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Contents of a transformative developmental social work curriculum

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ABSTRACT

South Africa is recognized as the most unequal society in the world. In the National Development Plan 2030 in 2012 the South African government has called on social workers to participate in transformation by addressing inequality. A pursuit of social justice highlights the need for a social work curriculum that is transformative in nature and cultivates an anti-colonial Global South approach. Transformative developmental social work based on social development theory is a modality of choice when it comes to practicing social work in Global South countries. It empowers social workers to contribute to social justice in societies that are plagued by inequality. Although South Africa has incorporated developmental social work into its social welfare policies, a knowledge gap still exists that hampers social workers in bridging the gap between theoretical training and practicing in Global South countries. It is, therefore, necessary for South Africa to develop social development training, and practice which answers to its own socio-political, cultural, and economic environment. To reach this objective, a curriculum is crucial in which social justice, human rights, and equality are pursued. The aim of the study was to develop a curriculum for undergraduate social work training in transformative developmental social work to enable social workers to contribute to social justice. A multi-method and multi-phased study approach were used for the purpose of curriculum and programme development. In phase one, a scoping review was done about current social development teaching in the Global South. During phase two, a quantitative cross-sectional study with newly graduated social workers was done. They completed the Social Justice Scales of Torres-Harding et al. Phase three was a qualitative descriptive study with young South Africans that were used to describe their experience of social justice in South Africa. These phases were used to gather information to guide the process of curriculum development. Curriculum contents were then verified using the Delphi Technique by social work teaching experts. The research study produced a curriculum for transformative developmental social work training for undergraduate social work students.

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1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to develop a curriculum for undergraduate social work training in transformative developmental social work to enable social workers to contribute to social justice.

Transformative developmental social work happens when social development theory, knowledge, skills and values like social rights and social justice are used in social work processes with the purpose to enhance the well-being of the entire ecology of the client and thus facilitate a process of external intervention in the lives and context of clients to emancipate and empower clients and make changes in social structures (Guo, 2012, p. 57; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012, p. 695). This is viewed as the chosen indigenous form of social work practice that to address poverty and underdevelopment within communities, as a method of intervention in the Global South (Gray et al., 2018, p. 975).

Social work curricula in South Africa, however, are characterized by Global North influences. These do not always resonate with an African-centered model of practicing social work (Mathebane & Sekudu, 2018, pp. 1–19). Mogorosi and Thabede (2018, pp. 1–2) states that countries should structure their social work education to deal with its unique conditions, cultures, social justice, and political realities. Developmental social work based on social development theory is a social work modality of choice when practicing social work in Global South countries, it empowers social workers to contribute to social justice in marginalized communities. Based on this, it should reflect prominently in the undergraduate social work curriculum (Gray et al., 2017, pp. 624–625).

Social justice refers to the concepts of economic justice, public participation, and social cohesion (Fominaya & Cox, 2013). The responsibility for fighting for social justice is part of the scope of practice for social workers (Segal et al., 2007). Social workers must challenge social injustice, pursue social change, promote sensitivity about diversity, improve access to resources, fight for the equality of opportunities, and enhance meaningful participation for all people. Pursuing social justice and contributing to the restructuring of unequal societies are entwined throughout all social work policy and service domains (Bent-Goodley & Hopps, 2017).

Social workers do not only need a set of skills equipping them to implement these important principles, but it also implies a cultural competence, a knowledge base embedded in and informed by indigenous knowledge systems, realities, and wisdom and a practice rooted in an anti-oppressive system (Gray et al., 2018, pp. 624–625).

This study attempted to construct a curriculum for undergraduate social work students which, when integrated into social work teaching can equip them accordingly.

2. Contextualization and problem

South Africa is recognized as the most unequal society in the world (Govender, 2016, pp. 244–246; National Development Plan 2030). To rectify this, the South African government commissioned the National Development Plan: 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2011) to address specifically exclusion, poverty, and inequality. The plan calls on social workers in partnership with Government to embark upon a focused participation in transformation, to reduce poverty, and

to address inequality in the country (National Planning Commission, 2011). It is, therefore, implied that social workers must become part of the pursuit of social justice in South Africa.

The National Development Plan 2030 (2012, p. 467) further states that a society focusing on achieving social justice could only do so by addressing and reducing poverty, broadening opportunities for all, the use of talents and assets of all South Africans, and by facilitating a national consciousness that supports the goal of social justice for all (National Development Plan 2030, 2012, p. 465). This resonates with the definition, mission, and responsibilities of social workers and explains where social workers could contribute to realize the changes the National Development Plan 2030 (2012) envisions by promoting a fight for social justice. The White Paper on Social Welfare (Department of Welfare, 1997) confirms the need for the transformation of social services from a remedial approach and recommends a move to a developmental social work approach to reach these objectives. Developmental social work remains the most appropriate tool for social workers to pursue social justice (Lombard & Twikirize, 2014).

Social workers should engage in this developmental social work approach by developing plans to target structural inequality and disadvantages to empower clients and build capacity in their lives (Gray et al., 2017, pp. 624–625). Developmental social work can be understood as the practice of applying social development knowledge, skills and values to existing social work processes with the purpose of enhancing the well-being of all bodies and structures in the ecology of the client (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012). A transformative developmental approach implies intervention in communities, where communities are ‘a place’ and ‘a people’. The development and transformation of these communities, political activism, resource and capacity development, and rebuilding communities (Fairfax, 2017, pp. 70–76). This is where social justice and transformative developmental social work meet each other, as the principles of social justice and the nature of transformative developmental social work overlap. in the global South. Patel and Hochfeld (2012, p. 700) suggest that appropriate social work education is key in driving the direction of social work as a profession in South Africa toward the transformation that is needed for the widespread practice of developmental social work and the indigenization of social work practice in the country.

Although South Africa has significantly worked developmental social work into its policies, a gap still exists in the practice of developmental social work (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012, p. 699). Social workers highlight the chasm between theoretical training and social work practice (Gray et al., 2017). This knowledge gap manifests especially when enabling young social workers to bridge the gap between theoretical training anchored in the Global North and practice realities in the Global South (Patel & Hochfeld, 2012, p. 699). Mogorosi and Thabede (2018, pp. 12–14) identified an urgent need for South Africa to develop social theory, training, and practice which answers to its own socio-political, cultural, and economic environment.

To establish a transformative mind-set in undergraduate social work students, the purpose of this study was to synthesize a curriculum for enabling students to understand own and practice from a position of commitment to pursuing social justice, equality, and human rights, so they are empowered to practice of transformative developmental social work.

3. Aims and objectives of the study

It is critical for universities to amend their programmes to enhance the capacity of social workers in order to address macro inequalities and social justice in South Africa (Kaseke, 2017, pp. 474–477). This study contributes, therefore, by providing a proposed curriculum for transformative developmental social work training.

The overarching aim of this study:

- To write a curriculum to be used in the transformative developmental social work training of undergraduate social work students.

In support of the aim, the following objectives were relevant to the research study:

Objectives of this study:

- To conduct a scoping review of available literature on transformative developmental social work training and practices in the Global South.
- To determine quantitatively the values, attitudes, and behaviors of newly qualified social workers in pursuit of social justice.
- To describe qualitatively the nature of social justice challenges faced by South African contemporary youth.
- To have the synthesized proposed curriculum content evaluated by social work experts.

4. Research methodology

Data were collected in the first three phases of the research study. In a fourth phase, it was structured according to a curriculum design approach, as described by Thomas et al. (2016) to develop a curriculum for transformative developmental social work training in South Africa. In the fifth phase, the developed curriculum was evaluated by a group of social work teaching experts.

Phase one focused on a scoping review of studies highlighting developmental social work training in the Global South. The researcher made use of a scoping review methodology to identify the best available studies to answer the research question (Uman, 2011, pp. 57–59). During the scoping review, a rigorous process of transparency was adopted to make sure the search strategy can be repeated and to promote the reliability of the study. It entails summarizing, clarifying, and integrating existing knowledge of a variety of research findings (Levac et al., 2010). The researcher made use of the five-step scoping review methodology, as explained in by Arksey and O'Malley (2005).

Phase two is entailed using a quantitative study with a cross-sectional study design (Rubin & Babbie, 2009, pp. 41–44) as information was collected from various newly qualified social workers at a specific point in time. To collect this information participants completed an online standardized psychometric scale to determine the values, attitudes, and behaviors of newly qualified social workers. The extent to which their training equipped them to promote social justice was evaluated. Descriptive studies are typically conducted by making use of a large-scale questionnaire completed by a representative sample of a target community. The questionnaire comprised the Scale

for Social Justice (SJS) by Torres-Harding et al. (2012, pp. 77–88), as this scale quantifies the nature and extent of the values, attitudes, and behavior of participants toward pursuing social justice (Torres-Harding et al., 2012, pp. 77–88). Belluigi (2015, pp. 15–17) suggests electronic psychometric scales as a reliable means to evaluate student perceptions.

4.1 Participants

An invitation to participate in the study was advertised to social workers in the Facebook group ‘Facing Social Work’. This group contains a collection of South African social workers who share and discuss the profession on the forum. The invitation invited social workers who have qualified between 2019 and 2021 to participate in the study. The social workers had to voluntarily respond to this advertisement to participate. Once clicking on the link provided participants were requested to read and sign the informed consent form. Once the informed consent form was submitted electronically participants could access and complete the psychometric scale.

Availability sampling was used as the researcher made use of a sample of the population of newly qualified social workers because it was accessible, and available on the said Facebook group but not all newly qualified social workers belong to this Facebook group (Creswell & Plano Clarke, 2011, pp. 72–74). A gatekeeper was not needed as it was an automated electronic process and no identifying particulars were requested from participants.

A cross-sectional design where information is gathered from a variety of individuals at a specific point in time should have a suggested minimum amount of 64 participants (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010, pp. 362–363). In this study, we 108 participants completed the scales. Facebook was used due to South African legislation preventing institutions from sharing contact details of groups with external parties and the inaccessibility of the South African Council for Social Service Professions to act as gatekeeper to share the research request with possible participants.

4.2 Research ethics

Ethical permission for this study was obtained from the North West University Health Research Ethical Committee. An assessment of risk was done to determine possible harm weighed against the benefits of participating in this study (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012, p. 58; Wiles, 2012, pp. 58–60). The study was classified as low risk. The online psychometric scale was completed voluntarily and anonymously and in the privacy of the social worker’s own environment. No identifying details (including the name of the university) were used during the data collection procedure. Every participant completed an informed consent form before participating. The e-mail address of the researcher was provided to answer any additional questions from the participants. Participants were notified that they could withdraw their participation or data at any stage should they wish to do so. Completing the Social Justice Scales may have instilled a sense of introspection, which indirectly stimulated the social workers to rethink their roles in the advancement of social justice. After collection, all data

were stored in password-protected files. Only the researchers have access to the data (Miles et al., 2014, p. 65).

Phase three focused on a qualitative study that made use of an online questionnaire containing open-ended descriptive questions. This kind of research has greatly contributed to the understanding of our social and political world (Brown & Hale, 2014, pp. 108–109). Questionnaires involve a written collection of the behavior, beliefs, or opinions of the target group (Brown & Hale, 2014, p. 111). This questionnaire was developed by the researcher and used to gather descriptive data on the way South Africans experience social justice realities at this point in time. It contains qualitative open-ended questions related to the four principles of social justice. A qualitative descriptive design was used to produce rich descriptions of the subjective experience of social justice in South Africa (Marlow, 2010, p. 32).

4.3 Participants

Participants representative of all genders and cultures were shown an advertisement requesting participation on three South African Facebook groups. These Facebook Groups were ‘Political Debate Mzansi’, ‘Azanian Political Forum’ and ‘South African Youth Business Unity’. Participants had to voluntarily click on the advertisement to access an informed consent form before participating. Sample size in qualitative research focuses on flexibility and depth (Padgett, 2008, pp. 56–57) rather than on size. The researcher repeated the advertisement in the groups until at least 50 participants responded. This number of participants exceeded the requirements for a representative sample in qualitative research (Fortune et al., 2010, p. 282). The researcher pursued quality and depth in the answers provided to the questions posed in the questionnaire.

4.4 Research ethics

Possible participants might have uncertainties of what the study entailed. This was dealt with by describing what was requested of them in detail in the advertisement that was posted on the Facebook groups and repeated in the informed consent letter. Participants could direct questions directly at the researcher. The completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and done anonymously. Participants were also made aware that they can withdraw at any time.

Phase four was used to incorporate the results obtained in phases 1–3 to develop a curriculum for social development teaching in social work training. During this phase, the researcher used the six-step approach to curriculum development, as described by Thomas et al. (2016, pp. 5–121). The steps are described in [section 5](#).

Phase five, The Delphi technique was used to gather the opinion of social work teaching experts to refine and review the curriculum designed in phase 4.

The Delphi technique is a structured and repetitive method, which is conducted in a multi-stage process. This type of study is often used to obtain input from a group of experts in social work education (Diamond et al., 2014, pp. 401–402). The Delphi technique repeats the response-analysis-feedback-response pattern until the views of participants reach consensus (the pattern is repeated, and each stage builds on the previous one) (Du Plessis, 2006, pp. 187–188). This phase of the study was done

qualitatively by asking open-ended questions to the participants but also contained a quantitative evaluation of the content (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010, p. 312).

4.5 Participants

The Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) was requested to circulate a request to participate its members with a PhD degree or higher. All prospective participants are social work lecturers at South African universities. These social work teaching experts were accessed through availability sampling by requesting their voluntary. Eight social work educators participated in this phase of the study; all the participants were lecturers at a variety of South African universities.

Social work academics employed at universities was the ideal target group for phase 5. 'Experts' in the context of the study could be defined as specialists in the field who have expert knowledge about the subjects under discussion (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010, p. 390). Keeny et al. (2010, pp. 10–15) define experts as a group of individuals who are specialists in a designated field and have experience in it.

4.6 Research ethics

The anonymity of participants and their affiliated institutions was guaranteed. All of the opinions shared by the experts were done anonymously via an online form. Participants were able to withdraw at any time during the process. The saved data is password protected, and only the researchers have access to it. Participating in the study may have been stimulating and enlightening to the experts. There were no significant risks involved (De Meyrick, 2003, pp. 8–9).

5. Curriculum development process and results

The curriculum was developed by making use of the steps suggested by Thomas et al. (2016). The process followed in each step is described below and results are presented in table format.

5.1 Step one: problem identification and needs assessment

Problems were identified and critically analyzed, by asking key questions as recommended by Thomas et al. (2016, pp. 11–28). The answers to these questions were derived from data collected in the first three phases of data collection. The problem identification process required the analysis of the current approach to the problem followed by the identification of an ideal approach. The difference between the ideal approach and current approach results in a general needs assessment.

This problem identification process follows by asking the questions below.

What is the problem with social development teaching and practice in South Africa?

Social work training has an Eurocentric past and is still affected by Eurocentric thinking, which does not resonate with an African-centered model of social work

practice (Arnold, 2014, pp. 185–189; Mogorosi & Thabede, 2018; Xweso et al., 2020). An Eurocentric approach renders the practice of social work ineffective and irrelevant in many South African communities (Mathebane & Sekudu, 2018). It is recommended that Global South countries should structure social work education so that unique conditions, cultures, and political realities are addressed (Mogorosi & Thabede, 2018). Consequently, institutions of higher education in the Global South are experiencing increasing pressure to change, shape, and contextualize social work training, according to the socio-political and historical context of Global South countries (Arnold, 2014, pp. 185–189; Mogorosi & Thabede, 2018; Xweso et al., 2020). Internationally, developmental social work is now recognized as the modality of choice to be used in Global South countries to address the identified problem. Consequently, South African universities have been engaging in attempts to reform their curricula accordingly (Arnold, 2014, p. 195; Gray et al., 2017, pp. 624–625). Although South Africa and the Global South have made significant progress, social work still has a long way to go before social work training is contextually relevant (Liddell & Lass, 2019; Patel & Hochfeld, 2012; Xweso et al., 2020).

Who are affected by the problem?

It affects social workers who practice in South African communities and the effectiveness of service delivery to marginalized clients. It also impairs the relevance of the contribution of social work to the restructuring of the South African society.

Question three: what does the problem affect?

It affects the transformation of South African social work in a developmental paradigm, and it affects the ability of social workers to contribute to the pursuit of social justice.

5.2 Step two: targeted needs assessment as seen below in Table 1

Guided by Thomas et al. (2016, pp. 13–14), the researcher used the data obtained in the first three phases of the research process to determine a current and ideal situation in each instance. These instances were recorded in columns one and two. The researcher then identified what needed to happen to move the curriculum from the current situation (column 1) to an ideal approach (column 2). This resulted in a targeted needs assessment as portrayed in column 3 (Thomas et al., 2016, pp. 12–29).

In Table 1 the current situation, ideal situation and the resultant targeted needs are shown (Thomas et al., 2016, p. 29).

5.3 Step three: setting goals and objectives for the curriculum

The goals and objectives of the proposed curriculum were then based on the targeted needs of social work students as identified in step two (column 3). For every need, a goal or objective to satisfy the need was set. These objectives can be seen in Table 2, column 1.

Table 1. The identified needs of social work students.

Problems of newly qualified social workers in practice as derived from data (Current situation)	Ideal situation according to data	Resultant targeted needs of newly qualified social workers
Students are not allocated to effective practical field placements to practice developmental social work.	All students are allocated to effective practical field placements to experience developmental social work practice.	Students need experience and to be prepared for practice realities.
The quality of developmental student field placements is poor, due to large casework loads.	Field placements prioritise developmental work and casework as equally important.	Students need to receive quality practical training in developmental social work.
Agency supervisors who practice developmental social work are not social workers.	Students are supervised by supervisors who are trained in developmental social work.	Students need quality developmental social work supervision.
A lack of conceptual clarity regarding developmental social work.	Students understand the concepts of developmental social work and are fluent in its application.	Students need effective conceptual and theoretical training in developmental social work.
The demonstration of transformative developmental social work in remedial contexts are difficult.	Students know how to practice transformative developmental social work in remedial contexts.	Students need to be confident in the practice of transformative developmental social work in all contexts.
Students feel inadequately prepared when practicing developmental social work.	Students are confident and well versed in developmental social work practice.	Students need confidence in their ability to practice developmental social work
Students lack a awareness of social security policies as tools to be used by social workers.	Students are aware of contextually relevant social security policies, and how to use them in practice.	Students need training in social security policies, and how to use them as tools in practice.
Training programmes are not embedded in the socioeconomic and political realities of society.	Social work training is grounded in the socioeconomic and political realities societies.	Students need to understand the socioeconomic and political realities of their clients.
Students are not adequately trained in and committed to a human rights-based framework.	Students are trained how to practice from a human rights-cased framework.	Students must learn to view all client systems through a human rights lens.
Students are not adequately trained in the economic history and development planning of the country.	Students are well trained in the economic history and development planning of the context they practice in.	Students need to be trained in the economic history and development planning of the country in which they practice.
Students are not well informed in the policy successes and failures of their country.	Students are well informed of policy successes and failures of the country.	Students need to be informed of policy successes and failures of their country.
Students lack critical thinking and self-reflective capacity skills.	Students know how to use their critical and self-reflective skills.	Critical thinking and self-reflective capacity skills need in every module of training.
Students are not skilled to empower individuals and groups, to actively participate in their own development.	Students are skilled in empowering clients to actively participate in their own growth and development.	Students need to be competent at empowering groups and individuals
Students do not use developmental social work effectively, because of unclear guidelines and no foundation laid in training.	Students make use of developmental social work effectively, due to clear guidelines and a firm foundation laid in training.	Students need a firm foundation in developmental social work and clear guidelines on how to implement developmental social work.
Students are apprehensive about engaging with communities.	Students eagerly engage with communities.	Students need to have the correct human-rights based attitude toward communities
Students believe that communities are unable to change.	Social work training inspires students to believe in the ability of individuals, groups, and communities to grow and change.	Students need to be inspired by clients and communities, and their ability to grow and change.
Students harbour negative thoughts and feelings towards community-based work.	Students are inspired and excited about the prospect of doing community-based work.	Students need social work training in community-based transformative work

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Problems of newly qualified social workers in practice as derived from data (Current situation)	Ideal situation according to data	Resultant targeted needs of newly qualified social workers
Students find it hard to work strengths-based, because of preconceived ideas they harbour.	Students can work strength-based in all client systems and boast a non-judgemental and non-biased attitude.	Students need to confront and solve their own preconceptions and biases towards clients during training.
Students find it hard to relinquish power in developmental social work and allow the community to make decisions.	Students can partner with communities as equals and allow communities to make their own decisions.	Students need to be taught how to manage power relationships with clients.
Students are not familiar with processes of planned social change to psychosocial wellness in conjunction with economic development.	Students are familiar with processes of planning social change and can promote wellness in conjunction with economic development.	Students need to learn how to implement planned social change processes and they need to be able to promote psychosocial well-being in conjunction with economic development.
Students are not trained in non-discriminatory models, interventions, and forging appropriate partnerships.	Students are comfortable with non-discriminatory models and can implement appropriate interventions and forge partnerships in all client systems.	Students must be confronted with non-discriminatory models in all their modules during training to enable them to partner with all clients.
Students do not link a commitment to social work to socioeconomic justice and human dignity.	Students realise that socioeconomic justice and human dignity are intrinsic to each other/transformative developmental social work.	Students need to be taught practice transformative development from a socioeconomic justice and human dignity approach.
Students are not informed in how to pursue institutional and policy changes and enable infrastructure development.	Students know how to manage institutional, policy change, and infrastructure development projects.	Students need to know how to influence policy and infrastructure development.
Students are not confident enough to engage in policy advocacy and practice.	Students are confident, in policy advocacy.	Students need to be trained and gain practical experience in policy design and advocacy processes.
Students lack training in analysing communities, social planning, and organizing communities to participate in social action.	Students easily analyse communities, write social change plans, and organize social action in communities.	Students need to be taught community analyses, how to write social plans based on and how to organize effective social action.
Students often do not understand the interrelatedness between social and economic aspects in the lives of clients.	Students understand the interrelatedness between social and economic aspects of clients' lives.	In all modules social work students must be stimulated to interrogate the interrelatedness between the social and economic factors in the clients' lives.
Students feel ill-equipped and ineffective when economic development interventions.	Students are well trained in economic development interventions, and they are confident in implementing these interventions.	Students need to be trained how to implement economic development interventions.
Students are not adequately taught how to build, engage in, and maintain partnerships.	Students are experts in building, engaging in, and maintaining sustainable partnerships.	Students need to be taught how to forge, build, engage in, and maintain partnerships.
Social work training lacks a relevant philosophical and ideological base regarding developmental social work.	Undergraduate social work training is underpinned by the ideological base of developmental social work.	Students need the social work curriculum to be underpinned by an ideological base regarding developmental social work.
Students are unfamiliar with laws, Acts, and policy procedures.	Social workers are experts in legislation, Acts, and policies affecting their clients.	Students need to be taught laws, Acts, policies, and relevant procedures
Social work students are not adequately taught the capacity to engage and drive political processes.	Social work students are well trained in engaging with and driving political processes.	Students need to be taught how political processes work, and the skills to engage and drive them.

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Problems of newly qualified social workers in practice as derived from data (Current situation)	Ideal situation according to data	Resultant targeted needs of newly qualified social workers
Students should be better prepared to juggle casework activities and developmental social work.	Students effectively juggle remedial casework and preventative developmental social work.	Students need skills on how to manage casework and practice developmental social work.
Students do not feel empowered and motivated to challenge factors effectively that obstruct or hamper their attempts to practice developmental social work and transform communities.	Students are motivated and inspired to challenge factors that prevent them from practicing developmental social work and transforming communities.	Students need to be well trained so that they are masters in developmental social work, and able to challenge factors with confidence that prevent them from practicing developmental social work and transforming communities.
Students must be able to engage with individuals who disapprove and discourage social justice-promoting behaviour.	Students confidently debate and advocate transformative developmental social work practice.	Students need to own transformative developmental social work.
Students must be better trained in the concepts of poverty, drivers of poverty, how poverty impacts access, equality, rights and participation.	Social workers are experts in the theory and manifestation of poverty, drivers of poverty, and how poverty impacts access, equality, rights, and participation.	Students need to be well trained in poverty theory and its manifestations in society, and how poverty impacts access, equality, rights, and participation.
Students should understand the manifestations of rural, urban, and township poverty.	Students are familiar with the manifestations of poverty in rural, urban, and township environments.	Students need to be exposed to and receive training in the manifestations of poverty in rural, urban, and township environments.
Students should be informed of how rurality affects access, equality, rights, and the participation of clients.	Students understand rurality, and how it affects access, equality, rights, and the participation of clients.	Students need practice experience in and knowledge of rurality, and how it impacts access, equality, rights, and the participation of clients.
Students must understand the dynamics of tribal areas and tribal leadership in South Africa.	Students understand the dynamics and impact of tribal areas and tribal leadership in South Africa.	Students need to be exposed to and taught in detail about the dynamics of tribal areas and tribal leadership.
Students should be trained in the manifestations of access, equality, rights, and participation in township life with specific focus on socioeconomic inequality, social services, access to water, sanitation, hygiene, waste management, food security, health services, early childhood development, and education in townships.	Students are trained in the manifestations of access, equality, rights, and participation in township life. They understand how socioeconomic inequality, social services, access to water, sanitation, hygiene, health services, early childhood development, and education manifest in townships.	Students must be well trained and have solid experience in how township life affects access, equality, rights, and participation in the context of socioeconomic inequality, social services, access to water, sanitation, hygiene, health services, early childhood development, and education.
Students should be aware of the impact of race on access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.	Students are aware of how race impacts access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.	Students need to be taught an awareness of how race impacts access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.
Students should understand the manifestation of the legacy of Apartheid and racial identity in South Africa.	Students understand how the legacy of Apartheid and racial identity manifest in South Africa.	Students must be taught insight about the impact of the legacy of Apartheid and racial identity on South Africans.
Students should know how gender affects access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.	Students know how gender affects access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.	Students need to be taught insight on how gender affects access, equality, rights, and participation in South Africa.
Students should know how to work with and teenage pregnancies, gender-based violence.	Social work students are experts in working and understanding teenage pregnancies, gender-based violence.	Social work students need to be well trained in understanding and working with teenage pregnancies, and gender-based violence.

Table 2. Goals and objectives, curriculum content, and learning methodologies.

Goals and Objectives	Curriculum content	Type of objective and Proposed learning method
Students need to achieve 65%+ in an evaluation of theoretical dimensions of transformative developmental social work. They need to be able to practically implement it and go through a verbal test of defending its use.	Students must be taught how to apply transformative developmental social work in a practical way by making use of the following techniques: • Community organization (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Policy analysis (Midgly & Conley, 2010; Pawar & Nixon, 2020). • Programme and project planning and administration (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Programme and project evaluation (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Building and maintaining partnerships (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Effective utilization of the available systems (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Effective communication with communities (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Mobilization of groups (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Mobilizing, facilitating, organising, and planning of community activities (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Capacity building in communities (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Cooperative action, coordination, and networking (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Mediating skills (Midgly & Conley, 2010). • Advocacy skills (Midgly & Conley, 2010).	Knowledge based objective and attitude based and skill-based objective. • Lectures • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning
All students must be familiar with social security/social protection and how it applies and interacts with developmental social work.	Students must understand: • Social protection and poverty eradication. Economic development and social justice (Todd & Drolet, 2020). • How to enhance the contribution of social protection (Todd & Drolet, 2020).	Knowledge based objective. • Reading • Online reading • Team-based learning
All students must understand and be able to explain the impact of socioeconomic and political realities on the lives of diverse client systems.	For each client system taught throughout social work training, the impact of the socioeconomic and political context should be added when they study client systems.	Knowledge and skill-based objective. • Online reading • Discussions • Team-based learning • Peer teaching
Students should be able to perform in an examination about the economic history and development planning of South Africa	Students should study and understand: • Socioeconomic history of South Africa. • The development history • Current development planning • Future development planning	Knowledge based objective. • Online reading • Peer teaching

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Goals and Objectives	Curriculum content	Type of objective and Proposed learning method
Students should be able to achieve in an examination about social development and social welfare policy history.	Students should be taught the social welfare and social development policy history and the impact of these policy successes and failures on communities.	Knowledge based objective. • Online reading • Team-based learning • Lectures • Peer teaching
Students should obtain a theoretical knowledge of and be able to implement community development processes.	Students should be educated in: • The nature of communities, Community development agents, Community development agents and approaches, Strategies for community development (Todd & Drolet, 2020) • Policy development in social work (Lombard & Viviers, 2020; Pawar & Nixon, 2020).	Knowledge based objective and Skill based objective. • Lectures
Students should be able to analyse, change, and write policy. Students should be familiar with and have practical experience in participating and influencing policy writing processes.	Students should be taught the following: • What is policy? • How to analyse policy. • How to write new policy. • How to influence policy. • What is the process of policy writing in South Africa? (Pawar & Nixon, 2020).	Knowledge based objective and Skill based objective. • Lectures • Online reading • Team-based learning
Students must be experts in South Africa's social development and social welfare Acts, White Papers, and policies.	Students should be taught: Social welfare and social development Acts, White Papers, and policies applicable to South Africa.	Knowledge based objective • Online reading • Team-based learning • Peer teaching
Students must be experts at poverty, its manifestations, and its relation to social justice.	Students must be taught: • Poverty theory (Addae-Korankye, 2019). • Manifestations of poverty. • The relationship between social justice and poverty (Stoeffler & Joseph, 2020).	Knowledge based objective • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical exposure
Students need to be familiar with current and past strategies employed by government to combat poverty.	Students need to be familiar with: • Past strategies that were employed to combat poverty • Current strategies to combat poverty	Knowledge based objective • Online reading • Peer teaching
Students need to be familiar with different manifestations of poverty in rural areas, townships, and urban areas.	Students need to know how poverty manifests in: • Rural South Africa • South African cities • South African townships	Knowledge based objective • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical exposure

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Goals and Objectives	Curriculum content	Type of objective and Proposed learning method
Students need to be experts in Rurality in South Africa and how it affects social justice.	Students need to study: • Rurality in South Africa. • The impact of rurality on social justice in South Africa • (Mafukata & Tshikolomo, 2019).	Knowledge based objective and Skill based objective. • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical Exposure
Students need to understand and have insight into: • Tribal areas in South Africa. • Tribal government • Tribal culture in	Students must have experienced and learned about: • Tribal areas • Tribal government Tribal culture	Knowledge based objective. • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical exposure
Students need to have had social work practice exposure and insight into township life and: Social justice • Township life • Socioeconomic equality • Social services • Access to water • Sanitation • Hygiene • Health services • Early childhood development • Education	Students need practical exposure to how South African township life relates to social justice in the following areas: • Socioeconomic equality • Social services • Access to water • Sanitation • Hygiene • Health services • Early childhood development • Education	Knowledge based objective • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical exposure.
Students must be able to write an essay about the way race impacts social justice	Students need to study and understand the phenomenon off race, in South Africa and how it impacts social justice.	Knowledge based objective And attitude-based objective. • Online reading • Discussions
Students must be able to explain how the legacy of Apartheid impacts racial identity in South Africa.	Students need to study the affect of the Apartheid legacy on racial identity in South Africa.	Knowledge based objective and attitude-based objective. • Online reading • Discussions
Students wave insight on how gender affects the dimensions of social justice in the lives	Students need to study the impact of gender on the realization of social justice (access, equality, rights, and participation)	Knowledge based objective and attitude-based objective. • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching
Students must know a protocol for dealing with • Teenage pregnancies • Gender-based violence	Students need to study the following phenomena in South Africa with a focus on transformation and empowerment: • Teenage pregnancies • Gender-based violence	Knowledge based objective and Skill based objective. • Problem-based learning • Team-based learning • Peer teaching • Practical exposure

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued).

Goals and Objectives	Curriculum content	Type of objective and Proposed learning method
Students must be able to explain social work from a critical perspective.	Students need to be taught critical social work.	Knowledge based objective, skill-based objective and attitude based objective. • Lectures • Discussions
Students must be able to analyse all client systems through a human rights lens.	Throughout training, students must be taught how to analyse any client system through a human rights lens.	Attitude based objective and Skill based objective. • Simulations • Demonstrations
Students must be able to apply critical and reflective thinking in every module taught to them throughout their studies.	Throughout training, students must be taught how to apply critical thinking and reflective thinking skills in social work practice.	Skill based objective. • Lectures • Demonstrations • Simulations • Class discussions • Supervision
Students must be able to plan and implement developmental social work in all the client systems they work with during their training. Students must be able to understand the promotion of emotional well-being in conjunction with economic development and have insight into their interrelatedness.	Students need to be taught how to plan and implement social change programmes to address social justice in the lives of all client systems they are trained to work with. Students need to be taught how to promote emotional well-being and economic development simultaneously.	Knowledge, skill-based and attitude-based objective. • Supervised experience • Demonstrations • Exposure • Case Studies
All students must be able to: • Write a community analysis. • Plan and implement social action based on the results of the community analysis.	Students need to be taught how to: • Write a community analysis report. • Plan social action based on the results of a community analysis report. • Implement social action plans.	Knowledge based objective and Skill based objective. • Demonstrations • Simulations • Supervised practical experience
Students need to be able to manage the balance between remedial casework and developmental social work effectively.	Supervision must empower students to manage the balance between remedial casework and developmental social work practice effectively.	Skill based objective • Supervision experience
Supervision must guide students to develop an unbiased, and non-judgemental attitude towards communities. Students must be assisted during supervision to confront their own bias towards communities. Students must be energized and inspired by their belief in the ability of communities to grow and change.	Supervision must guide students to form an unbiased, and non-judgemental attitude towards communities. Supervision must enable students to identify and confront their own bias towards communities. Supervision must assist students to be convinced of and believe in the ability of communities to grow and change. Supervision must inspire students and teach them to be energized by the ability of communities to grow and change.	Attitude based objective and skill-based objective. • Introspection • Exposure • Reflective writing

5.4 Step four: determining the required content of the transformative developmental social work curriculum to achieve goals objectives mentioned in step three (column 1)

The contents of a curriculum is determined by defining what is needed to satisfy the objectives of the curriculum as determined in step three and recorded in column 1 (Thomas et al., 2016, pp. 63–75). The proposed content for the curriculum is provided in column 2 of Table 2.

5.5 Step five: determining the learning methods that should be used in conjunction with the curriculum content

According to Thomas et al. (2016, p. 55), objectives determining curriculum content are divided into three categories: knowledge-based objectives, the attitudinal-based objectives and skill-based objectives. These objectives must be reached by using different teaching methodologies (Thomas et al., 2016, pp. 65–96). The researcher has suggested teaching methodologies to accompany the different sections of curriculum content. The suggested methodologies can be seen in column 3 of Table 2.

5.6 Step six: implementation and evaluation phase

Implementation and evaluation as part of curriculum development are preferred. For implementation, a process in higher education curriculum development is followed and directed by quality control and formal registration procedures, as indicated by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) and the Department of Higher Education. As this is a developmental process, the implementation and evaluation phase of the educational programme is not possible but serves as a suggested strategy for curriculum developers at higher education institutions in social work.

6. Discussion and conclusion

From the data obtained and the curriculum designed, it is clear that transformative developmental social work training, rests on two pillars, the first being content, dealt with in a formal class environment and the second supervised practical training (Amadasun, 2019; Gray et al., 2017; Mansvelt, 2018) with both these pillars containing, knowledge, skill, and attitudinal-based objectives.

In the formal class environment, an emphasis on social development skills and theory (Amadasun, 2019); poverty theory and an understanding of the manifestation and causes of poverty as well as the links between economic and psychosocial welfare proved to be important knowledge-based objectives (Amadasun, 2019).

Training however requires more than transferal of knowledge. Social development training should entail an intimate and extensive understanding of the context of the client. This context is as extensive as the client's socio-economic and political context, including the way their wellbeing is influenced by government policy, service delivery and the locality in which they find themselves (Mansvelt, 2018; Nikku & Rafique, 2019; Zelenev, 2018). To be able to do this, students need to be exposed to, learn to analyze, and

plan for social development intervention in diverse circumstances like rural areas, townships, urban areas, and tribal areas. In the analysis of contexts, students need to be able to look at a diversity of client systems through a critical, human rights based social work lense (Sheppard & Charles, 2014; Watts & Hodgson, 2019).

Ultimately social workers should be experts on the socio-political, historical, and economic context of the country in which they practice (Mogorosi & Thabede, 2018; Zelenev, 2018). They should be trained using indigenous literature, and practice social work skills that have been adapted to the cultural context in which they practice (Mogorosi & Thabede, 2018; Mwansa, 2011).

Social work lecturers and supervisors must challenge students to confront their own attitudes and prejudices and reflect upon how that would impact services they render to communities (Sheppard & Charles, 2014).

Not only should students be taught to partner with and engage clients, but particular attention should be given to understanding and interacting with government and community structures. This includes partnering, advocating with, and influencing policy, institution and services that affect their client base, with the goal of empowering clients to gain understanding of these processes and to influence it themselves. Understanding, influencing, and writing policy should become a social work priority if we were to affect the context in which our client's function. Social workers should be trained to be activists who speak for the marginalized (Nikku & Rafique, 2019).

It is crucial that all knowledge and skills acquired through training should be practiced in class and later in the service delivery environment. When implementing developmental social work skills and going through these processes, the importance of a supportive capable supervisor who takes developmental social work seriously cannot be overemphasized (Gray et al., 2018).

7. Recommendations for social work training

For social work students to learn to effectively practice developmental social work and all its assets as priority abovementioned additions and expansions of the knowledge and skills taught in undergraduate level should be made. Tertiary institutions should be committed to instill a developmental mind-set in students from the onset of training and practical developmental social work training should be regarded as important as other modalities.

Transformative developmental social work and critical human rights-based thinking need to integrate into all modules of social work training.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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