the foster care grant is suspended from SASSA they come to the office.

According to the collected data, one of the contributory factors to high incidence of foster care placements not being reviewed within two year is the insufficient working relationship between foster parents and social workers. It appears from this study that foster parents and social workers only meet sporadically. Professional helping relationship with client system is a foundation of harmonious foster care intervention process, many helping professionals consider it more important than the helping strategies used to address the client system's problems (McClam and Woodside, 2005: 119). Durand (2007:3) emphasizes that training is aimed at assisting foster parents to understand the roles they need to perform to provide their foster children with proper care. Social workers should therefore intensify training to enhance active participation and proper decision making amongst foster parent in foster family systems. This will promote a positive professional working relationship between foster parents and social workers.

4.5.9. After care services and termination of foster care

After care services and termination of foster care phases were not tested as the studied foster care placements were not yet discharged from legal placement. None of the 25 studied foster care placements were terminated.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented and interpreted the collected data. The researcher compared the information from 25 foster care placements files, 25 foster parents, 25 foster children, five social workers and available literature. Data that was obtained provided in- depth understanding of experiences of the participants about foster care. From the research findings, it was clear that foster care service is rendered by social workers to children in accordance to the Children's Act and policy of the Department of Social Development. Only selected few studied foster care placements shows that implementation of the Children's Act during foster care intervention is limited. The following chapter concludes the study to give the clear picture of the main findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the conclusion of the main findings that emerged in the research. The chapter then presents the research recommendations that developed out of the research study based on capacity building, theory, policy, practice and future research. The findings and recommendations are discussed based on the following objectives of the study:

- To evaluate the quality of social work intervention process in foster placement.
- To evaluate the views of foster parents and foster children regarding the quality of social worker's intervention in foster care placement
- To recommend strategies to improve the quality social work intervention process in foster care placement.

5.2 Findings and recommendations.

Consistent with the approach of this study, the study was not aimed to form generalization from findings. It is set out to explore and describe social work intervention in foster care placement. From this study social work intervention in foster care placement can be described as a process in which social workers follow different phases, utilizes techniques, skills, theories of human behaviour and social systems while supported by legislative mandates to serve the child. Services that are offered through social work intervention are child centred. Following themes is the discussions of the main findings and suggested recommendations:

5.2.1. Phase 01: Preparatory phase

According to the Government Capacity Building Support Program, Department of Social Development (2016: 11), this phase has to be initiated long before a child is in need of care and protection, and before a prospective foster parent is requested to perform this role. Social workers should include this as part of their operational plans and annual planning process.

5.2.1.1. Recruitment and Screening of prospective foster parents

In terms of ecosystems perspectives, the concept of reciprocity carries the idea that if one part of the system changes, that change interacts with all other parts (Payne, 2005: 145). It is therefore the researcher's view that if the child's wellbeing is compromised, the after effects will affect everyone around them for example, family members, friends and the community at large. Ecological perspectives to foster care placement gives everyone in the community responsibility to protect the child as a way of protecting the community.

Prospective foster parents apply to be foster parents at the Department of Social Development. Social workers complete screening of all the foster care applicants to determine their suitability. According to section 126 (1) of the children's act no 38 of 2005 as amended, before any person can be appointed as a foster parent, screening must be done to establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the child protection register. In London to identify a suitable foster family assessment of non- kinship carers are carried out according to the format provided by the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 7). All relevant checks are carried out and references taken up. A report is prepared outlining the suitability of the prospective carers to carry out the tasks of fostering (The London Borough of Barnet fostering service, 2015: 7).

This study revealed that the implementation of section 126 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 was lacking in the majority of the studied foster care placements. Most (22) of the studied foster care files did not contain screening report from the child protection register. The majority (22) of foster parents attested that they never applied to check if their names appear in the Part B of the child protection register. Three social workers indicated that they never screened foster parents against the child protection register. Some (two) of social workers attested that feedback from the child protection register can be time consuming as it takes long time to reach the social worker and the foster parents who will be tasked by the social worker to make the enquiry. All the social workers who participated in this study also indicated that children were found cared for by their foster parents, hence they were not screened against Part B of the child protection register.

The general finding in this regard is that, the decision of recommending the foster parent is based on the fact that the person has been living with the child. De Jager (2011:65) states that the reason kinship carers do not go through the same assessment as non-relative family foster carers is that the child might already be living with the kinship carer. The researcher is of a different view based on the fact that it seems like the decision of recommending foster parents is based on the assumption that if the person has been living with the child then is suitable. The researcher's opinion is that the kinship family is not immune to social challenges that might interfere with the normal functioning of each family system. Bungane (2007: 1) had discovered that many foster care placements are characterized by problems such as dysfunctional relationships between foster children and foster parents.

The study recommends that:

- The prospective foster parent to be properly assessed to ensure that they are fit and proper in terms of section 182(2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.
- The social workers to ensure the screening of foster parents against part B of the child protection register in terms of section 126 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, before their legal appointment as a foster parent. All prospective foster parents should be screened irrespective of related or non related foster placement

5.2.1.2 Training of foster parents

According to Durand (2007: 41), "training of foster parents is a very practical form of support system for foster parents that can provide them with information and skills in order to ensure that they are able to cope with the issues that might arise in any given foster placement. It helps foster parents to use the skills they develop through trainings to meet the needs of the child as well as improve placement stability". In Australia, foster care applicants are required to undertake an initial training program before being approved as foster parents (McHugh, 2013: 15).

Unavailability of training of foster parents is identified as a gap in this study. Social worker's concern in this study is shortage of manpower and foster care training manuals to be used in the training of foster parents. In London, in terms of the Fostering service statement of

purpose (The London Borough of fostering service, 2013: 08) “a training manual is provided to all new carers, which includes essential information and policies, procedures and guidelines for foster parents. Barnet Children’s service has a Children’s Workforce Development Team that commissions training courses for staff including foster parents”.

The study recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development to consider formulation of a formal foster care training program that will be aimed at equipping foster parents with necessary skills to care for their foster children.
- The social workers have to build a support system through partnering with other governmental and non-governmental organizations to ensure that proper training is offered to foster care applicants.

5.2.2. Phase 02: Intake phase

In terms of Social Welfare Services Framework (Department of Social Development, 2013a: 06), the social worker who is assisting the foster care applicants at the reception stage should perform the following activities; conducting intake interview, administer referral where applicable, complete intake form and process note, capture and file intake forms and process notes. Reamer (2005: 325) indicates that comprehensive recording of the client system’s information is necessary as it does not only support quality service delivery to the individuals but it is also a basis for collaboration and coordination of services. In terms of foster care placement client system is a child as he/she is the primary beneficiary. Foster care applicants form part of the action system as they work with social workers to help the child (Compton and Galaway 2005: 38).

The findings from the studied foster care placements revealed that social workers had interview sessions with foster care applicants during intake process as indicated by all the foster parents. The study has identified a gap on the establishment of a professional working relationship with the foster care applicants during initial stage is one element that came out strongly in this study. It came out that not all the foster parents in this study have experienced a good working relationship with social workers during intake phase. 15 of the 25 foster parents indicated that they have a good working relationship with the social

workers. Foster parent # 20 said *“I nearly gave up because of the way social worker spoke to me when I was applying for foster care. She was very much aggressive to me when I told her that I don’t know the father of my grandchild saying I am not telling her the truth”*. This is a judgemental attitude towards the foster care applicants. It also indicates that the social worker’s judgemental attitude can cause the applicants of foster care to give-up the social workers intervention. Foster parents indicated that the social workers were judgemental towards them. McClam and Woodside (2005: 119) support that professional helping relationship with client system is a foundation of foster care intervention process, many helping professionals consider it more important than the helping strategies used to address the client’s problems. The researcher is with the view that a good professional working relationship with the foster care applicants can serve the child’s best interest in terms of section 7 of the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005 as amended. It can promote applicant’s commitment to positive contribution in ensuring that the child is properly helped.

In studying the foster care files, several recordings of the activities performed by the social workers were lacking in most of the files. Only 12 files had intake forms which were fully completed, eight files had no records of intake phase and five files had intakes that were not fully completed. None of the 25 files included process notes. Twenty percent (20%) of participating social workers attested that it is due to high influx of clients to the intake office in a day that social workers are unable to complete recordings as expected, some intake documents got lost and had to be recompiled.

The researcher therefore recommends that:

- Social workers to consider what is in the best interest of the child when they work with foster parents/ prospective foster parents.
- Social workers to consider professional helping relationship as the core of practice throughout social work intervention process in foster care placements.
- Social workers to be none judgemental at all times when they work with client system.

- The Department of Social Development should manage high influx of the client system at intake offices to ensure that social workers perform to the best of their ability that will be more beneficial to the client system.
- Record management systems to be developed to ensure that the confidential information of foster care beneficiaries is well protected.

5.2.3 Phase 03: Assessment phase

The primary goal of assessment with reference to systems theory is the identification of life stressors that have caused or contributed to maltreatment and the strength that can be building upon to ensure that equilibrium is reached in the child's life prevent its recurrence. Another goal of assessment is to recognize specific needs of the child and to provide a basis for planning ways in which these needs can be met. All these are done to ensure that there is a proper adaptation between the child and their ecological environment. Systems theory to foster care placement acknowledges that systems interact with each other in the more complex ways, exploring this through holistic assessment helps to understand how individual children interact with other people in their families, communities and in wider society.

A multi-disciplinary team is part of action systems as it works with the social worker depending on the presenting problem. The team may perform a holistic assessment of a child's environmental paradigm in order to determine phenomena that may risk the well-being of the child. If a multi-disciplinary team is utilised, each professional should undertake a specialist assessment or contribute specialist knowledge or advice to the social worker who is the case manager. Various organizations and professional groups in America (child welfare league of America; American Academy of child and adolescent psychiatry; American Academy of Paediatrics) endorsed the concept that children entering foster care should be assessed for physical, developmental and mental health problems so that appropriate interventions can begin early for the child's adaptation (Grayson, 2012:3).

According to section 182(2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, prospective foster parents must be properly assessed by designated social worker to ensure that they are fit and proper persons to be entrusted with the foster care of the children. The Social

Welfare services Framework (Department of Social Development 2013a: 38) emphasises that during the assessment phase the social worker should schedule appointments if not yet done, conduct assessments by applying different techniques e.g. standardized tests, drawings, interviews, compile assessment report, in order to identify need for service and recommend plan of action for specific intervention.

The research has discovered from the studied foster care placements that all the social workers applied an interview as a technique to gather information. All the foster parents (100%) indicated that they had interviews with social workers. The study further revealed that not all the foster children from the studied foster care placement have participated in the assessment process. Seven of 25 foster children attested that that they never had interviews with social workers. The study also revealed that from all the studied foster care placements social worker were unable to conduct assessments the best way they wanted. One of the five social workers indicated that social workers are expected to place as many foster care placements as possible. In studying of the 25 foster care files no assessment reports were found in the files. Some of social workers (one) revealed that before 2013 social workers had no assessment tools they could use for assessment purposes.

The study further revealed that during assessment social workers limit their investigations to office interviews with foster parents and foster children. Few of the foster parents (five) indicated that they were not happy about that the social worker interviewed them in front of their colleagues. All the social workers indicated that in the Department of Social Development they are faced with challenges of an office space. Only few social workers have subsidised vehicles that enable to pay home visits and other social workers are unable to conduct home visits due to lack of transport and other social worker's do not have driver's licence. This indicates that the environment is not enabling social workers to conduct quality assessment.

The researcher recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development to consider driver's licence as a requirement in appointment of social workers.

- The Department of Social Development to establish a foster care multidisciplinary team that will contribute to holistic assessment and intervention processes. Various organizations and professional groups in America (child welfare league of America; American Academy of child and adolescent psychiatry; American Academy of Paediatrics) endorsed the concept that children entering foster care should be assessed for physical, developmental and mental health problems so that appropriate interventions can begin early (Grayson, 2012:3).
- The Department of Social Development to device the means to speed up the application of subsidized vehicles done by social workers for social workers to extend their investigations as required.
- The Department of Social Development to provide social workers with conducive office space to enable social workers to interview clients systems in confidentiality.
- Social workers to implement a generic norms and standard assessment tool when assessing new foster care applications.

5.2.4. Phase 04: Statutory phase

Statutory intervention is a legislative process that designated social worker initiates by bringing a matter before a presiding officer to determine whether a child is in need of care or not. Following presentation expose activities that are performed by social workers during investigation phase:

5.2.5. Phase 05: Investigating phase

5.2.5.1 Advertisement to trace unknown parents

According to Regulation 56(1) and (2) (c) and (d) pertaining the Children's Act no 38 of 2005, if there are allegations that the child has been abandoned; the social worker must place advertisements in the local news paper to verify the allegations. The study revealed that regulation 56 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended was not implemented in all the studied foster care placements. In the 25 studied foster care placements the whereabouts of 17 fathers of foster children were alleged to be unknown. The social workers who participated in this study attested that the Department of Social Development did not

allocate budget to be used to trace biological parents of foster children through media advertisement. The study also suggest that advertisement cannot be relied on as it is only limited to the local newspapers as required by the Children's Act no 38 of 2005.

The researcher recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development to allocate a budget that will help in the implementation of all the sections in the Children's Act.
- The Children's Act no 38 of 2005 to be reviewed to allow for national advertisement to trace biological parents in the media.
- Foster parents and foster children to do an affidavit at police station that the whereabouts of the parents are not known.

5.2.5.2 Professional report writing

The Department of Social Development (2013b:31) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, states that during the court preparation phase the social workers are expected to investigate and write a professional report that will guide the court in making decisions about the best interest of the child. The report should reflect the client system's situation and should comply with conditions in regulation 55 in terms of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005. From all the studied foster care files, it is discovered that social workers use regulated form 38 as a guiding tool to ensure that they compile the reports that comply with regulation 55 pertaining the Children's Act 38 of 2005.

The study revealed that before the report was send to court, contents of the reports were discussed with all the foster parents than foster children. Social workers reported there is a misconception that foster children are not mature enough to participate in any matter that concerns them when they are under the age of 10 years. The Children's Act no 38 of 2005 does not indicate specific age that the child should be considered matured to participate. It is the researcher's view that it might not be easy for the Children's Act to be clear about maturity age as children's development differs from one child to the other.

According to section 155 (2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the placement process should be finalised within 90 days. This study revealed that section 155(2) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 was never implemented to the majority of studied foster care placements. 21 of the 25 foster parents and foster children confirmed that it took long time for their foster care application to be finalised. Only four of five foster parents and foster children confirmed that they did not wait for too long for their application to be finalised. In studying 25 foster care placements it is discovered 14 placements were finalised after six months and seven placements were finalised after two years.

All the social workers who participated in this study linked the delay in processing the foster care cases to their workload. Four of five social workers who participated in this study attested that it is required from social workers to perform a wide variety of duties and come with a high workload. Social workers render crisis interventions and also have a target for awareness campaigns; supervises auxiliary social workers and also expected to provide support in coordination of the program. These demonstrate a synergy that exists between the ecological environment from which social workers are practicing foster care and the delay in processing foster care cases.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social workers to continue using regulated form 38 to ensure that they comply with regulation 55 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005.
- Social workers to use their expert knowledge during assessment to determine the maturity of the child to participate in terms of section 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005.
- The Department of Social Development to increase the manpower through employment of more social workers.
- The workload ratio per social worker to be defined and be implemented.
- The SACSSP to commit to the development of foster care as a speciality within the social work profession.

5.2.5.3. Supervision

The Supervision framework for the social work profession in South Africa, (Department of Social Development 2012: 18) defines Social Work Supervision as an interactional process with a harmonious relationship between the supervisor and supervisee based on theories, models and perspectives on supervision whereby the supervisor is responsible for guiding the supervisees by performing educational supportive and administrative functions to ensure compliance with social work theory, standardized knowledge, skills, competency and applicable ethical content in the practice setting for quality service delivery.

This study revealed that supervision that is received by social workers who are rendering foster care intervention is minimal. All social workers who participated in this study confirmed that there are no appointed supervisors, supervision functions are performed by program coordinators. Each coordinator supervises about two to three social workers and social workers are supervising social auxiliary workers. They further indicated that coordinators have the responsibilities of ensuring that the program activities are performed as expected. In all the studied foster care files, reports were signed by supervisors.

The researcher recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development to employ supervisors who will be specializing in supervision.

5.2.5.4. Recommending the right placement for the child in terms of section 46 read with section 156 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended.

According to section 184 (1) (a) (b) of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended, the court must consider a report by designated social worker about the cultural and linguistic background of the child and the availability of the suitable person with similar background to that of the child who is willing and able to provide foster care to the child. This study revealed that section 184 was implemented in all the studied foster care placements. All of 25 studied foster care placements were kinship foster care placements. Marc et.al (2008: 1) recognised that kinship care helps to maintain family system's relationships and cultural ties while providing children with the opportunity for permanency, safety, wellbeing and stability.

The researcher recommends that:

- Even if a kinship placement is done, the same regulations must be implemented and all kinship placements cannot be regarded as suitable.
- Social workers to continue with the implementation of section 184 of the Children's Act no 38 of 2005 to provide the best foster care placement to children.

5.2.5.5. Considering the likely effect of any change in the circumstances of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others.

The Department of Social Development (2013b:32) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, states that the social worker should also consider the likely effect of any change in the circumstance of the child, including the likely effect of any separation from siblings or significant others when preparing for foster placement. The Child Welfare Information Gateway (2013:4) emphasise that sibling relationships are emotionally powerful and critically importance not only in the childhood but over the course of a lifetime as children siblings form a child's first peer group and they typically spend more time with each other than with anyone else. This study revealed that placing siblings together in foster care is the best option. Two of the 25 foster children confirmed that they are assisted by their elder siblings to do their home work and motivate them to do the best in what they do.

This study confirmed that social workers prefer not to separate siblings during foster care placements. The study further revealed that placement of siblings is done either by placing a foster child with his elder sibling as foster parent, or by placing siblings together as foster children to an elder person in the family system that is willing to care for them. The study revealed that placement of foster children in foster care of their elder siblings happen in the events where there is no one in the family who is willing to assist to provide foster care to the child young siblings. The study revealed that the challenges that are faced with siblings who are foster parents to their younger siblings are that it is not easy for them to discipline their younger siblings. One of the foster parents attested her two siblings (foster children) are very challenging as they are teenagers. She indicated that it is through the support she received from the social worker that she is managing to handle them.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social workers should assist in the strengthening of the support system of foster parents to benefit siblings foster care placements. Social workers should link the foster families with other societal systems such as community based organizations such as Home Community Cases Cares (HCBCs), Faith Based Organization (FBOs), Traditional structures.
- Placements of siblings together in foster care placement to be considered as the best option by social workers.

5.2.5.6. Considering educational needs of the child and the likely effect of change in schools

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 32) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, when the child is placed in foster care, the social worker should ensure that the child's educational needs are met and the effects of changing the child's school should be considered. In terms of ecological theory people are influenced and can influence the environment they found themselves in. Changing of schools means the child will learn to adapt to the new school environment which will affect the child's educational stability. The study revealed that there were valid reasons for the children to change schools. One of 25 foster children from the studied foster care placements attested that his family were relocating to the new place hence he changed the school.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social workers should continue to advocate for stability in foster children's education.

5.2.6 Phase 06: Finalization of Children's Court hearing

5.2.6.1 Court Preparation

According to the Department of Social Development (2013b: 30) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, court preparation is the process of preparing children and/or their families for appearance

at court. The social worker should address fear and anxiety children and their caregivers by rendering the required professional intervention. It is also beneficial to prepare the child's carer so as to allow them to react to the child's anxieties and fears, particularly throughout the period prior to the hearing.

The study revealed that social workers do not keep complete records of all the activities they performed to prepare foster parents and foster children for court appearance. None of the studied 25 files had any proof on how the foster parents and foster children were prepared for court. All foster parents demonstrated that they were prepared for court appearance but it was not recorded in the files. The foster children revealed that they were told by the foster parents that they will be attending court. All the social workers who participated in this study revealed that foster parents are prepared from the beginning that they should attend court.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social worker should keep complete records of all the activities they perform with client systems.
- Court preparation to be a continuous process from the beginning to the day of court appearance.
- All the preparation processes be recorded for evaluation purposes. The recording of the court preparation processes will help the Department to identify the gaps in the used methods.

5.2.6.2 Court appearance

The study revealed that all the foster children and foster parents who participated in this study attended Children's Court hearing.

All the studied foster care files had court orders. Section 10 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 recognises children's rights to participate in any matter concerning them and to have their views given due consideration. This implies that implementation of the section was done in all the studied foster care placements. The study revealed that the way court are organised at Bojanala district differs from one office to the other. At some of the offices clients are

kept for long time at court while others are not. One of 25 foster parents attested that there were many people and they stayed for the long time at court, children started to cry as they were hungry. Two of the 25 of foster parents indicated that they did not stay for the long time at court. One of the five social workers who participated in this study attested that magistrates are giving priority to lawyers during children's court days.

The guidelines on the management of statutory services in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005, Department of Social Development (2013b:30) states that the social worker should make the court aware prior to court hearing for the arrangement an interpreter when the need arise. The study reveals that social workers from the studied foster care placements are doing well to ensure smooth communication with clients at court. Only seven of foster parents and foster children revealed that they were helped by the interpreter as the magistrate was speaking English. 17 of the foster parents and foster children in this study revealed that the language that was used in court was Setswana and they didn't need interpreter. All the social workers confirmed that the court is responsible for organising the interpreter, once the social worker made court aware of the need for interpreter's service. The study recommends that:

- Social workers need to acknowledge the needs of client systems and to establish a harmonious relationship with other stakeholders. They should advocate for the client systems to ensure that court is user friendly for the clients.
- Social workers should maintain a harmonious working relationship with children's court for the interest of foster care beneficiaries.

5.2.7. Phase 07: Application for foster child grant.

De Jager (2011: 70) states that since the foster caregiver has the responsibility to maintain and care for the child, the foster caregiver will have access to any relevant grant, should he/she not be able to afford the child's maintenance. The study revealed that through foster care placements, foster children are able to benefit from foster care grant that is meant to cater for their basic needs. The studied foster care placements indicated that social workers ensure that foster parents access the grant from SASSA. All the foster parents in this study revealed that the social workers assisted them to apply for the grant at SASSA.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social workers must ensure that foster children are accessing the grant that caters for their basic needs.

5.2.8. Phase 08: Foster care supervisory services.

It is discovered from all the studied foster care placements that social workers render monitoring and supervision services through community and individual contacts with clients. The social workers arrange meetings with all foster parents. 15 of foster parents attested that they meet with social workers in community meetings on quarterly basis. The general finding from the study is that many foster parents are maintaining contacts with the social workers and only few foster children maintain contact with social workers on quarterly basis. The study further discovered that both foster parents and foster children benefit from strong support system through community meetings with social workers.

The study revealed that there is a challenge of recording during monitoring and supervision of foster care placements. In all the studied foster care files there were no records of monitoring and supervision services provided by the social workers. Some of social workers who participated in this study indicated that the Department of Social Development should develop monitoring tool that should be used by social workers to monitor foster care placements.

The researcher recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development needs to develop a monitoring tool that will be used by social workers to monitor foster care placements.
- Life skills and empowerment programs should be made available to foster children and foster parents through both group work and community work. It is the researcher's view that group work and community work can enable social workers to respond to small number of foster family systems that needs individual attention as more families can be addressed simultaneously in groups.

5.2.8.1. Contact between foster children and their biological parent

The study revealed that from the studied foster care placements, foster children do not have contact with their biological parents. According to Bungane (2007:24), the social workers are expected to encourage the foster parents to allow foster children to have contact with their biological parents.

The researcher recommends that:

- Social workers should encourage the foster parents to allow foster children to have a well arranged contact with their biological parents through with the social worker's support. They must educate foster parents about the benefit of the child and parent relationship to the child.

5.2.8.2 Therapeutic support

Morgan (2012: 09) states that Children in Kinship placements have often experienced abuse and neglect and consequently often have emotional and behavioural needs which require therapeutic intervention.

The study reveals that therapeutic intervention is critical to address emotional and behavioural needs to both foster children and foster parents. Foster children in this study are placed in foster care because of death of parents and abandonment. With kinship placements foster parents are also dealing with the loss. Therapeutic interventions are therefore critical to both the foster child and foster parent. Literature revealed that availability of social workers to provide emotional support is highly appreciated by foster parents. The researcher is of the view that emotional support system can help to strengthen a harmonious working relationship between the social worker, foster children and foster parents. Social workers in this study outlined shortage of social workers as hindering factor to therapeutic services.

The study recommends that:

- The social workers should attend to therapeutically needs of foster parents and children or refer them to other professionals for therapeutic interventions. Payne (2005:146) support that working with others is an advantage of systems theory as it

emphasise how working indirectly with other networks permit influence on the client system.

5.2.8.3. Contribution of social auxiliary workers.

From the data available, it is clear that the social workers included in this study appreciated the assistance of social auxiliary workers but the support is limited due to transportation problems of auxiliary social workers. All social workers indicated that social auxiliary workers assist with monitoring, awareness campaigns and also assist during the review of foster care placements; however they depend on social workers to transport them to the communities to meet with foster parents and foster children. The study further revealed there is a shortage of social auxiliary workers.

The researcher recommends that:

- The Department of Social Development should increase manpower through the employment of more, social workers, supervisors and social auxiliary workers who will assist in the field of foster care.
- The Department of Social Development should make transport available to social auxiliary workers to ensure that they perform their responsibilities without depending on social workers.

5.2.8.4. Review of foster care placements

The review of foster care placement allows the worker to assess an output on the services rendered to the client system. The social worker, who finalised the children's court proceedings, where applicable, is responsible for the process of the review of court orders after two years, family reunification services, and any movement of the child within or out of the foster care home (Department of Social Development, 2013b:33) in the Information guide on the management of statutory services in terms of Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended.

The study revealed that not all foster care placements are reviewed as required by the Children's Act no 38 of 2005. All the social workers in this study attested that most of the foster parents only need the grant from the Department of Social Development, they don't

attend foster parents meetings and when they are called by social workers to the office they don't come until the placement lapse, when the foster care grant is suspended from SASSA they come to the office. This implies that some of the foster parents do not have a good working relationship with social workers.

The researcher recommends that:

- The social worker, who finalised the children's court proceedings, where applicable, should be responsible for the process of the review of court orders after two years, family reunification services, and any movement of the child within or out of the foster care home.
- The researcher's view is that clearly identified roles and responsibilities will facilitate self determination amongst foster parents and this will address the problem of lapsing cases as each person is willing to work.
- Social workers should also facilitate establishment of a harmonious professional helping relationship (rapport) with foster parents and children at the initial stage and maintain up to termination stage to ensure the smooth running of the intervention process.

5.2.8.5. Suggested recommendations for future research

- Feasibility study to be conducted by the Department of Social Development to identify all the resources needed to ensure that quality foster care service is rendered to the beneficiaries.
- A research study on services provided to foster children who are exiting foster care system should be conducted.
- A research study which compares South African foster care practice model with other international foster care models should be conducted.

5.3. Conclusion

Evidence from this study shows that social worker's intervention in foster care placement has not yet reached the desired quality. Though social workers engage in the process of assisting foster care beneficiaries, many gaps have been identified through this study. Record management came out as a major challenge throughout the process of foster care interventions. With reference to ecosystems perspectives, social workers appeared not to be taking advantage of the theory. The study revealed that social workers work alone when conducting assessment, assessment is only conducted with foster care applicants and children which cannot be trusted to provide holistic information on the child's circumstances according to the researcher's opinion. With ecosystems perspectives social workers have an opportunity to explore their creativity to ensure that foster care beneficiaries enjoy quality services. Foster care is a statutory service and it is rendered through the legislative guidelines. The Children's Act no 38 of 2005 as amended is guiding the legal processes in foster care interventions. It is discovered from the studied foster care placements that several sections in the act were not fully implemented. Social workers have never been able to implement the following sections: section 126 (1) dictates that before a person is allowed to work with or have access to children at an institution providing welfare services to children including a child and youth care centre, partial care, a shelter or drop in centre or school, the person managing or operating the institution, centre, facility, shelter or school must establish whether or not that person's name appears in Part B of the register.

In terms of regulation 56 pertaining the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, if it appears to a designated social worker that a child has been abandoned or orphaned, whether for the purpose of determining if such child is in need of care and protection or if such child can be made available for adoption or foster care placement, the social worker must place an advertisement in at least one local newspaper circulating in the area where the child has been found calling upon any person to claim responsibility for the child. Section 155(2) dictates that social worker must investigate the matter and within 90 days compile a report in the prescribed manner on whether the child is in need of care and protection.

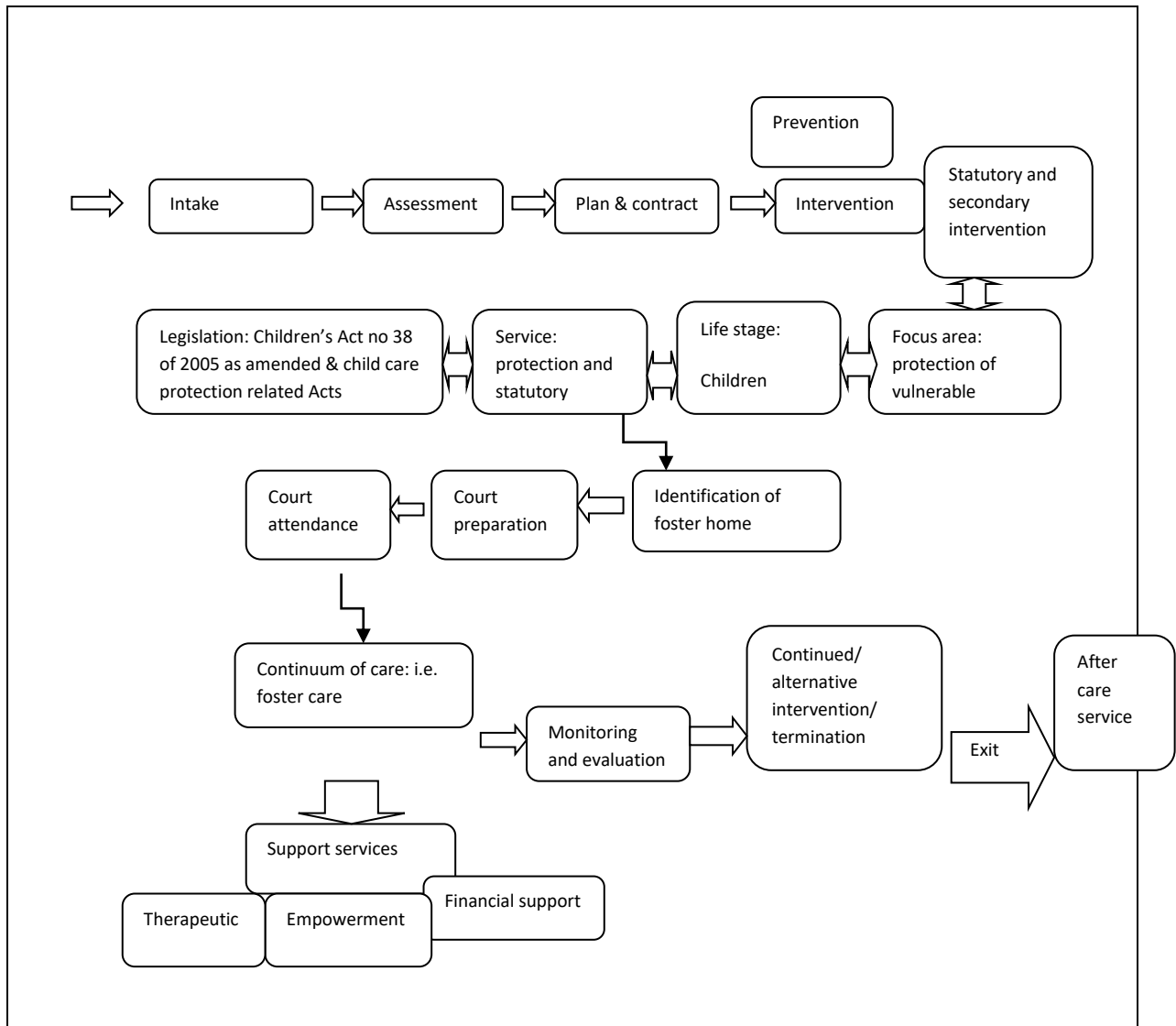
Hindering factors to quality social workers intervention in foster care placement as expressed by the participants' social workers include high workload, and shortage of

resources and office space. High workload contributed to the delay in finalization of foster care applications and monitoring of foster care placements. Shortage of resources such as transport and budget limit social worker's assessment and investigations. Insufficient office space compromises confidentiality to the client's information. There is a need for the Department of Social Development to be responsive to all the challenges to ensure the effectiveness of the services provided to beneficiaries through foster care intervention. The study also identified gaps on the Children's Act which calls for amendment of the Act. The regulation 56 that address advertisement to trace unknown parents is only limited to the local news papers where the child has been found calling upon any person to claim responsibility for the child. Standardized foster care monitoring tools is not yet available to help the social workers during monitoring of foster care homes.

5.4 Revised foster care intervention model.

To improve social workers interventions in foster care placement, the researcher propose implementation the following revised foster care model.

Figure 02: Revised foster care intervention model



The model shows that the social worker sees the client for the first time during intake process. After the intake process, the case is subjected to social workers assessment process for the purpose of understanding the child's ecological environment holistically. During assessment the social worker must engage the practitioners from other disciplines such as medical practitioners, psychologists and educators to also contribute their knowledge to the assessment report. Detailed assessment report to be compiled by the social worker and the

report to be discussed with the client system where the intervention plan and contract between the social worker and the client is drawn.

Foster care intervention process starts after holistic assessment of the child's ecological environment is complete and if the social worker has proven without reasonable doubt that the child is in need of care and protection in terms of the Children's Act 38 of 2005. The social worker should identify a suitable prospective home and parents where the child can be placed. Screening of the prospective foster family and parents should be performed which includes screening against child protection register. Holistic assessment with the prospective foster family should be done. The social worker must also engage practitioners from other disciplines to contribute their knowledge to the screening reports. Any identified challenges within the family should be addressed before foster care of the child is finalized. If the family is not ready to commit towards addressing the identified challenge, the child cannot be placed in foster care of such family.

With kinship placement, the approach would be slightly different especially if the child is already living with the prospective foster family. The social worker should however communicate the effects that the identified challenges may have to the child and make the family aware of the importance of addressing those challenges through social work interventions. If the family is not determined to commit to the process of dealing with the identified challenges, a social worker as an expert knows what is in the child's best interest and she must play a leading role in protecting the child from any circumstances that might harm his/her wellbeing. Hence removal of the child to the new foster family is possible. But all this must be communicated to the family by the professional social worker.

When the social worker is convinced that the family is ready to be trusted with foster care of the child, she must compile a report to prepare for court hearing. Before the report can be submitted to court, the social must discuss the report with the clients. When both the social worker and the clients are aware of the contents of the reports, the social worker arranges for court hearing. The social worker must ensure that the clients including the child appear in court. When the court is satisfied with the social workers report and approved the foster care placement of the child with the identified family. The social worker should continue to offer support services to the foster family which include ensuring that there is a

proper financial support, therapeutic and empowerment programs where applicable. Monitoring and evaluation process to be continuously done to detect the success of the intervention and if there is a need to continue with the service or change of intervention or termination of intervention. Implementation of this model can only be possible when the above recommendations can be taken into consideration.

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ANNEXURE A: SCHEDULE TO COLLECT DATA FROM 25 FILES.

(I) SCHEDULE FOR 25 FILES

CASE NO: _____

General information

1. Date the case is reported: _____

DD

MM

YY

2. Source of report

a. Child	
b. Caregiver	
c. Relative	
d. Parent	
e. Sibling	
f. Neighbour/Friends	
g. School staff	
h. Medical professional	
i. Police	
j. Other (e.g. NGO, CBO) specify.....	

PART A: PROCEDURAL INTERVENTION

1= Poor (below expectation)

2= Average (satisfactory with minor improvement)

3= Good (satisfactory)

Rating (tick)

	1	2	3	Recommendations
Adherence to correct procedures and processes:				
1. Intake process followed				
2. Initial assessment of the child/ren and family done (holistic).				
3. Plan of Action which stipulates the results of assessment as well as goals, activities and time frames.				
4. Consultations:				
a. Office interviews				
b. Home visits including visits to school, workplace, clinic etc				
c. Other forms of contact (Telephone, e-mail, fax, sms etc				
5. Pre statutory services (assessment (risk assessment done for abused or neglected child), information gathering, placements of advertisements for abandoned children, CPR clearance, screening with part B child protection register, family preservation services, report writing to court, request for services from other				

professionals.				
6. Court preparation for the child and the family (social worker’s report about cultural, religious, and linguistic background of the child and suitable person counter signed by supervisor)				
7. Attendance of court proceedings by the child, family and social worker				
8. Child participation considered.				
9. The child/ren placed with the person who matches the family of origin, if not reasons is provided.				
10. Foster care Supervision report done after every six months of placement				

PART B: Therapeutic intervention

	1	2	3	Recommendations
1. Holistic assessment of the child (Developmental assessment report)				
2. Case conference (case discussions with Social Worker discipline)				
3. Extension of foster placement after two years when family reunification or termination of placement was not found as best option				

PART C: Case Management

	1	2	3	Recommendation
1. Compliance with legislation				
2. Supervision/consultation				
2.1. Administrative supervision				
2.2. Supportive supervision				
2.3. Educational supervision				
2.4. Supervision notes				

PART D: Administration

The following is clearly identifiable on the cover of each file: File number, the provincial Department of Social Development office or designated child protection organisation responsible for the management of the case, file volume for large files (for example volume 1 or 2), a 'subject' field- This field may include the name(s) and surname(s) of the child (ren), date of birth and address, status of the file (active, pending, closed).				
1. Record – keeping	1	2	3	Recommendations
1.1. Intake form available and fully completed				

1.2. Completed process notes form of all contacts with clients				
1.3. Assessment report				
1.4. Supervision reports				
1.5. Documentation: relevant life documents available (copies of ID, birth certificates of foster children, death certificates of deceased parents, marriage certificates, medical report and proof of school attendance				
1.6. Official statutory documentation				
1.6.1. Court order/s				
1.6.2. Extension order/s				
1.6.3. Administrative orders				
1.6.4. Children's court report				
1.6.5. Affidavits				
1.7. Filing: Documents organised and filed properly (filing from the back of the file with most recent documents at the top.				

Remarks and recommendations

ANNEXURE B: INTERVIEW WITH SOCIAL WORKERS

1. What is your qualification?
2. What is the role of the social worker during their first engagement with foster care clients?
4. What techniques do social workers use to obtain comprehensive information for assessment purpose?
6. How do social workers facilitate the process of screening against part B of the child protection register?
7. How do social workers investigate allegations of unknown parents?
8. How do social workers deal with sibling foster placement?
9. How long does it take for social workers to finalize foster care applications at court?
10. Do social workers receive enough supervision during foster care intervention?
11. How do social workers prepare foster parents and foster children for court attendance?
12. Which language does it used in court?
13. What social workers do to ensure that foster care clients receives the grant at SASSA?
14. How do social workers monitor foster care placements?
15. How do social workers arrange for contact of foster children and their biological parents?
16. How social workers prepare for review of foster care placement?
17. What challenges do social workers encounter during foster care intervention process?
18. What can be done to improve or address challenged experienced in foster care intervention?

ANNEXURE C: INTERVIEW WITH FOSTER PARENTS

1. Where did you go to apply to foster care?
2. How would you comment about the help you received when you were applying for foster care?
3. How did the social worker obtain information that she used to compile report?
4. How did the social worker prepare you for court appearance?
5. Which language was used in court?
6. How often do you see the social worker?
7. How do you work with the social worker during foster care review?
8. What can be done to better or improve the situation of foster care placement?

ANNEXURE D: INTERVIEW WITH FOSTER CHILDREN

1. How old are you?
2. Where do you attend school?
3. When was the first time you saw the social worker?
4. Have you ever attended children's court?
5. Do you still remember what happened at court?
6. Which language was used at court?
7. How often do you see the social worker?
8. What do you normally talk about?

Do you have contact with any of your parents?

DIPOTSO TSA SETSWANA LE BAGOLO BA TLHOKOMETSENG BANA BA E SENG BA BONA KA TAELO YA KGOTLA TSHEKELO YA BANA KA TSELA YA FOSTER CARE.

1. O dirile kae kopo ya foster care?
2. O bone thuso ya ntseng jang ka nako e neng o dira kopa ya foster care O bone thuso morago ga sebaka se se kanakang o dirile kopo?
3. Modiredi loago o go thusitse go go baakanyetsa go tlhagelela kwa kgotlatshekelo?
4. Ke loleme le feng le le neng le diragadiwa kwa kgotlatshekelo?
5. Le tsere sebaka se se kana kang kwa kgotlatshekelo?
6. O bona modiredi loago morago ga sebaka se se kana kang?
7. O dirisana jang le Modiredi loago ka nako ya foster care review?
8. Ke eng se se ka diriwang go tokafatsa seemo sa thuso ya badiredi loago go thusa bana ba ba tlhokang foster care?

DIPOTSO TSA SETSWANA LE BANA BABA TLHOKOMETSWENG KE BAGOLO BA E SENG BA BONA KA TAELO YA KGOTLATSHEKELO KA TSELA YA FOSTER CARE.

1. O na le dingwaga tse kae?
2. O moithuti wa ko sekolong se feng?
3. O simolotse go bona leng Modiredi loago?
4. Le tsere sebaka se se kana kang kwa kgotla tshekelo?
5. O bona Modiredi loago morago ka nako e kana kang?
6. Modiredi loago o thusa jang go netefatsa kgolagano ya gago le bagolo?

ANNEXURE E: CONSENT FORM FOR SOCIAL WORKERS.



Social Work Subject Group

Tel: +27 18 389- 2350

Fax: +0866886126

Date: 25 August 2014

CONSENT FORM

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Informed Consent

Research title: Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at
Bojanala District, North West Province.

Principal researcher: Mr Keoagile Abel Mmolokoe

Department: Department of Social Work, North West University

Contact number: 0726948070

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this research project.

- Your involvement in this study is voluntarily, you may withdraw from the study at any time but your participation will be highly appreciated as it is very valuable.
- The researcher will treat the information as confidential. You will not be identified in any document including the interview transcripts and research report by name, or by any information. You will be referred to in documents under code name.
- The interviews will be tape recorded but you have a choice to agree to be recorded or not. Recording will help me to keep a record of everything you say. If you agree that I can record the interview, your name will not be mentioned on the tape recorder.

- We appreciate your willingness to be involved in this research project.

I understand the contents of this document and agree to participate in this research

Signature

Date

Witness

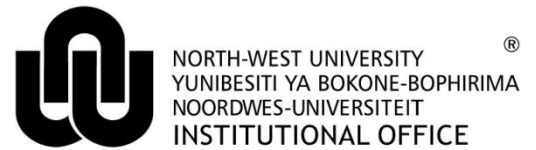
Date

Do you give me permission to record the interview? YES / NO

Signature

Witness

ANNEXURE F: CONSENT FORM FOR FOSTER CHILDREN.



Social Work Subject Group

Tel: +27 18 389- 2350

Fax: +0866886126

Date: 25 August 2014

FOROMO YA TUMALANO

Go: Mme/ Rre

RE: Tumalano

Setlhogo sa porojeke: Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at
Bojanala District, North West Province.

Mmatlisisi Mogolo: Mr Keoagile Abel Mmolokoe

Lefapha: Lefapha la Tirelo Loago, University ya Bokone Bophirima.

Nomoro ya mogala: 0726948070

Re lebogela gore o be o re file tetla ya go dira le ngwana mo porojekeng ena.

- Tlhaloganyana gore ngwana o tsaya karolo ka go ithaopa, o ka emisa go tsaya karolo ka nako efe kgotsa efe. Mme tlhaloganyana gore go botlhokwa gore a tseye karolo ka seo se tla tliša boleng jo bo seng kanaka sepe mo porojekeng.
- Mmatlisisi o tla tlhokomela gore tshedimosetso e ngwana a tla fanang ka yone e bolokesebile sentle. Leina la ngwana ga le tle go tlhagisiwa mo tokomaneng efe kapa efe ya porojeke. Ngwana o tla tlhagisiwa ka mokgwa wa khoutu
- Go tla dirisiwa rekoto go gatisa dipuisano, mme ngwana o na le tshwanelo ya go dumalana kgotsa go gana gore puisano e gatisiwe. Go gatisiwa ga dipuisano go tla thusa mmatlisisi gore a seke a latlhegelwa ke dintlha tsotlhe tsa puisano. Leina la ngwana ga le tle go gatisiwa mo rekotong.
- Re itumelela gore o be o letleletse ngwana gore a tseye karolo mo porojekeng ena ya dipatlisiso.

Ke tlhologanya diteng tsa tokomane ena, mme ke dumela gore ngwana a tsaye karolo mo prorojekeng ena.

Mosaeno

Letlha

Paki

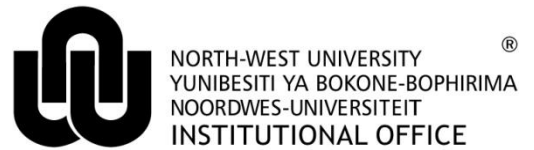
Letlha

A wa re letlelela go gatisa pusano ya rona? EYA / NNYAYA

Mosaeno

Paki

ANNEXURE G: CONSENT FORM FOR FOSTER PARENTS.



Social Work Subject Group

Tel: +27 18 389- 2350

Fax: +0866886126

Date: 25 August 2014

FOROMO YA TUMALANO

Go: Mme/ Rre

RE: Tumalano

Setlhogo sa porojeke: Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at
Bojanala District, North West Province.

Mmatlisisi Mogolo: Mr Keoagile Abel Mmolokoe

Lefapha: Lefapha la Tirelo Loago, University ya Bokone Bophirima.

Nomoro ya mogala: 0726948070

Re lebogela gore o be o bontshitse kgatlhego go tsaya karolo mo porojekeng ena.

- Tlhaloganya gore o tsaya karolo ka go ithaopa, o ka emisa go tsaya karolo ka nako efe kgotsa efe. Mme tlhaloganya gore go botlhokwa gore o tseye karolo ka seo se tla tlisa boleng jo bo seng kanaka sepe mo porojekeng.
- Mmatlisisi o tlile go tlhokomela gore tshedimosetso e o tla fanang ka yone e bolokesegile sentle. Leina la gago ga le tle go tlhagisiwa mo tokomaneng efe kapa efe ya porojeke. O tla tlhagisiwa ka mokgwa wa khoutu
- Go tla dirisiwa rekoto go gatisa dipuisano, mme o na le tshwanelo ya go dumalana kgotsa go gana gore puisano ya gago e gatisiwe. Go gatisiwa ga dipuisano go tla thusa mmatlisisi gore a seke a latlhegelwa ke dintlha tsotlhe tsa puisano. Leina la gago ga le tle go gatisiwa mo rekotong.
- Re itumelela go tsaya karolo ga gago mo porojekeng ena ya dipatlisiso.

Ke tihaloganya diteng tsa tokomane ena, mme ke dumela go tsaya karolo mo prorojekeng ena.

Mosaeno

Letlha

Paki

Letlha

A wa re letlelela go gatisa pusano ya rona? EYA / NNYAYA

Mosaeno

Paki



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900
Faks: (018) 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Ethics Committee
Tel +27 18 299 4849
Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

The North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-RERC grants its permission that provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at Bojanala District North West Province	
Project Leader:	Dr M de Chavonnes Vrugt
Student:	KA Mmolokoe
Ethics number:	N W U - 0 0 1 2 1 - 1 4 - A 9 <small>Institution Project Number Year Status Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation</small>
Approval date: 2014-06-18	Expiry date: 2019-06-17

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

<p>General conditions:</p> <p>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-RERC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project. The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the NWU-RERC. Would there be deviated from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited. The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-RERC and new approval received before or on the expiry date. In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-RERC retains the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project; withdraw or postpone approval if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected, it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-RERC or that information has been false or misrepresented, the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately, new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

The Ethics Committee would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Committee for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Linda du Plessis

Digitally signed by Linda du Plessis
DN: cn=Linda du Plessis, o=NWU,
Vaal Triangle Campus, ou=Vice-
Rector: Academic,
email=linda.duplessis@nwu.ac.za,
c=US
Date: 2014.12.05 07:54:26 +0200

Prof Linda du Plessis
Chair NWU Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (RERC)

ANNEXURE H: ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

ANNEXURE I: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE BOPHIRIWA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Social Work, Subject Group

Tel +27 18 389-2350

Fax +0866886126

Email 13271709@nwu.ac.za

Date 23 June 2014

For attention: The Head Of Department
Department of Social Development
North West Provincial Office

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for the permission to conduct research in the Bojanala District.

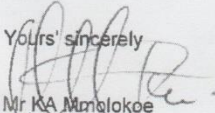
I Mr K A Mmolokoe, a registered Masters student at North West University (Mafikeng Campus). Also a full-time social worker working for the Department of Social Development in Bojanala District based in Moses Kotane Service Point (Mogwase Office). I hereby apply to be granted permission to conduct research in the Department in Bojanala District. The topic of the research is the "Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at Bojanala District of the North West Province".

The request has been communicated with the Bojanala Acting District Manager who advised us to forward the request to the office of HOD for approval.

Find the attached letter as request from research supervisor.

Hope you will find this in order

Yours' sincerely


Mr KA Mmolokoe

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE BOPHIRIW
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
MAFIKENG CAMPUS

Social Work Subject Group

Tel +27 18 369-2350

Fax +0866886126

Email 13271709@nwu.ac.za

Date 23 June 2014

For attention: The Head Of Department
Department of Social Development
North West Provincial Office

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for the permission to conduct research in the Bojanala District.

Hereby I would like to confirm that Mr K A Mmolokoe, is a registered Masters student at North West University (Mafikeng Campus). He is also a full-time social worker working for the Department of Social Development in Bojanala District, based in Moses Kotane Service Point (Mogwase Office). The topic of the research is the "Evaluation of social work intervention in foster care placement at Bojanala District of the North West Province"

The research proposal for his study has been approved by the Higher Degrees Committee of the Human and Social Science Committee of the University. This proposal included a commitment that the research will meet ethical requirements and that no person will be harmed or personal information disclosed.

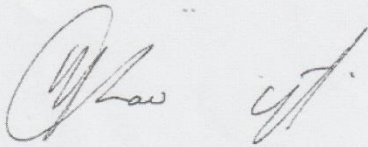
Your support will be highly appreciated in the following planned execution of the research:

- 1) A case study of 25 foster care files and interviews with the responsible, experienced social workers, foster parents and foster children between the ages of 12 and 18.
- 2) Five files from each service point will be examined as the district operates with five service points which are: Rustenburg, Moses Kotane, Madibeng, Kgetleng and Moretele service points.
- 3) The files must be of cases that were placed under the Children's Act from April 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Should the permission be granted, each service point will be requested to assist with availing the relevant files for random selection, the proposed dates for both survey and interviews is from the 7th to the 12th of July 2014.

Your response can be communicated to Mr Mmolokoe at 0726948070, 0788014715 or (014) 5557761, email: kmmolokoe@nwpg.gov.za, fax: (014) 555 6118

You are welcome to contact me for more detail
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. de Chavonnes Vrugt', written in a cursive style.

Of. Mariette de Chavonnes Vrugt
(Supervisor)

ANNEXURE J: APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



social development

Department:
Social Development
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

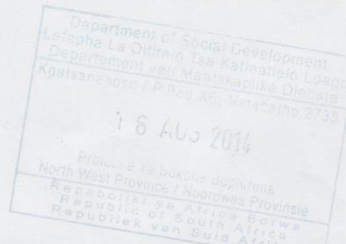


Private Bag X 2147
Mahikeng, 2745
Imperial Reserve
MAHIKENG

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Tel: +27 (18) 388 2867
Fax: +27 (86) 691 8369
E-mail: pmathe@nwpg.gov.za

Mr Mmolokoe
North West Univesrity
Mmabatho
2735



Dear Sir

Subject : Request For the Permission to conduct research in the Bojanala District

Your correspondence dated 04th November 2013 on the above subject is hereby acknowledged with thanks.

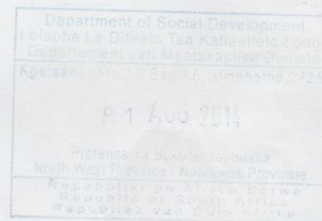
Kindly note that your request to conduct research within the organisation has been approved by the Acting Head of Department and you can proceed with your research immediately. The relevant office will be informed accordingly.

For further enquires please do not hesitate to contact Mr Leteane or Mathe at 018 388 2867/1660.

Wishing you all the best in your endeavour.

Thank you,

Solomon Leteane
Acting Director: HCM



Lefapha la Tlhabololo ya Loago ♦ Department van Maatskaplike Ontwikkeling

