

An empowerment programme to regain positive work engagement for social workers in the North West Province

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*"Enthusiastic employees excel in their work because they maintain the balance
between the energy they give and the energy they receive."*

Prof Dr Arnold B Bakker

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OPSOMMING

‘N BEMAGTIGINGSPROGRAM VIR DIE HERWINNING VAN POSITIEWE BETROKKENHEID VAN MAATSKAPLIKE WERKERS IN DIE NOORDWES PROVINSIE

Die doel van hierdie studie is om positiewe betrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers in die Noordwes provinsie te herwin deur middel van 'n bemagtigingsprogram wat die aspekte wat bydra tot lae beroepsbevrediging, uitbranding en beroepsverlating van maatskaplike werkers, onder die loop te neem.

Sleutelterme:

Maatskaplike werk, maatskaplike werkers, groepwerk, program, bemagtiging, betrokkenheid, beroepsbevrediging, stres en uitbranding.

Daar is 'n nypende tekort aan maatskaplike werkers in Suid Afrika. Een van die redes is die hoë beroepsverlatingsyfer van maatskaplike werkers; gevolglik is die professie as 'n skaarsvaardigheid geklassifiseer. Dringende retensiestrategieë vir die behoud van maatskaplike werkers vir die beroep word benodig.

Afdeling A verwys onder meer na die probleemstelling, navorsingsdoelwitte en doelstellings. Die navorsingsontwerp word bespreek asook die beperkings van die studie. Die ondersoek is in twee fases gedoen. Die eerste fase het gefokus op 'n behoeftebepaling en die tweede fase op die implementering en evaluering van die bemagtigingsprogram.

Die probleemstelling in afdeling A is gebaseer op die volgende:

Die werkslewe van maatskaplike werkers is beperk, en daar is 'n dringende tekort aan maatskaplike werkers in Suid Afrika. Aspekte soos uitbranding, gebrek aan hulpbronne en die nodige ondersteuningsdienste. Ongedefinieerde rolle in maatskaplike werk dra by tot verlaagde beroepsbevrediging en laer werksbetrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers.

Wanneer maatskaplike werkers onder druk verkeer en oor onvoldoende hulpbronne en ondersteuningsdienste beskik, is hulle meer geneig om te oorweeg om die beroep te verlaat.

Daar is gevind dat positiewe werksbetrokkenheid en beroepsbevrediging as teenvoeter vir stres en uitbranding dien.

Hierdie probleemstelling het aanleiding gegee tot die navorsingsdoel van die ondersoek asook tot die volgende vier navorsingsdoelwitte:

Doel: Die doel van hierdie studie is om positiewe betrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers in die Noordwes provinsie te herwin deur middel van 'n bemagtigingsprogram wat die aspekte wat bydra tot lae beroepsbevrediging, uitbranding en beroepsverlating van maatskaplike werkers onder die loop te neem.

Doelwitte:

- Om deur middel van 'n literatuurstudie te bepaal wat die retensie van maatskaplike werkers beïnvloed met spesifieke fokus op stres, uitbranding, beroepsbevrediging, positiewe werksbetrokkenheid en beroepsverlating.
- Om te bepaal watter beroepsbetrokkenheid en werksbevrediging Suid-Afrikaanse maatskaplike werkers ervaar, asook maatskaplike werkers in hul huidige posisies in die Noordwes provinsie, en in welke mate dit beroepsverlating, uitbranding en die voorneme om die beroep te verlaat beïnvloed.
- Om 'n bemagtigingsprogram te ontwikkel en te implementeer wat beroepsbetrokkenheid herwin.
- Om die effektiwiteit te evalueer van die bemagtigingsprogram wat daarop gerig is om die werksbetrokkenheid wat maatskaplike werkers in hul beroep ervaar, te verbeter.

Die ontwerp- en ontwikkelingsmodel is as 'n oorkoepelende navorsingsmodel gebruik. Die model is in ses fases verdeel wat elk in die studie gebruik is. Daar is hoofsaaklik op kwantitatiewe data gefokus. 'n Literatuurstudie is gedoen oor bestaande inligting rakende aspekte wat betrokkenheid, werksbevrediging, stres en uitbranding oor die algemeen beïnvloed, asook inligting wat spesifiek op maatskaplike werkers van toepassing is.

Afdeling B bevat vier artikels waarin die doelwitte en uitkomste van die navorsing weergegee word.

Elke artikel is as 'n afsonderlike entiteit hanteer; elk met 'n spesifieke navorsingsdoelwit. Hierdie ondersoek is aan die hand van spesifieke navorsingsmetodes gedoen. Hiervolgens is data bekom en die bemagtigingsprogram ontwerp en geëvalueer.

Artikel 1

Die navorsingsdoelwit van hierdie artikel was om deur middel van 'n literatuurstudie te bepaal wat die retensie van maatskaplike werkers beïnvloed met spesifieke fokus op stres, uitbranding, beroepsbevreëding, positiewe werksbetrokkenheid en beroepsverlating. Die resultate van die ondersoek het daarop gedui dat uitbranding as gevolg van stres, werksbetrokkenheid en werksbevreëding, konsekwent die werksverlating van maatskaplike werkers kan voorspel.

Artikel 2

Maatskaplike werk is as 'n skaarsvaardighedsprofessie verklaar. Die retensie van maatskaplike werkers vir die beroep is 'n belangrike aspek wat dringende aandag geniet. Die doel van die artikel was om te bepaal watter mate van beroepsbetrokkenheid en werksbevreëding Suid-Afrikaanse maatskaplike werkers ervaar, asook maatskaplike werkers in hul huidige posisies in die Noordwes provinsie, en in welke mate dit beroepsverlating, uitbranding en die voorneme om die beroep te verlaat beïnvloed. Alvorens daar egter na moontlikhede van retensie gekyk kan word, is dit eers nodig om 'n behoeftebepaling te doen van aspekte wat retensie beïnvloed. In hierdie artikel word die behoeftes rakende die betrokkenheid, beroepsbevreëding, stres, en uitbranding van maatskaplike werkers in die Noordwes provinsie bespreek aan die hand van 'n empiriese en literatuurondersoek. 60 (N=60) Maatskaplike werkers is by die empiriese ondersoek betrek nadat hulle met 'n sneeubalstreekproef-metode geselekteer is. Die resultate van die ondersoek het daarop gedui dat die probleme wat maatskaplike werkers ondervind, soos stres, uitbranding, verlaagde beroepsbevreëding asook verlaagde werksbetrokkenheid, moontlik deur 'n maatskaplike groepwerk bemagtigingsprogram ondervang kan word. Deur die nodige inligting, ondersteuning en opleiding in vaardighede te gee kan maatskaplike werkers moontlik bemagtig word en sodoende langer vir die beroep behoue bly.

Artikel 3

In hierdie artikel word die bemagtigingsprogram as intervensie gefokus. Die doel van hierdie bemagtigingsprogram vir maatskaplike werkers was om die betrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers by hul professie te verbeter deur aandag te skenk aan aspekte soos beroepsbevreëding, stres en uitbranding. 'n Program is saamgestel aan die hand van die resultate van die behoeftebepaling met 60 (N=60) maatskaplike werkers uit die Noordwes provinsie. Dit is aangevul deur 'n uitgebreide literatuurstudie oor die verbandhoudende onderwerpe. Die resultaat is dat 'n program aangebied is aan 11 (N=11) maatskaplike werkers deur middel van 'n tweedag-werkswinkel bestaande uit sewe sessies.

Artikel 4

Die navorsingsdoelwit van hierdie artikel was om die effektiwiteit van die bemagtigingsprogram te evalueer wat daarop gerig was om die werksbetrokkenheid wat maatskaplike werkers in hul beroep ervaar, te verbeter. In hierdie ondersoek is daar van die UWES skaal (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) gebruik gemaak om die nuut ontwerpte bemagtigingsprogram te evalueer. Die skaal meet die mate van betrokkenheid van werkers by hul professie. Hierdie skaal is by drie geleenthede by 'n eksperimentele asook kontrolegroep benut. Die eerste meting was voor die aanvang van die program, die tweede meting 32 uur later en die derde meting vier weke na die aanbieding van die program.

Die navorser as fasiliteerder en programaanbieder se observasies, refleksies en prosesnotas gedurende en na die aanbieding is ook gebruik om die praktiese toepassingswaarde van die program te evalueer en aanbevelings te maak vir toekomstige gebruik.

'n Selfopgestelde evalueringsvraelys is ook aan die einde van die program benut om die groeplede in die eksperimentele groep die geleentheid te gee om die waarde wat die program vir hulle ingehou het, te evalueer.

Die resultaat van hierdie ondersoek het aangedui dat die program geslaagd was. Dit het die gevoel van toegewydheid en lewenslus van die werkers verbeter (subskale van die UWES-skaal) en hulle bemagtig om self beheer te neem oor hul welstand ten einde uitbranding en verlating van die professie teë te werk. Die program het hulle toegerus met gereedskap, kennis, vaardighede en motivering ten einde hul eie welstand te monitor en verantwoordelikheid daarvoor te aanvaar. Dit het verder aan hulle 'n gevoel van beheer gegee waarmee hulle die negatiwiteit wat hulle in hul beroep ervaar het, kon verminder.

Die program is na afloop van die meting ook aan die kontrolegroep aangebied.

In **Afdeling C** is 'n samevatting van die vernaamste bevindinge en gevolgtrekkings van die ondersoek in die geheel aangebied.

In **Afdeling D** is die bylaes tot die navorsingsverslag, soos meetinstrumente wat vir data-insameling gebruik is, weergegee.

In **Afdeling E** is die saamgestelde bronnelys weergegee.

ABSTRACT

AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO RECLAIM POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE

(The spelling in the title approved by the Ethics Committee is North West province. This spelling will be used as such in the title only and as North-West province in the thesis).

The objective of this study is to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

Keywords:

Social work, social workers, group work, programme, empowerment, engagement, job satisfaction, stress and burnout.

A serious shortage of social workers is experienced in South Africa. One of the reasons provided is the high turnover rate of social workers; thus social work is classified as a scarce skill profession. An urgent retention strategy is needed in order to retain social workers for the profession.

Section A refers to the problem statement, research objectives, research procedures and research methodology. The keywords as well as the limitations of the research are investigated. The research was conducted in two phases. In phase one the needs assessment was implemented and in phase two the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the empowerment programme.

The problem statement in section A is based on the following:

The working life of social workers is limited and creates a shortage of social workers. Several factors contribute to this shortage of social workers, including the lack of resources, and of professional and family support. Undefined roles in social work contributed to lower job satisfaction and engagement. When social workers are under stress and do not have sufficient resources they will contemplate job turnover. Research indicates that positive work engagement can be put back into social work by addressing the factors contributing to job dissatisfaction, negativity, stress and burnout in the profession. Positive work engagement may be a protective factor against burnout.

This problem statement resulted in the following research goal of reclaiming positive work engagement for social workers in North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers. It further resulted in the four research aims indicated below:

- To determine by means of a literature study what affects the retention of social workers, with specific focus on stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover.
- To determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers and those in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.
- To develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing the degree of work engagement social workers experience in their profession.

The Design and Development model (D&D) was implemented. The model consists of six phases, which all have been used during this study. Quantitative data was mainly utilized. The literature study focused on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction, stress, burnout and job turnover in general as well as information specifically related to social workers.

Section B consists of the four articles in which the research goals and research outcomes are reported. Each article is dealt with as a self-contained unit focusing on specific research objectives that were achieved via specific research methods. These methods were employed to collect the necessary data for the design and evaluation of the empowerment programme.

Article 1

The research goal of this article was to determine what affects the retention of social workers with specific focus on burnout, job satisfaction, engagement, turnover and job stress by means of a literature study. An investigation was carried out into the existing literature on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction, and job turnover. Attention was further given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout and to preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The results of this research indicated that burnout, via stress, job

engagement and job satisfaction, consistently predict intention to leave and thus turnover of social workers.

Article 2

Social work was classified as a scarce skill. The retention of social workers is an important aspect that needs urgent attention. Before a retention strategy can be put into place a needs assessment is necessary in order to determine the factors influencing retention.

The research goal of this article was to determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession. In this article the researcher presented, analysed and interpreted research findings based on responses provided by 60 social workers from the North-West province. The research questions focused on job engagement, job satisfaction, burnout and stress social workers experienced in their current positions. The purpose was to determine the needs social workers experience that will affect their turnover intention and to establish what is needed to retain them for the profession.

In this research, Exponential Non-Discriminative Snowball Sampling was applied in order to identify participants.

The results of this research indicated that the needs/problems social workers experienced were stress, burnout, lower job satisfaction and engagement. These needs or problems can be addressed through an empowerment programme. Providing the necessary information, support and skills training social workers could be empowered and retained for longer periods for the profession.

Article 3

The research goal of this article was to develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement. The programme was developed after a needs assessment had been done including sixty (N=60) social workers from the North-West province. It was completed with a thorough literature study on the related themes. The result of this research was that the programme was presented to eleven (N=11) social workers in a two-day workshop consisting of seven sessions.

Article 4

The purpose of this article was to evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing work engagement social workers experience in their profession.

This was done through the use of the UWES (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale). This scale measures the work engagement employees experience. The UWES was used on three occasions with both the experimental and comparison group. The first measurement was taken prior to the intervention, the second 32 hours after the intervention and the third a month after the intervention.

The observations, reflections and process notes of the researcher as facilitator and presenter were used to evaluate the practical value of the programme as well as to suggest recommendations for future use. A self-developed evaluation questionnaire was used after the intervention to afford the experimental group the opportunity of evaluating the value of the programme.

The results of this research indicated that this empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement improved the engagement social workers experienced and was thus successful. It increased their feelings of dedication as well as vigor and empowered them to take care of their own well-being in order to counteract turnover and burnout.

After completion of the research, the programme was also presented to the comparison group.

In **Section C** a summary of the findings and conclusions of the research report and some recommendations are provided.

Section D consists of various addenda such as questionnaires and measuring instruments that were used.

Section E contained an integrated bibliography.

FOREWARD

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The article format has been chosen in accordance with the regulation A. 12.2 for the PhD (SW) degree. The formulation of the articles is in accordance with stipulations of *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk* (**Addendum: 17**), *International Social Work* (**Addendum: 18**) and *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* (**Addendum: 19**).

SECTION A

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

"Enthusiastic employees excel in their work because they maintain the balance between the energy they give and the energy they receive."

Prof Dr Arnold B Bakker

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Burnout can occur in any profession, but according to studies undertaken by Ross and Fridjhon (1995:265) burnout among social workers appears to be particularly high. In their study, it was reported that the mean working life of social workers was less than three years. Alpaslan and Schenck (2012:415) indicated that the lack of resources and of professional and family support contributed to the difficult working circumstances social workers experience, especially in the rural areas and is a matter of great concern. Their role as "Jack of all trades", lack of support from supervisors and the undefined role of social workers contributes to higher levels of frustration and stress.

Work engagement is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002:74). In essence, work engagement captures how workers experience their work: as stimulating and energetic and something to which they really want to devote time and effort to; as a significant and meaningful pursuit; and as engrossing and something on which they are fully concentrated (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:182). Bakker and Leiter further highlight the positive link between job resources and work engagement. Job resources refer to those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may: (a) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; (b) be functional in achieving work goals; or (c) stimulate personal growth, learning, and development. Increases in social support, autonomy, opportunities to learn and to develop, and performance feedback were positive predictors for enhancing work engagement (Albrecht, 2010:230). Engaged workers perform better than non-engaged workers do. They experience positive emotions, including happiness, joy, and enthusiasm. These positive emotions seem to broaden

people's thought–action repertoire, implying that they constantly work on their personal resources. Engaged workers experience better health as they can focus and dedicate all their energy resources and skills to their work. Engaged employees create their own job and personal resources. They transfer their engagement to others in their immediate environment and indirectly improve team performance (Albrecht, 2010:233).

Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree of positive affect toward the overall job or its components (Weisman *et al.*, 1980:342). Hellman (1997:678) reported on the model of Mobley, Homer and Hollingsworth indicating that dissatisfaction produces a series of withdrawal cognitions in which employees examine the costs and benefits associated with leaving their jobs. Ultimately, this cognitive appraisal results in the employees' withdrawal from the organization. Cranny, Smith and Stone (*In Hellman, 1997:678*) concluded that job satisfaction is a combination of cognitive and affective reactions to the differential perceptions of what an employee **wants** to receive compared to what he or she **actually** receives. According to Hellman (1997:94), the more dissatisfied employees become, the more likely they are to consider other employment opportunities. Would this then be the reason why social workers seek greener pastures in other fields or abroad?

Risk factors for job dissatisfaction according to Cox *et al.* (2003:174) as well as Marriott *et al.* (1994:199) include poor communication, low levels of support for problem solving and personal development. A lack of definition on organizational objectives, social or physical isolation, poor relationships with superiors, interpersonal conflict, lack of social support career stagnation and uncertainty, under-promotion or over-promotion, poor pay, job insecurity, low social value of work-role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility, access to organizational decision making, stress, work activities, social involvement with co-workers and autonomy are also further identified.

Marriott *et al.* (1994:199) point out that social workers indicated further that variety and autonomy are also important satisfaction factors. Work variety and autonomy are aspects of job descriptions over which administrators often have some control. Attention should be given to building a stronger sense of identity with social work tasks and to fostering a self-derived value in the work itself in order to increase job satisfaction (Marriott *et al.*, 1994:199). On-going seminars and continuing education focused on practice issues may similarly help social workers remain focused on the important task and achievement aspects of job satisfaction.

There appears to be a significant connection between job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and occupational stress. Work stress, job stress and occupational stress are often used interchangeably and linked to job turnover (Dollard, *et al.*, 2003:5). Dissatisfied workers further are more vulnerable to burnout. Murdock and Scott (2003:251) identify burnout as "... a mismatch between perceived demands and perceived ability to cope. It is the balance between how we view demands and how we think we can cope with those demands that determines whether we feel stress, distress or... challenged in a way we feel we can handle". The social work profession in itself places social workers at risk of becoming burnt out (Rothman & Malan, 2003:43).

This study will investigate ways in which positive work engagement can be put back into social work by addressing the factors contributing to job dissatisfaction, negativity, stress and burnout in the profession. Positive work engagement may be a protective factor against burnout. Engagement was formerly considered to represent the opposite of burnout along a single continuum (Prins *et al.*, 2010:237).

The question can be asked whether burnout, stress and job turnover in the social work profession are the reasons that social work is among the professions that the Minister of Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1) declared in 2003 as scarce. Addressing delegates, Social Development Deputy Minister Jean Benjamin, said, "Social workers are a key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society" (Anon, 2006:1). During this speech, measures were proposed to rectify the shortage of social workers in this country. Statistics report that the country needs 16 000 social workers over the next three years to provide the services children are entitled to in terms of the Children's Bill. However, universities only produce about 300 social workers a year (Dlamini, 2007:1). A draft Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Work (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1) was presented to retain and reclaim social workers for the profession. This included the improvement of the remuneration package for social workers in government, new generic job descriptions, which provide opportunities for career paths for social workers and scholarships for social workers to the tune of R2.8 million. The main problem with recruiting and retaining social workers is further attributed to the availability of more lucrative offers in other sectors within the country as well as abroad. It is also indicated that the inability to retain social workers was further exacerbated by poor working conditions and the fact that social workers are multi-skilled and therefore easily absorbed into other fields (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1).

It is the researcher's opinion that the focus should not be on creating more jobs or recruiting more social workers but rather on creating better jobs, on increasing the level of job satisfaction, and especially on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience. This will hopefully retain more social workers for the profession and create a consistent, experienced, and motivated workforce, which will thus enhance the quality of service delivery directly affecting the community of South Africa.

In order to create better and more satisfactory jobs, attention thus needs to be given to the nature of work engagement and job satisfaction social workers experience. An empowerment programme was developed based on an empirical research study. Empowerment can be defined as a process whereby individuals, **groups**, families, and communities are helped to attain personal or collective power, which increases their personal or interpersonal strengths to actively improve their circumstances (New Dictionary of Social Work, 1995:21; Zastrow, 2010:52).

The researcher agrees that social group work is a very positive and optimistic way of working with people. Kurland and Salmon (1998:ix) are of the opinion that it is truly empowering and affirming of people's strengths. The act of forming a group is a statement of belief in people's strengths and in the contribution each person can make in the others' lives. Group work is an opportunity to help individuals improve their social relationships and resources through their interactions in the group. The group is the perfect environment for consciousness-raising, for mutual help, for developing social skills, for exercising problem solving, and for experiencing inter-personal influence (Kurland & Salmon, 1998:ix). The foundation of a support group is that, when healthy human beings encounter difficult life situations, they can benefit from support, caring, and mutual aid (Kurland & Salmon, 1998:6). The goal of the empowerment-oriented group is to help members develop awareness and overcome obstacles where the empowerment involves the shared experience, analysis, and influence of groups on their own efforts (Lord & Hutchison, 1993:4). When the individual in a group undergoes the empowerment process, it also includes the enabling influence of a peer group within a collective-organizational structure, and relations with a mentor that enriches the experience (Sadan, 2004:81). The researcher feels that a support group can thus bring an instant sense of community and connection; knowing that "you are not alone". Being able to talk about how stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction has affected their life among others who truly understand can increase a sense of belonging, purpose, and self-worth – all of which promote positive mental health.

For these reasons, the empowerment programme was implemented on the basis of a support group, with the aim to improve positive work engagement of the social workers and to deal with issues that may lead to job turnover or to social workers leaving the profession. It was presented as a continuous development workshop (programme) as this gives professionals the opportunity to also keep abreast of knowledge developments and advances in their field of work and, as Botha (2012:420) explains, holds the potential of bridging the divide between the world of knowledge development and the world of social work practice. The study will further address this issue by presenting an overview of the current factors impacting on the job satisfaction and work engagement of social workers and comparing this with the skills required to prevent stress, burn out and job turnover. The study will then discuss the implications of factors and develop a programme that can be utilized by supervisors to enhance and develop the necessary skills. Finally, an evaluation of the success of the programme will be conducted.

2. RESEARCH QUESTION

The major research question to be answered by this research is: Will the presentation of an empowerment programme, which addresses factors contributing to low job satisfaction, stress and burnout in social workers, reclaim positive work engagement in social work?

The following sub-questions arise:

- What affects job satisfaction and positive work engagement, and leads to burn out?
- What degree of work engagement and job satisfaction do South African social workers experience in their current positions and how does this influence job turnover, level of burnout and the intention to leave the profession?
- Which activities must be included in an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement?
- Can the presentation of an empowerment programme be effective in enhancing the degree of work engagement social workers experience in their profession?

3. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. General aim

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

3.2. Specific objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- To determine by means of a literature study what causes the retention of social workers with specific focus on stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover.
- To determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers and social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.
- To develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing positive work engagement social workers experience in their profession.

4. CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENT

An empowerment programme for social workers can reclaim positive work engagement and decrease the high job turnover rate and burnout in social workers.

5. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

By means of a literature and empirical study this research attempted to clarify whether an empowerment programme could assist social workers in reclaiming positive work engagement.

5.1. Literature review

A literature study equips the investigator with a complete and thorough justification for the subsequent steps, as well as with a sense of the importance of the undertaking (Fouché & Delport, 2011:133-135). An investigation was carried out into the existing literature on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction, and job turnover. Attention was further given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The central focus of this study was to develop an intervention programme that could empower the social worker and could contribute to positive work engagement and job satisfaction, and to the prevention of burnout.

A wide range of literature was identified and studied, including books, academic studies, government and informal publications and scientific magazines. Literature regarding

engagement, burnout, stress, and job satisfaction was readily available although specifically related to social work was limited. Most literature was obtained from related professions including social work, psychology, medicine, nursing, and sociology. In order to identify appropriate sources, the following databases were used: NEXUS; Scholarly journal; Social Science Index: Social Work Abstracts; ERIC; RSAT; EbscoHost; PsycLit; Questia online library; Catalogue – Ferdinand Postma Library, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

The results attained were used for developing the measuring instruments (questionnaires and schedules) and the interpretation of data. The literature study was conducted throughout the research study.

5.2. Empirical Research

In this intervention research the Design and Development model (D&D) was used. De Vos and Strydom (2011:475) define the intervention research model as research which is targeted at addressing the practice application of research. The D&D model, Rothman and Thomas (1994:12) maintain, may be conceptualized as a problem-solving process for seeking effective intervention and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties. Rothman and Thomas (1994:9) stipulated the following six phases of the D&D model and furthermore called intervention research Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning, Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis, Phase 3: Design, Phase 4: Early development and testing, Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development and Phase 6: Dissemination. All six phases were used in this research.

Each of the phases will be discussed in this article, but the steps of each phase will be discussed separately later in the articles that follow as they were applied.

Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning

Problem analysis and project planning involves identifying the needs and involving clients. It further entails identifying concerns and analysing identified problems and thereafter setting goals and objectives for the study. The rest of the project and planning emanates from this first phase (De Vos & Strydom, 2011: 477). In the first and second article the researcher presented, analysed and interpreted research findings based on responses provided by 60 social workers from the North-West province. The purpose was to establish, by means of a literature study, what causes retention of social workers and to determine further, through continuous literature study as well as an empirical needs

assessment, the needs/problems social workers experience that will affect their turnover intention and to determine what is needed to retain them for the profession.

The following are steps in this phase:

- Identifying and involving clients.
- Gaining entry and cooperation from settings.
- Identifying concerns of the population.
- Analysing identified problems.
- Setting goals and objectives (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:477).

Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis

When an intervention research project is planned, it is crucial to determine what other researchers have done to address the problem. Knowledge acquisition involves identifying and selecting relevant types of knowledge and using integrated appropriated sources of information. Specifically existing forms of archival information and natural examples of successful practices of individuals and organizations are appropriate (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:480). A literature study as well as needs assessment was used to gather information on the phenomenon. The steps in this phase include:

- Using existing information sources.
- Studying natural examples.
- Identifying functional elements of successful models.

Phase 3: Design

An observational system is of crucial importance. Researchers must design a way of naturalistically observing the problem, events related to the problem, as well as a method system for discovering the extent of the problem and detecting effects following the intervention. By observing the problem and studying naturally occurring innovations and other prototypes, researchers can identify procedural elements for use in the intervention. The researcher studied what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers, and what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover and their intention to leave the profession. This phase consists of the following operations (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:482):

- Designing an observational system.
- Specifying procedural elements of the intervention.

Phase 4: Early Development and Pilot Testing

Development can be defined as the process by which an innovative intervention is implemented and used on a trial basis, developmentally tested for its adequacy, and refined and redesigned as necessary. This phase includes the following operations (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:483):

- Developing a prototype or preliminary intervention.
- Conducting a pilot test.
- Applying design criteria to the preliminary intervention concept.

The researcher developed an empowerment programme to be used on a trial basis, which will focus on regaining positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province. The programme focused on empowerment of social workers by creating awareness about engagement, job satisfaction burnout, and stress. The full programme was not pilot tested, but the content of the programme was given to external social workers to comment on before finalising the design.

Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development

Rothman and Thomas (1994:37) believe that the use of pilot tests and field replications to test and refine the intervention distinguishes intervention research from programme evaluation. There are four major operations or activities in the evaluation and advanced development phase: selecting an experimental design, collecting and analysing data, replicating the intervention under field conditions and refining the intervention (Rothman & Thomas 1994:37-39). The newly developed programme was evaluated by presenting it to 11 participants as the experimental group and using 14 respondents for the comparison group. The effectiveness was measured and the data was collected through a pre, post and delayed post-test. The data on both the quantitative and qualitative basis was analysed. Conclusions were drawn and certain recommendations and adaptations were made as part of the advanced development of the programme.

The following steps can be stipulated in this phase:

- Selecting an experimental design.
- Collecting and analysing data.
- Replicating the intervention under field conditions.
- Refining the intervention (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:485-486).

Phase 6: Dissemination

The last phase of this research process is to prepare research reports in order to communicate findings to the appropriate audience. This is called dissemination. Dissemination further indicates that potential markets for the intervention are selected and identified, a demand for the intervention is created, appropriate adaptation is encouraged, and finally technical support is provided for adopters. The information from this research was prepared to be disseminated through publishing articles in accredited journals. The empowerment programme is available for potential markets.

The steps in this phase, which make the process more successful, are (De Vos & Strydom, 2011: 487):

- Preparing the product for dissemination.
- Identifying potential markets for the intervention.
- Creating a demand for the intervention.
- Encouraging appropriate adaptation.
- Providing technical support for adopters.

5.3. Research design

Mouton (2001:55) and Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:89) state that a research design refers to a plan or blueprint of the way a researcher intends to conduct the research. According to Delport and Roestenburg (2011:171), a research design is a guideline according to which we determine the data collection methods. **In general for this research**, the exploratory mixed methods research design was used, with specific usage of the exploratory and descriptive methods in the first phases of the research and the experimental method in the quantitative phases (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007:11-12). The experimental design was applied using quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Although this research did not include a rich collection of qualitative data it does meet, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:11-12), the minimum criteria spelled out in their definition of qualitative research. Thus, it can be classified as the mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007: 12). Mixed methods research, according to Delport and Fouché (2011:434), *“is a combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or programme”*.

Quantitative research focuses on the use of surveys and measuring instruments. The interpretation of collected data forms part of qualitative research. According to Schurink *et al.* (2011:325), qualitative data analysis is the search for generalizations and relationships,

building structure and making sense of accumulated data. In this research, a quantitative and qualitative data collection method was used (Delpont and Fouché, 2011:435). The quantitative method often employs measuring instruments. Measurement instruments also refer to questionnaires and scales (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:171). During the needs assessment in phase two (Information gathering and synthesis) a self-developed questionnaire was used containing open and closed-ended questions. During phase five (Evaluation and advanced development) the standardized version of the Utrecht Work Engagement scale as well as a self-developed evaluation questionnaire were used.

Neuman (2000:23) states that the basic research provides a foundation for knowledge and understanding. Applied research, however, is aimed at solving specific policy problems of helping practitioners in accomplishing tasks. It is focused on solving problems in practice. In this study, applied research is used, as the planned intervention programme with social workers and supervisors will teach them to deal with problems in their natural work environment. Applied research can be either descriptive or exploratory. A combined approach between the exploratory and the descriptive research design was implemented during the first phases of the research model used (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008:21).

Descriptive research focuses on the “how and why” questions (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:96). This descriptive research will be conducted to describe work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout in more detail. The exploratory research design is conducted to gain insight into the problem, situation, or phenomenon (Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:134). It is further used to identify reasons why something might occur. Exploratory research is an initial research, which analyses the data and explores the possibility of obtaining as many relationships as possible between different variables without knowing their end-applications. It provides the basis for general findings (Panneerselvam, 2004:6).

Exploratory design was used in order to determine why social workers are under stress or feel burnout. The existence of the cause-effect relationship between variables used in the intervention programme as well as the testing of the hypothesis will require the explanatory research design (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:96).

In a later part of the research, the experimental design was used. According to De Vos and Strydom (2011:484), experimental designs, whether single-subject or between group designs, help to reveal causal relationships between intervention and the behaviours and related conditions targeted for change”. Fouché *et al.* (2011:145) continue to explain that

during the experimental design two comparison groups are set up which are exposed to an intervention. The impact of the intervention is then determined. The Quasi-experimental design with the comparison pre-test-post-test was used and purposive sampling was applied (Fouché *et al.*, 2011:149-151). An experimental group of social workers of the North-West province was exposed to an empowerment intervention where after a possible causal relationship would be established between their engagement levels prior to the intervention and their engagement levels after the intervention.

5.4. Respondents

Snowball sampling was used in phase two of the research, as this method is a non-probability sampling technique used by researchers to identify potential subjects in studies where subjects are hard to locate (Castillo, 2009:1). Researchers use this sampling method if the sample for the study is very rare or is limited to a very small subgroup of the population. The North-West province is a vast and extended area and the research covered most of the area stretching from Potchefstroom up to Mahikeng and Christiana. For this reason, the snowball sampling method was a better choice in order to reach more subjects. This type of sampling technique works like chain referral. After observing the initial subject, the researcher asks for assistance from the subject to help identify people with a similar trait of interest (Castillo, 2009:1). By means of this method **ninety (90) questionnaires were distributed** to social workers from the North-West are practicing social work Social workers from the following institutions in North-West were approached: NG Welsyn, Child Welfare, South African Women's Federation (SAVF), Correctional Services, South African Police Service, Department of Social Development, Department of Health, Ondersteuningsraad, Department of Defence, Department of Education, Child Line, North-West University, and SANPARK. The focus of the questionnaires was job satisfaction of the social workers in practice, as well as their stress and burnout levels.

Sixty (60) questionnaires were received back and can be summarized as follows:

Table 1: Distribution of social workers

ORGANIZATION	F	%
South African Police Service	13 social workers	21.7%
NG Welsyn	4 social workers	6.7%
South African Women Federation SAVF	5 social workers	8.3%
Department of Health	5 social workers	8.3%
Department of Education	2 social workers	3.3%
Department of Correctional services	2 social workers	3.3%
Department of Social development	14 social workers	23.3%
Child Welfare	3 social workers	5%
SANPARK	5 social workers	8.3%
Ondersteuningsraad	1 social workers	1.7%
Child line	3 social workers	5%
University	1 social worker	1.7%
Department of Defence	2 social workers	3.3%
TOTAL	N =60	100%

Most of the participants who took part in the needs assessment wanted to be part of the empowerment programme. The researcher used a purposive sampling method (Strydom, 2011a:232) during phase four, the development, and testing of the research, by selecting specifically social workers from the North-West province that took part in the needs assessment. **Invitations with specific dates were sent out to all sixty (60) social workers that participated in the needs assessment to attend the programme.** The participants were requested to indicate one of two dates for the workshop if they were interested. **Twenty-five participants replied on the invitations** and were selected to form part of the experimental and comparison groups according to the dates they selected. The first date was the 29th and 30th of September 2012 and the second date was 1st and 2nd of November 2012. The first date was the experimental group and the second date was the comparison group. Participants did not know which date was the comparison group and which date the experimental group. Eleven (11) Social workers were part of the experimental group while fourteen (14) were part of the comparison group. The pre, post, and delayed post-test were distributed to the comparison group prior to their programme date to ensure that the data was not affected by their attendance. The programme was offered to the comparison group as well for ethical reasons.

5.5. Measuring instruments

A survey, often called needs assessment (Royse, 2004:177), was conducted for purposes of this study in phase two (Information gathering and synthesis) of the research. Data was

collected by means of a personal completed self-structured questionnaire (**Addendum: 1**). The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first part A was based on biographical information. The second part B contained closed questions. A Likert rating scale was used for these closed-ended questions. The common feature of rating scales is to measure individuals, objects, or events on various traits or characteristics, at a point on a continuum or an ordered set of response categories (Grinnell & Unrau, 2005:118). Section C consisted of open as well as closed-ended questions focusing on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers (Rossouw, 2003:186; Strydom, 2003:116). Closed-ended questions reflected the quantitative method. The open-ended questions provided an appropriate opportunity for comment or elucidation to gather qualitative data. This provides the researcher with a set of pre-determined questions that might be used as an instrument to engage the participant and designate the narrative terrain (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995:76). Areas were identified by the respondents, which needed development in order to enable them to regain positive work engagement.

The questionnaire was pre-tested and revisited with four social workers before final use. According to De Vos *et al.* (2011:397), data gathering is the process of structuring and assigning meaning to a mass of collected data. The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, documented data collected from the closed-ended questions. Data collected by the open-ended questions were analysed by hand by the researcher. This means that the responses of the respondents were documented word for word in the report.

During phase four (Early Development and Pilot Testing) of the research the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (**Addendum: 2**) was used to measure the positive work engagement of the members by means of the empowerment programme. This measuring scale was used on three different occasions, namely before the programme started, after conclusion of the programme (thus 32 hours apart), and four weeks after the intervention had occurred with both the experimental and comparison group. A questionnaire (**Addendum: 3**) with closed and open-ended questions was also designed to evaluate the Empowerment programme at the end of the last session with the experimental group (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:406-421). According to Toseland and Rivas (1995:373) evaluation is the method by means of which practitioners obtain information and feedback on their work with a group. Evaluations can be used to test new interventions. In this research, evaluation was used to both monitor the group members, as this would give a picture of the effects of the group, and the value of the intervention

5.6. Data analysis

During all phases, data was quantitatively analysed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus by means of suitable computer packages, including SAS, STATISTICA en SPSS. The open-ended questions were qualitatively analysed by the researcher self and reported in the form of text. Kruger *et al.* (2005:217-219) point out that professional research can be analysed manually or by computer. Data was sorted to reflect the most interesting view, arranged into topics, and data belonging to each separate category were correspondingly clustered together in one group according to themes (Creswell, 2003:153-155; Schurink *et al.*, 2011:403).

5.7. Ethical aspects

Ethical permission for conducting this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). This study also complied with ethical standards as set out by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP). Respondents participated on a voluntary basis. Cultural differences were respected, and dealt with in a professional manner. The rights of the respondents and the responsibilities of the researcher ethically bound this research (Strydom, 2011b:114). **Permission to undertake this project was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University and the ethical number NWU-00091-10-A1 was allocated (Addendum: 4).**

- **Informed consent**

Verbal informed consent was obtained from the social workers who participate in this research and all the aspects of the research were explained to both parties before participation (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:77; Strydom, 2011b:117). Written consent was received prior to participation in the intervention programme **(Addendum: 7).**

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Confidentiality was also maintained by carefully explaining the general aim of the study and procedures to be followed. The questionnaires were completed anonymously and the names of the individuals were not disclosed. The data collected was kept in a file and locked up in a cabinet in the social worker's office. The researcher is a registered social worker at the SA Council for Social Service Professions (Babbie, 2004:64-67; Van Zyl-Edeling & Pretorius, 2005:107-113). Participation was collectedly voluntary.

5.8. Procedures

In the research, the following procedures were followed:

- Ethical permission for conducting this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) (NWU-00091-10-A1).
- Questions were constructed after a focused literature study.
- The questionnaires were presented in both Afrikaans and English.
- Participants were selected using a non-probability sampling technique, contacted and informed about the purpose of the study.
- Questionnaires were handed out to participants.
- Responses were noted, coded, and tabulated.
- Thereafter an empowerment programme was compiled.
- Sections of the programme were pilot tested.
- An empowerment programme was developed and designed. The information used for this programme was obtained from the data social workers from the North-West province, provided via a questionnaire during the first phase.
- Selection of participants for the needs assessment was based on the snowball sampling method, and selection for the participants for the research and comparison groups were solely voluntary using a purposive sampling method.
- During each session, several topics were discussed. The programme was presented in the form of a workshop.
- Before the programme started the research and comparison group members signed a form of consent.
- Before the first session, the research and comparison group members were measured by means of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale.
- The same measurement was repeated after the final session with both the research and the comparison group and again a month later.
- A self-structured questionnaire was used at the end of each programme to evaluate the impact of the empowerment programme. The questionnaire contained both open and closed-ended questions.
- The comparison group was exposed to the programme after all data had been collected.
- Data obtained from this research will be published in different journals and made available by means of workshops, to especially supervisors, to enhance the positive work engagement of their social workers and to prevent burnout and job turnover in the organizations.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations of the study were experienced:

- A non-probability sampling technique was used instead of a probability procedure. This sampling method was used because it indicated some characteristics or process that was of interest to this particular study (Silverman, 2000:104). The characteristics refer to social workers being from the North-West province, and who have participated in the needs assessment. Participants were not randomly selected which might have yielded better results. Fouché *et al.* (2011:151) indicated that a “randomized sample distinguishes a true experiment from other experiments. True experiments are at the highest level of the continuum, have the most rigid requirements, and are most able to produce results that can be generalized to a specific population”.
- Another problem was the distribution of questionnaires to the selected social workers in the North-West province and the time it took them to return it to the researcher. Of the 90 questionnaires sent to social workers, only 60 were received back. Awaiting the return of the questionnaires was time consuming.
- Due to the busy schedule of social workers, it was difficult to correlate dates for the proposed programme. Social workers were all keen to attend the workshop, but had to fit in available time between the experimental group dates and the comparison group dates.
- Retrieving the pre-test, post-test, and postponed post-test, especially from the comparison group, was challenging as the timeframes were specified.

7. TERMINOLOGY

To clarify certain concepts, it is necessary to define important key terms used recurrently in this research.

7.1. Social Work

According to the New Dictionary of Social Work (New dictionary of social work, 1995:60), social work is a “Professional service by a Social Worker aimed at the promotion of the Social Functioning of people”. Social work services are “programmes designed to help people solve social problems and promote their social functioning” (New Dictionary of Social Work, 1995:61). According to Zastrow (2010:54), “social work is a profession for those with a strong desire to help improve people’s lives” and the social work profession

promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being.

7.2. Social workers

According to the (New Dictionary of Social Work, 1995:60) a social worker is a registered person authorized in accordance with the Social Work Act, 1978(Act 110 of 1978)(SA, 1978) to practice social work.

7.3. Group work

Group work is defined by Toseland and Rivas (2005:12) as a “goal-directed activity with small treatment and task groups aimed at meeting socio-emotional needs and accomplishing tasks. This activity is directed to individual members of a group and to the group as a whole within a system of service delivery”.

7.4. Programme

According to the New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:49), the definition for the term programme is the process between a group and a social worker where systematic pattern of activities is followed to achieve group goals. The programmes for social work have the broad goal of enhancing individual and social change by providing services that meet individual and community needs. Geyer (2006:15) explains that a social group work empowerment programme suggests a series of group meetings where the collective needs and challenges of the group members are being met in a group context. This occurs through the application of an empowerment process in the social group work from a strengths perspective. This was the aim and purpose of this research programme as well as where the needs of social workers were addressed through the empowerment process in a group context.

7.5. Empowerment

Potgieter (1998:9) defines empowerment as "...a process that requires close partnerships between client systems and helpers and it is based on the strong belief in the strengths and potential of client systems to improve their life situations". Menon and Hartmann (2002:157) conceptualize empowerment as an act, a process, or a state. According to Durand (2008:36), empowerment in the workplace has two meanings. Firstly, the practice or set of practices involving the delegation of responsibility down the hierarchical structure of the organisation, resulting in increased decision-making authority for employees in

respect of the execution of their primary tasks. The second meaning of empowerment refers to psychological empowerment and refers to feelings of empowerment as reflected in competence/confidence in employees' abilities to perform a task well, to experience impact or influence in their jobs, to perceive self-determination and a sense of meaning. The greater the empowerment, the higher the level of job satisfaction workers experience (Hunter, 2009:5).

Buckle (2003:29) and Durand (2008:37) identify increased performance and motivation, quality products and services, lowered absenteeism and turnover, employees that are more creative, a sense of ownership, taking responsibility and higher levels of motivation, as advantages of empowerment for the organisation. Job satisfaction, commitment, energy, high performance, and willingness to learn were identified as some of the advantages for the individual.

7.6. Work engagement

Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002:74). When individuals feel engaged at work, a series of benefits tend to ensue. One of which is that turnover of employees is reduced. Individuals who are engaged are very energetic, dedicated, and absorbed at work, primarily because they enjoy their role, which ultimately tends to improve their wellbeing (Moss, 2009:1).

7.7. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1997:2). It can affect absenteeism and staff turnover and overall well-being, work productivity and work effort (Cabrita & Perista, 2007:2; Syptak *et al.*, 1999:26).

7.8. Stress

"Stress is the result of an imbalance between the level of demand placed on people, as they perceive it, and their perceived capability to meet the demand" (Selye, 1956:15). Work stress, job stress and occupational stress are often used interchangeably, and linked to job turnover (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5).

Stress can be defined as the state or condition that develops when energy is required to meet the physical, social, psychological, and emotional demands of one's environment

(Dewe, 1987:490; Verwey, 1996:102-107). When taking it into the workplace specifically that of the social worker, this stress can be described as occupational stress as it is “subject to the rigors of the role as social worker” (Clegg, 2001:102).

7.9. Burnout

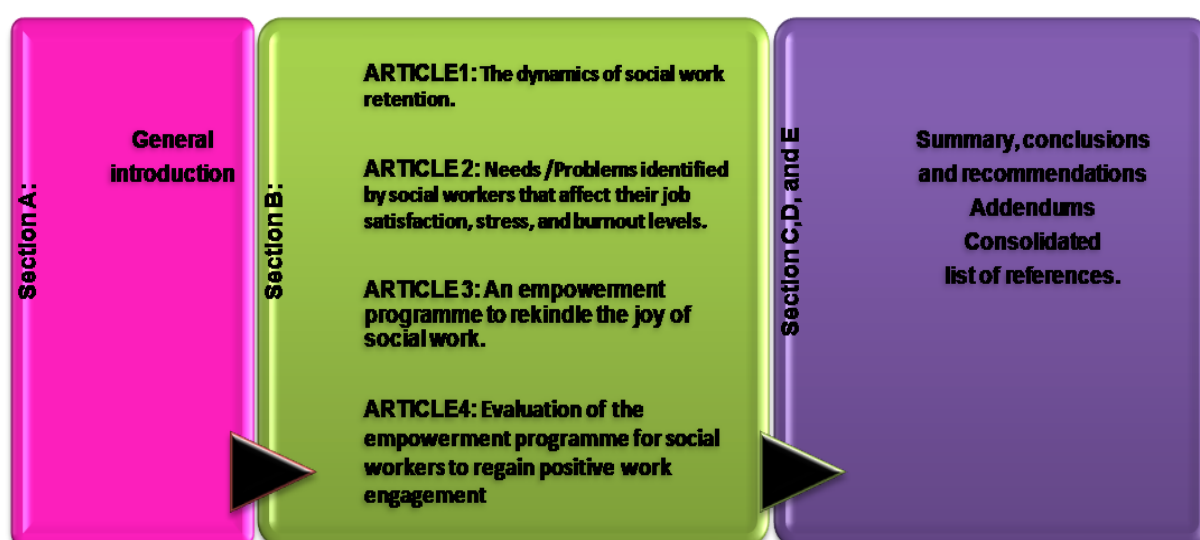
According to Van Zyl-Edeling and Pretorius (2005:168) burnout can be defined as “... the exhaustion or breakdown phase after long-term or intense stress, when the body's reserves are depleted and physical or emotional breakdown happens ... especially if they work in taxing areas involving violence, abuse, and serious illness. However, even the strongest, most experienced, best-trained, and most positive person has a limit to her capacity to deal with stress and could burn out unless protective measures are put in place”. Burnout is an important variable affecting engagement as well as job turnover (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010:90; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2).

8. PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report can be seen as the final product of the research process. It is a combined effort of integrating theory and practice (Strydom & Delpont, 2011:278).

This research report was divided into three sections. Figure 1.1 gives an overview of the format of the research report:

Figure 1: Report outline



Section A: General introduction

This section gives a brief orientation to the subject matter as well as an overview of the research methodology that will be utilized. Limitations of the research are also discussed. The researcher wishes to provide the reader with a thorough understanding of the fundamental principles of the study.

Section B: Articles

The format of this section contains four articles.

Article 1: The dynamics of social work retention

This article centres on the underlying relationships between Job satisfaction, stress, burnout, job turnover and positive work engagement and the retention of social workers.

Article 2: Needs/Problems identified by social workers that affect their job satisfaction, stress, and burnout levels

Article 2 is exploring the job satisfaction of South African social workers in the North-West province.

Article 3: An empowerment programme to rekindle the joy of social work

Article 3 is concerned with the development of an empowerment programme aimed at rekindling the joy of social work. The content of all the sessions are discussed in this article.

Article 4: Evaluation of the empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement

The results obtained from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale to evaluate the effect of the empowerment programme on the engagement levels of the social workers is presented in this article. The effectiveness of the programme is discussed according to the data collected from both the control and experimental group.

Section C: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The main conclusions formulated through the research as well as the recommendations for the improvement of the programme are discussed in this section. It consists of a comprehensive summary, conclusions, and recommendations regarding the research undertaken.

Section D: Annexure

The annexure to the research is listed in this section.

Section E: Consolidated list of references

A consolidated list of references is listed in this section.

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SA **see** South Africa

SAMP **see** South African Migration Project

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SECTION B:

ARTICLES

ARTICLE 1

THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL WORK RETENTION

Calitz, T, Roux, AA, and Strydom, H

Calitz, T is a PhD student, Roux AA a senior lecturer in the School of Psychosocial Behavioural Sciences, Social Work Division and Strydom, H a professor in the School of Psychosocial Behavioural Sciences, Social Work Division, Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University.

OPSOMMING

Daar is 'n nypende tekort aan maatskaplike werkers in Suid Afrika. Een van die redes is die hoë beroepsverlatingsyfer van maatskaplike werkers; dus is die professie as 'n skaars vaardigheid geklassifiseer. Dringende retensiestrategieë vir die behoud van maatskaplike werkers vir die beroep word benodig. Die doel van hierdie artikel is om te bepaal wat die dinamika is van maatskaplikewerk-retensie. Deur middel van 'n literatuurstudie word daar gekyk na wat die betrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers by hul professie beïnvloed en watter rol beroepsbevrediging, uitbranding, stress en beroepsverlating in die proses speel.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is well known nationally and internationally that South African social workers are well-trained and there is an increasing demand for their skills (Department of Social Development, 2009:6). Social workers are viewed as the key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society. The government is currently faced with the challenge that there is a lack of capacity to implement the necessary policies and programmes according to the constitutional, legal, and international obligations. In South

Africa, as in most other countries in the world, difficulty is experienced to recruit and retain social workers in the profession (Department of Social Development, 2009:7). According to Kopane (2011:1), at least 60 000 social workers are needed to implement the Children's Act. As at October 2011, there were 15 611 registered social workers and 2 953 registered social auxiliary workers. This represents almost a 75% shortage of social workers (Kopane, 2011:1).

Several factors contribute to this shortage of social workers. In South Africa, we do not only have the impact of globalisation, but our country has also undergone major political changes. Celebrating 17 years of democracy the workers at government organisations are faced with numerous challenges that have an impact on burnout, job insecurity, job engagement, and psychological well-being (Viljoen, 2004:v). The extremely aggressive recruitment policies of international agencies further impact on the availability and retention of social workers in South Africa. Social workers do intend to leave but not all of them leave eventually. Their actual leaving indicates unhappiness or negative job engagement – they are not happy in their work and that is why they intend to leave or actually do leave (Wermeling, 2009:4).

The serious shortage of social workers and the classification thereof as a “scarce skill” resulted in the reason for this research and which aims at regaining positive work engagement as this will hopefully lessen job turnover and burnout among social workers and thus retain them for a longer period in the profession. To understand a profession's viability in the market, each profession must understand recruitment, retention, and factors grinding down its members such as the supply and demand of sufficient professionals to carry out the work of the profession (Wermeling, 2009:1). If employees are unhappy with their current jobs, they will easily leave the organization and look for better opportunities elsewhere. The research undertaken for this thesis therefore pivots around burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and job turnover in social work.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social work is the systematic application of a body of knowledge, largely from the social, psychological, and biological sciences, together with a refined set of specific skills grounded in a clear set of values. The primary mission of the social work profession is the delivery and commissioning of responses to the needs of society's most vulnerable people, to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular

attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (National Association of Social Workers, 2009:6).

The recruitment and retention crisis in social work is acute and is having a destabilising effect on our local communities, negatively affecting this primary mission (Anon., 2005:12). Addressing delegates, Social Development Deputy Minister Jean Benjamin said: "Social workers are a key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society." (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1.) During this speech, measures were proposed to rectify the shortage of social workers in this country. According to statistics the country needs 16 000 social workers to provide over the next three years the services children are entitled to in terms of the Children's Bill. However, universities only produce about 300 social workers a year (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1; Ngomane, 2010:1). A draft Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Work was presented to retain and reclaim social workers for the profession. This included the improvement of the remuneration package for social workers in government, new generic job descriptions, which provide opportunities for career paths for social workers and scholarships for social workers to the tune of R2.8 million. The main problem with recruiting and retaining social workers is further attributed to the availability of more lucrative offers in other sectors within the country as well as abroad. It is also indicated that the inability to retain social workers was further exacerbated by poor working conditions and the fact that social workers are multi-skilled and therefore are easily absorbed into other fields (Department of Social Development, 2009:9; South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1).

Gaining a better understanding of the key factors influencing the recruitment and retention of social workers will promote the essential worth of social work, and with that, greater recognition will follow for the challenging nature of the job and the serious responsibilities allied with it. One approach to this problem is to focus on recruitment, and to develop educational initiatives that will bring more people into the Social Work profession. Another approach, and the aim of this study, is to focus on retention, and to ensure that social workers experience fulfilling and sustainable careers.

Extensive research was done on burnout, stress, turnover, and other factors affecting the lifespan of social workers and other helping professions. There appears, though, to be very limited research available on **how** to improve positive engagement and prevent burnout in social workers. Most of the interventions reported in the literature are individual-orientated and provide treatment, not prevention. No specific programmes, workshops, or direct

intervention methods were found focussing specifically on social workers and especially South African social workers. This research will try to put knowledge gained in previous research into action by designing and implementing an empowerment programme on an individual/group level to increase positive work engagement. Therefore, a process is created focussing on building resilience in individuals as well as in groups. This is also proactively investing in people rather than reactively dealing with stress and consequently burnout and job turnover (Fourie, 2004:174).

However, there are also many other powerful issues which have emerged from the literature study related to retaining employees in their profession. Research was found defining the underlying relationships between Job satisfaction, burnout, job turnover and positive work engagement (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104).

It is therefore critical that all factors affecting the retention of social workers are given consideration if positive improvements or preventions are to be gained.

3. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

3.1. Specific objectives

One of the objectives of *this* article is to determine what affects the retention of social workers with specific focus on burnout, job satisfaction, engagement, turnover and job stress, by means of a literature study what affects retention of social workers with specific focus on: Stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turn over.

The research method employed in this article is a literature review on the various topics regarding job satisfaction.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature study equips the investigator with a complete and thorough justification for the subsequent steps, as well as with a sense of the importance of the undertaking (Fouché & Delport, 2011:133-135).

The aim of a literature review is then to indicate:

- that one is aware of what is going on in the field, and thus the credentials;
- that there is a theory base for the study that is undertaken;
- how the study fits in with what has already been done. It provides a detailed context for the study);
- that the study has significance; and
- that the study will lead to new knowledge (Hofstee, 2006:91).

A thorough literature review is done to learn as much as possible from other scholars and establish grounded knowledge of all the variables used in the research including factors influencing the retention of social workers. Although there have been several studies on job satisfaction, retention, stress and job engagement in South Africa, these are limited because they relate to studies in individual organizations or use small samples or are out-dated. Most of the studies focus on the Health Care profession in general as well as teachers and doctors. In relation to South African social workers, research focussed on specific aspects such as burnout, stress, and retention. It was also clear from the literature that, despite years of research, empowerment programmes still seem to have huge shortcomings.

There is a huge body of research documenting the contributing factors of these recruitment and retention issues (Center for Human Services, 2007:4). These factors include positive work engagement, job satisfaction, and job turnover. Attention is further given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address the last-mentioned. Primary resources are used as much as possible. The purpose of the literature review is to gain a high level of current knowledge about the subject; to position the research within a theoretical framework; to clearly define the research problem, objectives and hypothesis; and to define and operationalize the key constructs. For the purpose of this article the following databases were used: NEXUS; Scholarly journal; Social Science Index; Social Work Abstracts; ERIC; RSAT; EbscoHost; PsycLit; Questia online library; Catalogue – Ferdinand Postma Library, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

5. POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is a relatively new term in today's literature, but is becoming very popular. Almost all scientific research appeared after the turn of the century. This correlates with the movement and academic interest in what is called Positive Psychology. Positive

Psychology focuses on human strength and optimal functioning. Engagement in everyday terms refers to “involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, absorption, focused effort, and energy” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010:11).

5.1. Conceptualization of engagement

Kahn (1992:322) historically popularized the concept *engagement*. He related the engagement concept to the notion of psychological presence. According to his definition, engagement refers to the state in which individuals express their entire self – physically, cognitively, and emotionally – in their role. “People feel and are attentive, connected, integrated and focused in their role performance.” Rothbard (2001:656) defined engagement as a construct of two dimensional and motivational natures, which includes attention and absorption as the two main constructs. Attention refers to the “cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends thinking about the role” while absorption refers to the “intensity of one’s focus on a role”.

In the literature, there are two approaches to work engagement. Maslach and Leiter (1997:34) advocate the first approach. Maslach and Leiter (2008:498) as the opposite describe work engagement or the positive antipode of workplace burnout, a syndrome characterised by mental or physical exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:294). Maslach and Leiter (1997:24) argue that engagement is characterised by energy, involvement, and efficacy – the direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout. They further contend that when individuals experience the feeling of burnout ‘energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism, and efficacy turns into ineffectiveness’ (Maslach & Leiter, 1997:24). According to this conceptualisation, engagement is measured by the reverse pattern of scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) dimensions (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:416). This means that low scores on exhaustion and cynicism and high scores on professional efficacy are indicators of engagement. Schaufeli *et al.* (2002:74) challenged this perspective. They argued that individuals might not feel at all exhausted, but will not necessarily experience energy.

Hence, burnout and engagement, although inversely correlated, might represent independent constructs. They differentiated three facets of engagement:

- vigor, in which individuals experience a sense of energy and resilience.
- dedication, in which individuals feel enthusiastically involved in challenging and significant work; and
- Absorption, in which individuals feel engrossed in their role – a more enduring form of flow.

According to this second approach, work engagement is thus most often defined as “. . . a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002: 74; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010:12).

Schaufeli and Bakker (2010:12) summarize the essence of engagement by defining it in terms of firstly, an organizational commitment and secondly, extra-role behaviour (behaviour that promotes effective functioning of the organization). It entails behaviour – energetic (vigor) component, an emotional (dedication) component and lastly, a cognitive or absorption component. Mirroring burnout, engagement has a positive impact on employees, organizations, and customers. Engagement has been associated with higher levels of positive perceptions of job characteristics, psychological well-being, good social relationships, organizational commitment, customer loyalty, and objective job performance as well as lower levels of turnover (Childs & Stoeber, 2010:270).

Whether or not engagement and burnout represent opposite poles of a single continuum received moderate, but not definitive, support. Confirmatory factor analyses indicated that cynicism and dedication, one facet of burnout and engagement respectively, do indeed represent opposite poles of the same dimension, while exhaustion and vigor, although highly and inversely related to each other, seemed to represent distinct dimensions (Demerouti *et al.*, 2010:209-222). Both approaches, however, for purposes of this study, indicate a specific positive impact on the happiness of a worker, or alternatively a positive experience. Engagement as an opposite pole of burnout stipulates a positive feeling in comparison to burnout while engagement as defined by Schaufeli and colleagues stipulates a positive fulfilling state as well. If one studies the components of engagement, as done by Demerouti *et al.* (2010:209-222), it becomes clear that the concept *engagement* is an important keystone to determine happiness and commitment at work. Because of their positive attitude and activity level, engaged employees create their own positive feedback, in terms of appreciation, recognition, and success (Bakker *et al.*, 2011:5). One can say that an engaged worker is a more positive, healthier, and happier worker. Paying attention to both burnout and engagement seems fruitful, as from such a perspective the thriving of

employees can be stimulated more fully by preventing ill health and stimulating well-being (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:277).

According to the researcher, engagement is seen as a clear buffer against burnout and loss of interest. The researcher agrees with Kahn and Byosiére (1992:622) and Bakker *et al.* (2005:170) that a worker that is positively engaged with his occupation will be more resilient against stress, burnout, and depression.

5.2. Drivers of engagement

Mainly two drivers consistently seem to influence work engagement, namely job resources and personal resources (Bakker *et al.*, 2011:6). Job resources refer to those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may reduce job demands, be functional in achieving work goals, or stimulate personal growth (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:275). Examples of job resources are autonomy, social support from colleagues, skill variety, opportunities for skill utilization, supervisor support, financial rewards, and career opportunities (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278). Job resources are assumed to play an intrinsic motivational role because they fulfil basic human needs, such as the needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278). Job resources including professional contacts (interacting with colleagues), and long-term and immediate results of work such as, seeing the good results of treatment, influenced future work engagement, which, in turn, predicted organizational commitment (Bakker *et al.*, 2011:6). Depending on the job context under study, the category of job demands can contain job characteristics as diverse as task interruptions, workload, work home interference, organizational changes, and emotional dissonance (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278). Personal resources have been defined in Bakker *et al.* (2011:7) as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development characterized by: (1) having confidence (self efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals, and when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success”.

5.3. Models of engagement

The Job Demands–Resources model (JD-R model) is a heuristic model that specifies how employee well-being may be produced by two specific sets of working conditions. The first set concerns job demands that represent characteristics of the job that potentially evoke

strain, in case they exceed the employee's adaptive capability (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:275). Demanding aspects of work such as work overload can lead to constant overtaxing. In the long run into exhaustion which in turn, may lead to negative consequences for the organization such as absenteeism and impaired in-role performance. In the second process proposed by the job resources model leads to engagement and positive outcomes (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:296). According to the JD-R model (Schaufeli, & Bakker, 2004:296), job resources become salient and gain their motivational potential when employees are confronted with high job demands.

6. JOB SATISFACTION

Researchers across disciplines have written countless articles concerning job satisfaction. Authors have borrowed from psychology, business administration, human resources management, and the wide umbrella of organizational science to define, measure, and interpret the significance of job satisfaction. In the past, job satisfaction was approached from the perspective of needs fulfilment – that is, whether or not the job met the worker's physical or psychological needs. If workers are satisfied with their needs, they probably experience job satisfaction. If they are not, no job satisfaction is probably experienced (Lim, 2007:13). As the importance of job satisfaction rises in the minds of workers, they are more likely to consider it as reasons for staying with their current job or for accepting a job offer elsewhere (Murray, 1999:5). Alam and Mohammed (2010:125) also found that lack of job satisfaction is among the factors that contribute to people's intention to quit their jobs. Job satisfaction can be a result of individual issues such as badness of fit between the individual and the actual job demands, but it can also be related to organizational climate and conditions (Strolin *et al.*, 2007:11).

General Job satisfaction is thus strongly correlated with turnover (Weaver *et al.*, 2006:iv). For this reason, job satisfaction is included in this research. Defining measure and interpreting job satisfaction and its relation to job engagement might shed some light on how to prevent turnover and retain social workers for the profession. Reviews of job satisfaction indicate that high job satisfaction is related to low employee turnover and absenteeism (Ilardi *et al.*, 1993:1790).

Job satisfaction is defined as an attitude individuals have about their jobs. It is an extent to which one feels positively or negatively about the intrinsic and/or extrinsic aspects of one's job (Alam & Mohammad, 2010:127). Alam and Mohammed (2010:127) see job satisfaction as an interesting construct for researchers in understanding employee behaviours and

attitudes. For several reasons they see it as an important work-related attitude in workforce research. First, satisfaction with the job is directly related to organizational commitment. Second, job satisfaction is either directly or indirectly related to an employee's turnover intentions. Turnover intention is perhaps the best indicator of future turnover. Thus, job satisfaction can influence a variety of important attitudes, intentions and behaviours.

Syptak *et al.* (1999:26) argue that satisfied employees tend to be more productive, creative, and committed to their employers, and recent studies have shown a direct correlation between staff satisfaction and patient/client satisfaction. Employee satisfaction affects every aspect, from client satisfaction to overall productivity. Frederick Herzberg theorized that employee satisfaction has two dimensions: "hygiene" and motivation. Hygiene issues, such as salary and supervision, decrease employees' dissatisfaction with the work environment. Motivators, such as recognition and achievement, make workers more productive, creative, and committed (Syptak *et al.*, 1999:26).

Syptak argues (1999:27-30) that in order to apply Herzberg's theory to real-world practice, the hygiene issues, although not the source of satisfaction, must be dealt with first to create an environment in which employee satisfaction and motivation are even possible. He suggests the following steps:

6.1. Company and administrative policies

An organization's policies, rules and perceived red tape can be a great source of frustration for employees. If the policies are unclear or unnecessary or if not everyone is required to follow them, the sense of frustration can be intensified. Although employees will never feel a great sense of motivation or satisfaction due to policies, it can decrease dissatisfaction in this area by making sure policies are fair and apply equally to all. Printed copies of a policies-and-procedures manual should be made easily accessible to all members of staff. If there is no written manual, one should be created, soliciting staff input along the way. Existing manuals should be updated again (with staff input). Policies should be compared with those of similar practices and evaluated whether particular policies are unreasonably strict or whether some penalties are too harsh.

6.2. Supervision

To decrease dissatisfaction in this area, one must begin by making wise decisions when appointing someone to the role of supervisor. Attention should be given to the fact that

good employees do not always make good supervisors. The role of supervisor is extremely difficult. It requires leadership skills and the ability to treat all employees fairly. Supervisors should be taught to use positive feedback whenever possible and should establish a set means of employee evaluation and feedback so that no one feels singled out. Fairness and competence at managerial tasks by one's supervisor seems of utmost importance (Spector, 1985:695).

6.3. Salary

Salary is not a motivator for employees, but they do want to be paid fairly. If individuals believe they are not compensated well, they will be unhappy working for the organization. Salaries and benefits should be comparable to those of other offices in the area. In addition, clear policies related to salaries, raises and bonuses should be available. Insurance, vacation and other fringe benefits can also be slotted into this facet affecting job satisfaction (Spector, 1985:695).

6.4. Interpersonal relations

Part of the satisfaction of being employed is the social contact it brings, so employees should be allowed a reasonable amount of time for socialization, for instance over lunch, during breaks and between patients. This will help them develop a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. At the same time, one should crack down on rudeness, inappropriate behaviour and offensive comments. If an individual continues to be disruptive, charge should be taken of the situation, perhaps by dismissing him or her from the organization (Syptak *et al.*, 1999:26).

6.5. Working conditions

The level of pride for people themselves and the work they are doing is affected by the environment they are working in. According to Syptak *et al.* (1999:26), everything should be done to keep equipment and facilities up to standard. Even a nice chair can make a world of difference to an individual's psyche. If possible, overcrowding should be avoided and each employee should have his or her own personal space, be it a desk, a locker, or even just a drawer.

If hygiene issues are neglected, employees would be generally unhappy, and this would be apparent to clients. Hardworking employees, who can find jobs elsewhere, will eventually leave.

6.6. Work itself

Perhaps most important to employee motivation is helping individuals believe that the work they are doing is important and that their tasks are meaningful. They are recognised, appreciated and respected for what they contribute. Emphasis placed on employees' contributions to the organization result in positive outcomes and good social care for clients. Success stories about how an employee's actions made a real difference in the life of a client, or in making a process better, should be shared. Enjoyment of the actual tasks themselves is important (Spector, 1985:695).

6.7. Achievement

One point inherent in Herzberg's theory, as highlighted by Syptak *et al.* (1999:27-30), is that most individuals sincerely want to do a good job. To help them, employees should be placed in positions that use their talents and are not set up for failure. Clear, achievable goals and standards for each position should be set, and employees must know what the goals and standards are. Individuals should also receive regular, timely feedback on how they are doing and should feel they are being adequately challenged in their jobs.

6.8. Recognition

Individuals at all levels of the organization want to be recognized for their achievements on the job. Their successes do not have to be monumental before they deserve recognition, but praise should be sincere.

6.9. Responsibility

Employees will be more motivated to do their jobs well if they have ownership of their work. This requires giving employees enough freedom and power to carry out their tasks so that they feel they "own" the result. As individuals mature in their jobs, opportunities should be provided for added responsibility

6.10. Advancement

Reward loyalty and performance with advancement. When feasible, support employees by allowing them to pursue further education, which will make them more valuable to the organization and more fulfilled professionally.

Sector's (1985:695) definition suggests that job satisfaction is a general or global affective reaction individuals hold about their job. While researchers and practitioners most often measure global job satisfaction, there is also interest in measuring the different "facets".

7. BURNOUT

Mental and physical states of exhaustion have been discussed for centuries, but it was Freudenberg in 1974 that first used the term "burnout" for the mental and physical exhaustion of voluntary workers in various social fields (Bühler & Land, 2004:36). Burnout is an important variable affecting engagement as well as job turnover (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010:90; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2). Some researchers also define it as the opposite of engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:182). Burnout can occur in any profession, but according to studies undertaken by Ross and Fridjhon (1995:265), burnout amongst social workers appears to be particularly high. In their study, it was reported that the average working life of social workers was less than three years.

Van Zyl-Edeling (2006:168) defines burnout as "... the exhaustion or breakdown phase after long-term or intense stress, when the body's reserves are depleted and physical or emotional breakdown happens ... especially if they work in taxing areas involving violence, abuse, and serious illness. However, even the strongest, most experienced, best-trained, and most positive person has a limit to her capacity to deal with stress and could burn out unless protective measures are put in place".

Key researchers in the field of burnout such as Leiter and Maslach (2005:2) define burnout as a "chronic state of being out of synch with your job". A burned out person feels unhappy, exhausted, cynical, and ready to leave or quit their job. Burnout entails a loss of energy, loss of enthusiasm and a loss of confidence. The loss of energy describes the feeling that the job demands more than one can give. The loss of enthusiasm indicates that one is only prepared to give the bare minimum, unwilling to go the extra mile. The original passion for the job is lost. Loss of confidence is linked with the feeling of being not effective and the creation of self-doubt (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:3). The last-mentioned authors view burnout as a "relationship" where the worker and the job are the two parties involved. Preventing and dealing with it should be dealt with accordingly (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2). Thus, burnout reflects an uncomfortable relationship between people and their work. Like relationship problems between two people, those between people and their work usually indicate a bad fit between the two, rather than just individual weaknesses, or just evil workplaces. Reversing burnout requires focusing on individuals and their organizations alike to bring them back into sync with each other (Maslach & Leiter, 2005:42).

The term burnout was mainly linked to the caring professions and was characterised by the breakdown of energy resources and adaptability as a reaction to chronic stress. Mainly three dimensions define burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced feelings of personal accomplishment (Bühler & Land, 2004:35). All three these core dimensions, can be assessed by using the MBI-Human Service Survey (MBI_HSS). A second survey was developed directed at people in the education sector, namely the MBI-Educators Survey (MBI-ESS). A third namely the MBI general survey, was designed for occupations that were not so people orientated. The most central dimension of burnout is exhaustion. According to Maslach *et al.* (2001:403), it is also the most obvious manifestation of burnout. Depersonalization as the second concept is a consequence or result of exhaustion. It is an emotional and cognitive way of distancing one-self from one's work. By trying to put distance between one-self and the needs of service users /providers, an exhausted worker tries to cope with the demands. Exhaustion and depersonalization (cynicism) is likely to cause erosion of the feeling of effectiveness. The lack of efficacy is contributed to the lack of relevant resources while exhaustion and depersonalization develop from the presence of work overload and social conflict. Job satisfaction and burnout are clearly linked (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:403-404).

The impact of burnout is extensive. It is seen as the biggest occupational hazard of this century. It is increasing and affects the economy negatively due to sick time, long-term disability, low productivity, and excessive job-turnover (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:4). It is more than having just a bad day. It is a chronic problem. It can affect job performance, resulting in possible absenteeism, intention to leave the job, actual turnover, lower productivity, and effectiveness at work. It is associated with decreased job satisfaction and reduced commitment to the job or organization. Most importantly it also entails a negative personal impact as the worker loses his joy and job fulfilment. When employees shift to minimum performance, minimum standards of working, and minimum production quality, rather than performing at their best, they make more errors, become less thorough, and have less creativity for solving problems. They are also less committed to the organization and less willing to go the extra mile to make a real difference (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:49).

Burned out workers can also influence colleagues and co-workers negatively. Burnout can result in "spill-over" to their personal and social life. The health of the working population is also influenced due to the stressful nature of the jobs. Physiological symptoms associated with those of prolonged stress can surface. There is also a link between burnout and substance abuse. Psychologically there is a link between burnout, neuroticism, anxiety,

depression, and lower self-esteem. Research argues that a mentally healthy person is better able to cope with prolonged stress and can resist the development of burnout (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:406).

Research done by Leiter and Maslach (2005:44) indicated that most person-job mismatches fall into six categories:

Workload: Workload is too much, too complex, too urgent or too awful.

Control: Problems with authority, influence, lack of decision-making and freedom.

Reward: Problems with recognition, pleasure, and compensation.

Community: Problems in the social community of the job (boss, clients, colleagues).

Fairness: Problems with justice in the workplace.

Values: Mismatch between organizational values and personal values.

Linking in with these aspects is the JD-R model, which also indicates that a high job demand and a lack of resources create the fertile ground for burnout (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010:87). Burnout can thus be seen as not the well-being of the worker, but in contrast the ill-being of the worker. A good understanding of burnout, its dynamics, and what to do to overcome it is therefore an essential part of staying true to the pursuit of a noble cause, and keeping the flame of compassion and dedication burning brightly.

8. STRESS

In this modern and fast-paced world, people are faced with daily challenges and long-term stresses, which can beat down health and harmony to low levels. How we perceive a stress-provoking event and how we react to it determines its impact on health. One can be motivated and invigorated by the events in one's life, or it can be perceived as "stressful" and responded to in a manner that may have a negative effect on physical, mental and social well-being. If it is always responded to in a negative way, health and happiness may suffer. By understanding oneself and the reactions to stress-provoking situations, one can learn to handle stress more effectively.

There are many definitions and opinions regarding the nature of stress. Divergent opinions about the difference between stress, burnout, and tension often also spark heated debates. It is widely accepted in theory that **occupational** stress presupposes burnout (Jonker, 2004:2).

Coleman (2001:711) defines stress as "A psychological and physical strain or tension generated by physical, emotional, social, economic, or occupational circumstances, events or experiences that are difficult to manage or endure". Quick *et al.* (1992:ix) explain "stress is a natural and inevitable characteristic of work and life. It is neither inherently bad nor destructive. It is in fact one of a person's best assets for achieving peak performance and managing legitimate emergencies. However, it does have the potential for turning into distress, or strain, due to a variety of reasons. It is this latter manifestation of stress that is individually and organizationally destructive."

Sue *et al.* (2000:192) emphasize the role of the stressor in their definition of stress as "*...an internal response to a stressor, while the stressor is an external event or situation that places a physical or psychological demand on a person*". The individual's appraisal of the stressor when they define stress as "...internal or external demands that are perceived as exceeding or taxing one's resources" is emphasized by Lazarus and Folkman (1984:19).

Chronic and severe stress can lead to burnout, a psychological syndrome comprising exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced efficacy (Winterbach, 2007:3). Stress depresses the immune system so that stressed individuals are more susceptible to disease and thus more likely to experience physical symptoms (Otis & Pelletier, 2005:2196).

Stress can be both positive and negative. Positive stress is seen as stress that helps us to concentrate, focus, and perform. It often leads to reaching peak efficiency. Negative stress occurs when we stay aroused or excited and we will not or cannot relax after meeting a challenge. Negative stress has been linked to physical ailments from tension headaches to heart attacks (Nash, 2003:34). Too much stress can be harmful and can threaten the professionals' physical and mental health, and place them at risk for injury, behavioural and/or serious health-related problems over time (Arrington, 2008:2).

The pressures and demands that cause stress are known as stressors. Major life events are stressors. Daily hassles and demands that cause stress are: environmental stressors (such as concern about pollution or global warming); family and relationship stressors (such as filing for a divorce or having a special needs child); work stressors (such as not enough time to work on projects or a competitive co-worker); social stressors (peer pressure or status values); and personally self-generated stressors (such as one's financial situation or lack of support).

Work-related stress can be defined as an individual's emotional and physical response to the demands of a job that is incongruent with his or her abilities, resources, or needs (NIOSH, 2008:2). Job stress is not a new phenomenon and currently it is a larger threat to

the health of employees and their well-being than ever in the past. Technology has made many jobs easier on one hand but on the other hand, it has caused information overload, replaced the jobs of humans, and heightened pressures for productivity. Social workers today are often overburdened and work under intense pressure with limited resources. They are expected to conduct interviews and home visits, attend court hearings, and conduct various administrative tasks including but not limited to, entering data into state systems to processing paperwork to ensure that vendors receive timely payments. Social workers have to serve more families with fewer resources. This can lead to overstressed workers (Arrington, 2008:8; Whitaker *et al.*, 2010:1).

8.1. Models on stress

There are different models on stress. Sutherland and Cooper (2000:50) point out that the Dimensions of the Stress Model have six different stressor categories, which are clearly distinguished. A stressor can be defined as those situations that trigger stress.

- Stress inherent in the work.
- Role-based stress.
- Stress related to the changing nature of relationships with people at work.
- Career stress.
- Stress related to organizational structure and climate.
- Stressors associated with the interaction of home and work situations / Circumstances.

Stress is viewed by the model of Torelli and Gmelch (1992:2) as a cyclical process consisting of four phases.

In the first phase, individuals experience certain demands. The types of demands/stressors that people may experience in the first phase of their model on stress are: Role-based stress; Task-based stress, External factors, and conflict resolution.

The second phase of this model is concerned with the interpretation of stress by the individual. A person may experience stress to such a large degree that it may result in ill health. Where an individual feels that he cannot react successfully to the demands, it will result in the experience of stress.

During the third phase, the individual reacts to the stressor being experienced by exercising choices in response to the stress. Here coping strategies will be exercised if it is thought

that they may combat the stress. The specific signs and symptoms of stress vary widely from person to person.

During the fourth stage, the long-term effects of the stress come to the fore. This will include the physiological symptoms of stress such as ulcers, increased blood pressure, headaches, and other physiological reactions. Exposure to long-term stress can result in emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal affectivity.

8.2. Symptoms of stress

Research done by Nash (2003:47-50) reports that common stress symptoms include: insomnia/sleep disorders, Sexual dysfunction, Indigestion/vomiting, Ulcers/diarrhoea, headaches, high blood pressure/heart attack/stroke, chronic illness flu, colds, hives, communicating less, feeling less energetic, experiencing lower productivity, being late more often for work or appointments, excessive use of sick leave, sleep disturbance, appetite disturbance, preoccupied with health and body and decreased wants.

Nash further states that psychological aspects of stress can include feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, hurt, shame, embarrassment and envy. Both the physiological and psychological reactions to stress react upon one another and can complicate the stress experienced. Prolonged or on-going stress can include symptoms such as: isolation from family and friends; drug/alcohol abuse; increase in smoking; depression/anxiety; irritability/rapid mood swings; compulsive eating/dieting; and child/spouse abuse.

Experiencing stress can result in various symptoms. It can range from physiological ailments to behavioural and psychological aspects, which may be more complicated and dangerous to the individual. It could also have a negative spinoff for the economy as more sick leaves will be taken and this in turn could affect productivity. Among social workers providing direct services, fatigue, psychological problems, and sleep disorders were the most commonly reported stress-related health concerns (Arrington, 2008:2).

8.3. Responses to stress and stress management

People's resilience and ability to manage stress and its symptoms depend on their use of strategies to help them: a) cope with stressors, and b) regain a sense of competence and mastery over their situations (Arrington, 2008:7). Gerber *et al.* (1998:492) mention that

people respond to stress in three basic ways: Resistance, avoidance and confrontation or adaptation.

8.3.1. Resistance

In the case of stress originating because of an external source (such as affirmative action), people may respond defensively. This includes resistance and fight to maintain the status quo. This reaction requires a great deal of energy and time and produces on-going stress.

8.3.2. Avoidance

We can bury our heads in the sand and hope whatever is making us feel bad will go away. Overindulgence in alcohol and drugs are a common avoidance technique.

8.3.3. Confrontation / adapting to stress

Adapting to stress could include the use of stress reduction techniques. These stress reduction techniques could include discussion groups, programmes on stress education, relaxation techniques, and physical fitness programmes. Besides the use of these stress reduction techniques, trying to adapt to stress can also include discussing your feelings with a spouse or close friend who can help you to gain perspective and seek professional counselling. This is supported by Arrington's research (2008:7) which indicated that study participants (social workers) living with high levels of stress identified several strategies that aid them in managing the stresses of their day-to-day work. Notably, for social workers of all races/ethnicities, exercise is the leading method for alleviating stress, followed by meditation and therapy.

Stress management programmes that make use of cognitive behavioural therapy, coping skills training or an approach that emphasizes relaxation, imagery, and meditation can be used to manage stress. Problem solving techniques with the incorporation of elements such as a healthy lifestyle, goal setting, and time management are also useful for combating stress (Winterbach, 2007:3). Winterbach (2007:3) further focuses on self-regulating as a way to combat stress, which refers to the processes of attaining and maintaining goals. He compares self-regulation with human beings as agents, as it enables people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times. Although many different theories and models of self-regulation exist, common key self-regulatory processes, used in his study, were goal management, including goal setting and goal execution; adjustment; and self-reflection. Research indicates that effective self-regulation can protect against the detrimental effects of stress

by enabling one to take suitable action to counter the effects of stress (Winterbach, 2007:4). In response to stress, and in order to maintain psychological and physiological homeostasis, social workers invoke different strategies to help them cope (Arrington, 2008:2).

9. JOB TURNOVER/ INTENTION TO LEAVE

Occupational behavioural researchers most often conceptualize turnover as voluntarily leaving a job or as the end of the process of withdrawal from work (Wermeling, 2009:2). Weaver *et al.* (2006:9) notes that the common definition of job turnover is that of workers voluntarily leaving jobs because they have obtained better jobs elsewhere. However, job turnover also includes:

- Workers being fired or not retained after a probationary period.
- Workers leaving the job for personal reasons without necessarily being dissatisfied with the job.
- Workers being transferred to similar positions in other similar agencies.
- Workers being promoted to more responsible positions within the larger human services agency.

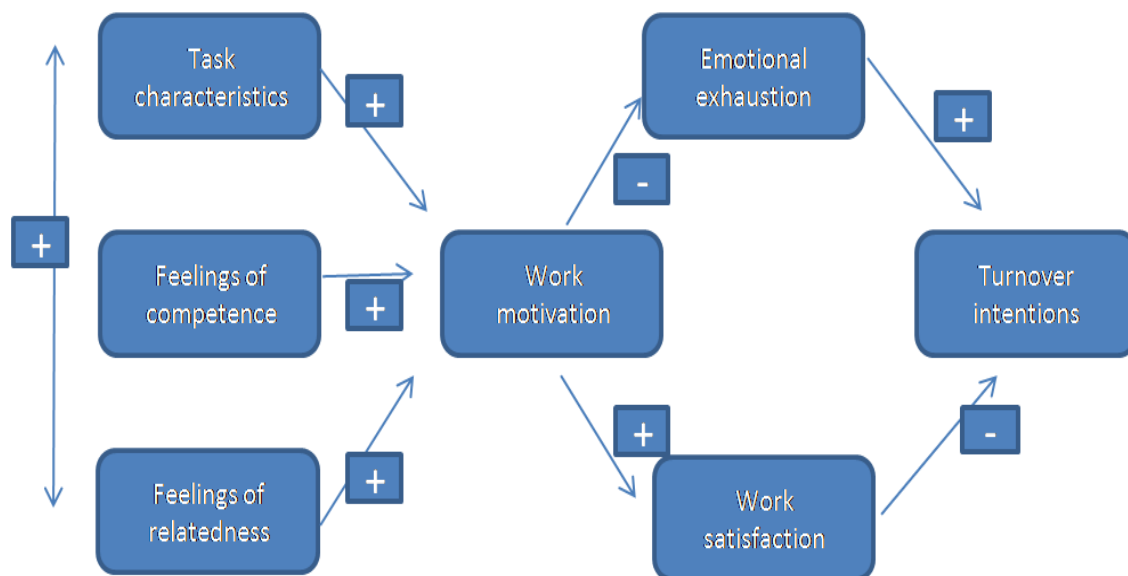
Leaving the job is a complex individual decision, made in social, professional, and economic circumstances. It is difficult to determine all the reasons why workers leave their jobs.

To understand a profession's viability in the market, each profession must understand recruitment, retention, and attrition of its members such as the supply and demand of sufficient professionals to carry out the work of the profession. Work turnover certainly represents one of the most important issues for any organization. Indeed, the money and time invested in hiring and training an individual who leaves the organization is lost forever. Over the years, much research has focused on turnover in the workplace. For instance, research has documented the role of variables such as job satisfaction, perceptions of control, job stress, intentions to leave and absenteeism in predicting turnover behaviour (Richer *et al.*, 2002:2089; Weaver *et al.*, 2006:viii). Richer *et al.* (2002:2089) established that work satisfaction and emotional exhaustion originate from work motivation and lead to turnover intentions. Emotional exhaustion leads to more turnover intention, whereas work satisfaction leads to less turnover intention. Moreover, turnover intention was found to

determine actual turnover behaviour. They used the following motivational sequence as applied to work turnover to describe the relationship presented in Figure 2:

- First, intrinsic job rewards, feelings of job competence, and feelings of relatedness toward work colleagues positively influence self-determined work motivation.
- Second, self-determined work motivation positively affects work satisfaction, but does influence emotional exhaustion negatively.
- In turn, work satisfaction and emotional exhaustion have negative and positive influences, respectively, on turnover intentions.
- Finally, turnover intentions translate into turnover behaviour over time.

Figure 1: Motivational model of work turnover (Richer et al, 2002:2089)



Central to the model of work turnover is the construct *motivation*. Self-determination theory (SDT) is rooted in a set of assumptions about human nature and motivation. Humans are inherently motivated to grow and achieve and will fully commit to and engage in even uninteresting tasks when their meaning and value is understood. SDT focuses on, and nurtures an interest in, the intrinsic importance of work (Stone *et al.*, 2009:3-4). According to SDT, humans have three core psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Satisfying human needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy creates sustainable (enduring) motivation. In the theory, sustainable motivation is called —autonomous, because it emerges from one’s sense of self and is accompanied by feelings of willingness and engagement. Motivation for engaging in an activity can be either self-determined or non-self-determined. A motivation is **self-determined** when an

activity is initiated for autonomous reasons; and its execution is associated with feelings of pleasure, choice, and personal importance. The existence of two major types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, is postulated.

9.1. Intrinsic motivation

This refers to accomplishing one's work for the inherent satisfaction and pleasure one experiences while engaging in it. For instance, individuals might go to work because they like to learn new things related to their jobs. Research showed that intrinsic motivation positively influences work satisfaction, which in turn negatively determines turnover (Richer *et al.*, 2002:2093). Intrinsically motivated employees work for passion, pleasure, and interest. In contrast, integrated regulation occurs when people fully endorse the importance of the work even though they may not find it interesting. Integrated regulation and intrinsic motivation correlate with proactive engagement in work (Stone *et al.*, 2009:7).

9.2. Extrinsic motivation

This refers to engaging in an activity in order to receive something external to the activity. The activity then serves only as a means to an end. Richer *et al.* (2002:2091) indicate that there are three major types of extrinsic motivation namely: external, introjected, and identified regulation. Individuals are externally regulated when the source of control is outside the person. For instance, workers who say they engage in their line of work because of the money or for the benefits can be seen as being externally regulated. With introjected regulation, the individual has only partially internalized previous external pressure or inducement to engage in the activity. The internal pressure now leads the individual to engage in the activity. For instance, workers who go to work because they would feel guilty if they did not can be said to be introjected. Finally, when motivated out of identified regulation, the behaviour is performed out of choice and is valued by the individual as being important. Thus, workers who stay at work on a Friday night because they have chosen to complete a project would display identified regulation. In addition to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, a third motivational concept is necessary in order to provide a more complete account of human behaviour. This concept is termed a-motivation and refers to the relative absence of motivation (neither intrinsic nor extrinsic). Individuals who are a-motivated engage in the activity without a sense of purpose and do not see a relationship between their actions and the consequences of such behaviour. For instance, a-motivated individuals might say that they go to work, although they are not sure if it is worth it (Richer *et al.*, 2002:2091-2092). Self-determined work motivation

(experiencing oneself as the source of one's actions) is associated positively with future intentions to remain in a job and negatively with perceived daily hassles (Otis & Pelletier, 2005:2206).

Whitaker *et al.* (2006:21) undertook a study to determine why organizations struggle to retain social workers. Nearly 30% of respondents intended to leave their current position in the next two years. The factors most frequently cited by social workers that would influence them to change their current position were higher salary (73%); lifestyle and family concerns (52%); more interesting work (37%); and stress of the current job (35%). More importantly, 7.4% indicated they intended to retire or stop working, and another 4.7% indicated they intend to continue working, but leave the social work profession. The study was unclear whether those who intended to leave the profession had similar reasons as those who intended to change positions. However, of the 4.7% that intended to leave the profession, age was not significant, in that all age groups in similar proportion intended to leave the profession. Bad working conditions do not always lead to actual turnover. However, it might lead to intentions that will eventually grow into behaviour.

10. DISCUSSION

Through a literature study, the researcher aimed to answer what affects retention of social workers. Before conclusions could be drawn it was necessary to look at the question of why retaining social workers is important. From the extensive literature study it became clear that:

- A nationwide shortage of social workers is experienced and is expected to become worse (Department of Social Development, 2009:7).
- Social workers are viewed as the key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society.
- High turnover rates in child welfare agencies are a major obstacle to timely investigations, compromising the ability of agencies to protect children.
- The country needs 16 000 social workers to provide over the next three years the services children are entitled to in terms of the Children's Bill (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1).

The retention of social workers will accomplish the following goals:

- Increase the number of qualified social workers.
- Help reduce the shortage of social workers.
- Better meet today's more complex client needs.

- Reduce training and recruitment costs.

It became clear from the literature that:

- General Job satisfaction is strongly related to remaining on the job.
- Self-efficacy – personal motivation is associated with remaining on the job.
- High degree of role conflict was related to leaving the job.
- Presence of stressful job conditions was related to remaining on the job.
- Caseload size is related to turnover.
- Components of “human caring” are importantly predictive and related to retention of child social workers.
- Lack of organizational support strongly associated with higher job stress, burnout and lack of engagement.
- The lack of sufficient resources is linked to burnout, stress and lack of job satisfaction and engagement.
- Burnout is strongly linked to social work turnover.
- Supervisor support and caseworker training have been cited as causes of retention.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Against the background of the aforementioned conclusions, the following recommendations can be formulated regarding further research into social work retention and engagement.

- In retaining social workers for the profession attention needs to be given to enhance the work engagement of social workers.
- Social workers need to be briefed in relation to burnout, its consequences, and the prevention thereof.
- Social work is a stressful occupation and attention needs to be given to enlighten social workers, their supervisors, and organizations to the nature of job stress and its effect on job satisfaction and turnover of social workers.
- The importance of social work resources in preventing burnout, stress and turnover leads to the recommendation that more effort needs to be placed by supervisors, social workers and organizations to develop, and maintain resources necessary to create job satisfaction and engagement of social workers.

12. SUMMARY

This research has clearly documented that there are many recruitment and retention issues of health professionals, including social workers. It appears to be one of the main problems in the South African Welfare system. This is not surprising when the existent literature and studies examining the reasons behind these recruitment and retention issues are looked at. However, while the empirical evidence is scant, there are current discussions for workable and possible effective strategies to alleviate these retention and recruitment issues of social workers. From this research, it can be concluded that social workers are important and they are leaving the profession. Several factors are related to the retention of social workers namely: stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover of social workers. In sum, burnout via stress, job engagement and job satisfaction seem to consistently predict intention to leave and thus turnover of social workers.

In the next article, the researcher will determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.

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ARTICLE 2

NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY SOCIAL WORKERS THAT AFFECT THEIR JOB SATISFACTION, STRESS, AND BURNOUT LEVELS

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OPSOMMING

Maatskaplike werk is as 'n skaarsvaardighedsprofessie verklaar. Die retensie van maatskaplike werkers vir die beroep is 'n belangrike aspek wat dringende aandag geniet. Alvorens daar egter na moontlikhede van retensie gekyk kan word, is dit eers nodig om 'n behoeftebepaling te doen van aspekte wat retensie beïnvloed. In hierdie hoofstuk word die behoeftes rakende die betrokkenheid, beroepsbevrediging, stres, en uitbranding van maatskaplike werkers in die Noordwes provinsie bespreek aan die hand van 'n empiriese en literatuurondersoek.

1. INTRODUCTION

The social work profession has experienced a critical decrease of social workers in South Africa. The retention of social workers is challenging, not only for South Africa but also for many different countries as described in studies conducted in The United States of America

and The United Kingdom (Vermeulen, 2008:1). South Africa has also experienced a drastic shortage of social workers, which has affected many social welfare organizations. According to Adlem (2007:5), many reasons contribute to the high social work turnover. These include poor working conditions; poor compensation of work; lack of resources and support; and increased demands for services. Hence social workers are experiencing work stress, burnout, decreasing job satisfaction and a lack of positive engagement.

The objective of the study was to determine (through a self-constructed questionnaire) what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Work turnover certainly represents one of the most important issues for any organization. Indeed, the money and time invested in hiring and training an individual who leaves the organization is lost forever. There is a serious shortage in social workers caused by the exodus from the profession at an alarming rate and the resultant classification of social work as a “scarce skill”. This has the obvious implication that the current demand for social workers within South Africa is not met in terms of the numbers of social workers currently practicing within the country. Social work aims at enhancing the social functioning and well-being of individuals within society through empowerment, and promoting social change and problem solving within human relationships (Janse van Rensburg, 2009:14).

According to the researcher, the challenges organizations face in recruiting and retaining competent social workers continually challenge practitioners and researchers. So why are they leaving? Why is it so difficult to retain and recruit social workers? Whitaker *et al.* (2006:24) listed the experiences of social workers as being *“increases in paperwork, severity of client problems, caseload size, waiting lists for services, assignment of non-social work tasks, level of oversight, coordination with community agencies, and availability of professional training.”* Most of these increases can be characterized as challenges to effective practice. According to Whitaker *et al.* (2006:24), social workers also report that they experienced decreases in job security, staffing levels (both social worker and other), availability of supervision and, most of all, the levels of reimbursement. Occupational stress can be caused by factors in the internal environment (individual), by the external environment (work/environment) or by the nature of the work (Van Wyk, 2011:6).

At a time of increased accountability and a strong focus on outcomes, it is very important for skilled social workers to be retained and supported to ensure that all children and families receive services that are aligned with both promising and best practices. High turnover rates in social work agencies are a major obstacle to timely investigations, compromising the ability of agencies to protect children. Weaver *et al.* (2006:v) point out that the retention of social workers is an immediate pressing professional and practical concern.

Strolin *et al.* (2007:4) continue to categorize causes for turnover according to three areas: individual factors, supervisory factors, and organizational factors. Individual factors can be defined as causes of turnover that stem from individual worker characteristics such as educational background, professional commitment, and demographics. Organizational factors are those causes of turnover that stem from the organization such as caseload size, job satisfaction, organizational climate and culture, salary, benefits, promotional opportunities, and administrative burdens. Strolin *et al.* (2007:12) further relate that organizational factors such as autonomy, influence over decisions affecting the job, flexibility, caseload size, supervision and professional development opportunities influence social workers' job satisfaction over time. Supervisory factors are defined as the causes of turnover that stem from insufficient supervisor support and competency. Supervisors are part of the workforce, yet are also connected to the administration; therefore, they play an important role in bridging the gap between the individual worker and the organization.

There appears to be a definite link between retention/ turnover and positive engagement of social workers and burnout, stress and job satisfaction. Strolin *et al.* (2007:5) state that turnover in child welfare and other human services attribute to burnout. A member of NASW survey group according to Arrington (2008:1) quoted: "The major challenge of social work is that social workers have too many things on their plates. They cannot possibly do everything they need to do and do it well. Burnout is a main reason people are leaving the profession. We are short-handed as it is..." Eborall and Garmeson (2001:8) maintain that, the stressful and demanding nature of the work and the conflicts created by time pressures are contributing factors taxing the personal and professional coping strategies of social workers and could lead to staff turnover. Ryder (2008:1) explained that skills shortages and high staff turnover reflect the global situation and that organisations have to replace their entire workforce nearly every four years. Moreover, NGOs experience a general shortage of managerial and leadership competencies as well as high costs to recruit and train new staff (Ryder, 2008:1). According to the researcher, it appears that burnout,

stress, job engagement, turnover and job satisfaction are the five aspects, which are mostly focused on, in relation to the retention of social workers for the profession.

This study therefore proposes to examine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction do South African social workers experience in the North-West province. How does work engagement and job satisfaction affect social workers job turnover, their level of burnout and their intention to leave the profession?

3. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

3.1. Specific objective

To achieve the aim of this research, one of the objectives of the research and that of this article is to determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will attempt to clarify whether an intervention programme can assist social workers in reclaiming positive work engagement through a literature and empirical study. In this article, the empirical findings of the needs assessment will be presented. This information will be used as the foundation of the group work programme that has been developed for this research project. The research methodology inclusive of the literature review, research model, respondents, terms, and empirical findings will be briefly described.

4.1. Literature review

An investigation was carried out into the existing literature on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction, and job turnover. Attention was given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The central focus of this study is to develop an intervention programme that can empower the

social worker and contribute to positive work engagement, job satisfaction and the prevention of burnout. The results attained were used in the interpretation of the data.

A wide range of literature was identified and studied, including books, academic studies, government and informal publications and scientific magazines. Literature regarding engagement, burnout, stress, and job satisfaction was readily available although specifically related to social work was limited. Most literature was obtained from related professions including social work, psychology, medicine, nursing, and sociology.

The purpose of the literature review is to gain a high level of current knowledge about the subject; to position the research within a theoretical framework; to clearly define the research problem, objectives and hypothesis; and to define and operationalize the key constructs. For the purpose of this article the following databases were used: NEXUS; Scholarly journal; Social Science Index; Social Work Abstracts; ERIC; RSAT; EbscoHost; PsycLit; Questia online library; Catalogue – Ferdinand Postma Library, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

4.2. Research model

Mouton (2001:55) and Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:89) state that a research design refers to a plan or blueprint of the way a researcher intends to conduct the research. Fouché and De Vos (2005a:132-133) explain that a research design is a guideline according to which we determine the data collection methods. In this article, the intervention model was used. De Vos and Strydom (2011:475) define the **intervention research model** as studies carried out with the aim of “conceiving, creating, and testing innovative human service approaches to preventing or ameliorating problems or to maintain the quality of live”.

In this study, the Design and Development model (D&D) was utilized. The D&D model according to Rothman and Thomas (1994:12) may be conceptualised as a problem-solving process for seeking effective intervention and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties. Rothman and Thomas (1994:9) stipulate six phases of the D&D model. The first and second phases were conducted during this part of the study:

The intervention research model's six phases are:

Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning

Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis

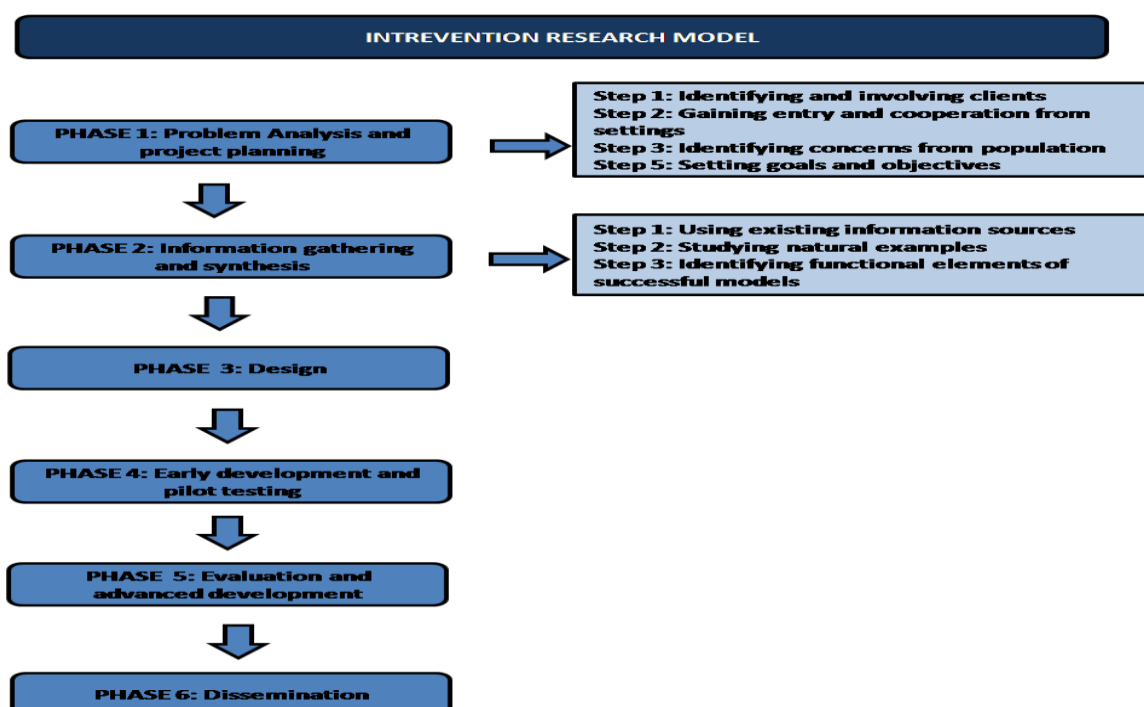
Phase 3: Design

Phase 4: Early development and testing

Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development

Phase 6: Dissemination

Figure 1: The intervention research: model
(Adapted from Rothman and Thomas (1994:28))



The researcher will describe the steps of Phases 1 and 2 of the model and indicate how the theory was applied in practice during each step in this article.

Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning

This phase consisted of several steps as outlined by De Vos and Strydom (2011:477).

Step 1: Identifying and involving clients

In this phase, the researcher chooses a population with whom to collaborate. A population is selected whose issues are of current or emerging interest to the society. The researcher, together with the population, identifies the specific targets and goals of the intervention. In this case, the population was social workers of the North-West province, both male and female.

- **Step 2: Gaining entry and cooperation from settings**

Conversations with key informants help the researcher understand what they have to offer and how to articulate the benefits for potential participants. Successful intervention researchers form a collaborative relationship with representatives of the setting by involving them in identifying problems, and in planning and implementing selected interventions. The researcher informed and involved social workers from different occupational settings by involving them in identifying problems, and in planning the interventions.

- **Step 3: Identifying concerns of the population**

Once the setting has been accessed, the researcher attempts to understand the issues of importance to the population. Qualitative and quantitative data on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers was gathered with this design. Information on what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover and the intention to leave the profession were gathered through exploratory research. These findings will enable the researcher to address the needs by means of an intervention programme.

The survey method was used in order to obtain quantitative and qualitative data (Strydom, 2003:116-133). This entails a research method according to which data is collected from a selected sample survey to describe the opinions or traits of that particular population (New dictionary of social work, 1995:47).

By using a self-structured questionnaire **(Addendum: 1)** the opinions of social workers were obtained to determine and evaluate work engagement, job satisfaction, job stressors, burnout, and unmet job expectations. Areas were identified by the respondents, which needed development in order to enable them to regain positive work engagement in their profession.

- **Step 4: Analysing identified problems**

The researcher analyses the problems of the social workers as well as aspects that need to be further explored. The researcher also analyses the literature. Social work has become a scarce skill because social workers cannot be recruited or retained in the profession. This causes a problem for the organizations and for the clients who are dependent on the social services. It appears that burnout, stress, disengagement and loss in job satisfaction affect the retention of social workers. Workload, lack of support, time management and

other factors contribute to the negative feelings with regard to burnout, stress, and disengagement (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:479). In this article the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, quantitatively analysed data collected from the questionnaire, while the researcher clustered the qualitative data according to the most interesting view, themes, and data belonging to separate categories.

Step 5: Setting goals and objectives

Goals refer to the outcomes that are desired by the community of interest (in this case participating social workers) while objectives refer to those specific changes in programmes, policy or practices that are believed to contribute to the broader goal (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:479). The aims of the programme or intervention are clarified by the goals and objectives set, and give clear structure and guidelines. Objectives give concrete steps on how to manifest concepts and theories. The objectives were linked to the design and format of the survey that was later distributed to the social workers.

The goal in this research was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers through an empowerment programme. One of the objectives were to determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intention to leave the profession.

Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis

Rothman and Thomas (1994:31-32) state that when planning an intervention research project it is essential to discover what others have done to understand and address the problem. The key activities in the research according to this phase were:

Step 1: Using the existing information sources

A thorough literature research identified concerns of the population involved. Data on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers was gathered through an intensive literature study.

Step 2: Studying natural examples

Further information on what the degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover and the intention to leave the profession was also studied.

Step 3: Identifying the functional elements of successful models.

The researcher studied existing models and programmes in order to determine what could be useful elements for an intervention. This data was linked to the data gathered in Phase 1 to formulate the content for the planned empowerment programme.

4.3. Research design

In this research, the experimental design was applied using quantitative data collection methods.

Quantitative research focuses on the use of surveys and measuring instruments. The interpretation of collected data forms part of qualitative research. According to Fouché and Schurink (2011:325) qualitative data analysis is searching for generalizations and relationships, building structure and making sense of accumulated data. In this research, quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used (Delpont & Fouché, 2011:435). Although this research did not include a rich collection of qualitative data it does meet, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:11-12), the minimum criteria spelled out in their definition of qualitative research. Thus, it can be classified as the mixed method approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007: 12). **In general for this research**, the exploratory mixed methods research design was used, with specific usage of the exploratory and descriptive methods in the first phases of the research and the experimental method in the quantitative phases (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007:11-12) Mixed methods research according to Delpont and Fouché (2011:434), *"is a combination of at least one qualitative and at least one quantitative component in a single research project or programme"*.

The quantitative method often employs measuring instruments. Measurement instruments also refer to questionnaires and scales (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:171). During the needs assessment in phase two (Information gathering and synthesis) a self-developed questionnaire was used containing open as well as closed-ended questions.

Neuman (2000:23) states that the basic research provides a foundation for knowledge and understanding. Applied research, however, is aimed at solving specific policy problems of helping practitioners in accomplishing tasks. It is focused on solving problems in practice (Neuman, 2000:23). In this study, the applied research is used to develop a planned intervention programme with social workers and supervisors to teach them how to deal with problems in their natural work environment. Applied research can be either descriptive or

exploratory. A combined approach between the exploratory and descriptive research design was implemented during the first two phases of the research model used (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008:21).

Descriptive research focuses on the “how and why” questions, according to Fouché and De Vos (2011:96). This descriptive research will be conducted to describe work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout in more detail. The exploratory research design is conducted to gain insight into the problem, situation, or phenomenon (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95). It is further used to identify reasons why something might occur. Exploratory research is an initial research, which analyses the data and explores the possibility of obtaining as many relationships as possible between different variables without knowing their end-applications. It provides the basis for general findings (Panneerselvam, 2004:6). Exploratory research was used in order to determine why social workers are under stress or feel burnt out. This design is used especially in the beginning phases where one needs to be acquainted with the situation and where the basic research goal is to obtain more information.

4.4. Respondents

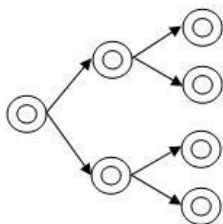
Snowball sampling was used in this research, as this method is a non-probability sampling technique used by researchers to identify potential subjects in studies where subjects are hard to locate (Castillo, 2009:1). Researchers use this sampling method if the sample for the study is limited to a very small subgroup of the population. The North-West province is a vast and extended area and the research covered most of the area stretching from Potchefstroom up to Mahikeng and Christiana. For this reason, the snowball sampling method was a better choice in order to reach more subjects. This type of sampling technique works like chain referral. After observing the initial subject, the researcher asks for assistance from the subject to help identify people with a similar trait of interest (Castillo, 2009:1).

4.4.1. Types of snowball sampling

Castillo (2009:1) identifies three types of snowball sampling:

- Linear Snowball Sampling (The initial respondents to a survey recruit others for a survey).

- Exponential Non-Discriminative Snowball Sampling (The first chosen subject refers to multiple subjects, and all of these multiple subjects are chosen as the next subject).



- Exponential Discriminative Snowball Sampling (Where among the multiple referrals by the primary subjects at each level, only one is chosen as the subject of research).

In this research, the Exponential Non-Discriminative Snowball Sampling was used as social workers contacted referred other social workers in their either organization or known to them, to link in with the research. This sampling was selected, as it was difficult to get respondents to complete the questionnaire. In order to have a larger respondent group more effort needed to be made to reach more social workers. Especially in towns not known to the researcher, it was difficult to locate the social workers and other social workers who knew of them, referred them.

By means of this method, **ninety questionnaires were distributed** to social workers from the North-West province that were practising social work. **Sixty Questionnaires were received back.** Social workers from the following institutions in the North-West province were approached: NG Welsyn, Child Welfare, South African Women Federation (SAWF), Correctional Services, South African Police Force and the Department of Social Development, Department of Health, Ondersteuningsraad, Department of Defence, Department of Education, Child Line, North-West University and SANPARK. The focus of the questionnaires was job satisfaction of the social workers in practice as well as their stress and burnout levels.

4.5. Measuring instruments

For purposes of this study a survey, also known as a needs assessment, was conducted in the first phase (Royse, 2004:177). Data was collected by means of a personally completed self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire (**Addendum: 1**) consisted of three sections. The first part, Section A, was based on biographical information. The second part, Section B, contained closed questions. A Likert rating scale was used for these closed-ended questions. The common feature of rating scales is to measure individuals,

objects, or events on various traits or characteristics, at a point on a continuum or an ordered set of response categories (Grinnell & Unrau, 2005:118). The third part, Section C, consisted of open as well as closed-ended questions focussing on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers (Rossouw, 2003:186; Strydom, 2003:116). The respondents identified areas that needed development in order to enable them to regain positive work engagement.

The questionnaire was pre-tested and revisited with four social workers before final use. According to Schurink *et al.* (2011:397), data gathering is the process of structuring and assigning meaning to a mass of collected data. The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University Potchefstroom Campus, documented data collected from the closed-ended questions. The qualitative data collected by the open-ended questions were analysed by hand by the researcher. This means that the responses of the respondents are documented word for word in the report.

4.6. Data analysis

The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, quantitatively analysed data by means of suitable computer packages, including SAS, STATISTICA en SPSS. The data from the open-ended questions in this study was analysed by means of Tesch's approach (Poggenpoel, 1998:343-344) and reported in the form of narratives. Kruger *et al.* (2005:217-219) point out that professional research can be analysed manually or by computer. Data was sorted to reflect the most interesting view, arranged into topics, and data belonging to each separate category were correspondingly clustered together in one group according to themes (Creswell, 2003:153-155; Schurink *et al.*, 2011:402).

4.7. Ethical aspects

Ethical permission for conducting this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). This study also complied with ethical standards as set out by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP). Respondents participated on a voluntary basis. Cultural differences were respected and dealt with in a professional manner. The rights of the respondents and the responsibilities of the researcher ethically bound this research (Strydom, 2005:57).

Permission to undertake this project was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University and the ethical number NWU-00091-10-A1 was allocated (Addendum: 4).

- **Informed consent**

Verbal informed consent was obtained from the social workers who participated in this research and all the aspects of the research were explained to both parties before participation (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:77; Strydom, 2005:59) **(Addendum: 7)**.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Confidentiality was also maintained by carefully explaining the general aim of the study and procedures to be followed. The questionnaires were completed anonymously and the names of the individuals were not disclosed. The data collected was kept in a file and locked up in a cabinet in the social worker's office. The researcher is a registered social worker at the SA Council for Social Service Professions (Babbie, 2004:64-67; Van Zyl-Edeling & Pretorius, 2005:107-113). Participation was collectedly voluntary.

5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

5.1. Work engagement

Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002:74). When individuals feel engaged at work, a series of benefits tend to ensue. One of which is that turnover of employees is reduced. Individuals who are engaged are very energetic, dedicated, and absorbed at work, primarily because they enjoy their role, which ultimately tends to improve their wellbeing (Moss, 2009:1).

5.2. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs (Spector, 1997:2). It can affect absenteeism and staff turnover and overall well-being, work productivity and work effort (Cabrita & Perista, 2007:2; Syptak *et al.*, 1999:26).

5.3. Stress

"Stress is the result of an imbalance between the level of demand placed on people, as they perceive it, and their perceived capability to meet the demands." (Selye, 1956:15.) Work stress, job stress and occupational stress are often used interchangeably, and linked to job turnover (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5). Stress can be defined as the state or condition that develops when energy is required to meet the physical, social, psychological, and emotional demands of one's environment (Dewe, 1987:490; Verwey, 1996:102-107). When taking this into the workplace, specifically which of the social worker, this stress can be described as occupational stress as it is "subject to the rigours of the role as social worker" (Clegg, 2001:102).

5.4. Burnout

According to Van Zyl-Edeling (2005:168) burnout can be defined as "... the exhaustion or breakdown phase after long-term or intense stress, when the body's reserves are depleted and physical or emotional breakdown happens ... especially if they work in taxing areas involving violence, abuse, and serious illness. However, even the strongest, most experienced, best-trained, and most positive person has a limit to her capacity to deal with stress and could burn out unless protective measures are put in place". Burnout is an important variable affecting engagement as well as job turnover (Hakanen & Roodt, 2010:90; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2).

6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The questionnaire consisted of three sections, namely A, B, C, and was distributed to ninety social workers in the North-West province. Sixty questionnaires were completed. The response rate thus was 66.7%.

6.1. Details of respondents (Section A)

Ninety (90) social workers of the North-West province of South Africa were involved in this study. Sixty (60) Questionnaires were hand delivered back from social workers currently in practice (thus a response rate of 67%). The number of social workers (respondents) per office varied and can be reported as follows:

Table 1: Distribution of respondents

ORGANIZATION	N	%
South African Police Service	13 social workers	21.7%
NG Welsyn	4 social workers	6.7%
South African Women Federation SAVF	5 social workers	8.3%
Department of Health	5 social workers	8.3%
Department of Education	2 social workers	3.3%
Department of Correctional services	2 social workers	3.3%
Department of Social development	14 social workers	23.3%
Child Welfare	3 social workers	5%
SANPARK	5 social workers	8.3%
Ondersteuningsraad	1 social workers	1.7%
Child line	3 social workers	5%
University	1 social worker	1.7%
Department of Defence	2 social workers	3.3%
TOTAL	N=60	100%

6.2. Section A: Biographical data

Biographical information was obtained in the first section of the questionnaire (Section A). The biographical information is presented to provide a biographical profile of the sample used in the project. The data is discussed according to the structure of the questionnaire. The following section deals with the analysis of the quantitative results.

6.2.1. General biographical details

In this section, information in relation to age, gender, language, qualifications, family set-up, race experience, and highest qualification was obtained. It can be summarized as follows:

Table 2: Biographical detail summary

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS				
THEME		F	%	N
AGE	Under 25	11	18,3%	N=60
	Between 26-30	11	18,3%	
	Between 31-40	18	30%	
	Between 41-50	10	16.7%	
	Over 50	7	11.7%	
	Missing	3	5%	
GENDER	Male	7	11.7%	N=60
	Female	50	83.3%	
	Missing	3	5%	
HOME LANGUAGE	Afrikaans	33	55%	N=60
	English	1	1.7%	
	Setswana	18	30%	
	isiXhosa	2	3.3%	
	Other	4	6.7%	
	Missing	2	3.3%	
QUALIFICATIONS	Dipl (SW)	2	3.3%	N=60
	BA(SW)	41	68.3%	
	MA(SW)	7	11.7%	
	DPhil	2	3.3%	
	Other- Please specify	6	10%	
	Missing	2	3.3%	
FAMILY SET-UP	Married with children	25	41.7%	N=60
	Married without children	5	8.3%	
	Divorced with children	1	1.7%	
	Unmarried with children	13	21.7%	
	Unmarried without children	15	25%	
	Missing	1	1.7%	
RACE	Black	24	40%	N=60
	White	31	51.7%	
	Coloured	3	5%	
	Indian	1	1.7%	
	Missing	1	1.7%	
YEARS EXPERIENCE	Less than 3 years	14	23.3%	N=60
	Between 3-5	9	15%	
	Between 6-10	12	20%	
	Between 11-15	11	18.3%	
	more than 20	13	21.7%	
	Missing	1	1.7%	

6.2.2. Age

From the table it can be deduced that 11 (18.3%) respondents were under the age of 25, 11 (18.3%) were between 26 and 30 years, 18 (30%) were between 31 and 40 years, 10 (16.7%) between 41 and 50 years and 7 (11.7%) over the age of 50. 3 (5%) people did not indicate their age. The average age of respondents was 36 years. The ages of the respondents were equally distributed, but with the highest number of respondents within the 31-40 year age group, with the majority under the age of 40. This coincides with research done by Earle (2008:26-27). The researcher supports Earle's concern that this age distribution indicates the lack of retention of social workers in the labour market (2008:30).

6.2.3. Gender

According to Maslach *et al.* (2001:411), gender is not a strong predictor for job burnout. In some studies, job burnout is greater among females. In other studies it is greater among males and some researchers indicate that there is no significant difference whatsoever between the genders. Of the respondents, 50 (83.3%) were female, while 7 (11.7%) were male. 3 (5%) members did not provide an answer. This is also supported by Earle's (2008:23) findings, which reveal that social workers are overwhelmingly female and that the South African welfare service is a female-dominated service industry.

6.2.4. Language and Race

Of the respondents 33 (55%) were Afrikaans speaking, 1 (1.7%) was English speaking and 24 (40%) were speaking Setswana, isiXhosa and other languages. 2 (3.3%) did not indicate their language. This corresponds merely with the race distribution of 24 (40%) black, 31 (51.7%) white, 3 (5%) coloured, 1 (1.7%), Indian. 1 (1.7%) did not provide an answer.

6.2.5. Qualifications

41 (68.3%) respondents' highest qualification was a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, 7 (11.7%) had a Master's Degree, 2 (3.3%) a Doctoral degree and 3% were qualified with a Diploma in Social Work. 2 (3.3%) did not indicate the nature of their qualifications and 6 (10%) indicated another type of education, but not what kind of education. It was the initial opinion of the researcher that qualifications affect resilience regarding stress, burnout, and job satisfaction as lack of knowledge impacts negatively on these factors. Increasing knowledge and training will improve "know-how" and feeling of being in control, but some

studies indicate that people with higher educational levels experience more job burnout. “Perhaps, they are more exposed to burnout due to their heavier responsibilities or because of their higher expectations” (Maslach *et al.*, 2001:410).

6.2.6. Family set-up

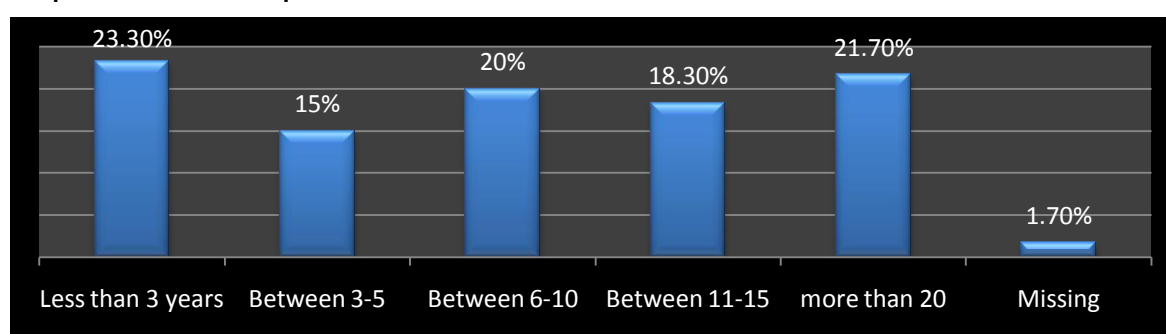
23 (38.3%) respondents were married with children, 5 (8.3%) were married without children, 1 (1.7%) was divorced with children, 15 (25%) were unmarried with children while a further 15 (25%) were unmarried without children. There was 1 (1.7%) who did not answer the question. Respondents marital status was nearly equally distributed.

6.2.7. Work experience

The researcher agrees with Layne (2001:18) that with years of experience come developed coping skills and numerous training sessions, which would enhance the resilience against stress and burnout.

Graph 1: Social work experience

N=60



There were 36 (60%) respondents who had more than 5 years of experience while 14 (23.3%) had less than 3 years' experience. Another 9 (15%) had between 3-5 years' experience. The average work experience of workers was 11.5 years. Thus, social workers with more years' experience would be slightly more resilient than newly qualified social workers.

6.2.8. Organizational set-up

Respondents were asked which organization they were currently employed at. Of the respondents, 12 (20%) were employed with NGO's, 14 (23%) of the social workers were employed by the South African Police Service, and 14 (23%) were employed at the Department of Social Development. There were 18 (30%) employed at other organizations including the Departments of Health, of Defence and of Education. Another 2 (3.3%) were

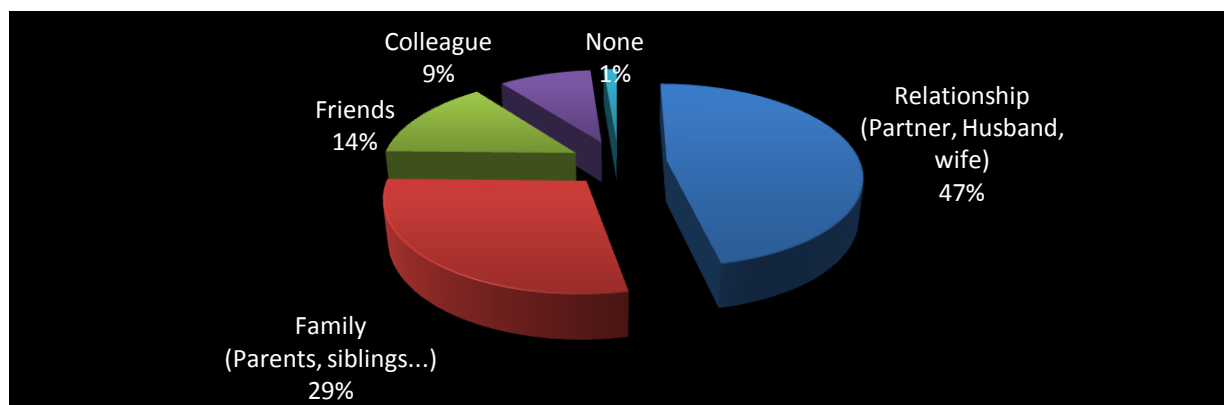
employed at the Department of Correctional Services. The governmental institutions thus employed the majority. In conjunction with the previous question, the respondents were asked which work set-up they would prefer (more than one could be indicated). Of the respondents, 15 (22.4%) indicated that their preferred work set-up would be Occupational Social Work. Another 12 (17.9%) indicated Educational Social Work, 8 (11.9%) indicated Child and Family Social Work and 7 (10.4%) indicated Forensic Social Work. Four (6%) indicated that their preferred work set-up would be private practice, while 14 (20.9%) indicated NGO's and only 7 (10.4%) chose Child and Family Social Work as a preferred occupational setting. It appears that the larger group of social workers preferred a different employment set-up as that which they currently experience. Being unhappy or dissatisfied in one's job could lead to social work turnover, disengagement and burnout. Other job opportunities, change in personal status, education, and work satisfaction all contribute to the rate of turnover for an organization. High rates of turnover deter service improvement and absorb resources that might be applied to task improvement (Yoon & Kelly, 2008:30). It is the researcher's opinion that being unhappy and/or unsatisfied at work can result in disengagement and eventually job turnover.

6.2.9. Main support network

Scott (2001:1) indicates the importance of support networks for care-giving professions, especially in relation to preventing burnout. Klopper (2004:47) further mentions that emotional support by friends, colleagues and family as a buffer can act against the effects and consequences of work stress. For this reason, the respondents were asked who their primary support network is. More than one answer could be provided.

Graph 2: Main support network

N=60



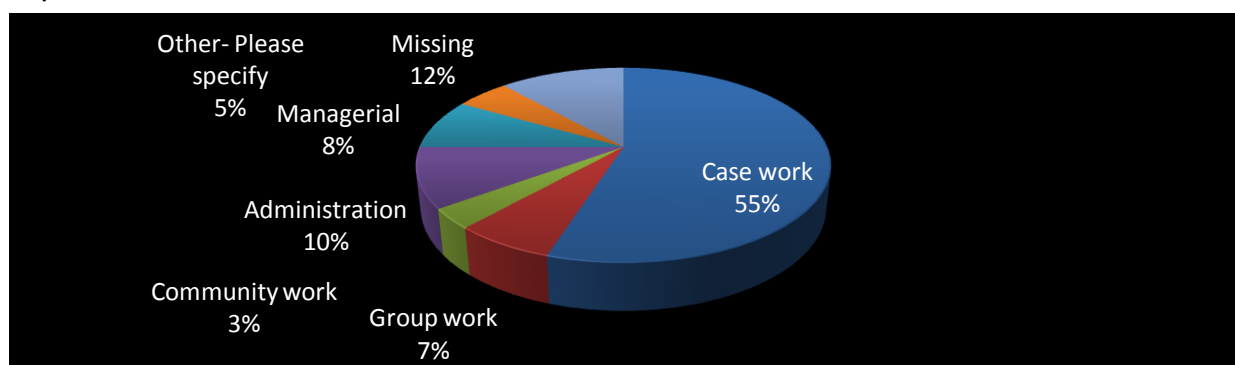
Only 1 (1%) respondent indicated that no support network was available. There were 36 (47%) respondents who indicated that their relationship with their partner, husband or wife as well as family were their main support network. There were a further 22 (29%) respondents who indicated their family (parents and siblings) as their most appreciated support. Another 11 (14%) indicated their friends were their main support while 7 (9%) felt their colleagues were their main support. Social work place support accounted for approximately 17% of the variance in job satisfaction and 9% of the variance in job tenure, and has been identified as a predictor of job satisfaction and other positive outcomes (Harris *et al.*, 2007:150). The *source* of support may be a supervisor, mentor, or colleague; the *content* of the support may include information, appraisal, assistance with tasks, or emotional support.

6.2.10. Work distribution during the day

Respondents were asked to indicate with which task they spend the most time at their current work.

Graph 3: Work distribution

N=60



Of the respondents, 33 (55%) indicated that most of their time spent at work was with casework for families, children and adults. 4 (6.7%) indicated that most of their time at work was spent doing group work. Another 6 (10%) indicated that administration took the bulk of their working hours, while 2 (3.3%) indicated community work and 5 (8.3%) indicated managerial duties, including supervision, took most of their time at work. 3 (5%) indicated other tasks while 7 (11.7%) did not indicate anything. Layne's (2001:28) research found that the practice setting in which a person was employed was not found to have a significant relationship with stress, strain, coping resources, or turnover intentions.

6.2.11. Medication usage for stress, anxiety or depression related illnesses

Respondents were asked whether they had used any medication in the last six months for stress, anxiety, or depression. 45 (75%) of the respondents indicated that they have not used (within the last 6 months) any medication for stress, anxiety or depression-related illnesses, while 14 (23.3%) had. Only 1 (1.7%) did not provide an answer. Social workers are considered an occupational group at above-average risk levels for burnout. Koeske and Koeske (1989:243) suggest that a continuing condition of high stress places the social worker at risk for emotional exhaustion. If the stress is not improved, the social worker may experience a loss of spirit, plan to leave the job, or develop psychological and physiological symptoms including depression. The 21% that indicated that they have used medication for stress-related issues indicated that nearly a fifth of social workers might be prone to burnout or contemplating job turnover.

It can be concluded that the average respondent was a female between ages 30 and 40 years, working mainly with children, families, and adults. She had an average of 11.5 years of work experience.

Maslach *et al.* (2001:57) indicate from their studies that variables of age, gender, marital status, and educational level **do not influence (moderate)** the relationship between job burnout and organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to leave.

6.3. Section B: Quantitative questions

Section B consisted of 39 self-developed closed-ended questions (**Addendum: 1**) on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers. Closed-ended questions combined with a Likert rating scale reflected the quantitative method. This "numerical scale that accompanies each question typically presents a range of response alternatives from very positive to very negative" (Gravetter & Forzano, 2003:100). The respondents were able to choose between five possible answers: 20% of the time (1), 40% of the time (2) 60% of the time (3) 80% of the time (4) and 100 % (5) of the time. Table 2 indicates the results of section B in relation to the respondents' burnout, positive engagement, and job satisfaction. All sixty (60) respondents filled in the questionnaire but not all of them filled in all the questions. Four members, although they filled out section A and C did not fill in section B. The questions included in Section B were analysed but due to space limitations discussion will be provided only on those **15 questions at the higher and lower end of the continuum, and those the researcher felt had specific relevance to the study.**

Table 3: Descriptive statistics		Descriptive Statistics				N= 60
NO	Question	F	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
qb1	Social work is a real plus in my life.	52	1.00	5.00	3.5577	.99830
qb2	As a social worker, I am doing what I always dreamed of doing.	55	1.00	5.00	3.3636	1.11162
qb3	I love my work as a social worker.	56	1.00	5.00	3.6071	1.09010
qb4	I feel valued at work.	55	1.00	5.00	3.0182	1.13024
qb5	I feel appreciated at work.	55	1.00	5.00	2.9455	1.11252
qb6	I feel involved in decisions that affect our organizational community.	55	1.00	5.00	2.7636	1.10493
qb7	Creativity/Innovation is supported in our organization.	55	1.00	5.00	2.9636	1.21661
qb8	I have the resources I need in order to do my work.	56	1.00	5.00	3.1071	1.07329
qb9	I have the opportunity to do what I do best at work.	54	1.00	5.00	3.1296	.99140
qb10	I am satisfied with my salary.	56	1.00	5.00	2.8393	1.12455
qb11	I am satisfied with my benefits.	56	1.00	5.00	2.8036	1.05175
qb12	I am satisfied with the connection between pay and performance.	56	1.00	5.00	2.6607	1.03180
qb13	Have you experienced recently (within the last six months) an increase in the use of addictive substances (Alcohol, Cigarettes, Drugs, Medicine?	56	1.00	4.00	1.3750	.82158
qb14	Have you recently (within the last six months) experienced reduced work performance?	56	1.00	5.00	2.2857	1.13961
qb15	Have you recently (within the last six months) experienced higher levels of absenteeism/sick leave?	56	1.00	4.00	1.3929	.75507
qb16	I get the opportunity to attend job-related seminars or continued education on practice issues.	56	1.00	5.00	2.9286	1.27717
qb17	I experience job-related <u>support</u> from co-workers/peers.	54	1.00	5.00	3.4630	1.09394
qb18	I want to leave my current job as social worker.	55	1.00	5.00	2.4182	1.42323
qb19	New skills or knowledge can change my attitude towards social work positively.	55	1.00	5.00	3.5818	1.21245
qb20	I am satisfied with my workload in general.	55	1.00	5.00	2.9091	1.19059
qb21	I am satisfied with the flexibility of my working hours in general.	55	1.00	5.00	3.2727	1.25395
qb22	I am satisfied with my physical working environment in general.	55	1.00	5.00	3.2909	1.14944
qb23	I am satisfied with my opportunities for promotion in general.	54	1.00	5.00	2.2222	1.20794
qb24	I am satisfied with the communication with my supervisor in general.	54	1.00	5.00	3.6852	1.19471
qb25	I am satisfied with my supervisor's management capabilities in general.	54	1.00	5.00	3.5926	1.17391
qb26	I am satisfied with my supervisor's active involvement in my career development in general.	55	1.00	5.00	3.2364	1.23174
qb27	I am satisfied with my overall relationship with my supervisor.	55	1.00	5.00	3.6909	1.15266
qb28	I am satisfied with my relationship with my peers in general.	56	2.00	5.00	3.7321	.70042
qb29	I am satisfied with my relationship with my clients in general.	56	1.00	5.00	3.6786	.87609
qb30	I am overall satisfied with my job.	56	1.00	5.00	3.2143	1.09069
qb31	I feel engaged with my job.	56	1.00	5.00	3.3571	1.11890
qb32	I experience my work as challenging.	54	1.00	5.00	3.4815	1.04142
qb33	I experience my work as stimulating.	56	1.00	5.00	3.2679	1.08697
qb34	I have the opportunity to share best practices with other social workers/professionals.	56	1.00	5.00	3.1964	1.06889
qb35	I can measure success in my work.	55	1.00	5.00	3.1455	.86961
qb36	I believe I am a competent social worker.	56	2.00	5.00	4.1250	.74009
qb37	I have <u>enough energy</u> for activities besides work.	56	1.00	5.00	3.1250	.99201
qb38	I have <u>other</u> stimulating activities besides work.	55	1.00	5.00	3.4000	1.02920
qb39	I believe I can make a difference in my client's life.	56	1.00	5.00	4.0357	.87312

6.3.1. I feel valued at work(q4) / I feel appreciated at work(q5) (F=55, N=60)

Factors positively associated with projected long-term tenure in the social work field revolve around the issues of being valued, feeling safe and being treated fairly (Fitts, 2006:ii). In this study, 16 (26.7%) of respondents felt less than 40% of the time valued and appreciated while 39 (65%) of the respondents felt they were appreciated and valued more than 60% of the time. 5 (8.3%) of respondents did not answer the question. In this case it seems that more than half of the social workers in North-West province felt valued and appreciated while nearly 27% felt appreciated only less than 40% of the time. Being valued, receiving praise and positive feedback are important aspects of job satisfaction (Collins, 2008:1181).

Job satisfaction can lead to enhancing the social worker's role within the organization, and reducing absenteeism, increasing retention, and increasing quality of services offered to clients, while dissatisfaction could lead to the opposite. Research concerning job satisfaction studies has proven that the more satisfied an employee is with his/her job, the less likely employees will contemplate turnover (Farmer, 2011:1).

It is the researcher's opinion that attention needs to be given to the 27% of social workers who do feel undervalued and unappreciated, as these workers would contemplate leaving their profession.

6.3.2. I feel involved in decisions that affect our organizational community (q6)(F=55, N=60)

When employees are more active in decision-making they feel more engaged, which leads to higher satisfaction and lower turnover rates (Peltier & Dahl, 2009:10). In this study, 22 (36.7%) of the respondents felt they were less than 40% of the time involved in decision making that affects their organizational community. There were 33 (55%) who felt that they were involved 60% or more of the time. Only 5 (8.3%) of the respondents did not answer this question. Again, more than a third of the respondents felt not involved in decision making which correlates with the feeling of not being appreciated and valued in the organisation.

6.3.3. Creativity/Innovation is supported in our organization (q7)(F=55, N=60)

On this question, 23 (38.3%) respondents indicated that their organization was supporting creativity and innovation only less than 40% of the time. Another 32 (53.3%) recorded that their organization supported creativity and innovation 60% and more of the time. Only 5

(8.3%) did not answer the question. More than a third of the respondents were not supported in their creativity and innovation ideas. Creative work environment was found to be a good predictor of participants' job satisfaction and creative self-efficacy level (Chan, 2000:60). Stimulating creativity and innovation could increase the job satisfaction and engagement of the social workers. Creativity in social work is needed to find new innovative solutions to problems, to move with the times. More support will flow to organizations showing more passion, creativity, energy, and drive (Liang, 2007:1). It is the researcher's opinion that creativity and innovation stimulates energy and dynamics within social workers as well as in their organizations. Colour, new fresh ideas and doing things differently banishes boringness and repetitive behaviour that could cause job dissatisfaction and lessen engagement.

6.3.4. I have the resources I need in order to do my work (q8)(F=56, N=60)

Studies have consistently shown that job resources are positively associated with work engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:185). Most of the respondents, namely 42 (70%) in this research, indicated that they have the resources they need to do their work 60% and more of the time. There were 14 respondents (23.3%) who indicated that they have the resources less than 40% of the time. There were 4 (6.7%) who did not provide an answer to the question. Social resources, such as work social support, and personal resources, might prevent work overload and prevent burnout (Gray-Stanley, 2011:1). Knowledge, supervision, financial resources, and promotional opportunities are resources particular affecting engagement and job satisfaction in this research.

6.3.5. I am satisfied with my salary (q10)/ I am satisfied with my benefits(q11)/ I am satisfied with the connection between pay and performance(q12)/ I am satisfied with my opportunities for promotion in general(q23). (F=54, F=56 N=60)

Factors that increase job satisfaction among social workers include satisfaction with salary. Job satisfaction decreases for social workers who have a poor salary (Cole *et al.*, 2004:2). Feeling taken advantage of is correlated with a lower level of job satisfaction but is not correlated with intention to leave the social work field (Fitts, 2006:iii). Most of the respondents were only 60% or less satisfied with their salary levels, benefits or connection between pay and performance.

Fitts (2006:iii) in their research mention that they found the best predictor for job satisfaction was promotional opportunities. The best predictor for changing jobs was low

financial reward. An alarming 21 (35%) respondents were 20% or less of the time satisfied with their opportunities for promotion. Another 11 (18.3%) were only 40% of the time satisfied with their promotional opportunities while 22 (36.7%) respondents indicated their satisfaction for 60% or more of the time. Six (10%) respondents did not answer the question. Another 20 (33.3%) were happy with their salary 40% or less of the time. There were 36 (60%) respondents who indicated that they were satisfied 60% or more of the time with their salary. Four (6.7%) did not answer the question. Hence, one third of the social workers were unhappy with their salary and they were unhappy with their promotional opportunities. Again, this would suggest that a third of the respondents in this research were at risk of leaving the profession.

6.3.6. Have you recently (within the last six months) experienced reduced work performance? (q14)

Fourie (2004:2) mentions burnout included withdrawing from social contact outside of work, work holism, having a quick temper, suspiciousness, rigidity, cynicism, overconfidence, alcoholism, stubbornness, paranoia, and/or feelings of omnipotence. A burnt-out person may also experience headaches, fatigue, exhaustion, insomnia, and/or gastrointestinal disturbances; loss of commitment at work; exhaustion; fatigue and boredom; inappropriate attitudes towards clients and self, role conflict and total emotional and physical exhaustion. Of the respondents, 19 (31.7%) indicated that they experienced reduced work performance only 20% of the time, while an alarming 25 (41.7%) respondents experienced reduced work performance 60% or more of the time. This would indicate that although social workers are generally satisfied, a level of burnout appears to be present affecting 41.7% of respondents' work performance.

6.3.7. I get the opportunity to attend job-related seminars or continued education on practice issues(q16). (F=56, N=60)

21(35%) respondents indicated that they only receive 40% or less of the time an opportunity to attend job-related seminars or continued education on practice issues. Another 35 (58.3%) have the opportunity 60% or more of the time. Four (6.7%) did not provide an answer. The researcher agrees with the bulk of research (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:275; Grasso, 1994:89-105; Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278) that limited educational and career opportunities are push factors resulting in social workers leaving the profession while at the same time opportunities for professional development are seen as pull factors to other organizations and professions. There is a constant strive towards growth and

improvement. Gaining knowledge is one way of preventing burnout, stress, and job dissatisfaction. If this need is not addressed, alternative opportunities might start luring away the social worker. Again, more than a third of social workers in this research feel this need is currently not addressed.

6.3.8. I want to leave my current job as social worker (q18)(F=55, N=60)

Leiter and Maslach (2009:331) found that a negative relationship exists between job satisfaction and job turnover, indicating that dissatisfaction prompts individuals to consider career changes. An alarming 6 (10.%) of the respondents want to leave their current job as social worker 100% of the time, while another 8 (13.3%) want to leave their job 80% of the time. This means that nearly a quarter of the respondents want to leave their current position 80% or more of the time. Another 11 (18.3%) want to leave their position 60% of the time and 8 (13.3%) want to leave their job less than 40% of the time. Of the respondents, 22 (36.7%) want to leave their current job less than 20% of the time while 5 (8.3%) did not answer the question. There were 25 (41.7%) of the social workers (nearly half) who indicated that they wanted to leave their current job 60% of the time. These findings once more emphasize the need to develop a retention strategy in order to prevent social workers from leaving their organizations or the profession.

6.3.9. I am satisfied with my workload in general (q20) (F=55, N=60)

Job satisfaction decreases for social workers who have a heavy workload according to Cole *et al.* (2004:5). Bakker and Leiter (2010:186) found that variability in professional skills boosted work engagement when qualitative workload was high, and mitigated the negative effect of high qualitative workload on work engagement. Seventeen (28.3%) respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their workload in general 80% or more of the time, while 14 (23.3%) were only satisfied 60% of the time. Another 23 (38.3%) of respondents were satisfied with their workload in general only 40% or less of the time. If taken into account that within the previous question it was indicated that a third of the social workers were unsatisfied, felt not appreciated and valued and felt a reduced work performance, a consistent trend might be developing among more or less a third of the respondents that might be lost to the profession, unless positive intervention occurs.

6.3.10. I am satisfied with my overall relationship with my supervisor (q27)
(F=55, N=60)

Employees that experience organizational support become more engaged with their job and organization (Chang & Wei, 2008:5). Supportive supervision relates to higher job satisfaction (Cole *et al.*, 2004:5). Studies have consistently shown that job resources such as social support from colleagues and supervisors are positively associated with work engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:185). In relation to this question concerning supervision, 49 (81.7%) respondents indicated that they were 60% or more of the time satisfied with their overall relationship with their supervisor. The fact that 80% indicate their satisfaction with their supervisor relationship correlates with the nearly 71% that felt satisfied with their job in general. Six (10.0%) indicated that they were satisfied with their relationship with their supervisor less than 40% of the time. Five (8.3%) did not answer this question.

6.3.11. I am satisfied with my relationship with my peers in general (q28)(F=56, N=60)

There were 39 (65%) of the respondents that indicated that they were satisfied with their relationship with their peers 60% or more of the time. Peer relationships provide emotional support, spur professional growth, impart cultural and political knowledge, encourage collaboration and innovation, and extend personal influence. When peer relationships become dysfunctional, they stir up undercurrents that distract people, cause resources to be hoarded, constrict information sharing and, generally, undermine engagement (Ruyle, 2007:1). 17 (28.3%) of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied only 40% or less of the time with their peer relationships. Another 4 (6.7%) did not indicate and answer.

6.3.12. I am overall satisfied with my job (q30)(F=56, N=60)

There were 43(71%) respondents who indicated that they were 60% or more of the time satisfied with their jobs while 4 respondents (6.7%) did not answer this question. Another 5 (8,3%) indicated that they were satisfied with their job less than 20% of the time, while a further 8 (13.3%) were satisfied with their job less than 40% of the time. This means that nearly a quarter of the social workers involved in this research were not satisfied with their jobs. Factors that, if not present, lead to dissatisfaction can include supervision, interpersonal relations, physical working conditions, salary, company policies and administrative practices, benefits, and job security. When these factors fail to meet minimum thresholds, job dissatisfaction occurs (Herzberg *et al.*, 1959:113).

6.3.13. I feel engaged with my job (q31) (F=56, N=60)

There were 44 (73.34%) of the respondents who felt engaged with their job 60% or more of the time, while 12 (20%) felt only engaged 40% or less of the time. This correlates with the results of the previous question, as job satisfaction and the achievement of work goals will result in engagement (Rothman & Rothman, 2010:5). Only 4 (6.7%) respondents did not answer this question. Nearly a fifth of the social workers involved in this research are disengaged or on the road to disengagement.

The researcher agrees that feeling engaged lights the passion for work and could then ignite positive self-beliefs as indicated by Xanthopoulou *et al.*(2012:510) who state that positive emotions seem to explain the transformation of job resources into positive self-beliefs on a daily basis. The researcher further believes that positive self-beliefs contribute to resilience against stress and burnout. Addressing engagement and reigniting work passion for the 21.4% that are not fully engaged could prevent possible turnover.

6.3.14. I believe I am a competent social worker(q36)/ I believe I can make a difference in my client's life (q39)(F=56, N=60)

Of the respondents, 21 (35%) believed 80% of the time that they are competent social workers. No respondent believed that they were competent 100% of the time. Another 27 (45%) felt they were competent 60% of the time while 6 (10%) felt competent 40% of the time. Two (3.3%) indicated that they only felt competent 20% or less of the time and 4 (6.7%) respondents did not provide an answer. This correlates with the findings in Section C of the questionnaire so far that around 61.7% of the respondents have experienced positive engagement. Personal accomplishment is associated with work engagement (Fourie, 2004:iv). One (1.7%) respondent felt 20% or less of the time that she could make a difference in her client's life. Another 1 (17%) respondent believed that in 40% or more of the time, she can make a difference in her client's life. There were 54 (90%) of the respondents that felt they could make a difference 60% and more of the time, of which. 4 (6.7%) did not provide an answer. According to Korunka *et al.*, (2010:16) a person's self-esteem plays a role in the development of burnout.

6.3.15. I have enough energy for activities besides work (q37)(F=56, N=60)

Of the respondents, 14 (23.3%) answered that they have enough energy for activities besides work only 40% or less of the time. Another 42 (70%) of the respondents felt they had enough energy for activities besides work 60% or more of the time, while 4 (6.7%) did

not provide an answer. Nearly a quarter of the respondents do not have enough energy left for activities besides work, which places them, according to the researcher, in a position to be at risk of burnout.

6.4. Section C: Qualitative questions

In this section, the researcher focussed on determining how the social workers felt about their current work placement, job satisfaction, feelings of burnout, stress, and engagement. A self-constructed open-ended questionnaire was used that reflected the participants' opinions. The researcher made use of 15 non-standardised self-constructed open-ended questions. The participants completed the questionnaire in writing. The answers were sorted according to themes. Respondents could give more than one answer and therefore more than one theme could be identified. The answers the respondents gave to the questions were the following:

6.4.1. Aspects loved in social work (N=60)

Respondents were asked in an open-ended question what they loved about their current position. 75 Different themes were identified. Table 5 provides a summary of the top eight themes.

Table 4: Love about work

N=75 themes

Top eight themes identified	F	%
Making a difference	16	21.3%
Not monotonous	5	6.6%
Supervisory work	4	5.3%
Challenging	3	4.0%
To be able to change people's lives	3	4.0%
To be specialist	3	4.0%
Managerial duties	3	4.0%
Multi professional	3	4.0%
	75	100%

Respondents in this research indicated 16 (21.3%) times that they loved the fact that they were making a difference in people's lives. This links up with research that suggested that, for most social workers, the need to be helpful is a primary motive in their choice of profession (Lloyd *et al.*, 2002:256). It was 5 (6.7%) times indicated that they enjoyed the work environment that was different every day and that it was not monotonous. Collins

(2008:176) mentions in her research that social workers find satisfaction, reward, and enjoyment not only in direct user contact, but also in helping users, challenge, task variety, team and multidisciplinary work and autonomy in their roles. Respondents indicated 4 (5.33%) times that supervisory work was one of the reasons they loved work. The managerial nature of the job was also indicated 3 times (4%) as an aspect contributing to the love of the job. This links up with Jessen's (2010:1) summary indicating that the managers in social service professions find their job more interesting and challenging due to their position, reporting higher feelings of accomplishment and control over work.

Respondents indicated 3 (4%) times that, they loved the fact that their work is challenging: Employee survey studies show that employees are more satisfied when they have challenging opportunities at work (National Business Research Institute, 2012:1). They further indicated a further 3 (4%) times that being able to change people's lives contributed to something they loved in their current position. Being able to specialise was also indicated 3 times (4%) as an aspect loved about the job. Respondents further pointed out 3 (4%) times that being able to work in multi-professional teams is an aspect social workers loved about their occupation.

6.4.2. Aspects hated in social work

Respondents were asked which aspects of social work they hate. According to Leiter and Maslach (2005:14-19), person-job mismatches fall into six categories: workload (too much work, not enough resources); control (micromanagement, lack of influence, accountability without power); reward (not enough pay, acknowledgment, or satisfaction); community (isolation, conflict, disrespect); fairness (discrimination, favouritism) and values (ethical conflicts, meaningless tasks). After completion of questionnaire C, the researcher used these six themes to categorize the information gathered from this section.

Table 5: Hate about work

WHAT DO HATE ABOUT YOUR POSITION			
	(More than one answer could be indicated provided) 60 respondents answered with 66 answers	F	%
Workload		25	37.9%
Reward		17	25.8%
Community		12	18.2%
Control		9	13.6%
None		2	3%
Values		1	1.5%
		66	100.00%

37.9% of respondents' frustrations were indicated as the workload not being favourable. This aspect included amount of work as well as type of work. The following statements clearly described the sentiments:

- *"I hate community work, I feel anxious around large crowds".*
- *"I hate that I am not able to reach all employees responsible for, as I feel tired and overwhelmed.*
- *I hate it that I do not prepare for follow-up sessions with clients, due to high work pressure or crisis intervention".*
- *"There is just so much to do and so little time to do it ".*

According to a study with social workers undertaken by NASW (Arrington, 2008:2), participants (n=3,653) were asked to identify factors that contribute to work-related stress, and many indicated that the lack of time to complete the necessary tasks of their jobs was a major issue (31%) Another 25% of respondent in that research acknowledged that their heavy workloads contribute to their stress, perhaps adding to their noted difficulty in completing day-to-day work tasks. Within the workload aspect, other high-ranking aspects specifically hated included too much administration. This coincides with what Weaver *et al.* (2006:29) found, namely that excessive policy changes and paperwork are sources of job dissatisfaction.

The second factor that appears to be upsetting to social workers in this research (25.8%) is reward aspect. This includes not being valued or paid according to their worth. *"Although the job is rewarding personally, this is not the case financially". "I hate working with clients; I feel it does not make any difference".* Research by Lawson *et al.* (2008:8) underlines inadequate salaries and benefits as a push factor causing good workers to leave.

The collegial (community) facet comprised 18.2% of the social workers' frustrations. This included supervision, collegial support, as well as client orientation. The following statements were made:

1. *"I don't have supportive colleagues. I do not get professional stimulation from my colleagues at all.*
2. *I do not have a supervisor geographically near to supervise me. The supervisor might have less knowledge than me".*

3. *“The fact that one has to call after clients, some do not honour appointments”.*
4. *“Working with clients who do not want to take responsibility...”*

Social work supervision plays a major role in the work performance of social workers. Lack of social work supervision contributes to deterioration of the social worker's work morale (Mbau, 2005:84). Another 13.6% of frustrations were dedicated to control issues that included organizational and managerial aspects. *“The negative attitude of management towards social workers...”* *“...having to deal with an organization that you cannot change...”*

Only 1.5% of frustrations were linked to value aspects. According to Leiter and Maslach, (2005: 149) value aspects include the organization's mission statements, policies and a certain culture that express their values. Members experienced a certain amount of mismatch between their own values and that of the organization. This also includes ethical standards and codes of conduct. It can be difficult to gain a sense of effectiveness and to become genuinely engaged if your values differ from those of the organization. There were 3% of the respondents who did not indicate any aspect they hated about social work.

From these findings, it can be concluded that workload aspects frustrated the social workers of North-West province most. This would include aspects such as time- and caseload management, administrative duties and limited knowledge in certain fields. Addressing this area in the empowerment programme can assist social workers to gain control and empowerment in the work environment.

6.4.3. Views on social work

Table 6: Views of social work

DID YOUR VIEWS AND EXPECTATIONS CHANGE			
		F	%
Not indicated		3	3.6%
No		16	25.5%
Somewhat		2	2.7%
Yes		39	68.1%
		60	100.00%

Respondents were asked whether their views and expectations of social work have changed since their student days. To this question, 39 (65%) of the respondents indicated that their views of social work have changed, of which 31 (51.7%) indicated that it has

changed for the worse. Another 16 (26.7%) indicated that it has not changed while 3 (5%) did not answer this question. Two of the respondents (3.3%) indicated yes or somewhat. From last-mentioned, the most compelling reasons were given as the difference between theory and practice and that administration is much more than expected. This was highlighted by comments such as *"Yes, as a social work student I had respect for the occupation. Now social work is all about Foster Care"*. According to Lawson *et al.* (2008:8), reality shocks caused by recruitment and training that do not match the job and the work can cause good workers to leave.

More than 50% of the social workers' views and expectations have changed for the negative. Being disappointed or "awakened" by the reality of the profession can affect job satisfaction and engagement and could lead to job turnover. It is the researcher's opinion that breaking down exactly what has changed and evaluating introspectively how it has affected one's engagement could assist social workers in positively dealing with the reality check and in preventing them from leaving the profession. The following are examples of responses given:

- *Yes, I thought social work was all about working with the poor and doing childcare. I learned however that it was about enhancing people social functioning and counselling. I think at that time I fell into the trap of stigmatising social work and it is actually so much more than removing children and placing them somewhere.*
- *Yes, they are more realistic now.*
- *No. not the views and expectations, it is just more challenging regarding the types of cases, seriousness of cases and workloads.*
- *Yes, as a student I had no idea that social workers had to "run" after their clients....*
- *Yes, I have come to realize that the "real" world is much harder.*

6.4.4. Future vision in social work

Respondents were asked whether they intend remaining in the occupation as social workers until they reach retirement age.

Table 7: Intend to remain in occupation

Will you remain in social work?			
		F	%
No		16	26.7%
Unsure		11	18.3%
Yes		32	53.3%
Not indicated		1	1.7%
		60	100.00%

There were 32 (54.6%) of the respondents who indicated that they would remain in the profession of social work. Another 11 (18.1%) were unsure and nearly a third 16 (26.4%) indicated that they would leave the profession. Interesting enough, in a study done by Fortuin (2004:4) in relation to the job satisfaction of social workers in the Boland, she concluded two thirds indicated their intention to leave their current employment. In North-West, a third indicated for sure that they wanted to leave the profession, but 44.5% (questionnaire B) were contemplating leaving the profession. This correlates with Wermeling's (2009:1) research, which indicated that 30% of licensed social workers did not plan to remain in their current position. The importance of efforts aiming to regain positive work engagement is highlighted as this will lessen job turnover and burnout in social workers and thus retain them longer in the profession. The following sentiment supports last-mentioned:

- *"Unsure: At this stage, I feel emotionally drained and cannot see myself functioning like this until retirement".*
- *"I would not like to remain, when the opportunity arises I would like to change careers".*
- *"Unsure, the profession needs to be taken seriously by people and the society. The occupation is not getting the respect it deserves".*
- *"I am not sure; maybe as the years go by I will develop an interest in a different career field".*

6.4.5. Level of passion for social work

The social workers were asked whether they currently felt more or less passionate about social work compared to their first year in the occupation.

Table 8: More or less passionate

Are you less or more passionate about social work?			
		F	%
Less		27	45%
More		29	48.3%
Same		2	3.3%
Unsure		1	1.7%
Not indicated		1	1.7%
		60	100.00%

There were 29 (48.3%) respondents that indicated that they were more passionate about social work while 27 (45%) indicated they were less passionate. “.. *Reality changed...*” This means that nearly half of the social workers that participated in this research were less passionate about social work compared to their first year in the occupation. According to the researcher, engagement and work passion go hand in hand as also stipulated by Bakker and Leiter (2010:11). If passion is lost, there is a danger of engagement lessening as well. This question thus correlates with the previous question’s findings of 44.5% of social workers contemplating possible turnover. The following answers indicate the feelings of the respondents:

- *I am more passionate, I know I am making a difference and am even better equipped to do that. I have more life experience, skills and knowledge.*
- *It fluctuates. In your first year, you still need to gain experience and skills. Social work has its ups and downs.*
- *More passionate, but also more realistic. Even though I have only been practising for 3 years I have realized how difficult the situations are that we work with. I have become more realistic and have shifted my focus and passion to more attainable goals.*

6.4.6. Experience of job satisfaction

Respondents were asked whether they experience job satisfaction in their current positions as social workers. A lack of job satisfaction holds negative implications for the social work practice (Fortuin, 2004:4). In a study done by Fortuin (2004:4), in relation to the job satisfaction of social workers, she concluded that younger social workers experience more

job satisfaction than do social workers in their midlife, while older social workers also experience more satisfaction.

Table 9: Do you experience job satisfaction?

Do you experience job satisfaction in your current position as social worker?			
		F	%
No		16	26.7%
Sometimes		9	15%
Yes		34	56.7%
Not indicated		1	1.6%
		60	100.00%

There were 34 (56.7%) social workers in the North-West province that indicated that they experienced job satisfaction, while 16 (26.7%) indicated that they did not. The following strong sentiments underlined the lack of job satisfaction experienced: *"No, absolutely not. The organization I work for does not recognize anything I do, whether or not I do my job or not, they do not care..."* Nine (15%) indicated they were unsure about the answer. One (1.6%) did not answer the question. This links up with Sela's research (2000:85) indicating social workers interviewed are generally dissatisfied with many aspects of their work.

The following are examples of answers provided:

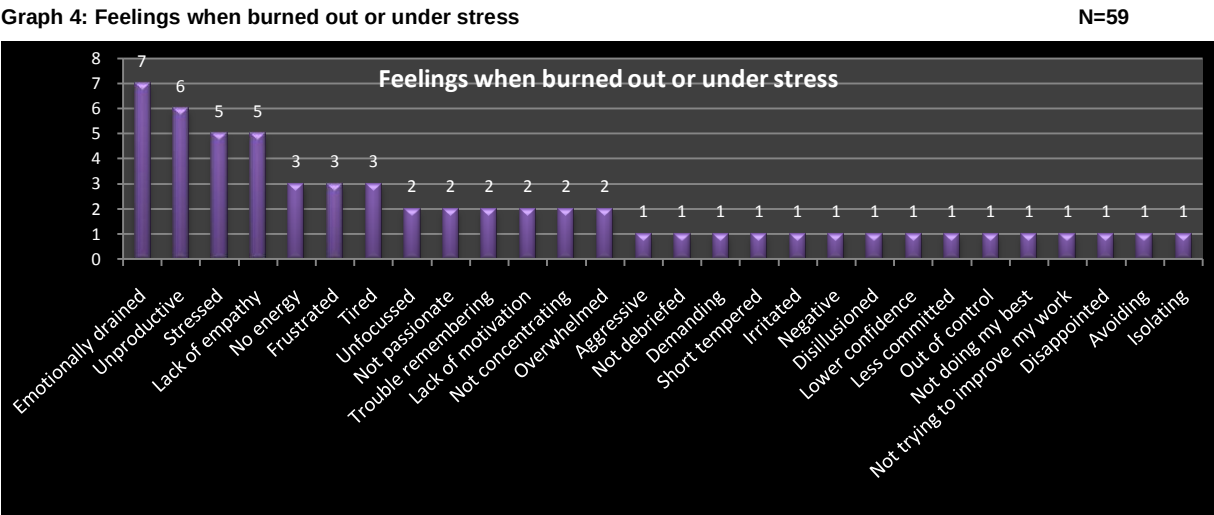
- *Yes, because I have a supervisor that is working to keep her personnel happy, motivated, and focussed.*
- *Yes, I am able to develop and implement projects and programmes. Good support from immediate supervisor.*
- *I am satisfied in my current job, as the job itself is less demanding as such I'm not under stress or pressure to perform.*
- *Not at all. I do not have any supervision.*
- *More or less, from my viewpoint this is as good as it gets....*
- *No, I am unable to bring innovations because commanders are always focussing on crime rather than the social well-being of the employee.*
- *No, I feel overwhelmed. The little satisfaction I experience cannot overpower my current tiredness.*

There is a definite overlap between engagement and job satisfaction (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:19) and therefore the researcher is of the opinion that the 26.7% social workers that do not experience job satisfaction as well as the 15% that are unsure, are at risk of losing

positive work engagement and in addition could contemplate turnover. Addressing job satisfaction in an empowerment programme to motivate social workers to take responsibility for their own happiness at work would directly empower social workers to prevent disengagement.

6.4.7. Feelings of burnout and stress

Respondents were asked to describe in which way they as a social worker feel burned out or under stress. A high level of stress was closely related to low job satisfaction and job commitment (Weaver *et al.*, 2006:29-31). Work-related stress is common in today’s workforce, including individuals practising social work. Given their profession’s client-centred nature, stress is a concern among social workers – particularly among those providing direct services. In this, study, respondents indicated that if they do experience stress, they would feel as follows:



In a study done by NASW (Arrington, 2008:2) among social workers providing direct services, fatigue was identified as the most commonly reported stress-related health concern. This coincides with the results of this study where emotionally drained was identified most because of stress experienced. Other consequences experienced are: unproductiveness, stressed, lack of empathy, no energy, frustration, tiredness, unfocussed, not passionate, trouble remembering, lack of motivation, not concentrating, overwhelmed, aggressive, not debriefed, demanding, short tempered, irritated, negative, disillusioned, lower confidence, less committed, out of control, not doing my best, not trying to improve my work, disappointed, avoidance and isolation (Arrington, 2008:6). Although this question does not indicate how many social workers feel stressed it does indicate that negative

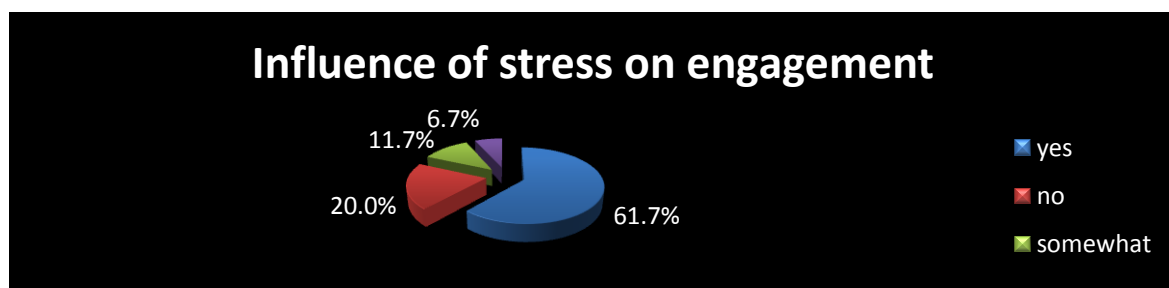
consequences as the result of stress do occur. *“There was a high work demand and I wasn’t able to cope with the emotional draining part and the high administration part...”* *“.....it’s as if you do not have the energy to deal with your private life and its problems. It makes it difficult to cope with your work...”* In a previous study done by this researcher (Calitz, 2008:67) on social workers in North-West 13% of respondents indicated they felt stressed and burned out. Stress, burnout and engagement are intertwined according to the researcher’s opinion (based on research done by different researchers (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104). The consequences of stress on social work engagement, passion, and possible turnover intentions motivate the researcher to include this topic in the empowerment programme.

6.4.8. Burnout and stress influence on job engagement

Respondents were asked: If they possibly were burned out or under stress, would they say their job engagement was influenced by it. Arrington (2008:13) stresses that over time, work-related stress can result in burnout in social workers. It can also contribute to increased risk for work place injury, impaired performance, poor mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, decreased concentration, and health-related problems for social workers.

Graph 5: Influence of stress on engagement

N=60



There were 37 (61.7%) social workers in the North-West province that indicated that their levels of stress influenced their job engagement. Another 12 (20%) indicated that it was not influenced, while 7 (11.7%) answered that they were unsure. Four (6.7%) did not provide an answer to this question.

The responses can be summarized as follows:

- Yes, once when I was under stress I did not have the energy to do my job or have the ability to stretch further.
- Yes, because I am not debriefed to release all the tension one is working under....
- Absolutely, I am not as passionately about my work anymore.

Fourie (2004:3) quoted Maslach and Jackson (1986) as they considered burnout to be a syndrome that results from job stress usually in jobs involving a lot of work with people. If stress influenced work engagement as indicated by the answers it must be borne in mind that social workers would be more likely to disengage if stressed, and contemplate leaving the profession unless intervention redirects the path. Building resilience against stress and burnout would then prevent disengagement of social workers.

6.4.9. Skills required to re-engage

Respondents were asked what skills they would require to passionately re-engage with their work. Social work needs energetic and dedicated workers: people who are engaged with their work. The respondents were asked what skills they would identify as beneficial to increase their work engagement or to passionately re-engage with their work. More than one skill could be identified. **82 different responses to this question were received.** They were grouped according to themes of which the top three are discussed here.

Table 10: Skills required to re-engage

TOP 3 SKILLS IDENTIFIED		N=82
SKILLS	F	%
CPD	6	7.3%
Support group	6	7.3%
Time management	5	6.1%
	82	

According to a study with social workers undertaken by NASW (Arrington, 2008:2), participants (n=3,653) were asked to identify factors that contribute to work-related stress. Many indicated that the lack of time to complete the necessary tasks of their jobs was a major issue. According to the researcher, these factors contributing to stress can be addressed through continuous professional development (CPD) and personal skills development. Continuous professional development was one of the highest-ranking skills identified with 7.3% of the indications in this research. This indicates the need for social workers to develop themselves and find new ways of improving their services and simultaneously coping with the demands of the profession. Continuous professional development may help to increase the retention of staff and may reduce burnout and stress (Bowie & Bronte-Tinkew, 2006:2; Lopez, 2010:19). The best measure, according to Jaffe (2004:153), to combat stress and vicarious traumatisation, is to provide for diverse work

experience and opportunities to learn new skills. In this sense, staff development and training is an essential tool to keep helpers involved, appreciated, and aware of their value.

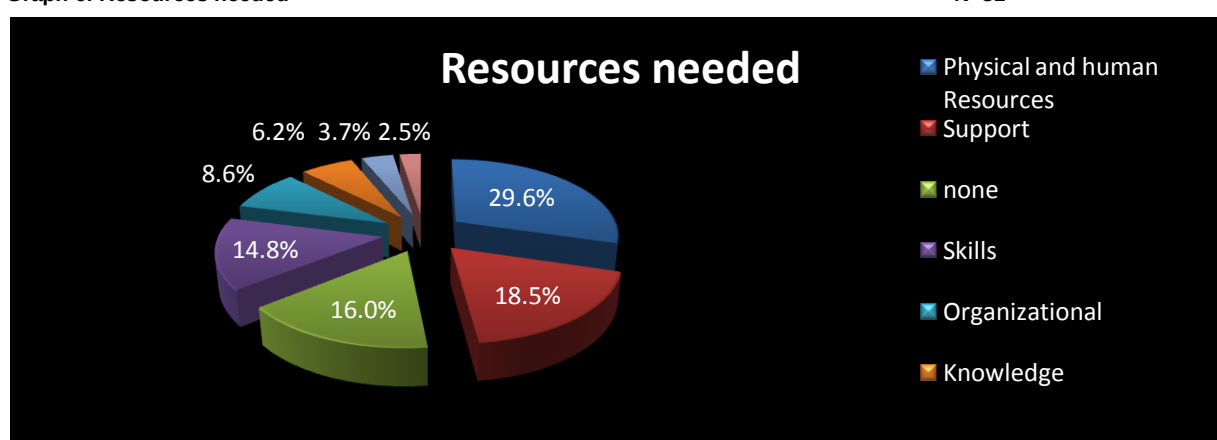
The need for a support group made out 7.3% of the total needs requested. In order to maximize performance and minimize burnout, support systems must be developed. Support groups in which staff members can share and vent their feelings and seek solutions can prevent burnout (Jaffe, 2004:152). Time management was also indicated in this research as one of the top three skills needed by social workers in North-West (6.1%). This research question stipulates and identifies the needs of the social workers in North-West province in order to re-engage.

6.4.10. Resources needed to re-engage passionately

Respondents were asked what resources they would require to re-engage with their work passionately. This question was closely linked to the previous one. More than one answer could be provided. **The 60 respondents provided 81 answers.** These responses were grouped together according to themes.

Graph 6: Resources needed

N=81



Twenty-four (29.6%) of the resources indicated by social workers were the need for physical and human resources such as more personnel, more finances, more vehicles and so forth, in order to re-engage positively with their work. Another 15 (18.5%) of the resources identified were for more support either in the form of supervision, networking or group support. A further 12 (14.8%) indicated that they required more skills (administrative, workshops, training). Five (6, 2%) of the resources needed was knowledge, while 16% did not indicate any resources needed. In numerous research articles, job resources are associated with higher work engagement (Cronjé, 2006:4). A further 7(8.6%) was needed

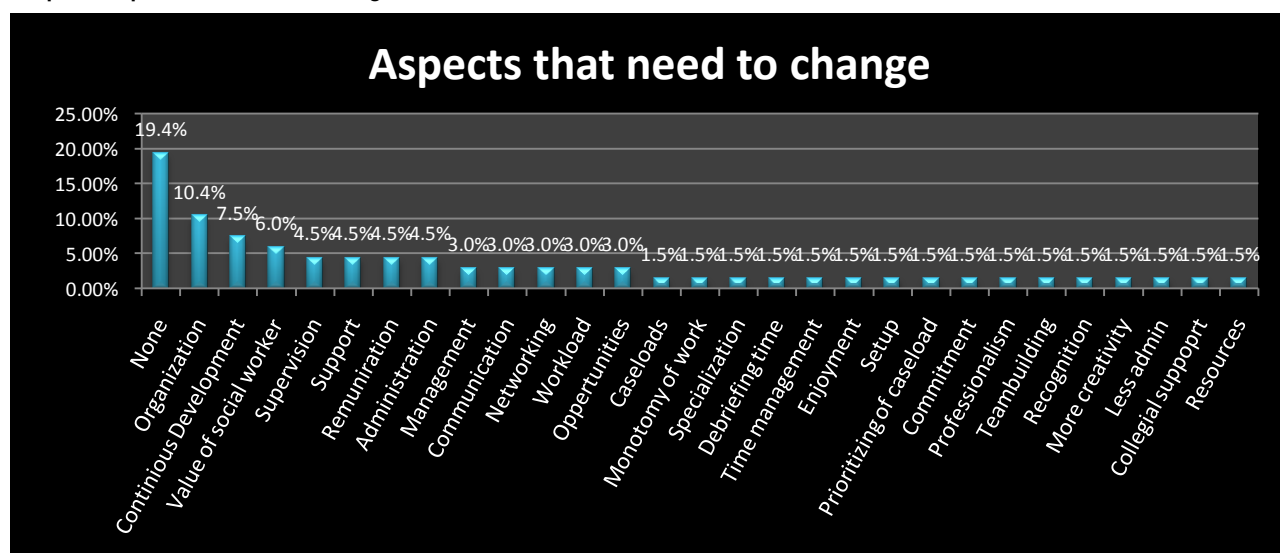
for organizational resources (promotion, recognition), while 2(2.5%) individual resources were identified. This would include personal growth and development. This need for support, new skills, workshops, and training was, according to the researcher, the area that needed to be addressed in order to re-engage social workers. Some of the sentiments highlighting the resource needs of the respondents were:

- *“Proper supervision sessions to support and encourage me”.*
- *“Die bywoning van kursusse met relevante inligting kan as aansporing dien om jouself positief uit te lig” (the attendance of workshops providing relevant information can serve as encouragement to promote oneself positively...).*
- *“Constantly participating in in-service training and attending conferences and workshops....”*
- *“Basic resources that can help me do my work more constructively”.*

6.4.11. Changes in current job circumstances to enhance job engagement

Respondents were asked what they thought needed to change in their current circumstances to increase engagement. More than one answer could be provided to this question. **The 60 respondents provided 67 answers.**

Graph 7: Aspects that need to change N=67



There were 13(19.4%) respondents that did not answer this question, while 7 (10.45%) of the overall indications were that the organization itself needed to change. 5(7.5%) of the changes identified were for more continuous development and training that should be accessed in order for social workers to engage more positively. Another 4 (6%) felt that social workers are not valued enough in the current circumstances. According to the

researcher, the 19.4% that did not indicate a possible change simulates the lack of attention social workers give towards the topic *engagement*. They do not view this as important and have not yet spent enough energy and time on addressing this aspect of their career life. For this reason engagement itself will be discussed closer in the programme and discussion will be focussed on improving own work engagement. Engaged workers take the initiative to change their work environments in order to stay engaged (Mennon, 2011:1). Respondents answered as follows:

- *Finances, Remuneration, and policies.*
- *Smaller caseloads.*
- *Additional staff and the necessary resources.*

6.4.12. Turnover intent

The respondents were asked whether they had ever contemplated leaving their current position. Arrington (2008:13) stresses that over time, work-related stress can result in burnout in social workers. It can also contribute to increased risk for workplace injury, impaired performance, poor mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, decreased concentration, and health-related problems for social workers. Additionally, these issues may cause these professionals to **consider a career change**. There were 60 respondents who were requested to answer the question, but 3 (5%) did not provide an answer. Another 28 (46.7%) indicated that they had not contemplated leaving their job. Nearly half, however, namely 29 (48.3%), did contemplate leaving their job and gave the following reasons:

Table 11: Turnover intent

N=29

Have you contemplated to leave your current job?			
		F	%
Yes	Unsatisfying job	6	20.7%
	Finance	5	17.2%
	Organizational values	3	10.3%
	Lack of promotion	3	10.3%
	Mismanagement	2	6.9%
	Personal Development	1	3.4%
	Organizational	1	3.4%
	lack of challenge	1	3.4%
	Lack of support from supervisor	1	3.4%
	Colleagues negative	1	3.4%
	Better work environment	1	3.4%
	Personal reasons	1	3.4%
	No challenge anymore	1	3.4%
	Emotionally tired	1	3.4%
	Organization	1	3.4%
	TOTAL	29	100.00%

Of those social workers leaving their job, 20.6% indicated that lack of job satisfaction was the main reason. “Job satisfaction decreases for social workers who have a heavy workload, poor salary, lack of support from co-workers, unpleasant working conditions, and negative feelings about working conditions” (Fitts, 2006:1). Another 17.2% argued that financial reasons were the main push factor. It is the researcher’s opinion that the needs of 15 of these 29 social workers that contemplate leaving could be supported through the empowerment programme by addressing burnout, stress, job satisfaction, and engagement. The following sentiments state the respondents’ feelings:

“Yes: for better work environment and personal development...”

“Yes, mainly due to financial reasons which are appalling...”

“Yes, I feel that I am not growing – stagnating”.

“Yes, social work is not fulfilling the passion in my life...”

“Yes.....There are no challenges anymore...”

6.4.13. Aspects preventing actual turnover

In the previous question 29(48.3%) (nearly half of the respondents) indicated that they contemplated leaving the profession. The respondents were further asked: if they did contemplate leaving the profession, but did not do so, what inhibited that decision?

Table 12: What prevented you from leaving? N=29

What prevented you from leaving?			
	Why not	F	%
Yes	Financial reasons	6	20.7%
	Passionate	4	13.8%
	Family reasons	3	10.3%
	Not indicated	6	20.7%
	In the process	2	6.9%
	Limited opportunities	2	6.9%
	Loyalty to Organization	1	3.4%
	Contract not finished	1	3.4%
	Lack of self confidence	1	3.4%
	No alternative options	1	3.4%
	It is a calling	1	3.4%
	No promotion yet	1	3.4%

There were 6 (20.7%) of these respondents that said they remain for financial reasons and a further 4 (13.8%) because they felt passionate. Only 3(10.3%) remained for family reasons and 2 (6.9%) are in the process of applying for an alternative position. Another 2 (6.9%) have not left yet due to limited opportunities and 1 (3.4%) due to contractual responsibilities. A further 1 (3.4%) lacked the self-confidence to leave while another 1(3.4%) has no alternative options. One (3.4%) believes her job is a calling which resulted in her not leaving while 1(3.4%) indicated that he is awaiting a promotion. A further 5 (10.3%) have not provided an answer, which would suggest that they are unsure why they have not left yet. More than 20% of the respondents in this research might still leave unless certain aspects of their work engagement are addressed. One should take note of the factors that retain social workers for the profession and which ones push the social worker away. Being passionate, loyal and engaged are factors, which retain social workers and prevent turnover.

6.4.14. Interest in empowerment programme

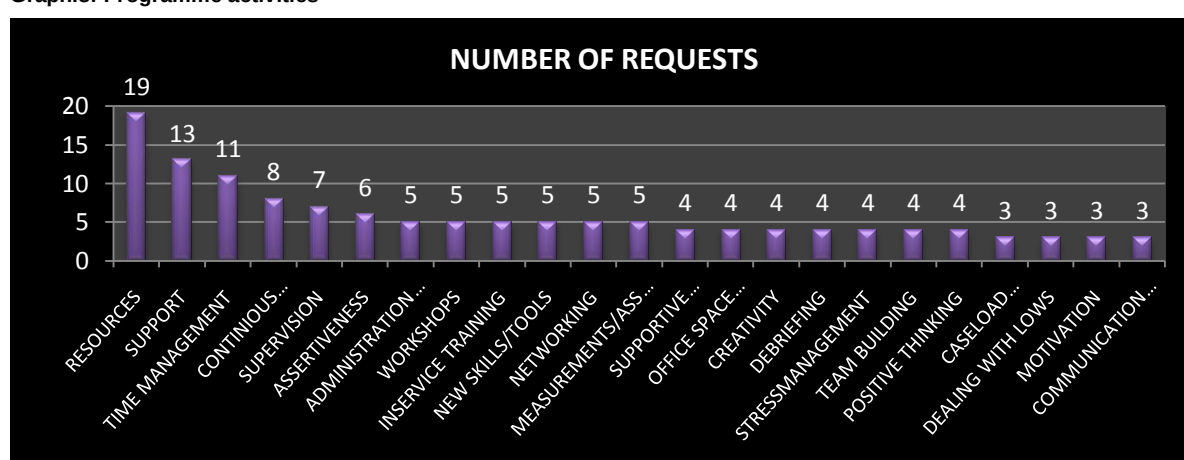
The respondents were asked whether they would be interested in participating in an empowerment programme. Of the respondents, 59 (98.3%) answered the question. 43

(72.9%) indicated that they were interested in an Empowerment programme. 16 (27.1%) did not indicate that they were interested. This simply emphasized the need among the social workers for personal growth and continuous development. It also indicates that workers are interested in increasing their job satisfaction and engagement.

6.4.15. Suggested programme activities

Respondents were asked what programme activities they would be interested in as part of the empowerment programme. To this question, the 60 social workers gave 134 different requests, which were grouped according to themes.

Graph.8: Programme activities



The respondents mostly identified a need for resources, support, skills, continuous development, and personal growth. The main needs were for resources (19 requests) and support (13 requests). These needs were taken as the basis for the empowerment programme by means of which a support group workshop will be held, addressing the aspects related to engagement, and providing the members with support group, debriefing and networking opportunities. A support CD (**Addendum: 6**) that entails articles, documents, websites, and other resources that can be used for personal growth, new skills, and tools, knowledge, which will serve and as a supportive measure, is included. The CD will also address time management and assertiveness skills, measurement scales, and other requested resources.

7. DISCUSSION

Considering their experiences of insufficient time to complete day-to-day work tasks, heavy workloads, poor compensation, challenging and/or difficult clients, and few resources, long working hours, and unclear job expectations, it is not surprising that social workers experience work-related stress. Under these less-than-optimal work conditions, social workers are often “pushed to the limit” when trying to complete their job requirements.

Over time, this can result in burnout, increased risk for work place injury, impaired performance, poor mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, decreased concentration, and health-related problems for social workers. Additionally, these issues may cause social workers to consider a career change.

In summary then, 71% of the respondents in this research were mostly engaged with their job and experienced job satisfaction, but nearly half contemplated leaving the profession. Another 41% had experienced a reduced work performance in the last six months. This could indicate high stress levels with possible burnout unless circumstances are addressed. Nearly 30% of respondents appeared already disengaged and experienced less job satisfaction.

These findings confirm the research outcomes in this area. Social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management; as a result, they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive. This could lead to feeling unsatisfied and contemplating turnover. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, an increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills improvements is necessary, in order to assist dealing with the stressors and keeping the social workers excited and interested in the profession.

The researcher concludes from the results of this research that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the job engagement social workers experience. Focus should be placed specifically on issues affecting job satisfaction, stress, and prevention of burnout, including aspects such as assertiveness skills, motivation and effective time management skills. A resource CD containing resources needed, which could further support the worker when supervision is not available or not appropriate, could contribute to enhancing positive work engagement for the social workers in the North-West province. The empowerment programme developed was based on the need for a support group whilst at the same time learning new skills and addressing continuous professional

development. The toolkit provided in the form of the CD further enhances the development of new skills and the provision of new knowledge.

Re-establishing a sense of control, mastery, and competence in one's work situation may seem, at first glance, a daunting task. However, it is the researchers opinion, based on the research defining the underlying relationships between Job satisfaction, burnout, stress, job turnover and positive work engagement (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104), that with strategies such as stress management, burnout prevention, and increasing job satisfaction, increased positive work engagement is an attainable goal. All these elements combined together can enhance support opportunities and better coping strategies for social workers. It is in such circumstances, along with the prerequisite provision of essential resources and manageable workloads that social workers can thrive and develop positively. It is impossible though to give assistance in this regard to social workers without doing this thorough study of the needs of these workers.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ More research needs to be focussed on retaining social workers for the profession.
- ❖ It is recommended that more needs assessments be done to create awareness in order to prevent burnout and to lower stress levels among social workers.
- ❖ Better salaries and working conditions are needed to keep social workers in the profession.
- ❖ It is recommended that organizations place more emphasis on providing continuous professional development opportunities for their employees.
- ❖ More support needs to be provided to social workers in the form of supervision and support groups.
- ❖ More awareness needs to be created in welfare organizations and departments regarding their influence and role in preventing job dissatisfaction and disengagement.
- ❖ More research is needed to develop a programme to specifically target managers of social workers regarding the effect and prevention of stress, burnout, dissatisfaction, and disengagement.
- ❖ It is recommended that an empowerment programme be developed that addresses the needs identified by the social workers of North-West province to enhance their work engagement and job satisfaction and to prevent burnout, stress and possible turnover.

- ❖ It is further recommended that this empowerment programme function on the base of a support group.

9. CONCLUSION

The recruitment and retention crisis in social work is acute and is having a destabilising effect on our local communities, negatively affecting its primary function (Anon., 2005:12). The primary mission of the social work profession is the delivery and commissioning of responses to the needs of society's most vulnerable people, to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (National Association of Social workers, 2009:6). Gaining a better understanding of the key factors influencing the recruitment and retention of social workers will promote the essential worth of social work, and with that, greater recognition will follow for the challenging nature of the job and the serious responsibilities allied with it. The aim of this study is to focus on retention, and to ensure that social workers experience fulfilling and sustainable careers.

In this article the researcher presented, analysed and interpreted research findings based on responses provided by 60 social workers from the North-West province. The research questions focused on job engagement, job satisfaction, burnout and stress. Social workers experienced in their current positions. The purpose was to determine the needs social workers experience that will affect their turnover intention and to determine what is needed to retain them for the profession.

Having determined the needs in this article, the researcher has therefore designed an empowerment programme in the next article, which will focus on regaining positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province. The programme focussed on the empowerment of social workers by creating awareness of engagement, job satisfaction burnout, and stress. In a supportive and creative way, social workers are provided with tools and tips to assist them in developing their own care plan. By enhancing their current skills and increasing their awareness, their own responsibility in rekindling the joy for social work is emphasized.

In the following article, the researcher will develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement.

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ARTICLE 3

AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO REKINDLE THE JOY OF SOCIAL WORK

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OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie bemagtigingsprogram vir maatskaplike werkers is om die betrokkenheid van maatskaplike werkers by hul professie te verbeter deur aspekte insluitend beroepsbeverediging, stress en uitbranding onder die loep te neem. Die uiteindelijke doel is om beroepsverlating van maatskaplike werkers te voorkom.

Die program is saamgestel na 'n behoeftebepaling met 60 maatskaplike werkers uit die Noordwes provinsie. Dit is aangevul deur 'n uitgebreide literatuurstudie oor die verbandhoudende onderwerpe. Die program is vir 11 maatskaplike werkers as die eksperimentele groep aangebied deur middel van 'n twee dae werkswinkel bestaande uit 7 sessies.

1. INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on the development of an empowerment programme aimed at regaining positive work engagement for social workers. This article contains the problem statement, research objectives, and research methodology employed. This article starts out with a problem statement, giving an overview of the planned programme, process, and

activities linking it up with this research project and its research objectives. A discussion of the research method follows, with details regarding research design, participants, measuring instruments and statistical analysis. Specific attention is then given to the aims and content of the programme, and the aids needed to present it. It concludes with an article summary giving an overview of the articles that form the body of this article.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social work is a challenging profession. It often involves intense work with clients in complex situations; work where evaluation criteria are unclear and role conflict abundant. Social workers are considered an occupational group at above-average risk levels for burnout (Soderfeldt & Soderfeldt, 1995:638). Cole *et al.* (2004:2) report: “factors that increase job satisfaction among social workers include satisfaction with salary, job autonomy, opportunities for promotion, quality of supervision, good working conditions. Job satisfaction decreases for social workers that have a heavy workload, poor salary, lack of support from co-workers, unpleasant working conditions, and negative feelings about working conditions”. The researcher agrees that retention of workers in human services agencies is a serious concern. Employee engagement, sense of belonging and organisational commitment can be considered to be components of well-being. Companies are investing large amounts of resources to lower employee turnover by creating an environment favourable for the employee. The social work profession has experienced a critical decrease of social workers. The retention of social workers is problematic, also in South Africa (Cloete, 2012:v; Earle, 2008:9). According to several studies conducted, many reasons could be ascribed to the high social work turnover, these include poor working conditions; poor compensation for work; lack of resources and support; and increased demands for services (Adlem, 2007:5; Naidoo & Kasiram, 2003:372-380; Schenck, 2004:158-171). Hence, social workers are experiencing work stress, burnout, decreasing job satisfaction and a lack of positive engagement. According to Eborall and Garmeson (2001:8), these factors are taxing the personal and professional coping strategies of social workers, which could lead to staff turnover. It is the researcher’s opinion that the focus should not only be on creating more jobs or recruiting more social workers but also on creating better jobs, increasing the job satisfaction and especially on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience. This will hopefully retain more social workers for the profession and create a consistent, experienced, and motivated

workforce, which will thus enhance the quality of service delivery directly influencing the community of South Africa.

There appears to be a definite link between retention/ turnover and positive engagement of social workers, burnout, stress, and job satisfaction. It is impossible to give assistance in this regard to social workers without conducting a thorough study of the needs of these workers. Having determined the needs in article two, the researcher has therefore designed an empowerment programme, which will focus on regaining positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province and building their resilience to prevent stress burnout and job dissatisfaction. Empowerment can be defined as a process whereby individuals, groups, families and communities are helped to attain personal or collective power, which increase their personal or interpersonal strengths to actively improve their circumstances (New dictionary of social work, 1995:21; Zastrow, 2010:52). Resilience, on the other hand, closely related to empowerment, is defined as one's ability to respond and adapt to challenging, adverse, or stressful circumstances (Shellman, 2009:9).

In this article, the researcher will discuss the programme under different captions.

3. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

3.1. Specific objective

To achieve the aim of this research, one of the objectives of the research as well as this article is to develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will attempt to clarify, through a literature and empirical study, whether an empowerment programme can assist social workers in reclaiming positive work engagement by developing and implementing an empowerment programme.

4.1. Literature study

A literature study equips the investigator with a complete and thorough justification for the subsequent steps, as well as with a sense of the importance of the undertaking (Fouché & Delport, 2011:134). A literature study was conducted on various aspects of this article. Fouché and Delport (2011:134-135) state that, to undertake meaningful research, the researcher should have made a thorough study of the subject under review. The focus of this study was on aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The central focus of this study was to develop an intervention programme that can empower the social worker and contribute to positive work engagement, job satisfaction and the prevention of burnout.

A wide range of literature was identified and studied, including books, academic studies, government and informal publications and scientific magazines. To ensure a purposeful search, the EBSCO Host: Academic Search Premier, Nexus, ERIC, Repertoire of South African Journals, Social Work Abstracts, PsycINFO, Social Sciences Index and SA Media databank were used. The results attained were used for developing and implementing the empowerment programme.

4.2. Programme development

The New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:49) defines the term *programme* as the process between a group and a social worker where a systematic pattern of activities is followed to achieve group goals. The programmes for social work have the broad goal of enhancing individual and social change by providing services that meet individual and community needs. Designing a social programme is a creative problem-solving process to solve complex social issues. A good programme design should incorporate sound research knowledge and best practices to determine the best fit of elements required for a programme to be effective. Programme design involves translating the programme objectives, with a thorough understanding of the social issue and needs of the target population, into new or improved services. The goal of programme design is to establish those services, which will have the best possible chance of achieving the programme's objectives and creating measurable positive change for participants (Maine, 2011:11). Geyer (2006:15) maintains that a social group work empowerment programme suggests a series of group meetings where the collective needs and challenges of the group members are being met in group context. This occurs through the application of an empowerment process in the social group work from a strengths perspective. This was the aim and

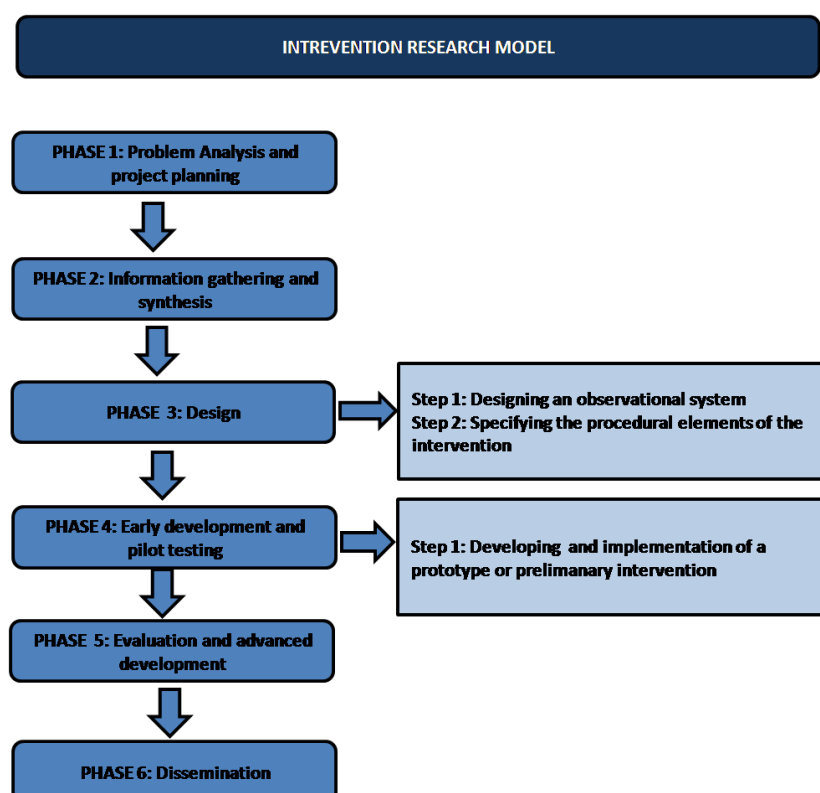
purpose of this research programme in which the needs of social workers were addressed through the empowerment process in group context.

4.3. Research model

In this intervention, research the Design and Development model (D&D) was used. The D&D model, according to Rothman and Thomas (1994:12), may be conceptualised as a problem-solving process for seeking effective intervention and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties. Rothman and Thomas (1994:9) stipulate six phases of the D&D model. This article focuses on phase 3 and step 1 of phase 4 (early development) of the newly developed empowerment programme for social workers as seen in Figure 4.

Figure 1: Phases and activities of intervention research

(Adapted from Rothman and Thomas (1994:28))



In this article, the researcher will describe all the steps of Phase 3 and step 1 of phase 4 of the model and indicate how the theory was applied in practice during each step.

Phase 3: Design

During this phase, the following steps are of importance:

Step 1: Designing an observational system

An observational system is of crucial value. Researchers must design a way of naturalistically observing the problem, events related to the problem, as well as a method system for discovering the extent of the problem and detecting effects following the intervention. The researcher has identified from the literature study and needs assessment behaviours associated with the problem. Engagement, job satisfaction, stress, and burnout are all related to and needs of the social workers in order to increase their engagement and retain them for the profession. The UWES scale was identified as a method of evaluating the behaviour that needed to be changed (**Addendum: 2**).

Step 2: Specifying procedural elements of the intervention

By observing the problem and studying naturally occurring innovations and other prototypes, researchers can identify procedural elements for use in the intervention. The researcher studied what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers, also what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover and their intention to leave the profession (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:482). These elements were included in the programme. A support group with an empowerment theme was also chosen as the main vehicle for the intervention. The procedural elements of an intervention often become part of an eventual practice model, which is the final product of the research (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:483).

Phase 4: Early development and testing – this is like a pilot full dress rehearsal of the programme and the process to test whether the design concepts work in practice. This phase offers a unique opportunity for developing the practical implementation procedures and processes. The programme was developed during this phase. In the next article, the designed programme was rolled out and tested with 11 social workers partaking in the experimental group. Pre- and post-tests as well as a postponed post-test were done to test the design. In this article, the following steps were followed:

• Step 1: Developing a prototype or preliminary intervention

The preliminary intervention procedures were selected and specified. In order to develop a prototype for use in pilot testing, the researcher needed to establish ways of communicating the intervention to intended users. Feedback from consumers and

implementers was obtained to help refine and simplify the prototype for the intervention (De Vos, 2005b:402). The researcher did a literature study as well as an empirical study (needs assessment) on the development of an empowerment programme for social workers in relation to positive work engagement. From this needs assessment it became clear that social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management. As a result, they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive. This could lead to them feeling unsatisfied and contemplating turnover. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, an increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills improvement is necessary in order to assist social workers in dealing with the stressors and keeping them excited about and interested in the profession. The recommendations and comments of the social workers were taken into consideration to help refine the development of a new empowerment programme for social workers.

Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development, and Phase 6: Dissemination, will be discussed in article 4.

4.4. Programme

An empowerment programme was developed. The information used for this programme was obtained from the questionnaires completed by sixty (60) social workers from the North-West province. Table 15 provides a **short** version of the outline of the programme. A more complete version follows in section 8.1.

Table 1: Outline of the programme

Session	Theme	Duration	Day
Session 1	Introduction and orientation	60 min	1
Session 2	Engagement	3 h 15min	1
Session 3	Job satisfaction	3 h	1
Session 4	Burnout	3h	2
Session 5	Stress	2h45 min	2
Session 6	The Toolkit	45min	2
Session 7	Conclusion and evaluation	30min	2

5. THE ROLE OF GROUP WORK IN A SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMME

Group work, as one of the methods of social work, can assist the social worker in facilitating and implementing empowerment programmes (Becker, 2005:11). Although programmes can be used in clinical social work as well as in community work and community development, the researcher, for purposes of this research, decided to implement the social group work method and to render services to social workers through a designed social group work programme. The researcher is familiar with the social group work method, since she has already implemented it in service delivery.

Group work is defined as a "Goal-directed activity with small treatment and task groups aimed at meeting socio-emotional needs and accomplishing tasks. This activity is directed at individual members of a group and to the group as a whole within a system of service delivery" (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:11). Social group work is an orientation and method of social work intervention in which small numbers of people who share similar interests or common problems convene regularly and engage in activities designed to achieve certain objectives (Barker, 2003:404; Corey & Corey, 2002:107; Du Preez, 1995:57; Toseland & Rivas, 2012:176).

Toseland and Rivas (2012:20) outline the following groups the social worker can use in helping to change the individual's life within a group: support groups, educational groups, growth groups, therapy groups and socialisation groups. Every group is unique regarding its needs (Roux, 2002:154; Zastrow, 2010:32).

For purposes of this study a social group work programme therefore is the process taking place between a facilitator (social worker) and group members (social workers) in which a systematic pattern is followed to achieve certain goals (Roux, 2002:184; Toseland & Rivas, 2012:276-277). Group work facilitates the development of empowerment - both personally and socially. Individuals often form groups due to the need of support. Although this is often for support needed to cope, support and encouragement is also often needed to confront or improve existing situations. In this way, clients learn how to "take control" so that instead of passively enduring what happens to them, they determine the effect of the situation on their own lives (Boyd & Skittrall, 1995:117). An empowering group work programme is a programme in which psychosocial principles and knowledge are converted into teachable skills, which can empower people to respond effectively to the demands and

problems of coping in certain situations or in a certain stage of life (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:7).

One of the benefits of being in a group is realizing that although people have many different issues and varied ways of coping, there are basic struggles we all share that are intrinsic to being human. This simple but powerful concept helps to reduce our sense of isolation and aloneness.

6. THE ROLE OF EMPOWERMENT IN A SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMME

Nedd (2006:16) stipulates a considerably positive correlation between empowerment and intention to stay in one's job. Grant (2006:53) links self-efficacy, which is also one of the dimensions of psychological empowerment, to employee turnover. She states that worker development, mentoring, coaching, feedback, encouragement, and building competence will lead to feelings of self-efficacy and lower staff turnover. The researcher also agrees with Spreitzer in that there is a link between empowerment and resilience. Empowerment enables individuals to be resilient in the face of difficulty or threat (Spreitzer, 2007:30). Empowerment can facilitate a sense of real hope that things will get better in the future. Empowerment may further provide the conditions necessary to build organisational commitment, and by enhancing organisational commitment, the levels of burnout and turnover can be reduced (Dee *et al.*, 2003:259-272). Empowerment has become an increasingly important factor in determining employee health and well-being (Laschinger & Finegan, 2005:439). Potgieter (1998:9) defines empowerment as "...a process that requires close partnerships between client systems and helpers and it is based on the strong belief in the strengths and potential of client systems to improve their life situations". Menon and Hartmann (2002:157) conceptualises empowerment as an act, a process or a state.

Durand (2008:36) holds that empowerment in the workplace has two meanings. Firstly, the practice or set of practices involving the delegation of responsibility down the hierarchical structure of the organisation, resulting in increased decision-making authority for employees in respect of the execution of their primary tasks. The second meaning of empowerment refers to psychological empowerment and refers to feelings of empowerment as reflected in competence/confidence in employees' abilities to perform a task well, to experience impact or influence in their jobs, to perceive self-determination and

a sense of meaning. The greater the empowerment, the higher the level of job satisfaction workers experience (Hunter, 2009:5).

Buckle (2003:29) and Durand (2008:37) identify increased performance and motivation, quality products and services, lowered absenteeism and turnover, employees that are more creative, a sense of ownership, taking responsibility and higher levels of motivation, as advantages of empowerment for the organisation. Job satisfaction, commitment, energy, high performance, and willingness to learn were identified as some of the advantages for the individual.

The following reasons support the utilization of an empowerment programme according to Steyn (2001:149-150):

- It serves as an energising tool that motivates the worker to be open.
- It increases worker satisfaction and morale due to a more positive orientation towards their work roles.
- It is associated with productivity at the team as well as individual levels.
- It creates problem-solving skills.
- It creates a shared purpose among workers, creates co-operation and enhances values.
- It leads to discovering creative solutions to different issues by means of group synergy.
- It saves management time, assigns responsibilities, develops people, builds trust and influences and expands the manager's scope.
- It improves quality of delivery by providing better information and delegating authority.
- It leads to organisational commitment. A worker's experience of empowerment may account for more variances in his or her organisational commitment.

In the context of this study psycho-social empowerment as a motivational construct will be used as described by Spreitzer (1995:1444). It reflects an individual's active orientation to his/her work role, with his/her cognitions being shaped by a work environment. Psycho-social empowerment exists when workers feel they exercise some control over their work life (Spreitzer, 1995:1444). In the context of this study, empowerment will further mean social workers "... must be assisted to recognise their potential and strengths, they must take initiative and ownership and control of their own developments to ensure sustainability". Empowerment means people having power to make informed decisions and relevant choices (Durand, 2008:37). Empowerment is the shifting of responsibilities to

even the lowest levels of the organisation. This implies that social workers are provided with the necessary skills and abilities to make decisions and that their potential is utilized in such a manner that they can solve the problems presented to them within the workplace (Werner, 2007:385).

Menon and Hartmann (2002:156) view motivational empowerment as psychological enabling. Enabling implies motivating through enhancing personal efficacy by creating conditions for increased motivation for task accomplishment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988:474). Spreitzer (1995:1444) defines psychological empowerment as "a motivational construct manifested in four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact".

Empowerment also implies having access to resources and opportunities to use them optimally in a given community. Durand (2008:37) indicates that empowerment includes providing training and bridging programmes to generate knowledge and expertise. It is a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situations.

The group work process was chosen as the method of empowerment in this research, as the group format provides opportunities for individuals that have a common situation or condition to share experiences, ways of coping, and strategies for problem solving that they have found to be successful. It is also a means to develop a support network and a sense of community (Sands & Solomon, 2003:8). Group participants bring experiential knowledge to the group and, as members increase their knowledge and comfort, they essentially function as co-facilitators. As such, the programme is created to empower social workers of the North-West province, thereby addressing focussing on increasing their positive work engagement and preventing turnover. The programme is facilitated as part of a group work process

In this research, the empowerment programme provided the researcher the opportunity to influence the participants while at the same time utilizing the programme to reach the goals of the research.

7. THE PLANNING PROCESS OF A PROGRAMME

Lombard (1991:115) indicates that every programme has procedures that should be followed, which are made up of specific activities that are arranged to meet certain goals. A programme is "a medium through which the functioning of members can be assessed in areas such as interpersonal skills, ability to perform daily living activities, motor co-ordination, attention span and the ability to work cooperatively" (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:268-269). According to the New Dictionary of Social Work (1995:49), the term programme is defined as the process between a group and a social worker where a systematic pattern of activities is followed to achieve group goals. Programmes for social work have the broad goal of enhancing individual and social change by providing services that meet individual and community needs.

According to Strydom and Wessels (2006:6), the group work process has a vertical and a horizontal approach, which respectively comprise the components and the phases. The components include motivation, structuring, climate, norms, control, cohesion, relationships and programme planning. The phases generally are as follows: the beginning/pre-group phase (*target group, goals, action plan*), the initial phase (*orientation, relationships, commitment*), the transition phase (*testing, playing, observing, taking responsibility*), the working stage (*cohesion, intimacy, participation, interaction, commitment*), the final stage (*less participation and commitment, need to function independently*) and the post group phase (*Individual follow-up, assessment, measurement*) (Herbst, 2002:119-121). The planning stage of the group work marks the beginning of the worker's involvement in the group and it was a very important step in designing this empowerment programme.

7.1. Planning and compiling of a group

The nature of a programme must be directed at the cultural, developmental, and environmental needs and common problems that bring the participants (group members) together (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:59). Compiling and writing a group work programme is critical and will in the end determine whether the goal of the group and those of individuals will be reached. A specific process of programme planning and compilation needs to be followed bearing in mind the group work process consisting of various aspects and stages of the group work process. A specific process also needs to be taken into account when compiling an empowerment programme (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:270). The selection of programme activities is of vital importance, as it will play a major role in the presentation of the programme (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:59). Programme activities are

the resources used within group context to assist individual group members and the group as a whole to achieve their objectives (Modise, 2005:62). It provides a medium through which the functioning of members can be assessed in areas such as interpersonal skills, ability to perform daily living activities, motor coordination, attention span, and ability to work supportively (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:268-269).

Toseland and Rivas (2005:261) and Roux (2002:183-187) indicate the procedure for selecting programme activities as follows:

- Specify programme activities that are consistent with the group's purposes and goals.
- Specify the objectives of the programme activity.
- Specify programme activities that can be performed, given the available facilities, resources and the time.
- List potentially relevant programme activities based on the member's interest and motivation, age, skill level, physical and mental state and attention span.
- Classify programme activities according to:
 - Characteristics of the activity, e.g. length, structure and so on.
 - Physical requirements of the activity, e.g. fine motor.
 - Co-ordination and strengths.
 - Social requirements of the activity, e.g. interactional verbal and social skills.
 - Psychological requirements of the activity, such as an expression of feelings, thoughts and motives.
 - Cognitive requirements of the activity, e.g. orientation to time, place and person.
- Select the programme activity best suited to achieve the objectives specified.

The researcher selected appropriate programme activities based on the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment.

The programme activities must address the needs of the social workers attending the programme if full co-operation is to be achieved. According to the results in the needs assessment discussed in article 2, it became clear that social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management. As a result, they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive. This could lead to them feeling unsatisfied and contemplating turnover. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, an increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills improvements is necessary in order to assist social workers in dealing with the stressors

and keeping the them excited and interested and **engaged** in their profession. For this reason the following type of activities are used in the programme:

Figure 2: Support group activities



(CHCGROUP2C, 2004:2)

Learning activities

Everything is a potential learning action. It could be a task, talking to another worker, reading, having an experience of any kind. Information sessions about engagement, job satisfaction, burnout, and stress are provided in this programme.

Reflective thinking activities

This is simply thinking about your experience, going over it in your mind. Experience is changed into real learning this way. Small-group discussions as well as mind mapping exercises are used in this programme.

Conclusions activities

These are the ideas or answers that come from reflective thinking. Mind mapping is used as a conclusion activity in this programme.

Planning activities

This is planning some action following from conclusions drawn. Action planning is used in this programme to follow up on conclusions made.

Resource activities contain further references and other materials relevant to the topics covered. A tool kit CD is provided as an additional resource (**Addendum: 6**)

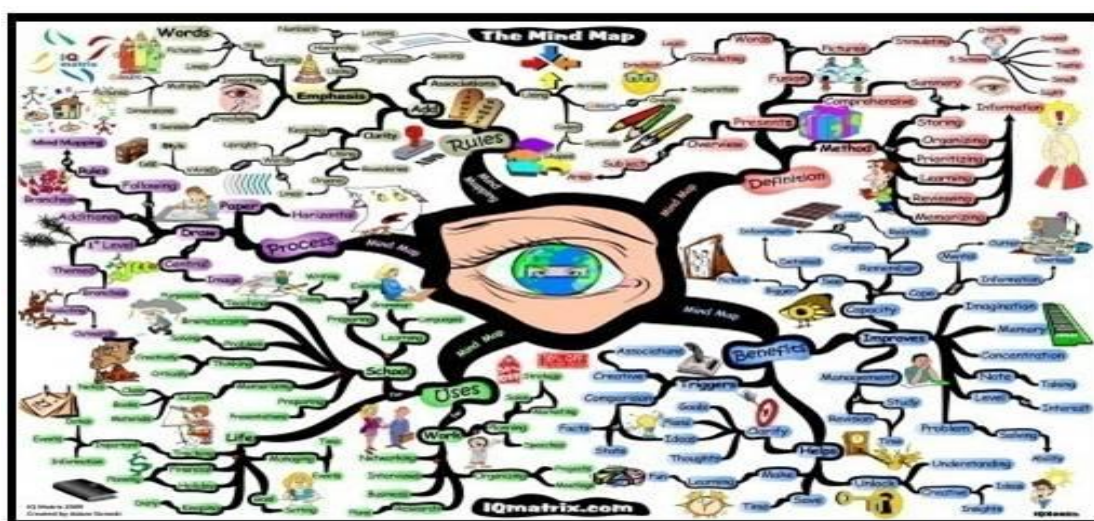
Additional support activities contain additional activities or discussions. The support group process and additional discussions are classified under this category.

Mind mapping and small-group discussions are the two main activities used in this programme and are discussed as follows:

7.1.1. Mind mapping

In this programme, Mind mapping as a rethinking and conclusion activity exercise was used after every information session or learning activity.

Figure: 3 Mind mapping



(Sicinski, 2009:1)

Sicinski (2009:1) explains the mind-mapping phenomenon as a visual information management tool that enables one to structure, organize, memorize, arrange, brainstorm, and learn information in a highly specialized way. This tool was used as a creative manner to invite the respondents to capture their ideas, notes, and needs during the empowerment programme. After each key session, the respondents drew a section of the mind map with the main goal on improving their positive engagement. After the programme, the four mind maps were given to the respondents to take home with them. This will constantly remind

them of what needs to be done in order to improve their engagement. The four areas that will be mind-mapped are engagement, job satisfaction, stress, and burnout.

7.1.2. Small-group discussions

The group's ideas and opinions are needed when discussing problems that need to be worked out (Anon., 2000:1). When finding solutions to conflict and problems or when generating fresh innovative ideas for products and services, there is no better way than to tap into the collective talent and creativity of respondents by using breakout groups. During these group sessions, small groups or Breakout groups were used. Breakout group is a term used to describe the gathering of people into smaller groups. It is a means of rapidly and actively gathering a large amount of newly generated information that can be reported back to a large audience. The process entails that the large group is divided into smaller ones to discuss a question or do an activity and then report back to the whole group (Anon., 2000:1). Breakout groups are used to alter the pace of a long workshop and to give everyone a chance to contribute to the discussion.

7.2. The role of group work in empowering social workers

Hepworth and Larson (1993:495) describe an empowerment programme as the facilitator (helper) that enables the group members to gain capacity to interact with their environment in ways that enhance their needs gratification, well-being, and satisfaction. It is closely linked to competence, self-esteem, support systems, and belief that individual actions or actions in consent with others can lead to improvement in one's life situation. There are different themes of helping processes and skills that can be identified with direct focus on empowering skills and functions such as:

- To boost motivation, gain resources, attend to presenting problems and personal strengths, and enlist energy in changing events.
- To maintain physical comfort and self-esteem, facilitate members to share and validate one another's experiences and reduce self-blame.
- To enhance problem solving and to promote self-direction, brain storming, sharing of possible solutions, challenging strengths and creativity.
- To promote social change, making clear mutual contact that bridges the personal, political, and social change focus and reaching for maximum participation (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:60).

8. DEVELOPMENT AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO RECLAIM POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

AIM:

The aim of the group work programme (**Addendum: 5**) was to empower social workers of the North-West province to reclaim positive work engagement by teaching them about burnout, stress and engagement and providing them with necessary skills and tools to prevent and address the negative factors influencing their engagement and possible turnover intentions.

8.1. Content:

The themes for this programme were identified in accordance with results discussed in Article 2 and guidelines of various literature sources. The findings of the needs assessment confirmed the research outcomes in this area. Social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management. As a result, they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive. This could lead to feeling unsatisfied and contemplating turnover intent. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, an increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge, and skills is needed in order to assist social workers to be more resilient and to deal with the stressors. This will keep them excited about and interested in the profession. Their resilience needs to increase in order to support their overall well-being. Resilience is the capacity to maintain competent functioning in the face of major life stressors (Kaplan *et al.*, 1996:158). There is a strong relationship between stress, burnout, social support, and resilience (Dyrbye *et al.*, 2010:1023). According to the researcher, empowering people with the necessary skills and support will thus build their resilience. Resilience relates to people's ability to stay positive even when the going gets tough. When levels of resilience are high, it is much more likely that morale will stay high when times are hard. High resilience means that people's behaviour is more resistant to pressure – in other words, they can carry on doing their job well even under significant strain; secondly, high levels of resilience means that people can cope with pressure, staying focused and positive.

The researcher concludes from this needs assessment that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the job engagement social workers experience by building their resilience. Focus should be placed specifically on issues affecting job satisfaction, stress, and prevention of burnout, including aspects such as assertiveness skills, motivation and effective time management skills. A resource CD **(Addendum: 6)**, containing resources needed which could further support the worker when supervision is not available or not appropriate, could contribute to enhancing positive work engagement for the social workers in the North-West province. **The content of this programme is provided as a comprehensive addendum: 5 (coloured pages) at the end of this article.**

When planning this programme the researcher specifically utilised the work from Leiter and Maslach (2005). The programme was started with an introduction and ended with an evaluation of a self-constructed questionnaire. The content and length of sessions in this programme will be given in a schematic manner first and will then be discussed more comprehensively. A broad spectrum of topics were covered which enhanced and empowered the total being of the social workers who's positive work engagement was affected. The aspects specifically identified in the needs assessment, namely assertiveness and time management, were addressed in the Tool kit CD while motivation was addressed throughout the programme. The relationship between turnover and the main key factors was also continuously intertwined during the programme. A schematic presentation of the programme follows:

Table 2: Schematic presentation of programme

Session	Theme	Duration	Time
Day 1			
Session 1	Introduction and orientation ○ Introduction ○ Ice breaker ○ Program ○ Work agreement ○ Pre test questionnaire	60 min	8:30-9:30
MORNING TEA			
Session 2	Engagement ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Engagement ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan ○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Summery	3 h 15min	9:45-13:00
LUNCH			
Session 3	Job satisfaction ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Job satisfaction ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan	3 h	13:30-16:30
AFTERNOON TEA			
	○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Summery		
DAY 2			
Session 4	Burnout ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Burnout ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan ○ Taking care and action	3h	8:30-11:30
MORNING TEA			
	○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Summery		
Session 5	Stress ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Stress	2h45 min	12:00-13:00
LUNCH			
	○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The plan ○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Summery		13:30-15:15
AFTERNOON TEA			
Session 6	The Toolkit ○ Content ○ Exploration of tool ○ The tool	45min	15:15-16:00
Session 7	Conclusion and evaluation ○ Summery ○ Conclusion ○ Post test and self developed evaluation questionnaire	30min	16:00-16:30

8.2. The discussion of the empowerment programme

A brief discussion of the implementation of the programme follows. The full version of the group work programme (Manual) is attached as Addendum 5 following this discussion.

8.2.1. Session 1: introduction and orientation

This introduction session has the following objectives:

Objectives

- To introduce group members to one another.
- To establish and build a relationship of trust.
- To develop insight with group members regarding the importance of confidentiality.
- To help members work together in a cooperative and productive manner.
- To outline and clarify the purpose, objectives and structure of the group work programme.
- To create an atmosphere of warmth, acceptance and enjoyment.
- To establish ground rules and to set goals.
- To compile a work agreement with group members.
- To complete the pre-test questionnaires: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) **(Addendum: 2)**
- To emphasize the relationship between engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, stress and turnover intentions.

Aids for the session

- Breakaway cards.
- Power Point monitor and accessories, slideshow.
- Standing board with a flip chart to write on, markers.
- Printed programme.
- Copies of Work agreement (Contract) **(Addendum: 8)**
- Copies of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)
- Attendance list

Overview of programme activities

- Introduction.
- Ice breaker.
- Programme.
- Work agreement.
- Pre-test questionnaire.

Content

The group facilitator welcomed everybody and introduced herself to the group members. The group members (social workers) were afforded the opportunity of introducing themselves to the rest of the group, which provided them with a starting point for interaction. This was done through an icebreaker. Ice Breakers can be an effective way of starting training. As interactive and often fun sessions run before the main proceedings, they help people get to know each other and buy into the purpose of the workshop (Mind Tools, 2012:1). As an icebreaker, each social worker was asked to introduce her/himself and name the reasons to the rest of the group why they became a social worker. They also needed to indicate their level of tiredness/burned out feeling on a scale from one to ten. A relationship of trust was established through a brief discussion of ethics in-group work (Corey & Corey, 2002:68-90). The importance of confidentiality was highlighted by means of an example of something the social workers did not wish anybody else to know. The social workers were encouraged to be cooperative and productive to gain the maximum from the programme. An attendance list was circulated and is attached as Addendum: 10.

The facilitator outlined the purpose and objectives of the group and had the responsibility to create an atmosphere in which the social workers would feel comfortable (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:65). The social workers were given the opportunity to establish the rules for themselves and these were visible for the duration of the programme (Geyer, 2006:97). The participants also completed a confirmed consent form (**Addendum: 7**) for research purposes. The contract (**Addendum: 8**) was discussed and signed (Herbst, 2002:288). The attendees completed a pre-group questionnaire namely the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003) prior to the presentation of the programme. This questionnaire was utilized again at the end of the programme (when they would complete the same questionnaire once more) to indicate whether they had benefited from

the programme. An introduction to the programme was provided and linked to the purpose of the different sessions.

8.2.2. Session 2: Engagement

This session focussed on engagement to prevent social work turnover and retain social workers for the profession. This entitled addressing the concept *engagement*. Engagement has been associated with higher levels of positive perceptions of job characteristics, psychological well-being, good social relationships, organizational commitment, customer loyalty, and objective job performance **as well as lower levels of turnover** (Childs & Stoeber, 2010:270).



Objectives

The objectives of this session were:

- To enhance the respondents' knowledge of engagement (positive engagement).
- To empower attendees with the definition of engagement.
- To discuss engagement issues for attendees.
- To discuss research findings regarding engagement and linking it up with the experiences of respondents.
- To empower attendees with what affects engagement.
- To empower attendees with tips for increasing engagement.
- To assist attendees in developing a personal increasing engagement rescue plan through a mind mapping exercise.

Aids for the session

- Breakaway cards.
- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Paper and pens.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow (16 slides).
- Mind mapping sheets with stickers, cartons and other stationary items.

Overview of programme activities

- Introduction.
- Definition.
- Engagement.
- Research results.
- Motivation.
- The Empowerment plan.
- Taking care and action.
- Tools and Tips.
- Personal rescue plan.
- Summary.

Content

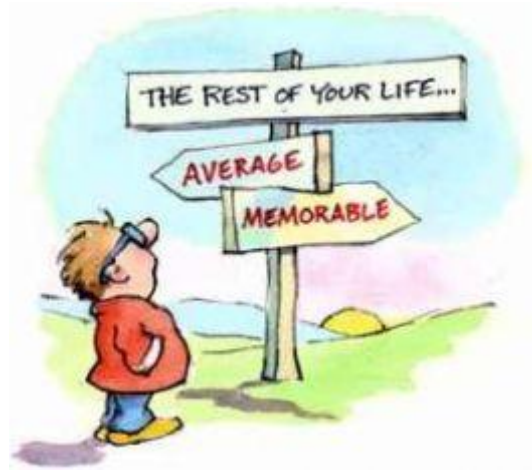
The researcher introduced the term *engagement* to the group and related it to a relationship. A breakaway group discussion linked work engagement to the attendant's current work circumstances and forced members to introspect their current work-self-relationship. Feedback was given to the group upon which the term engagement was defined in more detail. The drivers, causes and reasons for disengagement was focused on after which further introspection was facilitated by another breakaway session focusing on the attendants' personal engagement level which was influenced by resources and demands in his or her environment. Research results were discussed and members were motivated to take control over their own engagement and work life. Participants were taken through the steps of the empowerment plan in order to address and rejuvenate their own engagement. Tools and tips were provided which could support increasing engagement. Individual action plans were formulated through a mind mapping exercise focusing on:

- What determines their excitement in their work?
- What disengages them from work?
- What resources do they need?
- What action needs to be taken?

An evaluation session was held to summarize the main aspects of the session.

8.2.3. Session 3: Job satisfaction

General job satisfaction is strongly correlated with turnover (Weaver *et al.*, 2006:iv). For this reason, job satisfaction was focussed on in this session. According to Hellman (1997:94), the more dissatisfied employees become, the more likely they are to consider other employment opportunities. Alam and Mohammed (2010:125) also found that lack of job satisfaction is among the factors that contribute to people's intention to quit their jobs.



Objectives

The objectives for this session were:

- To enhance the respondents' knowledge of job satisfaction.
- To discuss job satisfaction issues for attendees.
- To discuss research findings regarding job satisfaction and linking it up with the experiences of respondents.
- To empower attendees with the definition of Job satisfaction.
- Empower attendees with what affects job satisfaction.
- To empower attendees with tips for increasing job satisfaction.
- To assist attendees with developing a personal "increasing job satisfaction rescue plan" through a mind mapping exercise.

Aids for the session

- Breakaway cards.
- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Paper and pens.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow.
- Mind mapping sheets with stickers, cartons and other stationary items.

Overview of programme activities

- Introduction.
- Definition.

- Job satisfaction.
- Research results.
- Motivation.
- The Empowerment plan.
- Taking care and action.
- Tools and Tips.
- Personal rescue plan.
- Summary.

Content

The researcher introduced the term *job satisfaction* to the group. A breakaway group discussion linked job satisfaction to the attendant's current work circumstances and forced members to introspect their current work: self-relationship. Feedback was given to the group upon which the term *job satisfaction* was defined in more detail. The effects of job satisfaction, as well as the factors influencing it, and the key areas of job satisfaction, were facilitated. Another breakaway session followed focusing on the original passion for social work as well as the needs to rediscover job satisfaction. Research results were discussed and members were motivated to take control over their own job satisfaction levels. The initial needs assessment indicated that 58% respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their job but during this session 82% (nine out of eleven) indicated they were not satisfied with their job. Participants were taken through the steps of the empowerment plan in order to address and rejuvenate their own job satisfaction. They were provided with a list of tools and tips, which could assist them in increasing their job satisfaction. Individual action plans were formulated through a mind mapping exercise focusing on:

- Which area needs addressing?
- What do I want from my relationship with my work in order to increase my job satisfaction?

8.2.4. Session 4: Burnout

Burnout plays an important part in social work retention and improving positive work engagement. Kim and Lee (2009:365) in their literature review on burnout, suggested that worker burnout increases levels of depression, sick-leave absences, turnover intention, actual turnover, and self-reported health problems. Turnover intention is



seen as a key outcome of burnout, which provided the reason for focussing on burnout in this session.

Objectives

- To enhance the respondents' knowledge of burnout.
- To discuss burnout issues for attendees.
- To discuss research findings regarding burnout and linking it up with the experiences of respondents.
- To empower attendees with the definition of burnout.
- Empower attendees with what affects burnout.
- To empower attendees with tips for preventing burnout.
- To assist attendees in developing a personal "preventing burnout rescue plan" through a mind mapping exercise.

Aids for the session

- Breakaway cards.
- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Paper and pens.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow.
- Mind mapping sheets with stickers, cartons and other stationary items.

Overview of programme activities

- Introduction.
- Definition.
- Burnout.
- Research results.
- Motivation.
- The Empowerment plan.
- Taking care and action.
- Tools and Tips.
- Personal rescue plan.
- Summary.

Content

The facilitator utilized a group discussion to determine the social workers' attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, and background regarding burnout. This was done in breakaway group discussions providing feedback to the larger group. The discussions included aspects such as own experiences, behaviour and reasons, and factors affecting burnout. The importance of guidance regarding the prevention of burnout was discussed in general but also in the context of the experiences and feedback of the social workers. The facilitator guided the discussion regarding manageable outcomes of following a healthy balanced work life. It will be important to utilize the attendees' knowledge and experiences regarding the above-mentioned as a basis for discussion so that they did not feel overwhelmed with yet another session of information. The attendees' needs regarding psychological, physical, and emotional care were utilised as basis to encourage them to take ownership regarding their emotional health in realising that they can be the most important role-players with regard to their emotional health. The facilitator empowered the attendees with tips for preventing their own burnout. Attendees were then assisted in drawing a mind map of the most important issues preventing and affecting their burnout. Focus was placed on personalizing their own "preventing burnout rescue plan".

8.2.5. Session 5: Stress

Stress and Occupational stress play a significant role in the daily lives of social workers. According to Ham and Griffeth (1995:45), evidence indicates that occupational stress moderately and positively predicts turnover intentions. To prevent turnover and increase positive work engagement, social workers need to be empowered to manage their stress. For this reason, stress was included in the next session.



Objectives

The objectives for this session were:

- To enhance the respondents' knowledge of job satisfaction.
- To discuss research findings regarding job satisfaction and linking it up with the experiences of respondents.
- To empower attendees with the definition of stress.
- To identify the causes of stress in the social worker.

- To help the social worker develop insight into the effect of stress on the quality of life.
- To introduce techniques of coping with stress.
- To learn and practice relaxation techniques.
- To assist attendees in developing a personal “stress rescue plan” through a mind mapping exercise.

Aids for the session

- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Paper and pens.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow.
- Mind mapping sheets with stickers, cartons and other stationary items.
- Relaxation music and CD player

Overview of programme activities

- Introduction.
- Definition.
- Stress.
- Research results.
- Motivation.
- The plan.
- Taking care and action.
- Tools and Tips.
- Personal rescue plan.
- Summary.

Content

The facilitator used group discussions to determine the social workers’ attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, and background regarding stress. This was done in breakaway group discussions providing feedback to the larger group. Again these discussions included aspects such as own experiences, behaviour, reasons and factors affecting stress. The facilitator guided the discussion regarding stressors for social workers specifically. The facilitator empowered the attendees with tips for decreasing and managing their own

stress. Attendees were then assisted in drawing a mind map of the most important issues affecting their stress. Focus was placed on personalizing their own “stress rescue plan”.

8.2.6. Session 6: Toolkit

An empowerment tool was designed to assist social workers to rekindle their joy for social work. This tool was provided in the form of a CD with a main menu, linking it to different topics, which could empower the social worker (**Addendum: 6**).

Objectives

- To empower attendees with a resource toolkit.

Aids for the session

- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow.
- Resource CD containing additional resources.

Overview of programme activities

- Content.
- Exploration of tool.
- The tool.

Content

The facilitator used this session to enhance and empower the attendees with important tools that might enhance their positive engagement. These tools would assist social workers in preventing stress, and burnout whilst simultaneously enhancing their engagement and job satisfaction. Tools included in the CD will address assertiveness, supervision, support, time management, caseload management, measuring success and resources. The CD as a tool was briefly explained as well as the process of accessing the menu and information.

8.2.7. Session 7: Conclusion and evaluation

This is the last session concluding the workshop.

Objectives

- To prepare social workers for the termination of the group.
- To consolidate with them what they have learnt during the sessions.
- To evaluate the programme and sessions through an evaluation form provided.
- To evaluate the total effect of the programme in relation to the possible increase in positive work engagement, by means of the **Work & Well-being Survey (UWES)**.

Aids for the session

- Standing board with flip chart to write on, markers.
- Paper and pens.
- Power Point monitor and slideshow.
- Self-constructed programme evaluation questionnaire (**Addendum: 3**)
- Copies of the **Work & Well-being Survey (UWES)**.

Content

A discussion on 'the way forward' was facilitated in order to help the social workers to incorporate the empowering skills they will gain during the sessions into their day-to-day life and future. The evaluation as a phase in-group work was vital, since attendees were given the opportunity to clarify the meaning of their experiences in the programme and to consolidate the gains they have made. Attendees completed a self-constructed programme evaluation questionnaire (**Addendum: 3**), as well as **Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) (Addendum: 2)** questionnaire. This same instrument was used as the pre-group questionnaire. Members were requested to re-submit the **Work & Well-being Survey (UWES)** in a month's time. Contact will be made with each member individually.

9. DISCUSSION

This article focussed on the design and testing of an empowerment programme. The aim of the programme was to rekindle the positive engagement of social workers. Different activities were included in this programme after the needs assessment done in article two. According to the findings of the initial needs assessment, 70% of the respondents were mostly engaged with their job and experienced job satisfaction, but nearly half contemplated leaving the profession. 41% experienced a reduced work performance in the last six months. This could indicate high stress levels with possible burnout unless

circumstances were addressed. 30% of respondents appeared already disengaged, and were experiencing less job satisfaction.

These findings of the initial needs assessment confirmed the research outcomes in this area. Social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management; as a result, they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive. This could lead to them feeling unsatisfied and contemplating turnover intent. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, a programme was developed that focussed on the increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills, in order to assist social workers in dealing with the stressors, keeping them excited, and interested in the profession.

The researcher concluded from the needs assessment that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the degree of job engagement social workers experience. Focus should be placed specifically on issues affecting job satisfaction, stress, and prevention of burnout, including aspects such as assertiveness skills, motivation and effective time management skills. A resource CD containing resources needed which could further support the worker when supervision is not available or not appropriate, could contribute to building resilience and to enhancing positive work engagement for the social workers in the North-West province. **This CD attached as addendum 6 is copywrite protected. It is the property of the researcher.**

Re-establishing a sense of control, mastery, and competence in one's work situation seemed, at first glance, a daunting task. However, with strategies such as stress management, burnout prevention, and increasing job satisfaction, increased positive work engagement was an attainable goal.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made after the development and implementation of the programme:

- ❖ The workshop format of the programme was an appropriate way of communicating informally with the participants and allowing intimacy to take place.
- ❖ The number of group members should not exceed 15, as this will influence the communication and atmosphere of the group.
- ❖ The needs assessment prior to the development of the programme was necessary as this gave guidance in relation to what needs the social workers experienced and what needed to be captured in the programme.
- ❖ This programme consisted of seven sessions of which four were the same in nature. The researcher recommends changing the experiential learning in one of the sessions in order to provide more stimulation and creativity. Preferably, the “stress session”, since social workers already have a huge amount of information on stress, and using a different approach might teach them more skills. Making use of video clips and other media was suggested in the evaluation forms.
- ❖ Giving more attention to background music during mind mapping activities can relax the atmosphere more.

11. SUMMARY

This article focused on the development and implementation of an empowerment programme aimed at regaining positive work engagement for social workers. Each session was discussed according to the objective, aids needed, overview, content and discussion of each session. It can be concluded that an empowerment programme can meet social worker’s need for increasing positive engagement and lowering stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction.

This empowering programme was designed in correlation with the needs assessment done in article two.

The process of planning and compiling a group work programme was explained. The main focus of this article was on the content of the designed group work programme. The discussion was structured thematically and comprehensively providing the objectives and content of each session. During the last session of the programme, the UWES

questionnaire as well as an evaluation questionnaire should be completed to evaluate the programme. It is recommended that these evaluations form the basis for recommendations that could improve the programme or be built into prospective programmes.

The following article provides an evaluation of the effectiveness of the empowerment programme.

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13. ADDENDUMS



Rekindle the joy of social work!

***AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL WORKERS
TO REGAIN POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT***

2012

T CALITZ

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INTRODUCTION

Social work is a difficult profession. It often involves intense work with clients in complex situations; work where evaluation criteria are unclear and role conflict is abundant. Social workers are considered an occupational group at above-average risk levels for burnout (Soderfeldt and Soderfeldt, 1995:638). Cole, Panchanadeswaran, and Dainig (2004:2) report; “factors that increase job satisfaction among social workers include satisfaction with salary, job autonomy, opportunities for promotion, quality of supervision, good working conditions. Job satisfaction decreases for social workers who have a heavy workload, poor salary, lack of support from co-workers, unpleasant working conditions, and negative feelings about working conditions.”

Retention of workers in human services agencies is a serious concern. Employee engagement, sense of belonging and organizational commitment can be considered as components of well-being. Companies are investing large amounts of resources to lower employee turnover by creating an environment that is favorable for the employee. The social work profession has experienced a critical decrease of social workers in South Africa. The retention of social workers is problematic also in South Africa.

According to several studies conducted, many reasons could be ascribed to the high social work turnover, these include poor working conditions; poor compensation of work; lack of resources and support; and increased demands for services (Adlem, 2007:5). Hence, social workers are experiencing work stress, burnout, decreasing job satisfaction and a lack of positive engagement. According to Eborall and Garmeson (2001:8) these factors are taxing the personal and professional coping strategies of social workers, which could lead to staff turnover.

We should not be focusing on creating more jobs or recruiting more social workers but rather on creating better jobs, increasing the job satisfaction and especially on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience. This will hopefully retain more social workers for the profession and create a consistent, experienced and motivated work force, which will thus enhance the quality of service delivery directly influencing the community of South Africa.

This program will try to do just this. There appears to be a definite link between retention/ turnover and positive engagement of social workers, burnout, and stress and job satisfaction. It is

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impossible to give assistance in this regard to social workers without doing a thorough study of the needs of these workers. Having determined the needs in a preliminary needs assessment the

researcher has therefore designed this empowerment programme, which will focus on regaining positive work engagement for social workers in the North West Province.

THE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

The programme to follow consists of the objectives, aims, and contents of an empowering programme. Empowerment can be defined as a process whereby individuals, groups, families and communities are helped to attain personal or collective power, which increase their personal or interpersonal strengths to actively improve their circumstances (New dictionary of social work, 1995:21; Zastrow, 2010:52).

Seven sessions will be presented to social workers during a two-day workshop. The aim of the program is to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers by teaching them about burnout, stress, job satisfaction and engagement. Secondly, to provide them with necessary skills and tools to prevent and address the negative factors influencing their engagement and possible turnover intentions.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Session	Theme	Duration	Time
Day 1			
Session 1	Introduction and orientation ○ Introduction ○ Ice breaker ○ Program ○ Work agreement ○ Pre test questionnaire	60 min	8:30-9:30
MORNING TEA			
Session 2	Engagement ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Engagement debriefing ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan ○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Evaluation	3 h 15min	9:45-13:00
LUNCH			

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Session 3	Job satisfaction ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Job satisfaction debriefing ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan	3 h	13:30-16:30
	AFTERNOON TEA		
	○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Evaluation		
DAY 2			
Session 4	Burnout ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Burnout debriefing ○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The Empowerment plan ○ Taking care and action	3h	8:30-11:30
	MORNING TEA		
	○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Evaluation		
Session 5	Stress ○ Introduction ○ Definition ○ Stress debriefing	2h45 min	12:00-13:00
	LUNCH		
	○ Research results ○ Motivation ○ The plan ○ Taking care and action ○ Tools and Tips ○ Personal rescue plan ○ Evaluation		13:30-15:15
	AFTERNOON TEA		
Session 6	The Toolkit ○ Content ○ Exploration of tool ○ The tool	45min	15:15-16:00
Session 7	Conclusion and evaluation ○ Summery ○ Conclusion ○ Questionnaire ○ Evaluation	30min	16:00-16:30

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PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The general aim of this program is to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers

1. PARTICIPANTS

This program is designed to address the needs of social workers. This includes social workers in the different sections of the occupation, male as well as female.

2. THE LAYOUT OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop emphasizes experiential learning. Training activities include, but are not limited to, small group discussions, presentations by participants, case studies, action planning, brainstorming, mind mapping and self-awareness exercises.

At the start of the workshop, an engagement survey (UWES) will be handed out in order to measure the levels of engagement participants experience prior to the intervention. At the end of the workshop, the same survey (UWES) will be given to the participants again to measure the immediate impact. A third measurement (UWES) will take place four weeks after the workshop. An evaluation questionnaire will also be handed out after the workshop to assess the program itself.

3. SESSION LAYOUT

Each module begins with an overview and general information about purposes and length of time needed. Times throughout the modules are estimated—and can be shortened or lengthened depending on the trainer's facilitation. Each session includes an Introduction, Definition, and information session, Discussions, Feedback on research results, Motivation, an Empowerment plan, Session on Taking care and action, Tools and Tips as well as a Personal rescue plan.

4. HANDOUTS

Handouts are included at the back of each session and will be copied for participants in advance of the session.

5. SELECTION OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Programme activities are the resources used within the group context to assist individual group members and the group as a whole to achieve their objectives (Modise, 2005:62). It provides a medium through which the functioning of members can be assessed in areas such as interpersonal skills, ability to perform daily

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living activities, motor coordination, attention span and ability to work supportively (Toseland & Rivas, 2005:259).

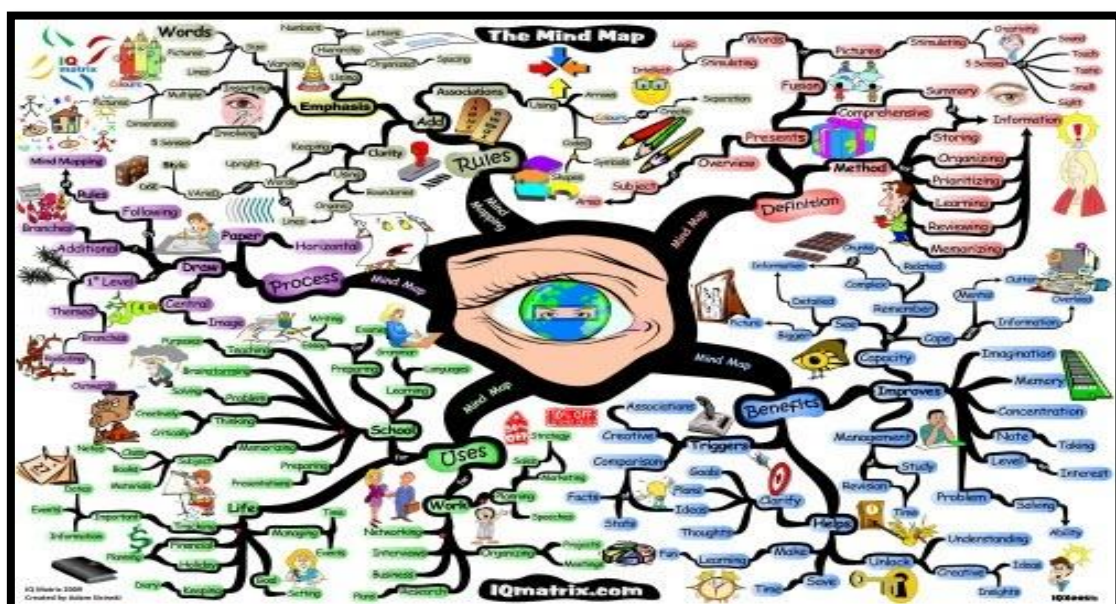
The programme activities must address the needs of the social workers attending the programme if full co-operation is to be achieved. Mind mapping and small group discussions are the two main activities used in this programme.

Mind mapping

In this program, Mind mapping as a practical exercise is used. Sicinzki (2009:1) explains the mind-mapping phenomenon as a visual information management tool that enables one to structure, organize, memorize, arrange, brainstorm, and learn information in a highly specialized way. Mind Mapping is a method of storing, organizing, prioritizing, learning, reviewing, and memorizing

information. It effectively presents an overview and summary of a body of knowledge that fuses words and pictures; helping simulate logic and creativity for proficient and effective thinking practices involving the five senses. This tool is used as a creative manner to invite the respondents to capture their ideas, notes, and needs during the empowerment programme. After each key session, the respondents will draw a section of the mind map with the main goal on improving their positive engagement. After the programme the four mind maps will be placed together to form a bigger picture, laminated and given to the respondents to take home with them. This will remind them constantly of what needs to be done in order to improve their engagement. The four areas that will be mind mapped are engagement, job satisfaction, stress and burnout.

Picture 1: Mind mapping (Sicinski, 2009:1)



INTRODUCTION

Drawing Mind Maps

Drawing a Mind Map is a rather simple process once one has a grasp of the basic structure. It is a process, which requires very little systematic explanation. Here follow some quick guidelines to help draw the first Mind Map (Sicinski, 2009:1).

- Take a large sheet of paper and place it horizontally in front of you.
- Draw a reasonably sized (colour) memorable central image that represents the topic you are going to be mapping.
- Draw at least four thick organic looking branches radiating outwards from the central image. Make sure to use a different colour to represent each branch.
- Write “key topic” words along these branches that represent the central image and the topic you are mapping.
- Draw additional branches that extend from your main branches. The words on these branches are essentially sub-topics of the words you wrote on your main branches.
- Keep expanding the Mind Map outwards with additional sub sub-topics / key words and branches

Further tips:

- Use symbols to classify different types of thoughts and

ideas.

- Use “key words” on lines. Short phrases can also work well.
- Use multi-headed arrows of varying colour, size, style and dimensions.
- Use codes to help draw your attention to specific sections of the map.
- Use good spacing between topics to separate your ideas.
- Use stimulating images and colours throughout the map.
- Use images to represent words in a metaphorical, “sound-like”, or direct manner.
- Create boundaries and borders to draw attention to specific branches.
- Create linear hierarchies of ordered numbers, lists and letters.
- Create “line” hierarchies; radiating from thick to thin lines.
- Create “word” hierarchies; varying “word sizes” to emphasize importance.
- Create memorable central image and associative pictures.
- Draw different shapes to represent ideas and segments of the map.
- Draw multi-dimensional words and objects.
- Draw thick branches that radiate outwards away from the central image.
- Vary “word” case. Use UPPER and lower case to emphasize importance of words.
- Vary font styles to separate ideas and topics.
- Vary branch colours in order to separate topics.
- Vary branch endings in order to



INTRODUCTION

emphasize words or phrases.

- Vary branch thickness in order to highlight specific ideas.
- Vary image / picture colours, emphasis, and size to enhance memory and recall.

Drawing Mind Maps in this way helps to stimulate imagination while at the same time creating strong associations. It is these two factors - imagination and association - that stimulate long-term memory and recall of information (Sicinski, 2009:1)



Small group discussions

During this workshop, small groups or Breakout groups are used. Breakout group is a term used to describe the gathering of people into smaller groups. It is a means of rapidly and actively gathering a large amount of newly generated information that can be reported back to a large audience. The

process entails that the large group is divided into smaller ones to discuss a question or do an activity and then report back to the whole group.

After some sessions, the respondents will be given the task to discuss the topic within a small group. Following an allocated amount of time, everyone reassembles to hear all of the small group's present summaries of their discussions.

Toolkit

A resource CD consisting of several resources in the form of PDF documents, web links and other formats will be made available to the participants in order to provide quick and easy support. Articles and manuals that could be of use in managing complex social work cases, providing guidelines or teaching new skills needed to manage caseloads, time management or address needs of burnout, stressed or dissatisfied social workers, will be included in a user friendly PowerPoint version with easy accessible hyperlink.

6. HOW TO USE THE ACTION PLAN

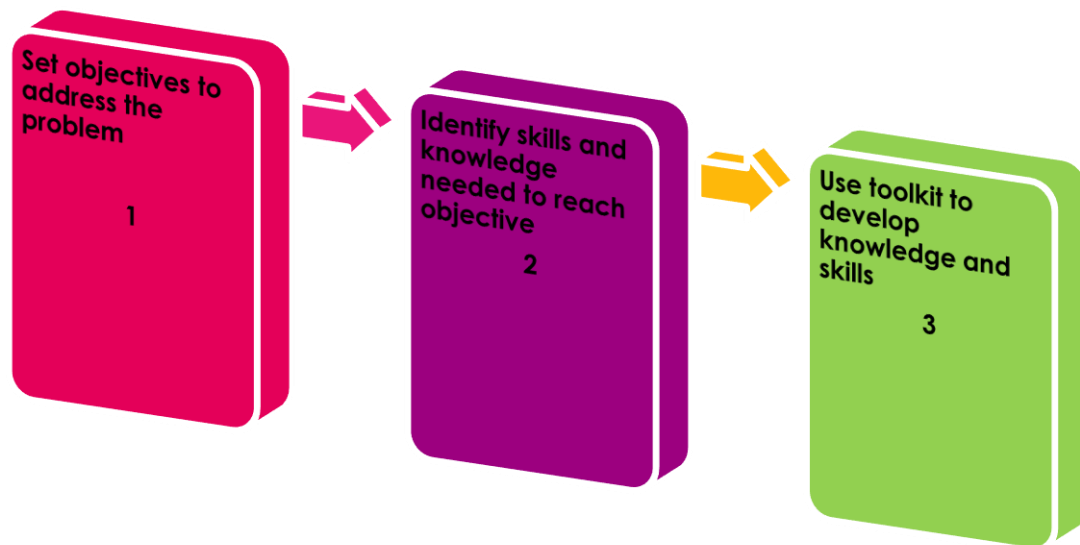
At the end of each chapter an empowerment plan is discussed which focuses on the main ideas for improving, preventing or coping with challenging issues. A four-step plan guides the participant towards taking care and to start

with an action plan. Thereafter tools and tips are provided to stimulate ideas in how to build resilience and prevent stress, burnout and job dissatisfaction. The mind map rescue plan is a tool which summarises all the above and gives a

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visual rescue plan from which the participants can work. During this process, the participant is guided to do introspection and identify the needs and skills required to empower themselves.

The toolkit CD provides then, some of the necessary information and links to develop and improve the skills and knowledge needed.



OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this session were:

- *To introduce group members to one another.*
- *To establish and build a relationship of trust.*
- *To develop insight with group members regarding the importance of confidentiality.*
- *To help members work together in a cooperative and productive manner.*
- *To outline and clarify the purpose, objectives and structure of the group work programme.*
- *To create an atmosphere of warmth, acceptance and enjoyment.*
- *To establish ground rules and set goals.*
- *To compile a work agreement with group members.*
- *To complete the pre-group questionnaires: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES).*
- *To emphasize the relationship between engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, stress and turnover intentions.*

SESSION 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION



It is well known nationally and internationally, that South African social workers are well trained and there is an increasing demand on their skills (Department of Social Development, 2009:6). Social workers are viewed as the key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society. The government is currently faced with the challenge that there is a lack of capacity to implement the necessary policies and programs according to the constitutional, legal and international obligation.

1. OVERVIEW

In South Africa, as in most other countries in the world, there is difficulty in recruiting and retaining social workers in the profession (Department of Social Development, 2009:7). At least 60 000 social workers are needed to implement the Children's Act. As at October 2011, there were 15 611 registered social workers and 2 953 registered social auxiliary workers. This represents almost a 75% shortage of social workers (Kopane, 2011:1).

Several factors contributed to this problem. In South Africa, we do not only have the impact of globalization, but our country has also gone through major political changes. Celebrating 17 years of democracy the workers at government organizations are faced with numerous challenges that have an impact on burnout, job insecurity, job engagement and psychological well-being (Viljoen, 2004:v). The extremely aggressive recruitment policies of international agencies further impact on the availability and retainment of social workers in South Africa. Social workers do intend to leave but not all of them leave eventually.

In this study, 54% of the respondents (social workers of North West) indicated that they would remain in the profession of social work. 18% were unsure and nearly a third (27%) indicated that they would not

remain in **the profession** until retirement age. 51% of the social workers contemplated to leave their current job and indicated that an unsatisfying job (21%) was the main reason.

Research was found defining the underlying relationships between positive work engagement, Job satisfaction, burnout, stress and job turnover (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104). The relationship between turnover intentions and the different terms should be recognized to create awareness and to empower social workers with knowledge.

Social workers actual leaving indicates unhappiness or negative job engagement-they are not happy in their work and that is why they intend to leave or actually leave (Wermeling, 2009:4). For this reason, this research aimed to regain positive work engagement as this would lessen job turnover and burnout in social workers of North West and thus retain them longer in the social work profession.

2. INTRODUCTION

The researcher introduces herself to the group and outlines the purpose and goal of the group.

3. ICEBREAKER

As an icebreaker each social worker is asked to introduce her/him and name the reasons, they became a social worker to the rest of the group.

4. PROGRAM

The researcher out provides an outline of the workshop and the topics that will be addressed.

5. WORK AGREEMENT

The ground rules, expectations and work agreement are facilitated.

6. QUESTIONNAIRE

Attendants will fill in the pre test UWES scale (See addendum 1).

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this session were:

- *To enhance the respondents knowledge of engagement (positive engagement).*
- *To empower attendees with the definition of engagement.*
- *To discuss engagement issues for attendees.*
- *To discuss research findings regarding engagement and linking it with the experiences of respondents.*
- *Empower attendees with what affects engagement.*
- *To empower attendees with tips for increasing engagement.*
- *To assist attendees with developing a personal increasing engagement rescue plan through a mind mapping exercise.*

WORK ENGAGEMENT



Preventing social work turnover and retaining social workers for the profession entitles addressing the concept of engagement. Engagement has been associated with higher levels of positive perceptions of job characteristics, psychological well-being, good social relationships, organizational commitment, customer loyalty, and objective job performance **as well as lower levels of turnover** (Childs & Stoeber, 2010:270).

1. OVERVIEW

When you are in a relationship and things do not work out you are likely to experience these feelings of “Why isn’t this relationship working out? Is it me or the other person’s fault?” You would properly feel frustrated and exhausted by this failing relationship. In this case, it could be your relationship with your job that is going wrong. One spends more time with one’s job than with family or friends. In order to re-engage with **the** relationship one needs to determine what exactly is going wrong. When a relationship is this important to you want it to be the best it

can be (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2). It should be a perfect match! But as Leiter and Maslach (2005:2) put it: A relationships takes a lot of care, time, effort, commitment and a dedication to stick with it, in good or bad times. Two role-players are identified in a relationship: you and the “other”. If the two of you are “matched”, things will work out fine, but if not, stress, burnout and dissatisfaction and eventually disengagement will occur. Almost every study about what makes people happy at work comes down to engagement.

2. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

Activity

Participants are divided into three small groups and discuss the following statement/question: Your work demands a lot from you but it might give you things in return, but what exactly does it give you in return?

Aim:

- To encourage discussion and debriefing in relation to current feelings of engagement and factors influencing work engagement.
- To establish participants frame of mind in relation to engagement.

Time needed 5-minute group discussion and 5 minute Feedback to bigger group.

Materials: Discussion card: **Your work demands a lot from you but it might give you things in return, but what exactly does it give you in return?**

3. DEFINITION

Engagement is a relative new term in today’s literature, but is becoming very

popular. Almost all-scientific research appeared after the turn of the century.

This correlates with the movement and academic interest in what is called Positive Psychology. Positive Psychology focuses on human strength and optimal functioning. Engagement in everyday terms refers to “involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, absorption, focused effort and energy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010:11). In the literature, there are two approaches to work engagement. Maslach and Leiter (1997:34) advocate the first approach. Maslach and Leiter (2008:498) describe Work engagement as the opposite or the positive antipode of workplace burnout, a syndrome characterized by mental or physical exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:294). Maslach and Leiter (1997:24) argue that engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and efficacy – the direct opposites of the three dimensions of burnout. They further contend that when individuals experience the feeling of burnout ‘energy turns into exhaustion, involvement turns into cynicism and efficacy turns into ineffectiveness’ (Maslach & Leiter, 1997:24).

Schaufeli *et al.* (2002:74) challenged this perspective. They argued that individuals might not feel at all exhausted, but will not necessarily experience energy. Hence, burnout and engagement, although inversely correlated, might represent independent constructs. According to this second approach, work engagement is

thus most often defined as “. . . A positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010:12). Disengaged workers are bored, stressed, distracted, disillusioned and sometimes holding back from giving their organizations their full potential. They do not enjoy what they do.

The concept of engagement is an important keystone to determine happiness and commitment at work. Because of their positive attitude and activity level, engaged employees create their own positive feedback, in terms of appreciation, recognition, and success (Bakker & Leiter, 2011:5). One can say that an engaged worker is a more positive, healthier and happier worker.

Why do we disengage?

Disengagement results from major disconnect a mismatch between you and your work. It might be between the job functions and your talents, your experience, your values, all of the aspects of yourself, emotionally, intellectually, creatively -- that enable you to perform at your best. On the other hand, it might include that job's potential for future opportunities. If the wrong match exists between oneself and features of the work - the role, the job environment, the management culture- it might lead to disengagement One might feel that one just does not belong in that job (LaBier,

2012:1). Disengagement can also occur as the result of underutilization of talents, skills, and capabilities. Lack of opportunity for new learning and development creates feelings of confinement, another source of disengagement.

Drivers of engagement

There are mainly two drivers that consistently seem to influence work engagement namely job resources and personal resources (Bakker & Leiter, 2011:6). Job resources refer to those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may reduce job demands, be functional in achieving work goals, or stimulate personal growth. Examples of job resources are autonomy, social support from colleagues, skill variety, opportunities for skill utilization, supervisor support, financial rewards, and career opportunities (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278) job demands can contain job characteristics as diverse as task interruptions, workload, work home interference, organizational changes, and emotional dissonance (Van den Broeck *et al.*, 2008:278).

Disengagement can be the result of burnout-, stress or loss of job satisfaction and can ultimately lead to job turnover

(Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104). Bored and disengaged workers fritter their time away on the internet, socializing, gossiping and going to make-believe appointments.

Consequences of disengagement

A lack of engagement at work causes health issues, relationship trouble and reduces the likelihood of reaching life goals. A worker who is positively engaged with his occupation will have more resilience against stress, burnout and depression (Kahn & Byosiore, 1992:622; Bakker *et al.*, 2005:170).

Activity

4. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

A 10-minute group discussion is held on whether the participants feel still engaged or have they already disengaged? This is followed by the question on what job demands and resources influence their engagement? Feedback is provided within the bigger group.

Aim: To encourage introspection, discussion and debriefing in relation to current feelings of engagement and factors influencing work engagement and to motivate participants to focus on aspects influencing their engagement.

- To identify possible aspects that need to be addressed and resources that could be used.

Time needed 10-minute group discussion.

Materials: Discussion card: Are you still engaged or have you already disengaged? What job demands influence your engagement? What job resources influence your engagement?

5. RESEARCH RESULTS



From the research done on social workers in the North West Province 54% indicated they were more passionate about social work while 41% indicated they were less passionate. The highest skill indicated to enhance work engagement was continuous development, while a support group, time management, caseload management and assertiveness were also mentioned significantly. 31% of social workers indicated that they needed physical and human resources in order to re engage positively with their work. 19% indicated that they required more support either in the form of supervision, networking or group support in order to re engage more passionately. 15% indicated that they required more skills (administrative, workshops, training).

6. MOTIVATION

Feeling disengaged means that you have lost your energy, enthusiasm and confidence. One needs to recognize what can be changed and what not. To achieve good reality you need to let go of some fantasy (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:13). You are not alone! There are many and many thousands of employees who struggle with the same "relationship issues". If you want your situation at work

to change, you are on your own and you have to take charge of your work life! This will take time, effort and courage. If your efforts are fruitful, you will make a difference in your life and that of your clients. The greatest challenge will be to decrease burnout and to increase engagement. You can take control of your work life.

7. THE EMPOWERMENT PLAN



One needs to determine "What is my relationship with my work? "Why are we still together? Is there something special about my work that keeps me here and makes everything worthwhile? If you want, the relationship to work you will need a better fit. This might involve that you bargain for a better exchange rate: in other words, you need get more and give more, as well as compromise more effectively. One needs to recognize what can be changed and what not.

- ➡ **Individuals must own their own engagement:** They come to work with their own motivator's interests and talents. They cannot expect the organization to provide an exact set of tasks or conditions to fit their personal and professional success.
- ➡ **They must be clear on personal values and goals:** If employees do not know what is important to them

they will not find it in their current job- or potentially in any other.

- ➡ **Take action:** Employees cannot wait for a tap on the shoulder to signal a career move or exciting new project. They need to take the initiative to build their skill sets, articulate their

interests, satisfy their core values, and identify ways to apply their talents to achieve organizational goals. They need to initiate conversations about reshaping their job, clarifying their work priorities, or getting the support, they need from manager (Zinger, 2010:60-62).

8. TAKING CARE AND ACTION

The following steps as identified by Leiter and Maslach (2005:20) are discussed and a 20 min individual exercise, using addendum 2 is undertaken.

STEP	FOCUS	ACTION
Step one: Define the problem -	Identify which area of your work relationship needs addressing: Think about a past work experience where you felt very engaged. What kind of work did it entail? What were the challenges? Did you work with a team or alone? What specific things about that work did you find most satisfying? Now think about your current situation. What is lacking? Is it your boss? Is it your co-workers? Is it the environment or the type of work? Figuring out what makes you tick at work is the first step toward fixing the problem.	✚ Identify the Kind of Work that Engages You
Step two: Setting objectives -	What do I want from my relationship with my work? Aim towards identifying the kind of work environment, people, organizational culture, or type of work you need that energizes you. List them, and compare them with your present situation	✚ Be specific ✚ Be positive ✚ Be practical
Step three: Take action -	What action needs to be taken in order to achieve my goals?	✚ Engaging in self development actions ✚ Exerting your influence ✚ Taking initiative
Step four: Tracking progress	the progress made. Brief notes of previous actions tried and result.	✚ Take the work test again

9. MIND MAP RESCUE PLAN

Activity

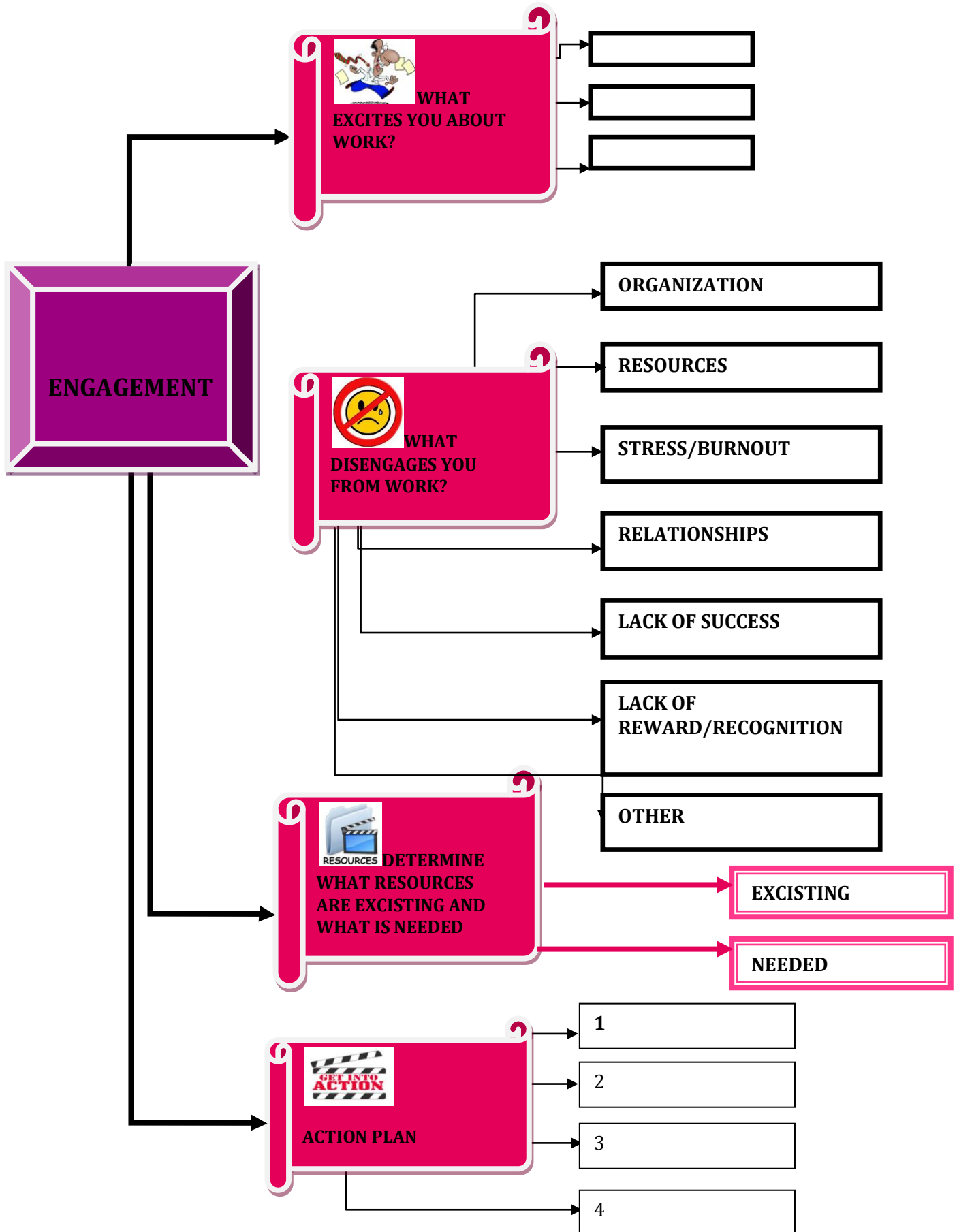
Participants are requested to mind map their own rescue plan to increase their engagement according to following hints:

- What excites you about your work?
- What disengages you from work?
- What resources do you need to increase engagement?
- What action needs to be taken to increase engagement?

Aim: To assist participants to increase their own engagement

Time needed 20 minutes

Materials: Mind mapping sheets, Koki and pens.



OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this session were:

- *To enhance the respondents knowledge of job satisfaction.*
- *To discuss job satisfaction issues for attendees.*
- *To discuss research findings regarding job satisfaction and linking it with the experiences of respondents.*
- *To empower attendees with the definition of Job satisfaction.*
- *Empower attendees with what affects job satisfaction.*
- *To empower attendees with tips for increasing job satisfaction.*
- *To assist attendees with developing a personal “increasing job satisfaction rescue plan” through a mind mapping exercise.*

JOB SATISFACTION



Researchers across disciplines have written countless articles concerning job satisfaction. Authors have borrowed from psychology, business administration, human resources management, and the wide umbrella of organizational science to define, measure, and interpret the significance of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is important not just, because it boosts work performance but also because it increases our quality of life. Many people spend so much time at work that when it becomes dissatisfying, the rest of their life soon follows.

1. OVERVIEW

In the past, job satisfaction was approached from the perspective of needs fulfillment – that is, whether or not the job met the worker’s physical or psychological needs. If the worker is satisfied with his/her needs, there is probably job satisfaction. If he/she is not, there is probably not job dissatisfaction (Lim,

2007:13). As the importance of job satisfaction rises in the minds of workers, they are more likely to consider it as a reason to stay with their current job or accept a job offer elsewhere (Murray, 1999:5). Alam and Mohammed (2010:125) also found that lack of job satisfaction is among the factors that contribute to people's intention to quit their jobs. Job satisfaction can be a result of individual issues such as badness of fit between the individual and the actual job demands, but it can also be related to organizational climate and conditions (Strolin *et al.*, 2007:11).

General Job satisfaction is strongly correlated with turnover (Weaver *et al.*, 2006:IV). For this reason job satisfaction is included in this program. To define measure and interpret job satisfaction and its relation to job engagement might shed some light on how to prevent turnover and retain social workers for the profession. Reviews of job satisfaction indicate that high job satisfaction is related to low employee turnover and absenteeism (Ilardi *et al.*, 1993:1790).

Activity

A five-minute group discussion on the question: Do you work to live or live to work?

Aim: To motivate participants towards introspection and focusing on the importance of job satisfaction for participants.

Time needed 5 minutes

Materials: Discussion card: **Do you work to live or live to work?**

2. DEFINITION

Job satisfaction is defined as an attitude that individuals have about their jobs. It is an extent to which one feels positively or negatively about the intrinsic and/ or extrinsic aspects of one's job (Bakker *et al.*, 2011:127). However, the most-used definition of job satisfaction in organizational research is that of Locke

(1976:1304), who described job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". Cranny, Smith and Stone as cited in Hellman (1997:2) concluded that job satisfaction is a combination of cognitive and affective reactions to the differential perceptions of what an employee **wants** to receive compared with what he or she

actually receives. In other words, Job satisfaction describes how content an individual is with his or her job. The happier people are within their job, the more satisfied they are said to be. Employee satisfaction affects every aspect, from client satisfaction to overall productivity.

Job satisfaction is a worker's sense of achievement and success on the job. It is generally perceived to be directly linked to productivity as well as to personal well-being. Job satisfaction implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well and being rewarded for one's efforts. Job satisfaction further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work (Aziri, 2011:78).

3. EFFECTS OF JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is significant because a person's attitude and beliefs may affect his or her behaviour. Attitudes and beliefs may cause a person to work harder, or, the opposite may occur, and he or she may work less. Job satisfaction also affects a person's general well-being for the reason that people spend a good part of the day at work. Consequently, if a person is dissatisfied with their work, this could lead to dissatisfaction in other areas of their life.

The importance of job satisfaction specially emerges to surface if one thinks of the many negative consequences of job dissatisfaction such a lack of loyalty, increased absenteeism, increase number of accidents etc.

When employees are satisfied, they tend to care more about the quality of their work, they are more committed to the organization, they have higher retention rates, and they are generally more productive (Aziri, 2011:84; Worrel, 2004:2).

4. FACTORS OF JOB SATISFACTION

Frederick Herzberg theorized that employee satisfaction has two dimensions: "hygiene" and "motivation". Hygiene issues, such as salary and supervision, decrease employees' dissatisfaction with the work environment. Motivators, such as recognition and achievement, make workers more productive, creative and committed (Syptak *et al.*, 1999:26). Company and

administrative policies, Supervision, Salary, Job security, Interpersonal relations, Working conditions, Work itself, Achievement, Recognition, Responsibility and Advancement are key areas affecting job satisfaction. Work-life balance has also emerged as a major factor influencing job satisfaction (Hughes & Bonzionelos, 2007:145-154; Redmund, 2012:1).



(Redmund, 2012:1)

Activity

5. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

Individual exercise: Participants are requested to think about what originally drew them to their current job. They should take some time to think about what motivates and inspires them — and how they approach their work. Feedback to the group.

Aim: To assist participants to remember their passion for social work and to refocus on what is needed to increase their job satisfaction.

Time needed 10 minutes

Materials: Discussion card: Think about what originally drew you to your current job. Take some time to think about what motivates and inspires you — and how you approach your work

6. RESEARCH RESULTS

A lack of job satisfaction holds negative implications for the social work practice (Fortuin, 2004:4). 58% of social workers in the North West province indicated that they experienced job satisfaction, while 26% indicated that



they did not. Interesting research points are:

- A lack of job satisfaction holds negative implications for the social work practice (Fortuin, 2004:4).

- 58% of social workers in the North West province indicated that they experienced job satisfaction, while 26% indicated that they did not.
- Job satisfaction decreases for social workers who have a heavy workload according to Cole *et al.* (2004:5). Bakker and Leiter (2010:186) found that variability in professional skills boosted work engagement when qualitative workload was high, and mitigated the negative effect of high qualitative workload on work engagement.
- Working more hours than being paid for was negatively associated with projected long-term tenure (Fitts, 2006:iii).
- The physical characteristics of the work environment including noise, lighting, and ventilation have been linked to job satisfaction in office workers (Veitch *et al.*, 2007:3).
- Fitts (2006:iii) in their research mention that they found the best predictor for job satisfaction was promotional opportunities. The best predictor for changing jobs was low financial reward.
- If employees who perceived organizational support, they become more engaged to their job and organization (Chang & Wei, 2008:5). Supportive supervision relates to higher job satisfaction

Cole *et al.* (2004:5) Studies have consistently shown that job resources such as social support from colleagues and supervisors are positively associated with work engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:185).

- Peer relationships provide emotional support, spur professional growth, impart cultural and political knowledge, encourage collaboration and innovation and extend personal influence. When peer relationships become dysfunctional, they stir up undercurrents that distract people, cause resources to be hoarded, constrict information sharing and, generally, undermine engagement (Ruyle, 2007:1).

7. MOTIVATION

Most professional jobs can be shaped to allow for individual situations or for one's growth and development needs. Think about ways to add things to your job that will allow you to play more or take some things out that will allow you to be more satisfied. Then go to your supervisor and discuss it – not that it will make you happier but that it can add to your productivity (Zidle, 2012:1). A task viewed as fun, as an outlet for untapped creativity or a channel for self-development. Play, and then there is no resistance or creative

avoidance! Your career is your creation. When was the last time you really gave serious thought and time to planning it? Too many people delay or even paralyze their actions. They wait for their supervisors to provide career maps. Only you can make the time and the decisions that put your career on the right course. The payoff is greater work satisfaction.

8. THE EMPOWERMENT PLAN



We might select a position that is an excellent fit at any point in our working years. We perform well and enjoy the work, the benefits and rewards are in the right range - but over time, the things begin to change. This can be the result of new and different goals that no longer use our full range of abilities, the introduction of technology that alters the work, the need for new knowledge or skills to accomplish the tasks, or perhaps the lack of anything new. These types of changes and others affect our level of satisfaction. The key is to take a step back, conduct an evaluation of what has changed and identify what specifically is affecting our current level of satisfaction. If you are unsatisfied with your job, it is helpful to reflect on why you work. Think about what originally drew you to your current job, and whether it may be a factor in your lack of job satisfaction.

➡ **Is it just a job?** If you approach work as a job, you focus primarily on the financial rewards. The nature of the work may hold little interest for you. What is important is the money. If a job with more pay comes your way, you will likely move on.

➡ **Is it a career?** If you approach work as a career, you are likely interested in advancement. You may want to climb the career ladder as far as possible or be among the most highly regarded professionals in your field. You are motivated by the status, prestige and power that come with the job.

➡ **Is it a calling?** If you approach your job as a calling, you focus on the work itself. You are less interested in financial gain or career advancement, preferring instead to find a sense of fulfillment from the work itself.

➡ **Why do you remain in your current job?** Do the relationships matter more than money? Are you doing well compared to your peers? The grass is not always greener.

9. TAKING CARE AND ACTION

The following steps as identified by Leiter and Maslach (2005:20) are discussed and a 20 min individual exercise, using addendum 2 is undertaken.

STEP	FOCUS	ACTION
Step one: Define the problem	Identify which area of your work relationship needs addressing in order to increase job satisfaction Identify specifically what is contributing to your satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Make a list. What items relate to the organization, department, or your job? Is there something you need to learn or change to improve the situation? Take the time to get at the root of what isn't working.	- Identify what contributes to job satisfaction /dissatisfaction - What skills are needed?
Step two: Setting objectives	What do I want from my relationship with my work in order to increase my job satisfaction? What are the ingredients you need for job satisfaction? Is it Self-awareness, a challenge, variety, a positive attitude, knowing your options, a balanced lifestyle or a sense of purpose? Some people thrive on being creative and innovative whereas others prefer stability and continuity. Challenge and constant stimulation may be important to one person, while creating a work/life balance is paramount to another.	- Be specific - Be positive - Be practical
Step three: Take action	What action needs to be taken in order to achieve my goals? More self-development to enhance knowledge and skills?	- Self development actions - Improving of creativity - Learn to have more fun
Step four: Tracking progress	Keep track of the progress made. Brief notes of previous actions tried and result.	Notes on previous action taken and outcome

10.MIND MAP RESCUE PLAN

Activity

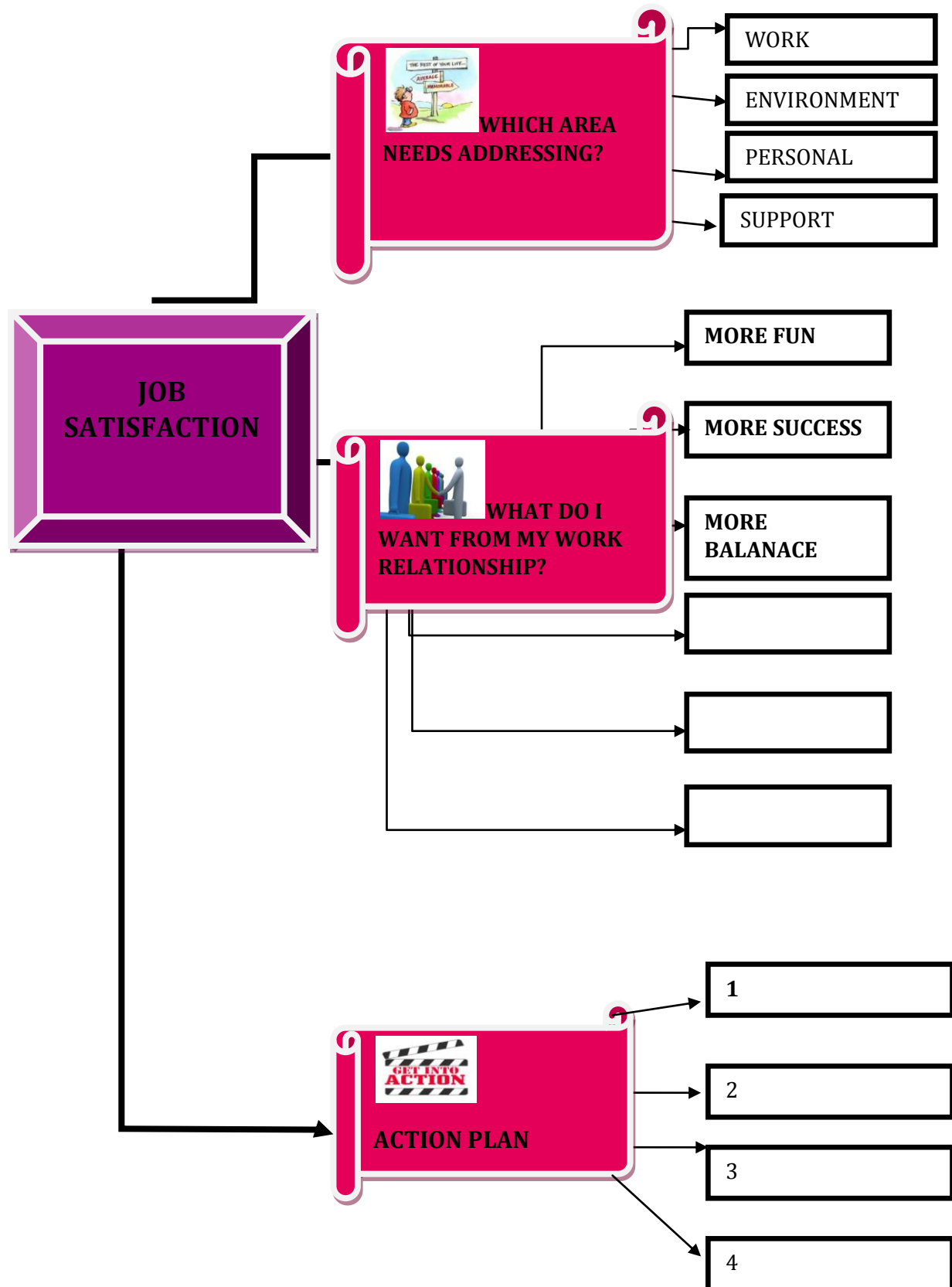
Participants are requested to mind map their own rescue plan to increase their job satisfaction according to following hints:

- Which work area needs addressing?
- What do I want from my relationship with my work in order to increase my job satisfaction?
- What action needs to be taken?

Aim: To assist participants to increase their job satisfaction within their current occupation.

Time needed 20 minutes

Materials: Mind mapping sheets, Koki and pens.



OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this session were:

- *To enhance the respondents knowledge of burnout.*
- *To discuss burnout issues for attendees.*
- *To discuss research findings regarding burnout and linking it with the experiences of respondents.*
- *To empower attendees with the definition of burnout.*
- *Empower attendees with what affects burnout.*
- *To empower attendees with tips for preventing burnout.*
- *To assist attendees with developing a personal “preventing burnout rescue plan” through a mind mapping exercise.*

BURNOUT



Burnout plays an important part in social work retention and improving positive work engagement. Kim and Lee (2009:365) in their literature review on burnout, suggested that worker burnout increased levels of depression, sick-leave absences, turnover intention, actual turnover, and self-reported health problems. Turnover intention is seen as a key outcome of burnout.

1. OVERVIEW

Burnout is one of the biggest occupational hazards of this century. When burnout hits you, then you have trouble spelled with a capital T. It is far more than feeling blue or having a bad day. Burnout is described as being chronically discordant with your job (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2). This can be a significant crisis in the life of a social worker. Mental and physical states of exhaustion have been discussed centuries ago, but it was Freudenberg in 1974 that first used the term “burnout” for the mental and physical exhaustion of voluntary workers in various social fields (Bühler

& Land, 2004:36). Burnout is an important variable affecting engagement as well as job turnover (Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2005:2; Hakanen & Roodt, 2010:90). Burnout can occur in any profession, but according to studies undertaken by Ross and Fridjhon (1995:265) burnout amongst social workers appears to be particularly high. In her study, it was reported that the average working life of social workers was less than three years. According to Adlem (2007:6) the stress social workers work under, as well as the job pressure, can cause burnout and turnover.

Activity

A ten - minute group discussion on the question: Do you believe social workers are more or less prone to burnout?

Aim: To stimulate participants towards introspection and focusing on the needs and pressures of the social work profession

Time needed 10 minutes

Materials: Discussion card: **Do you believe social workers are more or less prone to burnout?**

2. DEFINITION

Some researchers define burnout as the opposite of engagement (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:182). Murdock and Scott (2003:251) identify burnout as "... a mismatch between perceived demands and perceived ability to cope. It is the balance between how we view demands and how we think we can cope with those demands that determines whether we feel stress, distress or... challenged in a way we feel we can handle". The social work profession in itself places social workers at risk of becoming burnt out (Rothman & Malan, 2003:43).

According to Van Zyl-Edeling (2006:168) burnout can be defined as "... *the exhaustion or breakdown phase after long-term or intense stress, when the body's reserves are depleted and physical or emotional breakdown happens ... especially if they work in taxing areas involving violence, abuse and serious illness. However, even the strongest, most experienced, best-trained and most positive person has a limit to her capacity to deal with stress and could burn out unless protective measures are put in place*".

Key researchers in the field of burnout such as Leiter and Maslach (2005:2) define burnout as a "chronic state of being out of synch with your job". A burned out person feels unhappy, exhausted, cynical and ready to leave or quit their job.

Burnout entails a loss of energy; loss of enthusiasm and a loss of confidence. The loss of energy describes the feeling that the job demands more than one can give. *The loss of enthusiasm indicates that one is only prepared to give the bare minimum, unwilling to go the extra mile. The original passion for the job is lost.* Loss of confidence is linked with the feeling of being not effective and the creation of self-doubt (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:3). The last mentioned authors view burnout as a "relationship" where the worker and the job are the two parties involved. Preventing and dealing with it should be dealt with accordingly (2005:2). Thus, burnout reflects an uncomfortable relationship between people and their work. Like relationship problems between two people, those between people and their work usually indicate a bad fit between the two, rather than just individual weaknesses, or just evil workplaces. Reversing burnout requires focusing on both individuals and their organizations to bring them back

YOU MAY BE ON THE ROAD TO BURNOUT IF:

- **EVERY** day is a bad day.
- Caring about your work or home life seems like a total waste of energy.
- You are exhausted all the time.
- The majority of your day is spent on tasks you find either mind-numbingly dull or overwhelming.
- You feel like nothing you do makes a difference or is appreciated. (Smith et al., 2012: 1)

into sync with each other (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:3).

The difference between stress and burnout

Smith *et al.* (2012:1) indicate that burnout may be the result of insistent stress, but it is not the same as too much stress. Stress, mostly, involves *too much*: too many pressures that require too much of you physically as well as psychologically. People under stress can still imagine, though, that if they can just get everything under control, they will feel better.

Burnout, alternatively, is about *not enough*. Being burned out means feeling empty, devoid of motivation, and beyond caring. People experiencing burnout often do not see any hope of positive change in their situations. If excessive stress is like drowning in responsibilities, burnout is being all dried up. One other difference between stress and burnout is that while you are usually aware of being under a lot of stress, burnout gradually invades your life, sometimes without you noticing it. (Smith *et al.*, 2012:1). Croucher (2012:1) described the differences between stress and burnout as follows:

Stress	Burnout
Characterized by over engagement	Characterized by disengagement
Emotions are over reactive	Emotions are blunted
Produces urgency and hyperactivity	Produces helplessness and hopelessness
Loss of energy	Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope
Leads to anxiety disorders	Leads to detachment and depression
Primary damage is physical	Primary damage is emotional
May kill you prematurely	May make life seem not worth living

What causes burn out?

Most people have an intuitive idea of what burnout is. From the research perspective, burnout is associated with feelings of hopelessness and difficulties in dealing with work or in doing your job effectively. These negative feelings usually have a gradual onset. They can reflect the feeling that your efforts make

no difference, or they can be associated with a very high workload or a non-supportive work environment. Often the first sign of job burnout is a feeling of emotional exhaustion. When asked to describe how they feel, affected employees may describe feeling drained, at rope's end, and fatigued.

Leiter and Maslach (2005:14-19) summarize the origin of burnout as the disconnection between the organization and the individual in six areas of work life: workload, control, reward, community, fairness, and values:

Workload: Working alone vs. working with others, deadlines, amount of work to be completed and so forth.

Control: Authority, decision-making, professional judgment and so forth.
Feeling like you have little or no control over your work

Reward: Salary, benefits, perks
recognition of achievement and so forth.

Community: Organizational communication, employee interaction and so forth.

Fairness: Diversity, cultural sensitivity, disciplinary procedures, management's treatment of staff and so forth.

Values: Management's commitment to the organization's values and mission, honesty, integrity and so forth.

The relationship between burnout and each of these categories reportedly varies according to the nature of the work and how employees relate to their jobs. "Burnout is always more likely when there is a major mismatch between the nature of the job and the nature of the person who does the job" (Leiter & Maslach, 2005:19).

Warning signs of burnout

The following questions can be asked in order to determine the onset of burnout: (Tartakovsky, 2012:1)

- Are you starting not to care about work anymore?
- Is it hard to stay motivated?
- Do you feel your workplace is a dreaded place to be?
- Are you snapping at your colleagues?
- Do you feel disengaged from your work?
- Have you lost your passion for things?

The answers to these questions can give you an indication of whether or not you are at risk of burnout.



Activity

3. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

A ten-minute group discussion on the questions: What do you think causes burnout for social workers? Are there certain beliefs that contribute to burnout of social workers?

Aim: To determine the possible burnout factors social workers might experience and to identify possible cognitive beliefs that contribute to feelings of burnout.

Time needed 10 minutes

Materials: Discussion card:

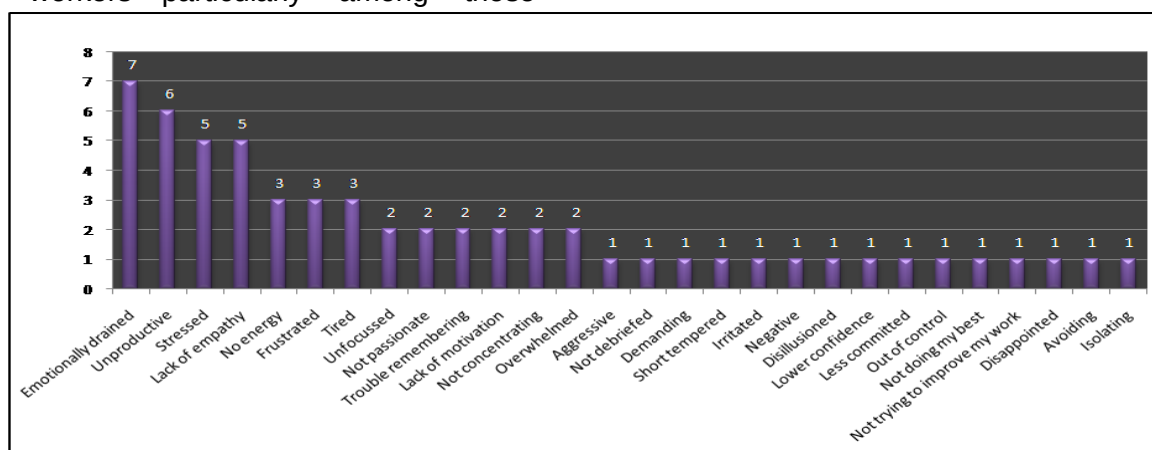
- a) What do you think causes burnout for social workers? Are there certain beliefs that contribute to burnout of social workers? (Discussion 10 min)
- b) Are there certain beliefs that contribute to burnout of social workers?

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

Work-related stress is common in today's workforce, including individuals practicing social work. Given their profession's client-centered nature, stress is a concern among social workers—particularly among those

providing direct services.

In this study respondents indicated that if they do experience stress, they would feel as follows:



5. MOTIVATION

When you are burned out, problems seem insurmountable, everything looks bleak, and it is difficult to muster up the energy to care—let alone do something about your situation. However, burnout can be healed. Burnout is preventable personally and professionally. You can regain your balance by reassessing priorities, making time for yourself, and seeking support

6. THE EMPOWERMENT PLAN



❖ Define the problem

- Recognize – What warning signs of burnout are you experiencing? Are you experiencing burnout?
- Do the relationship with work test (See addendum 7).

❖ Set objectives

I want to:

- Prevent burnout
- Cope with burnout
- Recover from burnout.

❖ Take action

- Work out specific action steps to address the area that is infected or affected
- Address negative beliefs

7. TAKING CARE AND ACTION

The following steps as identified by Leiter and Maslach (2005:20) are discussed and a 20 min individual exercise, using addendum 2 is undertaken.

STEP	FOCUS	ACTION
Step one: Define the problem	Identify which area of your work relationship needs addressing in order to prevent and lessen burnout • What is burnout, and are you experiencing it? • What symptoms do I experience? • What are some factors leading to burnout? • What beliefs contribute to burnout?	✚ Identify what contributes to burnout. ✚ What skills are needed? ✚ List what is not working.
Step two: Setting objectives	What do I need to do to build resilience and to prevent and cope with burnout?	✚ Be specific ✚ Be positive ✚ Be practical
Step three: Take action	• What action needs to be taken in order to achieve my goals? What are some ways to prevent, cope with, or recover from burnout? More self-development to enhance knowledge and skills?	✚ Engaging in self-development action.
Step four: Tracking progress	Keep track of the progress made. Brief notes of previous actions tried and result.	✚ Notes on previous action taken and outcome

Activity

8. MIND MAP RESCUE PLAN

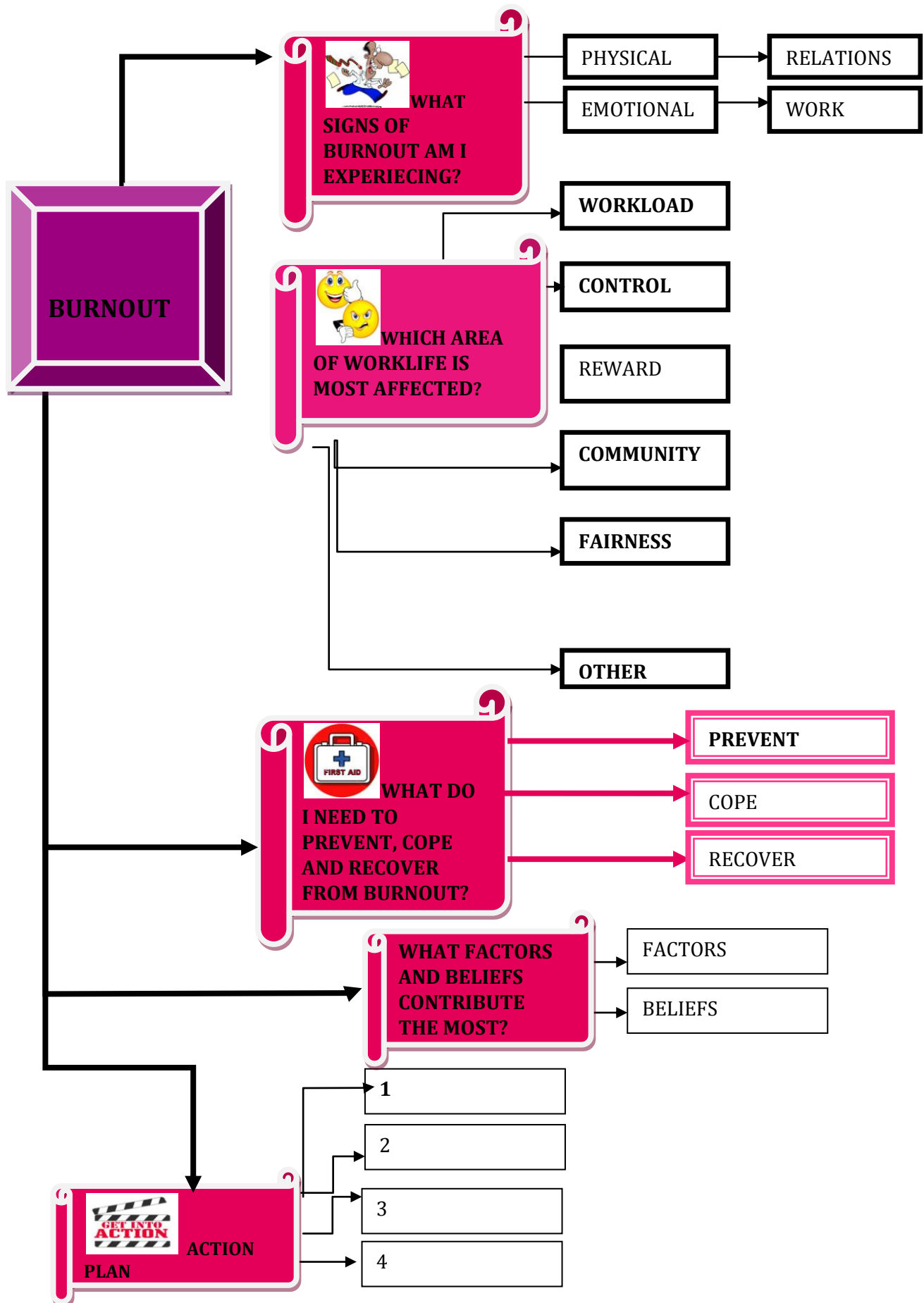
The process of mind mapping is explained. Each respondent mind maps their own rescue plan according to following hints:

- **What signs of burnout am I experiencing?**
- **Which area of my work life is mostly affected?**
- **What factors and beliefs contribute the most?**
- **What do I need to do to prevent, cope or recover from burnout?**

Aim: To assist participants to prevent, cope and recover from burnout.

Time needed 20 minutes

Materials: Mind mapping sheets, Koki and pens.



OBJECTIVES

The objectives for this session were:

- *To empower attendees with the definition of stress.*
- *To identify the causes of stress in the social worker.*
- *To help the social worker develop insight into the effect of stress on the quality of life.*
- *To introduce techniques of coping with stress.*
- *To learn and practice relaxation techniques.*
- *To assist attendees with developing a personal "stress rescue plan" through a mind mapping exercise.*



STRESS

Stress and Occupational stress play a significant role in the daily lives of social workers. According to Ham and Griffeth, (1995:45) evidence indicates that occupational stress moderately and positively predicts turnover intentions. To prevent turnover and increase positive work engagement social workers need to be empowered to manage their stress.

1. OVERVIEW

Are you feeling stressed? It is not surprising if you are. Social work is a notoriously demanding job and those in frontline roles are often up against it. Curtailing someone's liberty, taking a child into care or supporting a bereaved partner are all inherently stressful scenarios to deal with, but when combined with large case loads, limited budgets and a myriad of bureaucracy it is little wonder care professionals health and wellbeing suffer. In this modern and fast-paced world, people are faced with daily challenges and long term stresses, which

can beat health and harmony down to low levels. How we perceive a stress-provoking event and how we react to it determines its impact on health. One can be motivated and invigorated by the events in our lives, or it can be perceived as "stressful" and responded to in a manner that may have a negative effect on physical, mental and social well-being. If it is always responded to in a negative, way health and happiness may suffer. By understanding one self and the reactions to stress provoking situations, we can learn to handle stress more effectively.

Activity

2. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

Participants are requested to discuss what could cause stress in the social work profession specifically.

Aim:

- To encourage discussion and debriefing in relation to current feelings of stress and factors influencing stress in the social work profession.
- To use the group as a support for ventilation of feelings.

Time needed 10-minute group discussion.

Materials: Discussion card: **What do you think causes stress in the social work profession specifically?**

3. DEFINITION

There are many definitions and opinions regarding the nature of stress. Divergent opinions about the difference between stress, burnout, and tension often also spark heated debates. It is widely accepted in theory that **occupational stress** presupposes burnout (Jonker, 2004:2).

Coleman (2001:711) defines stress as "A psychological and physical strain or tension generated by physical, emotional, social, economic, or occupational circumstances, events or experiences that are difficult to manage or endure". According to Quick *et al.* (1992:ix) "stress is a natural and inevitable characteristic of work and life. It is neither inherently bad nor destructive. It is in fact one of a person's best assets for achieving peak performance and managing legitimate emergencies. However, it does have the potential for turning into distress, or strain, due to a variety of reasons. It is this latter manifestation of stress that is individually and organizationally destructive."

Sue *et al* (2000:192) emphasize the role of the stressor in their definition of stress as "...an internal response to a stressor, while the stressor is an external event or situation that places a physical or psychological demand on a person". The individual's appraisal of the stressor when

they define stress as "...internal or external demands that are perceived as exceeding or taxing one's resources" is emphasized by Lazarus and Folkman (1984:19).

Work-related stress is defined as an individual's emotional and physical response to the demands of a **job** that is incongruent with his or her abilities, resources, or needs (NIOSH, 2008:2). Job stress is not a new phenomenon and currently it is a larger threat to the health of employees and their well-being than ever in the past. Technology has made many jobs easier on one hand but on the other hand, it has caused information overload, replaced the jobs of humans and heightened pressures for productivity.

Social workers today are often overburdened and work under intense pressure with limited resources. They are expected to conduct interviews and home visits, attend court hearings, and conduct various administrative tasks including but not limited to, entering data into state systems to processing paperwork to ensure that vendors receive timely payments. Social workers have to serve more families with fewer resources. This can lead to overstressed workers. (Whitaker *et al.*, 2010:1; Arrington, 2008:8)

The nature of stress

Stress can be both positive and negative.

Positive stress is seen as stress that helps us to concentrate, focus, and perform. It often leads to reach peak efficiency.

Negative stress occurs when we stay aroused or excited and we will not or cannot relax after meeting a challenge. Negative stress has been linked to physical ailments from tension headaches to heart attacks (Nash, 2002:34). Too much stress can be harmful and can threaten the professionals' physical and mental health, and place them at risk for injury, behavioural and/or serious health-related problems over time (Arrington, 2008:2) .

"The pressures and demands that cause stress are known as **stressors**." Major life events are classified as stressors, but daily hassles and demands like: Environmental stressors (such as concern about pollution or global warming); family and relationship stressors (such as filing for a divorce or having a special needs child); work stressors (such as not enough time to work on projects or a competitive co-worker); social stressors (peer pressure or status values); and personally self-generated stressors (such as ones financial situation or lack of support) are also important stressors. The following six trigger categories of stressors are identified:

- Stress inherent to and in the workplace.
- Role based stress.
- Stress related to the changing nature of relationships with people at work.
- Career stress.
- Stress related to organizational structure and climate.
- Stressors associated with the interaction of home and work situations / Circumstances (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000: 150).

According to the model of Torelli and Gmelch, (1992:2) stress is viewed as cyclical process consisting of four phases.

In the first phase, individuals experience certain demands. The types of demands /stressors that people may experience in the first phase of their model on stress are: Role based stress; Task based stress, External factors, and conflict resolution.

The second phase of this model is concerned with the interpretation of stress by the individual. A person may experience stress to such a large degree



that it may result in ill health. Where an individual feels that he cannot react successfully to the demands, it will result in the experience of stress.

During the third phase, the individual reacts to the stressor being experienced by exercising choices in response to the stress. Here coping strategies will be exercised if it is thought that they may combat the stress. The specific signs and

symptoms of stress vary widely from person to person.

During the fourth stage, the long-term effects of the stress come to the fore. This will include the physiological symptoms of stress such as ulcers, increased blood pressure, headaches, and other physiological reactions. Exposure to long-term stress can result in emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal affectivity.

Symptoms of stress

The experience of stress can result in various symptoms of stress. It can range from physiological ailments to behavioural and psychological aspects, which may be more complicated and dangerous to the individual. It could also have a negative spin off for the economy as there will more sick leaves taken and this in turn could affect productivity. Among social workers providing direct services, fatigue, psychological problems, and sleep disorders were the most commonly reported stress-related health concerns (Arrington, 2008:2)

Nash further states that psychological aspects of stress can include feelings of anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, hurt, shame embarrassment and envy. Both the physiological and psychological reactions to stress react upon one another and can complicate the stress experienced. Prolonged or ongoing stress can include symptoms such as:

Isolation from family and friends, Drug / alcohol abuse, increase in smoking, Depression / anxiety, Irritability / rapid mood swings, Compulsive eating / dieting and child / spouse abuse.

Responses to stress and stress management

People's resilience and ability to manage stress and its symptoms depend on their use of strategies to help them: (a) cope with stressors, and (b) regain a sense of competence and mastery over their

situations (Arrington, 2008:7). According to Gerber *et al.*, (1998:492) people respond to stress in three basic ways:

Resistance

In the case of stress originating because of an external source (such as affirmative action), people may respond defensively. This includes resistance and fight to maintain the status quo. This reaction requires a great deal of energy and time and produces ongoing stress.

Avoidance

We can bury our heads in the sand and hope whatever is making us feel bad will go away. A common avoidance technique is overindulgence in alcohol and drugs.

Confrontation / adapting to stress

Adapting to stress could include the use of stress reduction techniques. These stress reduction techniques could include discussion groups, programs on stress education, relaxation techniques, and physical fitness programs. Besides the use of these stress reduction techniques, trying to adapt to stress can also include discussing your feelings with a spouse or close friend who can help you to gain perspective as well as seeking professional counselling. This is supported by Arrington's (2008:7) research which indicated that Study participants (social workers) living with high levels of stress identified several strategies that aid them in managing the stresses of their day-to-day work. Notably, for social workers of all races/ethnicities,

exercise is the leading method for alleviating stress, followed by meditation and therapy).

Stress management programs that make use of cognitive behavioural therapy, coping skills training or an approach that emphasizes relaxation, imagery and meditation can be used to manage stress. Problem solving techniques with the incorporation of elements such as a healthy lifestyle, goal setting and time management are also useful to combat stress (Winterbach, 2007:3). Winterbach further focuses on self-regulating as a way to combat stress which refers to the processes of attaining and maintaining goals.

He compares self-regulation to human beings as agents, as it enables people to play a part in their self-development, adaptation, and self-renewal with changing times. Although there are many different theories and models of self-regulation, common key self-regulatory processes, which were used in his study, were goal management, including goal setting and goal execution; adjustment; and self-reflection.

Research indicates that effective self-regulation can protect against the detrimental effects of stress, by enabling one to take suitable action to counter the effects of stress (Winterbach, 2007:4) In response to stress, and in order to maintain psychological and physiological

homeostasis, social workers invoke different strategies to help them cope

(Arrington, 2008:2).

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

Arrington (2008:13) stresses that over time, work-related stress can result in burnout in social workers. It can also contribute to increased risk for work place injury, impaired performance, poor mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, decreased concentration, and health-related problems for social workers. Although only 12, 95% of social workers in the North West province indicated in a previous study done by the current researcher (Calitz, 2010:67) that they feel under stress 69 % of social workers in the North West provinces indicated in the current research that their levels of stress influence their job engagement. Social workers who do sometimes feel burned out or stressed, experience emotional drainage and unproductiveness as the main effects.

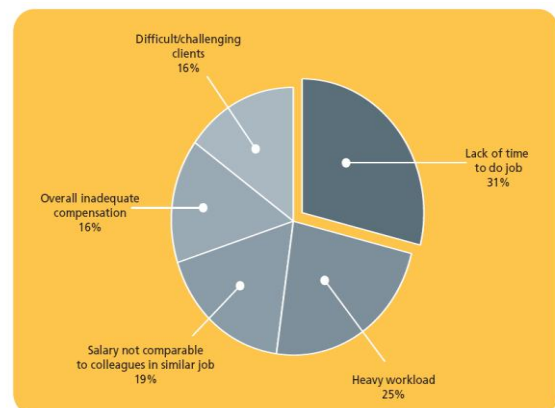
Stressors linked to social work were identified in the study by NASWA (Arrington, 2008:2), including the following:

- Having more responsibilities than they can handle with ease (i.e., “wearing too many hats”) (15%).
- Needing to complete routine tasks that have little intrinsic value (14%).
- Having few opportunities for advancement and/or promotion (14%).

- Being expected to work long hours (13%).
- Receiving few resources to adequately accomplish work tasks (11%).
- Having conflicting or unclear job expectations (10%).
- Getting minimal support from co-workers and/or supervisors (9%).
- Being unable to balance professional and personal life (8%).

A study conducted by Collings and Murray (1996:383) investigating predictors of stress amongst social workers yielded the following findings: “...high levels of measured stress seem to be significantly associated with:

- having a high workload;
- dissatisfaction with supervision;
- issues regarding promotion;
- perceiving society to have unrealistic expectations of social workers;
- pressure involved in planning and reaching work targets;



*Participants were allowed to mark multiple responses; total percentages may exceed 100.

Activity

5. BREAK AWAY SESSION AND FEEDBACK

Participants are requested to discuss the following questions:

- What support or resilience have you used or are you using to prevent or cope with social work stress?
- How can we support colleagues experiencing stress?

Aim: To use the group as a support for ventilation of feelings.

Time needed 10-minute group discussion.

Materials: Discussion card: What support or resilience have you used, or are you using to prevent or cope with stress? How can we support colleagues experiencing stress?

6. MOTIVATION

Re-establishing a sense of control, mastery, and competence in one's work situation may seem, at first glance, a daunting task. However, with strategies like regular exercise, meditation/relaxation techniques, and therapy - identified by professional social workers as useful coping tools - alleviating work stress can be an attainable goal.

7. THE EMPOWERMENT PLAN

➡ Define the problem

- Recognize –Am I experiencing stress?
- What are my stressors and symptoms?

➡ Set objectives

- I want to :
 - Familiarize myself with my stressors and symptoms
 - Cope with my stress
 - Adapt to my stressors
 - Reduce my stress levels.

➡ Take action

- Do a weekly stress diary (See addendum 8)
- Discover exactly why, where, when and how you stress



8. TAKING CARE AND ACTION

The following steps as identified by Leiter and Maslach (2005:20) are discussed and a 20 min individual exercise, using addendum 2 is undertaken.

STEP	FOCUS	ACTION
Step one: Define the problem	Identify which area of your work relationship needs addressing in order to prevent and cope with stress? ▪ What causes me to stress?	- Identify what contributes to your stress. - What skills are needed? - List what is not working.
Step two: Setting objectives	What do I need to do to build resilience and to prevent and cope with stress? Which stressors need to be avoided, which ones need to be adapted to, and which situations need to be altered to minimize my stress?	- Be specific - Be positive - Be practical
Step three: Take action	What action needs to be taken in order to achieve my goals? What skills or actions are needed to avoid, adapt and alter my situations in order to minimize stress?	Engaging in self-development action.
Step four: Tracking progress	Keep track of the progress made. Brief notes of previous actions tried and result.	Notes on previous action taken and outcome

9. MIND MAP RESCUE PLAN

Activity

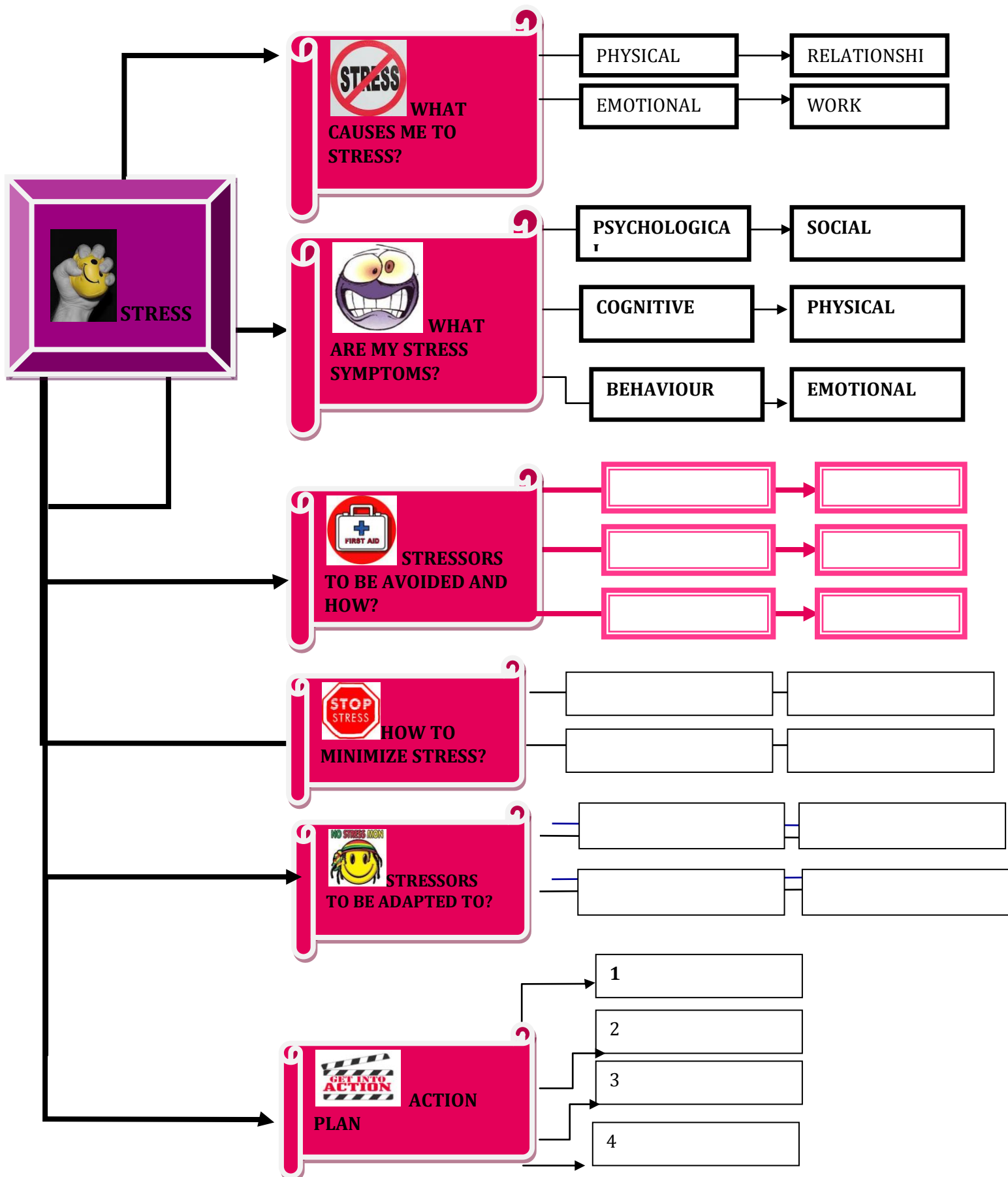
The process of mind mapping is explained. Each respondent mind maps their own rescue plan according to following hints:

- **Familiarize myself with my stressors and symptoms**
- **Work out specific action steps to address the stressors**
- **What stressors do I need to avoid?**
- **What do I need to alter in my situation to minimize stress?**
- **How and to which stressors do I need to adapt?**

Aim: To assist participants to prevent, cope and recover from stress.

Time needed 20 minutes

Materials: Mind mapping sheets, Koki and pens, Relaxation music and CD player



OBJECTIVES

The objective for this session was to empower attendees with a resource toolkit



THE TOOLKIT

To assist social workers to rekindle their joy for social work an empowerment tool was designed. This tool was provided in the form of a CD with a main menu, linking to different topics, which could empower the social worker.

1. EXPLORATION OF TOOL

The aim of the tool is to empower and assist social workers in increasing their engagement, job satisfaction and empowering them to deal effectively with burnout and stress by providing them with access to information and knowledge in the form of articles, web sites and links, book names and so forth. The focus areas were:

Assertiveness

- ➡ To provide information on assertiveness.
- ➡ To assist social workers in developing strategies to manage assertiveness.

Time management

- ➡ To provide information on effective time management.
- ➡ To assist social workers in developing effective time management strategies.

Supervision

- ➡ To assist social workers in developing resources to assist them to cope with minimal supervision.
- ➡ To provide information on the supervisory process and the importance of supervision.

Support

- ➡ To provide information on the importance of support within and outside the work environment.
- ➡ To assist social workers in developing an effective support system.

Caseload

- ➡ To assist social workers in dealing with their caseload effectively.

Measuring success

- ➡ To provide information on the importance of measuring success.
- ➡ To provide access to measuring tools.

Resources

- ➡ To provide different resources on different subjects in order to empower and support social workers in coping with their daily tasks.

2. THE TOOL

Getting started

Every attendee is provided with a CD. The CD should be inserted into the computer and accessed from the My Computer icon. The CD will be opened as a Power Point Presentation (2007). A main menu will appear which can then be accessed.

Moving around

Once a topic is identified by double clicking on the icon, you will be guided to a next page where different hyperlinks will lead you the desired topic. Double clicking on the icon will initiate the link. Internet access is required for some of the links, while others will automatically open in the desired document.

1. UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT SCALE

UWES Manual; page 48 English version

Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 17 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the '0' (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy* (VI1)
2. _____ I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose (DE1)
3. _____ Time flies when I am working (AB1)
4. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous (VI2)*
5. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job (DE2)*
6. _____ When I am working, I forget everything else around me (AB2)
7. _____ My job inspires me (DE3)*
8. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work (VI3)*
9. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely (AB3)*
10. _____ I am proud on the work that I do (DE4)*
11. _____ I am immersed in my work (AB4)*
12. _____ I can continue working for very long periods at a time (VI4)
13. _____ To me, my job is challenging (DE5)
14. _____ I get carried away when I'm working (AB5)*
15. _____ At my job, I am very resilient, mentally (VI5)
16. _____ It is difficult to detach myself from my job (AB6)
17. _____ At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well (VI6)

* Shortened version (UWES-9); VI= vigor; DE = dedication; AB = absorption© Schaufeli & Bakker (2003). The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale is free for use for non-commercial scientific research. Commercial and/or non-scientific use is prohibited, unless previous written permission is granted by the authors

2. TAKING CARE AND ACTION PROGRESS FORM

Taking Care and Action:				
Define Area of work life that needs addressing:				
Area that needs addressing	The objective	Actions needed	Time line	Progress
1.	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •
2.	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •	• • • •
3.	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •
4.	• • •	• • •	• • •	• • •

3. ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND TIPS



- Learn more about engagement, what engages you and where are you on the engagement continuum.
- Address the aspects that influence engagement: Burnout, stress, job satisfaction
- Know the consequences of disengagement.
- **Scope out Opportunities:** Look for opportunities at your present employer that are more stimulating for you. Often, it is possible to carve out new responsibilities for yourself with a little initiative and extra effort. Mold your job like Play Dough. Craft it into something that you find more engaging (LaBier, 2012:1).
- **Talk It out:** Meet with your supervisor and explain that you are interested in getting involved in the type of work you identified above. Put it in terms that are more positive. For example, say something like, “I’d like some new challenges.” or “I’m interested in growing in a new direction where I can make a greater contribution.” Most supervisors will appreciate this kind of interest.
- Seek out an opportunity outside of work, maybe through a course, a seminar or workshop, or a volunteer opportunity, in order to learn something that enhances your existing skills or that builds new ones.
- **Focus on contribution.** Determine how you can contribute. Know that what you give is often what you receive in return. To be disengaged at work can often lead to experiences of disengagement in other areas of your life. Engagement is not a limited resource and research would suggest that higher levels of employee engagement at work translate to higher levels of engagement at home and in the community. Focus on contribution and banish entitlement.
- **Be responsible** while holding others accountable. Take responsibility for your own engagement while holding others accountable for their engagement. Encourage the leadership and the organization to keep making their contributions to elevate employee engagement. In the movement from employee engagement to workplace engagement: **if it is to be it is up to we!**
- **Master your personal energy.** Energy is your fundamental raw material for employee engagement. Learn to master your energy at work. Increase your levels of mental, emotional, physical and spiritual energy while also ensuring you take time for energy recovery. One paradox of employee engagement is that we must also find times to disengage from work to recharge and revitalize ourselves for the work ahead.
- **Be strong.** Know your strengths while also knowing what strengthens you. What are the gifts or qualities you bring to your work and what are the activities you engage in that

strengthen you? People who know their strengths, use their strengths on a daily basis, and use their strengths in the service of others report higher levels of authentic happiness at work.

- **Own your work.** Some people make their marks while others sign their names. Make your work a signature of whom you are. Many organizations not only treat you like an owner they ensure that employees literally own a piece of the company. There is a great deal of truth to the statement: nobody washes a rented car.
- **Obliterate “the if only”.** Do not postpone your engagement efforts waiting for the if only. If only the organization would do this, if only my manager would recognize me, if only I had a different job...Stop the “if only” and do what you can with what you have wherever you are. Practice the advice of the great NCAA basketball coach, John Wooden: Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can (Zinger, 2010:5).
- **Work on what excites you.** Excitement precedes passion. Whenever possible, work on what excites you and reduce the work of what doesn't excite you.
- **Learn best practices.** Full engagement means you need to know the best theoretical way of doing the work. Then you can discover if the best practice is right for you.
- **Belong to a professional organization.** Like-minded people working in the same area as you build knowledge and contacts.
- **Focus on the work.** When you are working, do the work. Do not let distractions remove your focus. The more you focus on the work, the greater the concentration and engagement.
- **Build superior task management practices.** Knowing all your commitments in a trusted task management system reduces stress.
- **Become a “trusted adviser.”** When you provide your views of the work and business judgment with your manager, you engage at a higher discussion than most employees do. You will also learn about more opportunities to get your work to what excites you.
- **Network with high performers.** High performing people bring higher levels of engagement in their work. Get to the top of your game by talking with these people.
- **Work the edges, not the middle.** The edge is where the new stuff is happening in your field. The edge is where the value is for employers. The edge is where you need to be constantly learning to perform effectively.
- **Become the go-to person for your work.** If you are the expert, you will learn even more from the questions people ask of you. Making you even more of an expert.
- **Learn from those with adjacent skills to your skills.** Adjacent skills are those that sit next to your skills. For example, if you know finance, learn from those that are experts in the bordering skill of financial reporting. Learning adjacent skills rounds out your knowledge and leads to engaged thinking (Zinger, 2010:60-62).

4. JOB SATISFACTION TOOLS AND TIPS



Here are a few tips and tools to increase job satisfaction (Dean, 2011:1):

❖ **Little hassles**

People's job satisfaction is surprisingly sensitive to daily hassles. It might seem benign but when it happens almost every day and it is beyond our control, it hits job satisfaction hard. Find out about those little daily hassles and address them.

❖ **Perception of fair pay**

Pay, for whatever your job, should be fair for you to be satisfied. If the difference between what you think you should earn and what you do earn is big, the more your satisfaction will be influenced. It is all about perception. If you perceive that other people doing a similar job are paid about the same as you then you are more likely to be satisfied with your job than if you think they are getting more than you.

❖ **Achievement**

Feeling that you have achieved something makes people feel more satisfied with their job. Success cannot always be seen. Success should be measured even in very small steps. There is nothing worse than not knowing whether you're doing a good job. Receiving negative feedback can be painful but at least it indicates areas where improvements can be made. On the other hand positive feedback can make all the difference to how satisfied people feel. One's sense of achievement can be guided by requested feedback from clients and managers.

❖ **Complexity and variety**

Complexity, variety and a challenge can influence job satisfaction positively. It sounds easy when put like that, but many jobs offer neither complexity nor variety. Strive towards aiming higher and more creatively. Do things "your way" by having fun! Be creative, use color, pictures a new style... Be curious and open to new ideas and areas that you can get involved in. Build your network and connections at work. See what other people are doing and what they need in case you can contribute, learn and expand your skills, knowledge. Taking on extra tasks can take you up to a promotion quicker if it builds on your key skills and makes you a valuable asset to the team and company (Dean, 2011:1).

❖ Increase the challenge

Even if the job itself is not all that challenging, you can make it challenging. Some great ideas here include:

- Set performance standards for yourself – aim to beat your previous record, or set up a friendly competition among co-workers.
- Teach others your skills – nothing is more challenging, or rewarding, than passing your skills and knowledge on to others.
- Ask for new responsibilities – these will give you opportunities to stretch yourself.
- Start or take on a project that uses skills you would like to use, or want to improve.
- Commit to professional development – take courses, read books or trade magazines and attend seminars. However you do it, keep your skills fresh and current (Dean, 2011:1).

❖ Control

You may have certain tasks you have to do, but *how* you do them should be up to you. The more control people perceive in how they carry out their job, the more satisfaction they experience.

If people are not given some control, they will attempt to retake it by cutting corners, stealing small amounts or finding other ways to undermine the system. Psychologists have found that people who work in jobs where they have little latitude—at every level—find their work very stressful and consequently unsatisfying.

❖ Organizational support

A professional support network is needed to keep current on your field and understand the changes that may be coming. If people perceive more organizational support, they experience higher job satisfaction. Link in with professional organizations and support groups. Create a supportive bond between colleagues. Keep good relations with your supervisor and co-workers. Be friendly and positive; your good attitude will wear off on others. Recognize that you are all on the same team and working toward the same goal.

❖ Work-home overflow

Home-life can negatively influence job satisfaction. Trouble at home can lead to trouble at the office. Trouble at the office can spill over into the family domain compared with the other way around. Either way finding ways of distancing yourself from work while at home are likely to protect you against job stressors (Dean, 2011:1).

❖ Clarify job expectations

Review your managers and your own expectations of your role. Look at your job description, the role and the responsibilities you have. Identify whether these are right and understand what your manager is expecting and wanting from you. Discuss and agree what you each want and will do in order to make it work. Outline what is important to you – what you are happy to do and what you are not willing to do. It is important to be clear with yourself and your boss about what you are expecting and wanting from your role.

❖ Think Positive

Go into work with a positive attitude. Instead of thinking of it as a daily grind and a way to make money, think of your job as an adventure and a challenge. Stay focused on the positive aspects of your job. Stop negative thoughts from entering your brain.

- Reframe your thoughts to the positive.
- Put the events of the day in the correct context.
- Do not dwell on setbacks.
- Commit to viewing obstacles as challenges.
- Accept that mistakes.

❖ Take pride in your work

Whether you dig ditches or run A billion Rand Corporation, give every action the best you have to offer. Do not accept second-rate performance. Doing your best is a prideful act.

❖ Bring enthusiasm to your work

Your thinking controls your attitude. Since you have total control of your thought process, you control your attitudes. Change your attitude and act enthusiastically, no matter how bad you feel. By acting enthusiastically, you will soon feel enthusiastic. By feeling enthusiastic, you will be enthusiastic. By being enthusiastic, you will begin to view your job differently.

❖ Always be professional

Acting professionally means you will always work at the highest standards. You cooperate with peers. You are there for those who need your expertise. You do things right the first time. Professionals enjoy their work. Amateurs find excuses to be unprofessional and complain about how boring and unchallenging a job they have.

❖ Clarify professional / personal priorities

Be clear on what your priorities are and what is generally really important to you. What are you interested in? What matters to you the most?

Getting alignment between your work and personal priorities is also important in order for you to feel happy, fulfilled and satisfied with all aspects of your life. Find a Sense of Purpose. You to find a sense of purpose in the things you do. Even if you have a boring job, it helps a lot if you can see the real benefit you are providing for people.

❖ Become the expert in your field

Strong concentration in a specialty niche is a great way to build your expertise. Commit to this process and you open multiple opportunities for advancement on your job. You will also build enthusiasm for the subject matter because the more you learn about a subject, the higher your interest becomes. A self-feeding process can bring outstanding results to your career possibilities (JobJasoos, 2012:1).

5. BURNOUT TOOLS AND TIPS

Here are some tips to prevent, cope and recover from burnout.



Prevention

In order to prevent burnout: Start the day with a relaxing ritual. Rather jumping out of bed as soon as you wake up, spend at least fifteen minutes meditating, writing in your journal, doing gentle stretches, or reading something that inspires you.

- **Adopt healthy eating, exercising, and sleeping habits.** When you eat right, engage in regular physical activity, and get plenty of rest, you have the energy and resilience to deal with life's hassles and demands.
- **Set boundaries.** Do not overextend yourself. Learn how to say "no" to requests on your time. If you find this difficult, remind yourself that saying "no" allows you to say "yes" to the things that you truly want to do.
- **Take a daily break from technology.** Set a time each day when you completely disconnect. Put away your laptop, turn off your phone, and stop checking email.
- **Nourish your creative side.** Creativity is a powerful antidote to burnout. Try something new, start a fun project, or resume a favourite hobby. Choose activities that have nothing to do with work.
- **Learn how to manage stress.** When you are on the road to burnout, you may feel helpless. You have a lot more control over stress than you may think. Learning how to manage stress can help you regain your balance.
- **Be informed of the expectations,** scope of responsibilities, opportunity for advancement, supervision, job description, workload, evaluation criteria, benefits, and salary of a job before accepting it.
- **Identify goals** and evaluate accordingly both at home and on the job.
- **Maintain personal growth** both at home and on the job.
- **Seek out helpful supervision** for your work both at home and on the job.
- **Develop an active outside life** with a variety of interests.

- **Personalize your work and home environment** with meaningful pictures, objects, colours, etc.
- **Feel comfortable with yourself**, set limits for yourself and know how far to become involved with family and colleagues.
- **Encourage and practice good communication skills.**
- **Provide for flexible working conditions.**
- **Seek out encouragement** for trying new ideas.
- **Find your own "decompression techniques"** such as activities like meditation or exercise that relieve tension and put you into a more relaxed state.
- **Build a support system** for yourself with those who can discuss your problems and help look for solutions.
- **Build resilience:** Several factors are associated with resilience, including:
 - The capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out.
 - A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities.
 - Skills in communication and problem solving.
 - The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses.
 - Relationships that create love and trust and support (Comas-Diaz *et al.*, 2012:1)

Coping

In order to cope with burnout:

- Recognize the symptoms of burnout.
- Learn to ask for help.
- Be aware of the limitations of your family, your job and yourself.
- Maintain discipline in daily responsibilities and duties.
- Take time out during the day.
- Diversify responsibilities; put more variety in both your job and your home life.
- Take short vacations at least twice a year.
- Try to change little things that gnaw at you and accommodate to those you cannot change.

- Organize your time so you can concentrate on vital tasks.
- Admit burnout is a real problem for you; do not try to cover it up.
- Distinguish between stressful aspects of your job or home life that you can change, and those you cannot change. If too much time is being taken away from the satisfying aspects of your life by unimportant, trivial duties, establish a set of priorities for yourself. Discuss your priorities with your boss and your family members.
- Make a list of the things you hate most on the job or at home. Dispense with or delegate all you can.
- Alternate major tasks in which results will not be seen for a while with those that will have immediate productive and gratifying results.
- Reach an awareness of your motivation in dealing with your family or in entering your specific career field.
- Your job does not define you. "If you are feeling unappreciated by others, you should still learn how to "appreciate yourself". You can start by nixing the negativity and thinking about your positive qualities — in turn, you may improve your mood, reduce anger, and fight off depression.

Recovering from burnout

Sometimes it is too late to avert burnout. If you are already past the breaking point, it is vital to take your burnout very seriously. Additional emotional and physical damage can result if one tries to press on through the exhaustion. While the tips for preventing burnout are still helpful at this stage, recovery requires additional steps (Smith *et al.*, 2012:1).



- **Slow down**

Slow down or take a break! When you have reached the end stage of burnout, adjusting your attitude or looking after your health is not going to solve the problem. Cutting back whatever commitments and activities you can is a priority. You need to give you time to rest, reflect, and heal.

- **Get support**

When you are burned out, the natural inclination is to protect what little energy you have left by isolating yourself. Friends and family are the key resources at this stage. Simply sharing feelings with another person can relieve some of the stress.

- **Re-evaluate your goals and priorities**

Burnout is beyond doubt a sign that something important in your life is not working. Re-evaluation is needed. Take time to think about your hopes, goals, and dreams. Are you overlooking something that is truly important to you?

Burnout can be a chance to revive what really makes you happy and to change course accordingly.

6. STRESS TOOLS AND TIPS



The following tips are provided to assist you with coping and managing your stress:

- If you have a busy day ahead do not check your emails until 11.30am, instead prioritize what tasks are more important.
- See your workload as a week or a month rather than daily so you can plan.
- Make a note ahead of time of what help you need from other people to complete a task and approach them early.
- Take 10 minutes out of every day for yourself to do something that makes you happy, like taking a stroll or reading (Sale, 2008:1).

Burrows (2012:1) provide the following additional tips for dealing with stress:

- Take control of your life and take a moment to think about all you have been given and how blessed you are. Be thankful for everything you do have in control and dismiss everything you do not. Be thankful for even the simplest things such as having a roof over your head, having a bed to sleep on, having quality food, warmth, security, and mostly good health. This is something that many people in the world don't even have so think how lucky you are.
- Be aware of your choices; you always have a choice. This is true for emotions as well as work. Sometimes you need to let your emotions out but still stay in control.
- Say something positive to yourself as soon as you wake up every morning. This will keep your energy and mind going.
- Say something positive to yourself as soon as you wake up every morning. This will keep your energy and mind going.
- Set goals for what you need to achieve that day, then write a **"to do list"**. When writing your "to do list":
 - Know your limits - Be realistic about what you can accomplish in a day.
 - Prioritize your tasks and work to finish them starting with the highest priority (urgent/important).
 - Do your most unpleasant or most difficult task at the beginning of the day when you are fresh, thereby avoiding the stress of last minute preparation. Procrastination feeds stress!

- Schedule your day and your stress as this can reduce the number of stressors you must juggle at any one time. Stagger deadlines for large projects.
- Add some "breathing" space that will allow you time for "recharging" and creative thinking. You will also be better prepared when an unanticipated task arrives. Too much logical and systematic thinking creates stress - you need to give that part of the brain a rest and stimulate the other parts of the brain.
- Review your goals at the end of the day and think about everything you have achieved. This is therapeutic, and will help you sleep better. Check off the things that you accomplished on the "to do" list.
- Know your limits and do not push yourself too hard or beat yourself up when you do not achieve your goals. Tomorrow is another day, start writing tomorrow's to-do-list before you lie down so that it is off your chest.
- Keep your "to do" list to 7 things as there is more chance you will get them done.
- Be organized. Much stress arises from feeling snowed under. Being organized and getting your priorities straight can help you break responsibilities down into manageable pieces and focus on the things that really matter.
- Identify the things that put you under stress. Make sure you understand why you become stressed so that you can try to avoid these circumstances.
- Stop worrying about what you cannot change. This especially comes with things such as politics. Learning to accept things as they are, is an important coping mechanism, but not as easy as it sounds. Take responsibility for making your life what you want it to be. It is less stressful to make decisions and take action than to feel powerless and react to other's decisions. Decide what you want and go for it!
- Treat your body right - You will have more self-confidence and energy, and be less likely to experience the physical side effects of stress:
 - Eat a healthy breakfast and healthy snacks only. Your choice of food is very important when dealing with stress; stay away from sugary snacks and have unsalted nuts and fruit available.
 - Drink water it is the best beverage and stay off alcohol, which always adds to stress one way or another. Caffeine is also known to raise stress levels, so again it is best to drink water.
 - Get fit. Exercise a little every day. This releases endorphins that can lower stress levels, also eat chocolate it also releases endorphins, but only in a small to moderate dosage.
 - Get enough sleep, and, if possible, get into regular sleeping habits.

- Listen to music. Stress can inspire intense emotional reaction. Utilize it. Vent the spleen to a favorite piece of music and experience a happy release.
- Listen to calm and soft music. It really gets you relaxed and happy. Try listening to music with no vocals and pick music with instruments like the flute, piano, etc.
- Use positive self-talk - One of the first things you can do in facing stressful situations is to reinforce your resolve through positive statements such as, "I can handle this, one step at a time," or "Since I've been successful with this before, there's no reason why I can't do it again".
- Rehearse (visualize) - When you know that you are going to face a stressful situation, rehearse how you are going to handle it. Picture yourself overcoming it successfully. Create a mental "videotape" that you can play repeatedly in your mind.
- Visualize positive things; this does not take long but can help you regain focus.
- Develop a sense of humor - One of the barriers to stress reduction is the temptation to take things too seriously. It is okay to back off from your intensity and see the humor in life's situations. Laugh a little or better yet, laugh a lot! See the humor in stress.
- Talk to friends. This is one of the most important things, as keeping things bottled up can only cause more stress.
- **Learn to say no; you cannot do everything you are asked.**
- Accept and appreciate the turmoil around you, without it there would not be anything you could call a good thing. Understand, that to feel frustration and anxiety only indicates your own humanity, and it is nothing to feel ashamed of.
- Take a bath this will give you private time and relax the body.
- Chew gum. It has been shown that the action of chewing can reduce stress; this is why many people who are under constant stress tend to overeat. Chewing gum is a healthier alternative.
- Try some relaxation techniques or breathing techniques.
 - Do Deep Relaxation.
 - Perform Progressive Muscle Relaxation.
 - Ease Depression With Relaxation Techniques.
 - Relax Without Relaxation Techniques.
 - Have a Day of Relaxation (for Women).
- Lie down on a bed with your eyes closed for a few minutes. Try to let your mind go blank. You may eventually fall asleep if you are relaxed enough (Burrows, 2012:1).

Chapter Two

What Is My Relationship with Work?

This chapter begins the process of defining your current relationship with It by generating a profile of the six strategic areas. Your job in this test is to give a critical evaluation of every component of your current job, in terms of the degree of “fit” or “match.” For every question, you will be asked to indicate whether things are “just right” (that is, a good fit), a “mismatch,” or a “major mismatch.” Be picky! Don’t say something is just right unless it really is. Your comparison reference in this test is your ideal work situation (and not what you will put up with just for the sake of being reasonable).

My Relationship with Work Test

Once you've taken the test, you'll have clarity on which areas of your work are a match, which areas are a major mismatch, and which areas are just right.

- In each of the six areas, how does your current job fit with your preferences, work patterns, and aspirations? (If things on a given dimension are just right, put a check in the Just Right column.)
- If a certain dimension is incompatible with your preferred way of working, put a check in the Mismatch column.
- If a quality is a major departure from your ideals, put a check in the Major Mismatch column.

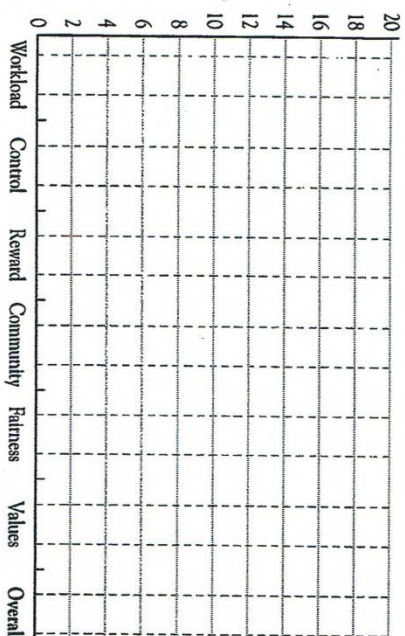
The six tables that constitute the My Relationship with Work Test (Workload, Control, Reward, Community, Fairness, and Values) follow.

Scoring

Scoring the test gives you a Total for each of the six strategic areas.
Here's what you do:

- For each of the six sections, put a check in the cell under either *Just Right*, *Mismatch*, or *Major Mismatch* for each item. Then enter the Rating number (0, 1, or 2) into the right-hand Score column for each item.
- Add up the scores within each strategic area and put the total score in the Total cell. This will give you six Total scores, one for each strategic area.
- In the Grand Total row at the bottom of the test, enter the sum of the six Total scores and then divide by six.

WHAT IS MY RELATIONSHIP WITH WORK? 31



Workload

This section is about the work. The items focus on the amount of work, the kind of work, the pace of work, and the demands of work. These items call for a fairly long-term perspective. The issue isn't today's workload but the state of things over the past few months and how you expect things to be in the foreseeable future.

			<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Mismatch</i>	<i>Major Mismatch</i>	<i>Score</i>
		<i>Rating</i>	0	1	2	
W1	The amount of work to complete in a day					
W2	The complexity of my work					
W3	The intensity of demands from customers					
W4	The firmness of deadlines					
W5	The frequency of surprising, unexpected events					
W6	The opportunity to settle into a comfortable groove					
W7	The frequency of interruptions in my workday					
W8	The proportion of my work time spent with customers					
W9	The amount of time I work alone					
W10	The amount of time I work with other employees					
	<i>Workload Total</i>					

Control

This section focuses on the environment for making decisions at work. The items concern the amount of authority you can exercise over your job and over the operation of your work group. For these items, it doesn't matter how you've gained this authority. You may be empowered by company policy or you may have gained influence through your personal networking. The issue is about providing an accurate reading of your capacity to make decisions about your work.

			<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Mismatch</i>	<i>Major Mismatch</i>	<i>Score</i>
		<i>Rating</i>	0	1	2	
C1	The amount of group decision making in my work setting					
C2	The extent to which I share authority with coworkers					
C3	The amount of information my supervisor provides on major developments in the organization					
C4	My participation in decisions that affect my work					
C5	The quality of leadership from upper management					
C6	The quality of leadership shown by my immediate supervisor					
C7	The authority I am assigned in my area of responsibility					
C8	Opportunities to exercise my professional judgment					
C9	My capacity to influence decisions that affect my work					
C10	My freedom to follow my professional judgment					
	<i>Control Total</i>					

Reward

This section is about rewards. There are many ways a job can be rewarding and just as many ways that it can miss the boat. For this section, give some thought to the sorts of things that keep you going.

			Just Right	Mismatch	Major Mismatch	Score
		Rating	0	1	2	
R1	My salary and benefits relative to what I require					
R2	My salary and benefits relative to what I could get elsewhere					
R3	Recognition for achievements from my supervisor					
R4	Recognition for achievements from management other than my supervisor					
R5	The rigorousness of regular performance evaluations					
R6	My access to perks at work—travel, office furniture, conference support, and so forth					
R7	Opportunities for promotion					
R8	Opportunities for bonuses or raises					
R9	The amount of time I do work I truly enjoy					
R10	The amount of time I work with people I truly enjoy					
	Reward Total					

Community

The focus in this section is the people who make up your *social work environment* (hence the designation S on the test, which distinguishes it from the C used in the control section). Think of the people you encounter on the job: clients, coworkers, bosses, subordinates, and others.

			Just Right	Mismatch	Major Mismatch	Score
		Rating	0	1	2	
S1	The ease of discovering what is happening across the organization					
S2	Open, honest communication across the organization					
S3	The freedom to express differences of opinion					
S4	The extent people must rely on others at work					
S5	The frequency of supportive interactions at work					
S6	The closeness of personal friendships at work					
S7	The amount people interact informally at work					
S8	A shared sense of purpose across the organization					
S9	My sense of community with the entire organization					
S10	The extent of openness to people from units other than one's own					
	Community Total					

Fairness

This section focuses on respect and fairness. Think of the important decisions that affect the quality of your work life. How are people around you treated, and how do you treat others? To what extent are fairness and respect evident in the life of your company?

			<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Mismatch</i>	<i>Major Mismatch</i>	<i>Score</i>
		<i>Rating</i>	0	1	2	
F1	My supervisor's attention to treating employees fairly					
F2	Upper management's attention to treating employees fairly					
F3	Management's dedication to giving everyone equal consideration					
F4	Clear and open procedures for allocating rewards and promotions					
F5	Procedures for discipline that are specified in detail					
F6	The objectivity of decisions on pay raises or bonuses					
F7	The objectivity of decisions on work schedules and assignments					
F8	The extent to which individuals interact politely and respectfully					
F9	The level of cultural sensitivity across the organization					
F10	The organization's accommodation of diverse backgrounds and abilities					
	<i>Fairness Total</i>					

Values

Do you believe in what you're doing? This section is about the way your values and those of your company fit together. Or don't. Think of the crunch issues that pit one set of values against another. Does the company come through for you? Does the company come through for its own corporate values?

			<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Mismatch</i>	<i>Major Mismatch</i>	<i>Score</i>
		<i>Rating</i>	0	1	2	
V1	The depth of management's commitment to its mission					
V2	The influence of organizational values on my work					
V3	The influence of the organization's values in everything it does					
V4	The level of honesty across the organization					
V5	Management's diligence in maintaining honesty and integrity					
V6	My willingness to make personal sacrifices in order to further my organization's mission					
V7	The potential of my work to contribute to the larger community					
V8	My confidence that the organization's mission is meaningful					
V9	The constructive impact of the organization's mission and activities					
V10	The organization's contribution to improving the general quality of life					
	<i>Values Total</i>					
	<i>Grand Total</i>					

8. STRESS DIARY

Name _____

Is this a typical day? Yes ____ No ____

Date _____

Circle One: S M T W T F S

Time of Day	Intensity of Stress (1-7)	Duration of Stress	Situation (circumstance, location, People)	Triggering Event (preceding event)	Emotional Behavioural Reaction (your feelings about the event)

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Addendum 6: Resource CD

CD

ARTICLE 4

EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO REGAIN POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT

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OPSOMMING

In hierdie ondersoek is daar van die UWES skaal (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) gebruik gemaak om die nuut ontwerpte bemagtingings groepwerkprogram te evalueer. Die skaal meet die mate van betrokkenheid van werkers by hul professie. Hierdie skaal is by drie geleenthede by 'n eksperimentele asook n kontrolegroep benut. Die eerste meting was voor die aanvang van die program, die tweede meting was 32 uur later en die derde meting was vier weke na die aanbieding van die program.

Die navorser as fassiliteerder en programaanbieder se observasies, refleksies en prosesnotas gedurende en na die aanbieding is ook gebruik om die praktiese toepassingswaarde van die program te evalueer en aanbevelings te maak vir toekomstige gebruik

'n Self opgestelde evalueringsvraelys is ook aan die einde van die program benut om die groeplede in die eksperimentele groep die geleentheid te gee om die waarde wat die program vir hulle ingehou het, te evalueer.

Die program is na afloop van die meting ook aan die kontrolegroep aangebied.

1. INTRODUCTION

Extensive research was done on factors affecting the lifespan of social workers and other helping professions. The research defined the underlying relationships between Job satisfaction, burnout, job turnover and positive work engagement (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al.*, 2002:2104).

An empowerment programme was developed aimed at regaining positive work engagement for social workers and so retaining them for the profession and enhancing the lifespan of these social workers. The programme focussed on empowerment of social workers by creating awareness about engagement, job satisfaction, burnout, and stress. In a supportive and creative way, social workers were provided with tools and tips to assist them in developing their own care plan. By enhancing their current skills and increasing their awareness, their own responsibility in rekindling the joy for social work was emphasized.

In the following article, the results will be discussed according to the pre-test data analysis, middle-test, as well as the post-test data analysis, consisting of qualitative and quantitative data. Recommendations for the adaptation of the empowerment programme made by participants will also be discussed

2. PROBLEMSTATEMENT

Social work is the systematic application of a body of knowledge, largely from the social, psychological, and biological sciences, together with a refined set of specific skills grounded in a clear set of values. The primary mission of the social work profession is the delivery and commissioning of responses to the needs of society's most vulnerable people, to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (National Association of Social Workers, 2009:6).

This is a difficult profession. It often involves intense work with clients in complex situations; work where evaluation criteria are unclear and role conflict abundant. Social workers are considered an occupational group at above-average risk levels for burnout (Soderfeldt & Soderfeldt, 1995:638). Gaining a better understanding of the key factors influencing the recruitment and retention of social workers will promote the essential worth of social work, and with that, greater recognition will follow for the challenging nature of the job and the serious responsibilities allied with it. One approach to this problem is by focusing on recruitment, and by developing educational initiatives that will bring more people into the

Social Work profession. Another approach, and the aim of this study, is by focusing on retention, and ensuring that social workers experience fulfilling and sustainable careers.

The researcher agrees that retention of workers in human services agencies is a serious concern. There are long-standing concerns in many developed countries about the high turnover rate of social workers and the related negative influence on service delivery. Much research has been focused on determining the reasons for turnover and retention, but less attention has been given to establishing the effectiveness of interventions designed to reduce undesirable turnover (Webb & Carpenter, 2011:1). South Africa's need to recruit and retain Social Workers cannot be overstated. The desired outcome of the recruitment and retention strategy of the Department of social development is to determine conditions that impact negatively on social work services, as well as to provide guidelines and measures that will ensure the recruitment and retention of Social Workers within the profession (Department of Social Development, 2009:3).

Employee engagement, sense of belonging and organisational commitment can be considered components of well-being. Companies are investing large amounts of resources to lower employee turnover by creating an environment favourable for the employee. It is the researcher's opinion that the focus should not be on creating more jobs or recruiting more social workers but rather on creating better jobs, increasing the job satisfaction and especially on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience, by building their resilience and thereby empowering them. This will retain more social workers for the profession and create a consistent, experienced, and motivated workforce, which will enhance the quality of service delivery directly influencing the community of South Africa.

3. RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers.

3.1. Specific objective

The specific objective of this article is to evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing positive work engagement social workers experience in their profession.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methods used for this research were a literature study and an empirical investigation.

4.1. Literature study

An investigation was carried out into the existing literature on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction, and job turnover. Attention was further given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The central focus *of this study* was to evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience in their profession

In order to identify appropriate sources, the following databases were used: NEXUS; Scholarly journal; Social Science Index: Social Work Abstracts; ERIC; RSAT; EbscoHost; PsycLit; Questia online library; Catalogue – Ferdinand Postma Library, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

4.2. Design

The experimental design was used in this part of the research. According to De Vos (2005b:403), experimental designs “whether single-subject or between group designs, help to demonstrate causal relationships between intervention and the behaviours and related conditions targeted for change”. An experimental group of social workers of the North-West province was exposed to an empowerment intervention where after a possible causal relationship would be established between their engagement levels prior to the intervention and their engagement levels after the intervention. De Vos (2005a:389) explains, “the most valid and reliable measurement results are obtained by using the experimental design”. For purposes of this research, two groups were formed; an experimental group with 11 social workers and a comparison group with 14 social workers. Measurement took place before the first session of the group work programme (pre-test), at the end of the last session of the group work programme (post-test) and a month after the completion of the programme.

4.3. Research model

In this research, study the Design and Development model (D&D) was used. The D&D model as Rothman and Thomas (1994:12) point out may be conceptualised as a problem-solving process for seeking effective intervention and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties. Rothman and Thomas (1994:9) stipulate six phases of the D&D model. The intervention research model’s phases are:

Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning

Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis

Phase 3: Design

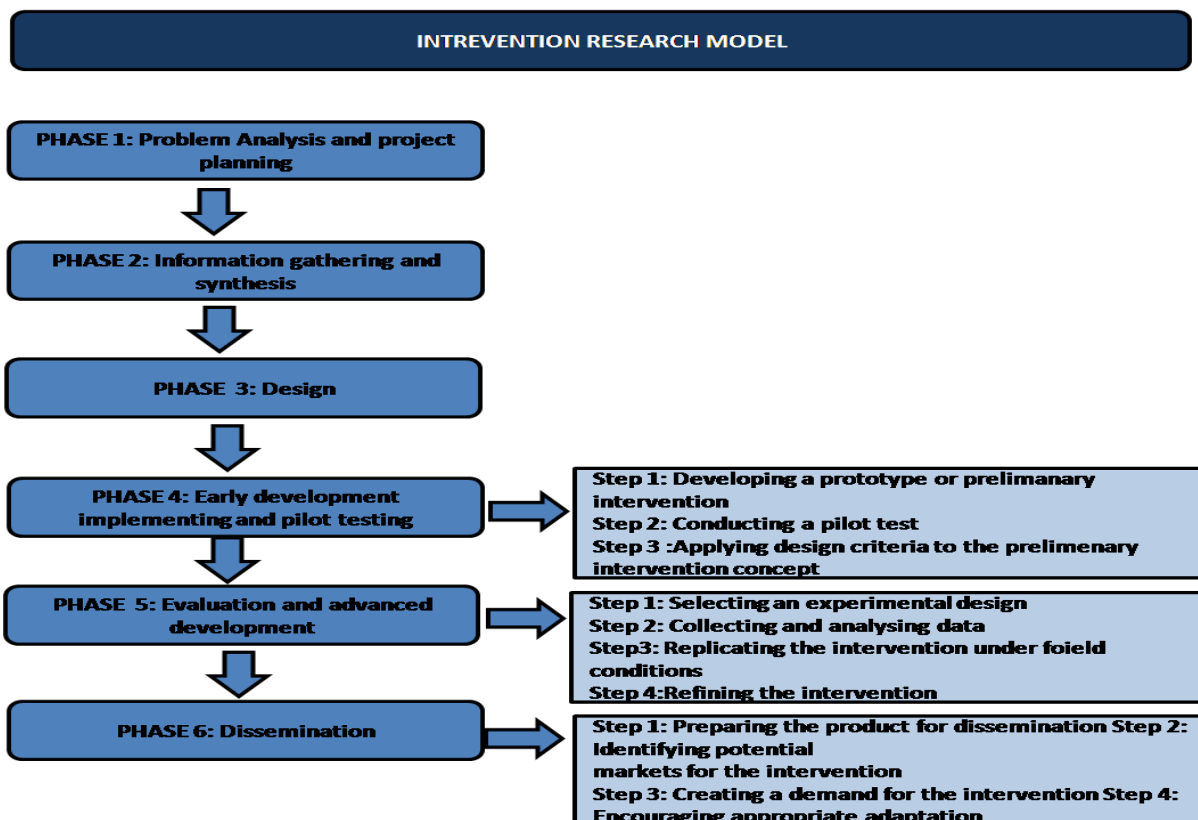
Phase 4: Early development and testing

Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development

Phase 6: Dissemination

This article focuses on phases 4, 5 and 6, the evaluation and advanced development and the dissemination of the newly developed empowerment programme for social workers, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Intervention Research Model (Adapted from Rothman and Thomas (1994:28))



Phase 4: Early development, implementing and testing

The second and third steps were followed during this part of the research.

• **Step 2: Conducting a pilot test**

Pilot tests are implemented in settings convenient for the researcher and are somewhat similar to ones in which the intervention will be used. These pilot tests assist in determining the effectiveness of the intervention and in identifying which elements of the prototype may need to be revised (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:484). There is always the possibility of error when collecting data. The surest protection against such errors is to test the questionnaire fully or partly by a representative sample. A limitation according to the intervention process as described by Rothman and Thomas (1994:28) is the fact that the full programme was not pilot tested, but the content of the programme was given to external social workers to comment on before finalization of the design.

• **Step 3: Applying design criteria to the preliminary intervention concept**

The appropriate community intervention is determined by using common guidelines and values. Relevant questions include: Is the intervention effective? Is it replicable by end-users? Such criteria assist in guiding the design of interventions that are subjected to pilot testing and formal evaluation (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:485). It was determined that the appropriate community for this programme intervention will be the social workers in current practice and social work supervisors. During the implementation of the empowerment programme, the researcher collaborated with the participants to make changes to the programme, in order to make it more effective.

Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development

Rothman and Thomas (1994:37) believe that the use of pilot tests and field replications to test and refine the intervention distinguishes intervention research from programme evaluation. There are four major operations or activities in the evaluation and advanced development phase: selecting an experimental design, collecting and analysing data, replicating the intervention under field conditions and refining the intervention (Rothman & Thomas, 1994:37-39).

• **Step 1: Selecting an experimental design**

These designs help demonstrate casual relationships between the intervention and the behaviours and related conditions targeted for change. According to De Vos (2005b:403), factors such as the goals and magnitude of change sought by the target group, the types of behaviours, the desired immediacy of change, and the goals of the research affect the choice of design. The existence of the cause-effect relationship between variables used in

the intervention programme as well as in the testing of the hypothesis will require explanatory research design (Fouché & De Vos, 2005a:141). An impact evaluation was done using the randomized experimental design with a pre-test-post-test comparison group (Adamchak *et al.*, 2000:71). For ethical reason the comparison group was presented with the programme after the measurements were taken.

- **Step 2: Collecting and analysing data**

During the testing and evaluation of an intervention, data is continuously collected and analysed (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:486). The effectiveness of the programme could be determined by measuring the different aspects discussed in the various sessions. Measurements were taken at the first and last sessions as well as a month after the completion of the programme.

- **Step 3: Replicating the intervention under field conditions**

The programme was presented to social workers practicing in the North-West province. The main goal of the intervention, according to De Vos and Strydom (2011:486), is to develop an intervention that is effective in a variety of real-life contexts. Replication under different field conditions helps to assess the validity of the effects of the intervention.

- **Step 4: Refining the intervention**

Errors are helpful and the results of full field-testing are used to resolve problems with the measurement system and intervention (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:486). Feedback from the social workers that participated in this programme and their recommendations, were recorded in order to adapt and refine the programme.

Phase 6: Dissemination phase

The last phase of this research process is to prepare research reports in order to communicate findings to the appropriate audience. This is called dissemination. Dissemination further indicates that potential markets for the intervention are selected and identified, a demand for the intervention is created, appropriate adaptation is encouraged, and finally technical support is provided for adopters (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:487).

- **Step 1: Preparing the product for dissemination**

The programme must be ready for dissemination. The standards for use of the programme were maintained by insisting that users be trained before the programme can be

implemented. Programme material such as the manual, aids, and the tool CD will only be issued to users that receive training (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:487).

- **Step 2: Identifying potential markets for the intervention**

In defining a market of potential users for a community intervention, researchers should ask certain questions, such as: Which people could benefit from the intervention? Which media approach would be most suitable? Which market segment would most likely adopt the intervention? The empowerment programme can be used by other social work practitioners and social support structures or it can be used for the educational preparation of social work (Fawcett *et al.*, 1994:41).

- **Step 3: Creating a demand for the intervention**

Disseminators must convince potential purchasers that they will benefit from the intervention (De Vos & Strydom, 2011:489). Marketing the value of the programme especially in the social work profession and with supervisors will create a demand for the intervention. As such, the researcher already applied for CPD (Continuous Development Points) with the SACSSP and 6 points were allocated. The programme was further presented to the comparison group as well after which two further bookings from other organizations were received for the presentation of the programme. Positive feedback from the attendees snowballed to further bookings. Supervisors already realized that this programme could be beneficial to their organization with the accredited CPD points being an added bonus.

- **Step 4: Encouraging appropriate adaptation**

It might be necessary to adapt the programme according to the specific target group or to fit certain conditions.

- **Step 5: Providing technical support for adopters**

Technical support may be critical in implementing to maintain long-term client satisfaction. The researcher will be available to assist in providing technical support if there are other adopters of the programme. Especially for the updating of the data, CD technical support might be needed. Adopters of the programme may require support from the researcher to assist with troubleshooting or adapting the intervention to meet their specific needs (De Vos, 2005b:406).

4.4. Research design

Mouton (2001:55) and Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:89) state that a research design refers to a plan or blueprint of the way a researcher intends to conduct the research. According to Fouché *et al.* (2011:143), a research design is a guideline according to which we determine the data collection methods. They differentiate between qualitative and quantitative research. Quantitative research focuses on the use of surveys and measuring instruments. The interpretation of collected data forms part of qualitative research.

During this part of the research, the experimental design was used. The main idea, according to Fouché *et al.* (2011:145), of an experiment is that two comparison groups are set up, and an intervention is administered to one group (experimental group), while the other group receives no intervention (comparison group). The groups are compared after the intervention.

More specifically the quasi-experimental, **pre-test, post-test** and **retention test** comparison group **design** was used. The quasi-experiment is a design, according to Fouché *et al.* (2011:150), which includes an experimental group as well as a comparison group. The experimental group receives the intervention while both groups receive the pre-test-post-test. The difference between a real experiment and a quasi-experiment is the random selection of participants. In this research, the participants were purposefully selected according to their proximity to Potchefstroom and then the selection of a date for the workshop. Those who selected the first date were the experimental group while those who selected the second date were the comparison group. A pre-test was done before the workshop and 32 hours later, a post-test was taken followed by the postponed post-test four weeks later.

4.5. Respondents

Most of the participants that took part in the needs assessment wanted to be part of the empowerment programme, and for this reason, the researcher used a purposive sampling method (Strydom, 2011a:232). In purposive sampling, one samples with a *purpose* in mind. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a type of non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling focuses on sampling techniques where the units that are investigated are based on the judgement of the researcher (Lund Research Ltd, 2012:1). The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable you to answer your research questions. Purposive sampling can be very useful for situations

where one needs to reach a targeted sample quickly and where sampling for proportionality is not the primary concern. With a purposive sample, one is likely to obtain the opinions of the target population, but it is possible to overweight subgroups in the population that are more readily accessible (Lund Research Ltd, 2012:1).

Twenty-five participants that were currently employed as social workers in the North-West province, and could attend the scheduled sessions, and that participated in the needs assessment were selected to form part of the experimental and comparison groups. The experimental group consisted of 11 social workers and the comparison group consisted of 14 social workers. In the experimental group, two participants were from the Defence Force, four from the South African Police Service, one from Education and one from the Department of Social Welfare. Two were from the SAVF and one from the Department of Health. This included three males and eight females, four white, two coloured and five black participants. The homogeneity of the group was thus evenly distributed across race, gender, and organizational settings. The comparison group consisted of two males and twelve females, eleven white, one coloured and one black participant. Five members were from the South African Police Service, three from Childline, two from child welfare, two from correctional services, and one from the private sector.

4.6. Logistics:

The programme was presented as a two-day group session because the amount of information and activities to be shared with the social workers were exceeding the one-day timeframe. It was presented on the 29th and 30th of September 2012 with three sessions on the first day and two sessions the second day in the Potchefstroom NG Church Miederpark Hall. A request for the venue was made with the church (**Addendum: 11**). The programme started at 8:30 am and ended at 16:00 pm every day. Tea breaks at 10:00 am and 15:00 pm were provided as well as lunch at around 13:00 pm. Each session lasted about 2 hours. The first day the introduction, engagement and job satisfaction themes were covered while burnout, stress, the toolkit, and the conclusion themes formed part of the day two programme. Every session apart from the introduction, toolkit and conclusion consisted of a:

- ❖ Definition.
- ❖ Theme discussion.
- ❖ Research results feedback.
- ❖ Motivation.
- ❖ An empowerment plan.

- ❖ Taking care and action steps.
- ❖ Tools and tips.
- ❖ Personal rescue plan and a summary.

4.7. Preparation of participants:

The process of preparing the client for participation in group work begins as early as the initial contact between the client and the programme. Clients' preconceptions about the group, their expectation of how the group will benefit them, their understanding of how they are expected to participate, and whether they have experienced a motivational session prior to the group will all influence members' participation (Van der Westhuizen, 2006:58). The group members that were willing to participate in this experimental part of the research were individually contacted, and informed about the logistical aspects of the workshop. Concerns prospective participants had were dealt with or explained. The purpose as well as the process of the group work was discussed. This was followed up with an invitation letter indicating the time and venue of the workshop (**Addendum: 9**). Members of the comparison group that were willing to participate in this research were also individually contacted and informed about the logistical aspects of the group work and the confirmation of the later date was provided in an invitation letter. Their concerns were dealt with and explained. The purpose of the workshop was discussed as well as their role as part of the comparison group of this experiment. They were requested to fill out the UWES questionnaire 24 hours apart as well as a month later (**Addendum: 2**).

4.8. Measuring instrument

The Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) was used to measure the positive work engagement of the members. This measuring scale was used on three different occasions, namely before the first session started, after the last session ended (thus 32 hours apart) and a month after the last session, with both the experimental group and the comparison group. A questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was also designed to evaluate the Empowerment programme at the end of the last session with the experimental group (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:406-421) (**Addendum: 3**).

The UWES questionnaire will be discussed in more detail at paragraph 6.1.

4.9. Research procedure

The following steps were followed during the research procedure:

- The Empowerment programme/workshop was presented over two days.

- Pre-, post- and postponed post-test were done before and after the programme
- Before the first session, the social workers from the experimental group as well as those from the comparison group signed the necessary consent forms (**Addendum: 7**).
- Before the first session, both groups completed the Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) (**Addendum: 2**). The same measurement was repeated after the last session and one month after the programme.
- The participants were prepared by explaining the nature and the logistical detail of the research.
- Social workers, who were part of the comparison group, were invited to a second workshop after the research was finalised.
- The empowerment programme was implemented and evaluated by means of a self-administered questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions by the group members in the experimental group(**Addendum: 3**).
- All the quantitative data was analysed and presented in graphs and tables in this research report;
- The interviews were transcribed and then analysed to determine themes and categories; and
- The study was presented in a bound research report.

4.10. Data analysis

Data was, during this article, quantitatively analysed by the Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus by means of suitable computer packages, including SAS, STATISTICA en SPSS. The open-ended questions from this study were analysed by means of the Tesch approach (Poggenpoel, 1998:343-344) and reported in the form of text. Kruger *et al.* (2005:217-219) point out that professional research can be analysed manually or by computer. Data was sorted to reflect the most interesting view, arranged into topics, and data belonging to each separate category were correspondingly clustered together in one group according to themes (Creswell, 2003:153-155; Schurink *et al.*, 2011:403).

4.11. Ethical aspects

Ethical permission for conducting this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). This study also complied with ethical standards as set out by the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP). Respondents participated on a voluntary basis. Cultural differences were respected and

dealt with in a professional manner (Welman *et al.*, 2005:181-182). The rights of the respondents and the responsibilities of the researcher ethically bound this research (Strydom, 2005:57). **Permission to undertake this project was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the North-West University and the ethical number NWU-00091-10-A1 was allocated (Addendum: 4).**

For this research study, the following aspects were taken into consideration:

■ **Informed consent**

Informed consent was obtained from the social workers who participate in this research and all the aspects of the research were explained to both parties before participation (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:77; Strydom, 2005:59).

■ **Harm to respondents**

In order to protect respondents against any harm, sensitivity towards emotionality and physical comfort were maintained (Strydom, 2011b:115). The respondents' rights to withdraw from the programme were respected

■ **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Confidentiality was also maintained by carefully explaining the general aim of the study and procedures to be followed. The questionnaires were completed anonymously and the names of the individuals were not disclosed. The data collected was put in a file and locked up in a cabinet in the social worker's office. The researcher is a registered social worker at the SA Council for Social Service Professions (Babbie, 2004:64-67; Van Zyl-Edeling & Pretorius, 2005:107-113).

■ **Voluntary participation**

In the case of this study the participants were regarded as volunteers, thus they were not forced to participate in the study (Strydom 2011b:116). The respondents knew that they had a choice to participate and could withdraw at any stage.

■ **Denial of treatment**

It would be unethical to deny beneficial services to clients strictly for the purpose of research (Strydom, 2011b:121). For this reason, the comparison group was offered the opportunity to attend the programme after the evaluation of the programme was completed.

5. EVALUATION OF THE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Empowerment involves employees taking the initiative to respond autonomously to challenges with the encouragement and support of management (Collins, 2007:25).

An empowering group work programme is one by means of which psychosocial principles and knowledge are converted into teachable skills which can empower people to respond effectively to the demands and problems of coping in certain situations or in a certain stage of life (Phillips, 2001:20; Van der Westhuizen, 2006:7).

This empowerment programme (**Addendum: 5**) was presented to 11 social workers from the North-West province. The participants were both male and female and came from different sections of the social work community. All lived in the North-West province. The programme consisted of 7 sessions of which the first was introduction and the last one the summary session. It was presented in a workshop format over two days.

The aim of this programme was to empower social workers with skills addressing issues contributing to engagement, job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover. Qualitative measuring instruments with open as well as closed-ended questions were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme

6. EVALUATION BY MEANS OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENT

Rothman and Rothman indicated in their research that studies (both internationally and in South Africa) have shown that engagement can be measured in a valid and reliable way using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Rothman & Rothman, 2010:2). For this reason, the Utrecht Work engagement scale (UWES) was used to measure and appraise work engagement of the respondents in this research. The UWES questionnaire was used on three different occasions, namely before the workshop, after the workshop and a month later with the experimental group as well as the comparison group. A self-constructed questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions was also given to the experimental group for evaluation of the programme. A discussion follows on the main instrument used (UWES).

6.1. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

According to Bakker *et al.* (2011:9), measures of engagement have to have a clear theoretical foundation. It should be clearly dependable with an associated definition, need to have published statistical evidence in support of their validity and reliability, and need to be of practical utility in organizational contexts. Many practitioner-developed measures of engagement exist, but relatively few measures of engagement have been “road-tested” in the peer-reviewed literature (Bakker *et al.*, 2011:9). The **Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-17)** is used to measure work engagement (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:277; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:295) and was used in the majority of work engagement research studies in the literature (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:182). Both the authors Schaufeli and Bakker gave the researcher permission to use the UWES engagement scale (**Addendum: 14**).

The 17-item instrument has good psychometric properties and consists of three subscales: Vigor, Dedication, and Absorption (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:277; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:295). The first subscale, vigor, is represented by six items and reflects elevated levels of energy, resilience, and persistence. A sample item is "I can continue working for very long periods at a time". The second subscale, dedication, is also represented by five items and corresponds to a sense of purpose, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge at work. A typical item is "My job inspires me". The third subscale, absorption, consists of six items and represents the extent to which individuals are absorbed in their work. The items were ranked on a 7-point scale, ranging from 0 _ *never* to 6 _ *always*. Several studies have demonstrated the cross-national validity, reliability, and stability of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Bakker *et al.*, 2007:277). Also for South African circumstances, the UWES proved reliable. According to Bakker *et al.* (2011:9), the UWES has been validated in several countries in Europe, and in North America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. The scale was chosen for this study because it reflects how people view, feel about, and react to their jobs and will therefore improve our understanding of social workers' emotional and personal experience of their work. It is a well-tested engagement scale, which has good internal consistency and test–retest reliability and is standardized for South African communities. Engaged workers are characterised by high levels of vigor and dedication, and they are immersed in their jobs (Fourie, 2004:10).

6.1.1. Reliability and validity

Rubin and Babbie state that the more reliable the measure, the less random error there is in it (2005:182). Delpont (2005:162) explains that reliability indicates the stability or consistency of the measurement. If the measuring instrument is independently administered it would

deliver similar results. Strydom (2003:215) points out that one must also strive for the highest possible way of reliability.

Rubin and Babbie (2005:184) hold that in a conventional usage, the term validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration. Anastasi and Urbina (1997:84) add that the validity of a test concerns what the test measures and how well it does so.

To determine the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments, Cronbach alpha coefficients and mean inter-item correlations were used to analyse the internal consistency of the measuring instruments.

The psychometric results confirm the factorial validity of the UWES. The UWES consists of three scales that are highly correlated. Besides, this pattern of relationships is observed among samples from different countries, which confirms the cross-national validity of the three-factor solution. Taken together, this means that engagement is a construct that consists of three closely related aspects measured by three internally consistent scales (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003:8). In conclusion: all scales of the UWES are highly internally consistent. The UWES has good internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Pillar, 2008:59).

Table 1: Reliability and viability

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY				
	Chronbach's Alpha	Chronbach's Alpha standardized	Inter item correlation	Number of items
Total questionnaire	0.829	0.832	0.629	19
V (Vigor)	0.825	0.819	0.429	6
DE (Dedication)	0.837	0.849	0.529	5
AB (Absorption)	0.702	0.717	0.297	6

6.1.2. Statistical procedures and terms

Ellis and Steyn (2003:51-54) mention that the statistical significance of results of research is not only important when results are reported but to comment on the practical significance of a statistically significant result. They (Ellis & Steyn, 2003:51-53) further explain that statistical inference draws conclusions concerning the population from which a sample was drawn by using descriptive measures that have been calculated. Instead of only reporting

descriptive statistics, effect sizes can be determined. Practical significance can be understood as a large enough difference to have an effect in practice. Interpretation of the results in this study was done by calculating effect sizes. Test results for each participant were subtracted from the post-test results for each participant to test whether the mean of the differences were zero, and repeated with the retention results. Cohen's (1988:567) effect size for differences between means of dependent groups was calculated according to the following formula:

$$d = \frac{\text{mean of difference}}{\text{Standard deviance of difference}}$$

According to Cohen (1988:567), guidelines of effect sizes for differences between means are as follows:

- d =0.2 a small effect
- d =0.5 a medium effect
- d =0.8 a large effect and also practical significant.

Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were computed to describe the data. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationships between the variables. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$. P value can be defined as the level of marginal significance within a statistical hypothesis test, representing the probability of the occurrence of a given event. The p value is used as an alternative to rejection points to provide the smallest level of significance at which the null hypothesis would be rejected. The smaller the p value, the stronger the evidence is in favour of the alternative hypothesis (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012d:1).

The null hypothesis is described as a type of hypothesis used in statistics that proposes that no statistical significance exists in a set of given observations. The null hypothesis attempts to show that no variation exists between variables, or that a single variable is no different from zero. It is presumed to be true until statistical evidence nullifies it for an alternative hypothesis (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012c:1).

ANOVA with post hoc Bonferroni tests were performed to investigate differences between groups. ANOVA is a statistical analysis tool that separates the total variability found within a data set into two components: random and systematic factors. The random factors do not have any statistical influence on the given data set, while the systematic factors do. **The ANOVA** test is used to determine the impact independent variables have on the dependent variable in a regression analysis (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012a:1).

Bonferroni test is a type of multiple comparison test used in statistical analysis. When an experimenter performs enough tests, he or she will eventually end up with a result that shows statistical significance, even if there is none. If a particular test yields correct results 99% of the time, running 100 tests could lead to a false result somewhere in the mix. The Bonferroni test attempts to prevent data from incorrectly appearing to be statistically significant by lowering the alpha value (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012**b**:1).

The term **statistically significant**, is explained as the “likelihood that a result or relationship is caused by something other than mere random chance”. Statistical hypothesis testing is traditionally employed to determine whether or not a result is statistically significant. This provides a “p value” representing the probability that random chance could explain the result. In general, a 5% or lower p value is considered to be statistically significant” (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012**e**:1).

The mean indicates a simple mathematical average of a set of two or more numbers. The mean for a given set of numbers can be computed in more than one way, including the arithmetic mean method, which uses the sum of the numbers in the series, and the geometric mean method. However, all of the primary methods for computing a simple average of a normal number series produce the same approximate result most of the time (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012**f**:1).

Standard Deviation is a measure of the dispersion of a set of data from its mean. The more spread apart the data, the higher the deviation. Standard deviation is calculated as the square root of variance (Investopedia Dictionary, 2012**g**:1).

7. RESULTS OF THE UWES QUESTIONNAIRE

The following are the results of the pre-post and postponed post assessments.

Before the first session, participants scored the UWES questionnaire prior to the intervention or Empowerment programme taking place. Both the comparison group and experimental group completed the questionnaire. This questionnaire is called the pre-test questionnaire. After the intervention or empowerment programme (32 hours later) the experimental group completed their post-test questionnaire. The comparison group was also requested to complete the post-test questionnaire within 32 hours.

Four weeks after the intervention or empowerment programme the experimental group was requested to complete the postponed post-test. The comparison group was also requested to complete the retention test four weeks after the post-test.

Table 2 provides the mean and standard deviation and Cronbach's alpha for each construct and dimension.

Table 2: Summary of results

SUMMARY																
	Control						Experimental									p=<0.05 for significance
	pre		post		ret		pre		post		ret		p			
	MEAN	STD ERR	MEAN	STD ERR	MEAN	STD ERR	MEAN	STD ERR	MEAN	ST ERR	MEAN	ST ERR	P GROUP	P TIME	P INTERACTION G*T	
AB	24	1.1	22.92	1.01	24.35	1.15	21.36	1.25	22	1.15	24.9	1.29	0.44	0.03	0.2	Not Significant
DE	21.35	1.43	20.35	1.52	20.71	1.25	17.27	1.61	20.18	1.72	22.63	1.41	0.69	0.002	0.000089	Significant
V	23.21	1.24	20.71	1.58	22.64	1.37	18.9	1.4	22.81	1.78	25.27	1.55	0.94	0.0004	0.000007	Significant

It can be conceded from this summary that on the AB scale (absorption) the comparison group improved from a 24 mean on the pre-test to a 22.92 after the post-test and a 24.35 after the postponed post-test (retention test), while the mean of the experimental group improved from a 21.36 after the pre-test to a 22 after the post-test and a 24.9 after the postponed post-test. The p value on the groups, time and group and time interaction did not improve significantly for the experimental group compared to the comparison group that received no intervention.

On the DE scale, (dedication) the comparison group's mean score lowered from 21.35 after the pre-test to a 20.35 after the post-test but improved slightly to a 20.71 after the postponed post-test after a timeframe of 32hours. The experimental group's mean score improved from a 17.27 after the pre-test to a 20.18 after the post-test and intervention took place and a further improvement to 22.63 after the postponed post-test four weeks later. The p value on the group interaction was not significant, but on the time interaction, it was significant, meaning that the mean value improved over time significantly with a very significant p value on the experimental group and time interaction. This indicates that the DE scale did improve significantly for the experimental group in time after the intervention compared to the comparison group that had no intervention. On the V scale (vigor) the mean value of the comparison group decreased from 23.21 to a 20.71 after the post-test (32hours later), and lifted again slightly to a mean value of 22.64 after a four week period with no intervention. The V scale mean value of the experimental group prior to the intervention was 18.9. This

improved to a mean value of 22.81 after the intervention and post-test (32 hours later), while the V mean value, four weeks after the intervention, increased to 25.27. The p group value was not significant, but the p time value had significantly improved, indicating that the 32-hour and four-week time lapse impacted positively on the experimental group. The p value for the group-time intervention was 0.000007, which is highly significant. This can be summarized that the Vigor scale of the experimental group improved significantly after the intervention and even further after a four-week period compared to the comparison group that received no intervention over this period.

A discussion on the separate scales follows.

7.1. Absorption scale

Absorption is measured by six items that refer to being totally and happily immersed in one's work and having difficulties detaching oneself from it so that time passes quickly and one forgets everything else that is around. Questions in the UWES include:

1. *Time flies when I am working.*
2. *When I am working, I forget everything else around me.*
3. *I feel happy when I am working intensely.*
4. *I am immersed in my work.*
5. *I get carried away when I am working.*
6. *It is difficult to detach myself from my job* (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003:6).

The results of the UWES questionnaire (absorption) can be visually presented as follows:

Figure 2: Mean of Absorption scale

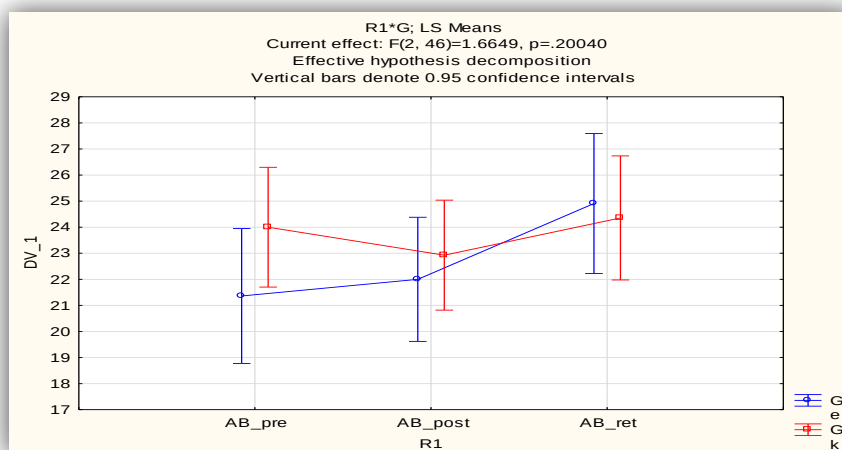


Table 3: Summary of Absorption scale

Bonferroni test; variable DV_1 (Calitz T_3tye) Probabilities for Post Hoc Tests Error: Between; Within; Pooled MS = 16.777, df = 49.829								
Cell No.	G	R1	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}	{5}	{6}
1	e	AB_pre	21.364	22.000	24.909	24.000	22.929	24.357
2	e	AB_post	1.000000	1.000000	0.141588	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
3	e	AB_ret	0.141588	0.467503	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
4	k	AB_pre	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
5	k	AB_post	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
6	k	AB_ret	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000

Those who score high on absorption feel they usually are happily engrossed in their work, they feel immersed by their work and have difficulties detaching from it because it carries them away. Consequently, everything else around is forgotten and time seems to fly. Those who score low on absorption do not feel engrossed or immersed in their work, they neither have difficulties detaching from it, nor do they forget everything around them, including time. With repeated measures with ANOVA and the Bonferroni test there appears to be no significance between the pre-, post- and postponed post-test on the Absorption (AB) subscale.

7.2. Dedication Scale

Dedication is assessed by means of five items that refer to gaining a sense of significance from one's work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about one's job, and feeling inspired and challenged by it. Questions in the UWES include:

1. *I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.*
2. *I am enthusiastic about my job.*
3. *My job inspires me.*
4. *I am proud of the work that I do.*
5. *To me, my job is challenging (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003:5).*

The results of the UWES questionnaire (dedication) can be visually presented as follows:

Figure 3: Mean of Dedication scale

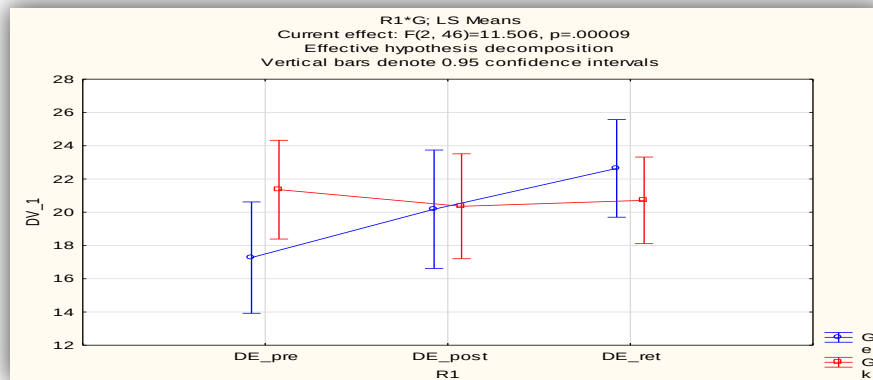


Table 4: Summary of Dedication scale

Bonferroni test; variable DV_1 (CalitzT_3tye)								
Probabilities for Post Hoc Tests								
Error: Betw een; Within; Pooled MS = 27.850, df = 29.371								
Cell No.	G	R1	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}	{5}	{6}
1	e	DE_pre		0.055509	0.000015	0.967453	1.000000	1.000000
2	e	DE_post	0.055509		0.196740	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
3	e	DE_ret	0.000015	0.196740		1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
4	k	DE_pre	0.967453	1.000000	1.000000		1.000000	1.000000
5	k	DE_post	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000		1.000000
6	k	DE_ret	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	

Those who score high on dedication strongly identify with their work because it is experienced as meaningful, inspiring, and challenging. They usually feel enthusiastic and proud about their work. There is a marginally higher difference on the Dedication (DE) scale between the post-test and the pre-test with a p value of 0.055. Significant is a p value of lower than 0.05. There is no significance between the post-test and the postponed post-test but there is a significant difference ($p = 0.000015$) between the postponed post-test and the pre-test, indicating that the experimental group has an increased value on the dedication scale, which continued over a four-week time period). The mean of the dedication scale increased from 17.27 in the pre-test to 22.63 in the postponed post-test. The comparison group's score did not change significantly from the pre-test to the post-test or postponed post-test ($p=1$). This means that the experimental group, on the emotional dedication) component of engagement, felt more enthusiastically involved in their challenging and

significant work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010:12), and this continued on a long-term basis. Dedicated employees are usually enthusiastic, inspired and have a strong identification towards their work. Such employees are regarded as being highly engaged in what they do (De Braine & Roodt, 2011:1).

7.3. Vigor Scale

Vigor is assessed by the following six items that refer to high levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest effort, not being easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties. Questions in the UWES scale include:

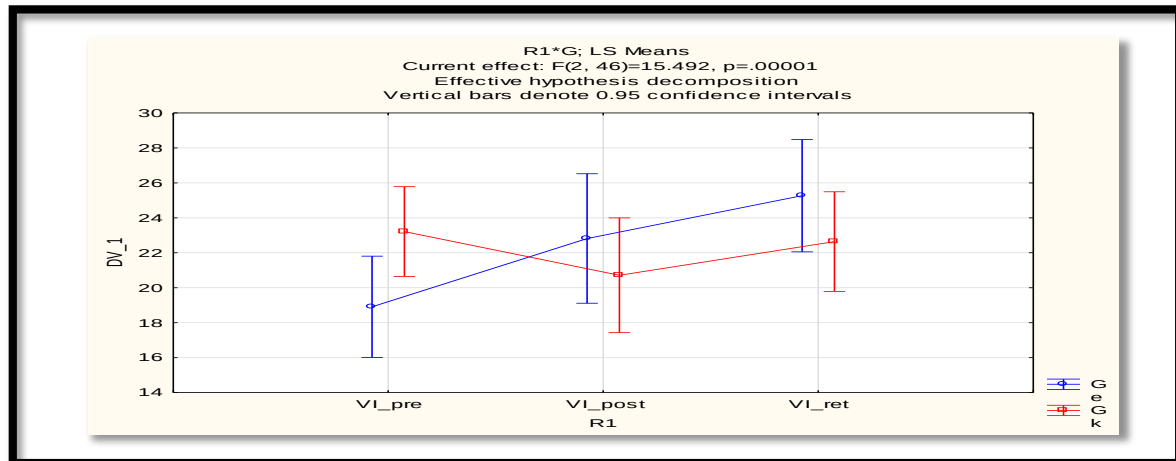
1. *At my work, I feel bursting with energy.*
2. *At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.*
3. *When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.*
4. *I can continue working for very long periods at a time.*
5. *At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.*
6. *At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well*.*

The results of the UWES questionnaire (vigor) can be visually presented as follows:

Figure 4: Mean of Vigor scale

Bonferroni test; variable DV_1 (Calitz T_3tye) Probabilities for Post Hoc Tests Error: Betw een; Within; Pooled MS = 27.814, df = 30.826								
Cell No.	G	R1	{1} 18.909	{2} 22.818	{3} 25.273	{4} 23.214	{5} 20.714	{6} 22.643
1	e	VI_pre		0.007061	0.000003	0.772312	1.000000	1.000000
2	e	VI_post	0.007061		0.335106	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
3	e	VI_ret	0.000003	0.335106		1.000000	0.598859	1.000000
4	k	VI_pre	0.772312	1.000000	1.000000		0.138908	1.000000
5	k	VI_post	1.000000	1.000000	0.598859	0.138908		0.624554
6	k	VI_ret	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	0.624554	

Table 5: Summary of Vigor scale



Those who score high on vigor usually have much energy, zest and stamina when working, whereas those who score low on vigor have less energy, zest and stamina as far as their work is concerned. Vigor refers to individuals' feelings that they possess physical strength, emotional energy, and cognitive liveliness, a set of interrelated affective states experienced at work. It has been associated with motivation, job performance, and organizational effectiveness (Shirom, 2010:69).

There was a significant difference ($p=0.007$) on the Vigor scale between the pre- and post-test, and an even greater significance between the postponed post-test and the pre-test ($p=0.000003$), but no significant difference between the postponed post-test and the post-test. The mean score increased from 18.09 in the pre-test to 25.27 after the postponed post-test. This means that the participants of this research increased their levels of energy and mental resilience while working, even on a long-term basis of four weeks, and were willing to invest effort in their work (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:182). This further means that the individual will feel motivated, eager, and excited about his or her work and will persevere even when setbacks, limitations or challenges arise (Pillay, 2008:37).

7.4. Combined scale

The results of the UWES questionnaire (combined) can be visually presented as follows:

Figure 5: Mean of combined scale

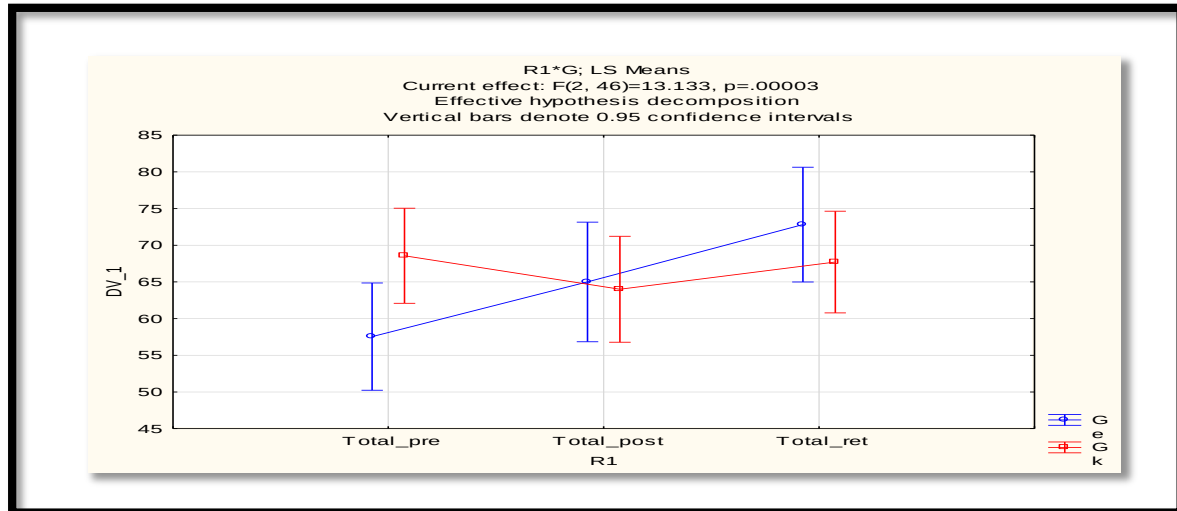


Table 6: Summary of combined scale results

Bonferroni test; variable DV_1 (CalitzT_3tye.sta)								
Probabilities for Post Hoc Tests								
Error: Between; Within; Pooled MS = 155.14, df = 30.797								
Cell No.	G	R1	{1}	{2}	{3}	{4}	{5}	{6}
			57.545	65.000	72.818	68.571	64.000	67.714
1	e	Total_pre		0.057614	0.000002	0.535012	1.000000	0.772080
2	e	Total_post	0.057614		0.038041	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
3	e	Total_ret	0.000002	0.038041		1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
4	k	Total_pre	0.535012	1.000000	1.000000		0.609404	1.000000
5	k	Total_post	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	0.609404		1.000000
6	k	Total_ret	0.772080	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	

The reliability and viability of this scale allowed this scale to be valued as an entity as it can be reported that the scale has acceptable internal consistency. There was a just below significance of .057 between the pre- and post-test, but a significance of 0.038 between the post- and postponed post-test. There was a high significance of 0.000002 between the pre-test and the postponed post-test indicating the programme had in general increased the work engagement of attendees of the programme over a four-week period. The mean increased from 57.54 to 72.818 whereas the mean of the comparison group **decreased** from 68.57 to 67.71 over the four-week period. The lowest p value was with the interaction between group and time on the vigor scale. For purposes of this study, the significant time-

by-group interaction effect is the most important result, indicating that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and postponed post-test scores for the experimental group and the comparison group. It can be concluded from the results of the UWES pre-, post- and postponed post-test that this empowerment group work programme definitely affected especially the vigor and dedication aspects positively, as outlined by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004:295) and Bakker *et al.*(2007:277), and can be used to increase the general work engagement of social workers.

7.5. Conclusion

The quantitative measures utilised in this study have statistical significance value, especially related to the Vigor and Dedication scales of the UWES scale. The programme does increase engagement of the social workers and can be used to increase the commitment and joy social workers experience in their profession.

8. EVALUATION BY PARTICIPANTS

Open-ended questions were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the empowerment group programme. The measuring instrument (**Addendum: 3**) used was the social workers' reflections and feedback on the programme regarding the knowledge, attitudes and skills the social workers had gained. The efficacy of the programme as an empowering tool was evaluated by the completion of this self-formulated evaluation questionnaire that allowed the social workers to communicate their views on the perceived efficacy of the programme. The first six questions were closed-ended questions while the last three were open-ended questions.

8.1. Evaluation of quantitative data

8.1.1. The overall quality of the programme

The participants were asked to rate the overall quality of the workshop and could choose between the following answers: Excellent. Very good, good, fair and poor. 3 (27.3%) indicated that the overall quality was very good, while 8 (72.7) rated the quality of the programme as excellent. According to the majority of participants, the quality of the programme thus was outstanding.

8.1.2. The balance between presentations and hands-on activities

The participants were asked to rate the balance between presentations and hands-on activities. The participants could choose between: not enough presentations, good ratio, not

enough hands-on instructions, too many presentations and too many hands-on activities. All the participants (100%) indicated that the balance between presentation and hands-on activities were good. This relates to what Onserud *et al.* (2009:9) highlighted in their research, namely that the use of activity in groups can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the group's purpose and to the realization of the goals of individual members.

8.1.3. Personal impact on feelings of engagement

In this question, the participants were asked how useful this workshop was in relation to their feelings of engagement. They could choose between the following answers: Very useful, somewhat useful, uncertain, minimally useful and not very useful. 8 (72.7%) indicated that they had found the workshop impact to be very useful, while 3 (27.3%) indicated that the workshop was somewhat useful in relation to their feelings of engagement. Engagement is characterized by energy, involvement and professional efficacy (Bakker, 2009:3-4). Most of the participants indicated that the workshop was very useful in relation to these "engagement" feelings containing energy, involvement, and professional efficacy. This correlates to the results of the UWES questionnaire, which indicated that the programme had a significant effect on the participants' feelings of engagement.

8.1.4. The value of the printed manual

The participants were asked how useful the printed manual was. They could select one of the following answers: Very useful, somewhat useful, uncertain, minimally useful and not very useful. 10 (90.9%) participants indicated that the printed manual was very useful, while 1 (9.1%) found the manual to be somewhat useful. The purpose of the manual was for people to follow along, make notes, and refer to the programme throughout the workshop. A manual would help participants to remember later what the workshop was about, and would assist them in passing the ideas on to others. The impact of the programme following the UWES scale indicated that the programme was effective after a four-week time span, indicating that the members used the information provided in the manual for a time period after the intervention. A manual may also assist the participant in a hands-on walk through to ensure the instructions accomplish what they need to accomplish and that the goal of the programme is reached (Gregory, 2010:1).

8.1.5. The value of the activities in relation to the presentation

The participants were asked how useful the activities were in relation to the presentation. Nearly all the participants (10 (90.9%)) indicated that the activities, in relation to the

presentation, were very useful. 1 (9.1%) found the activities to be somewhat useful in relation to the presentation. Programme activities are the resources used within the group context to assist individual group members and the group as a whole to achieve their objectives (Modise, 2005:62). The objectives for this programme were reached, indicating that the activities were effectively chosen.

8.1.6. The development of new viewpoints and insights

The participants were asked whether the workshop had provided them with new insights and viewpoints. Participants could indicate one of the following answers: To a great degree, to a moderate degree, somewhat, minimal, hardly at all. 8(72.7%) of the participants felt that they had to a great degree developed new viewpoints and insights. There were 3 participants that revealed that they had developed new viewpoints and insights only to a moderate degree. To build a culture of engagement it is important to incorporate training in intrinsic motivation. In contrast to people that have developed burnout, engaged employees experience a sense of energetic and emotional dedication to their work tasks, and perceive themselves as capable of coping with the demands of their work (Chirkowska-Smolak, 2012: 76). These are all connected to viewpoints, insights and attitudes. It is the researcher's opinion that the new insights and viewpoints participants had developed had contributed to the success of the programme.

8.2. Evaluation of qualitative data

In the following section of the self-developed questionnaire, three open-ended questions relating to the workshop were presented to the participants.

8.2.1. Facets most helpful regarding the programme

In this question, the participants were asked what they liked most about the workshop. The participants indicated that they liked the creative activities and the informal way they were presented. *"The way it was presented, was very practical and useful"*. Especially the engagement, burnout and stress content of the workshop were mentioned as having been valuable. The toolkit was highlighted as very useful and they further commented positively on the practical examples and activities used to emphasize the skills that were taught. It provided the opportunity for introspection into themselves. They also liked the *"good group interactions"*, and the discussion among group members. The small size of the group contributed to an intimate and relaxed atmosphere, which contributed to the opportunity to share. It also allowed the freedom to voice their own opinions and an opportunity to interact with other professionals, sharing ways to cope.

Most of these facets identified are related to the advantages of group work. Group work facilitates the development of empowerment – both personally and socially. Individuals often form groups due to the need for support. Although this is often for support needed to cope, support and encouragement is also often needed to confront or improve existing situations. In this way, clients learn how to "take control" so that instead of passively enduring what happens to them, they determine the effect of the situation on their own lives (Boyd & Skittrall, 1995:117). The choice of a group work activity contributed successfully to reaching the aim of this research as the atmosphere and dynamics of this support group assisted the empowerment process and increased the engagement social workers experienced.

8.2.2. Facets the least helpful about the programme

The participants were asked what they found the least helpful about this workshop. On this question, most attendees commented that nothing should be changed and that they liked the format as is. This underpinned that the choices of activities made after the needs assessment in article two were appropriate and that it added to the empowerment that took place. There was a suggestion for allowing more group discussions and alternating some activities to allow more experiential learning. These will be taken into account when recommendations are made for final development of the programme.

8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement of the programme

The participants were asked for suggestions to improve the workshop. The following suggestions were made by the participants in relation to possible improvements to the programme:

- *The programme can be of longer duration.*
- *More media could be used as part of the creative activities, including magazines and more experiential learning activities.*
- *The programme should be presented on a regular basis.*
- *The venue of the workshop could be more accessible.*

Most participants concluded again that the programme was excellent and fulfilled their expectations. They stressed the importance of the informal setting, atmosphere and intimate group size.

8.3. Conclusion

It appears that the selection of activities and the way it was presented was effective and contributed to the atmosphere and growth of the members. The members indicated that they especially liked the informal atmosphere of the small group and that it allowed for

intimacy and sharing to take place. The nature of this programme as a support group helped to create a supportive atmosphere where members could express their feelings and allow for growth. It is the researcher's opinion that this support contributed to the growth that took place and assisted in empowerment and growth in engagement. If this workshop had presented to a "non-supportive group" the amount of growth and empowerment would have lessened.

9. EVALUATION BY THE PROGRAMME PRESENTER

This evaluation was conducted by the researcher as programme presenter during and after the presentation of the group work programme and represents the viewpoint of the researcher on various aspects of the programme. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the practical applicability of the programme and to make recommendations for future utilization. The facilitator's reflections, observations, and process notes were utilized in the evaluation of this programme.

9.1. Session 1: Introduction and orientation

Eleven participants joined this workshop. They were from different sections of the community as well as different sections of the social work community. Some of the group members were familiar to each other. After the introduction, an Icebreaker was launched in order to create a starting point for interaction. Members indicated their reason for joining the social work profession as well as their level of "tiredness/burnout" on a level of one to ten.

Nine of the eleven members indicated that they were on and above the seventh point on the scale, implying that they very tired within their current social work position, that they felt burned out, and had no energy left. Two members indicated that they were past the 10-point scale. Although the atmosphere was relaxing and comfortable, a "tired" negativity surrounded the group. After explaining the aim of the programme and the programme schedule itself the majority of members remarked that they needed this workshop urgently as they already felt disengaged dissatisfied and burned out. In the needs, assessment 69.7% indicated that they were satisfied with their job, while 30.3% were not. 40 (71.4%) of the respondents felt engaged with their job 60% or more of the time, while 12 (21.4%) felt only engaged 40% or less of the time. During this icebreaker, though, 82% of this group indicated they were not engaged with their job. Participants appeared to have more "guts" to indicate verbally within a support group their feelings of disengagement.

9.2. Session 2: Engagement

The second session was aimed at exploring engagement and defining the term and explore what effects engagement, to provide attendees with tips for increasing engagement and assisting them with developing a personal “increasing engagement” rescue plan through a mind mapping exercise.

An introduction and overview was provided in relation to work engagement. A breakaway session was facilitated answering the following: *Your work demands a lot from you but it might give you things in return, but what exactly does it give you in return?* Members were negatively orientated and struggled to find positive attributes to their job. They did, however, agree that helping clients to reach their goals was a good motivator, but that organizational climate, work overload and ineffective management was more demanding than the rewards they received. One member did indicate that the “support of colleagues” was a strong positive aspect of the job.

After the first breakaway, the definition and background information was provided and the reasons why people disengage were discussed. The drivers of engagement and the consequences of both positive engagement and disengagement followed. The second breakaway session focussed on:

- *Are you still engaged, or have you disengaged?*
- *What job demands and resources influence your engagement?*

Seven of the eleven members indicated that they already felt disengaged. Reasons provided were workload, lack of supervision, the organizational culture, relationship with colleagues and no recognition. Members that still felt engaged indicated a good support network and being “new” to the profession as reasons. One member summarized her feelings well by saying *“I am just doing the basics, just enough not to get into trouble, I am only trying to survive day by day”*.

After the breakaway, the research results were discussed. Members associated themselves with the research and information provided. Members were motivated to take control and prioritize engagement within their work relationship. Constant attention needs to be given in order to re-establish and maintain engagement. They were provided with tools and tips on how to increase and work on engagement. They started their own individual mind-mapping action plan following these questions:

- What excites you about your work?
- What disengages you from work?
- What resources do you need to increase engagement?
- What action needs to be taken to increase engagement?

Informal discussions were led during and after this activity.

During the summary, the members indicated that they needed to take responsibility for their own engagement. As one member put it, *"I need to take care of it myself"*. They realized that certain things needed to change and adaptations are needed in order to re-engage. The connection between yourself and your work as a relationship that needs attention and care, made an impact on the members and it surfaced that members started to realize that changing their engagement was in their own hands. Another member indicated, *"I never thought about my relationship with my work as something that needed work"*.

They cannot wait for the organization or the workload to change – they need to do this themselves.

9.3. Session 3: Job satisfaction

Session 3 was aimed at exploring job satisfaction. The introduction was followed by a breakaway session: *Do you work to live or live to work?* Members indicated that both are important but if one is tired and no longer cares, one no longer has a balance between living and working. Some members indicated that they just go through the motions at the moment. The atmosphere was still relaxed but continued to have negativity to it. The majority of members felt overwhelmed and had little job satisfaction left.

This breakaway session was followed by a definition of the concept *job satisfaction*. The effects of job satisfaction, the factors influencing it, as well as the key areas of job satisfaction were further facilitated. A second breakaway followed: *Think about what originally drew you to your current job.* Take some time to think about what motivates and inspires you — and how you approach your work. Most members replied that making a difference in people's lives initially drew them to the job. Seeing clients happy and reaching the goals motivates them. One member said: *"When a client gives positive feedback it kick-starts her day"*. One member further stated that what she initially thought the job is about, differed from the reality, but she has adapted.

Members were given time to go through tips and tools for increasing job satisfaction, after which they started their own individual mind-mapping action plan. Informal discussions were

led during and after the activity. A relaxing atmosphere was created with modern background music. Members started to move around between tables and spoke openly about their frustrations.

During the summary, one member indicated that the supporting colleagues made all the difference and carried her through tough times. She further stated that she knew she had to set stronger and clearer boundaries. Another member indicated that she was happy in her work itself but that additional factors influenced her job satisfaction. Additional work not related to social work (such as extra reports, administration or washing of vehicles) affected her job satisfaction and she needed to address this. Another member indicated that she liked her job but certain areas affected her job satisfaction and she realized that those areas could be controlled and addressed. One of the male members stated that: *"I am also sometimes not satisfied. Job satisfaction needs to be a priority that you will have to address yourself and need to take responsibility for yourself"*. It was said that it sounds easier than it really is to set boundaries. Negativity was still experienced and feelings of helplessness to change the systems (organizational) that did not work. Members were motivated to change thinking patterns and thinking out of the box creatively. Members realized by breaking down the problem into smaller parts it could be changed, and this could assist them in addressing issues of their own.

9.4. Session 4: Burnout

Session 4 was aimed at exploring burnout. After the introduction and overview, a breakaway session addressing the following question was held: *Do you believe social workers are more or less prone to burnout?* The members answered that they realized social workers were more prone due to their high caseload as well as the responsibilities that accompany the job title. The members sometimes had difficulty in disassociating themselves from the clients' problems. The breakaway session was followed by the difference between stress and burnout and the causes of burnout. A second breakaway followed addressing the following question: *What do you think causes burnout for social workers?* Are there certain beliefs that contribute to burnout of social workers? The members focused on the belief that they could, should or are supposed to be able to solve all the problems, as this one caused internal as well as external pressure. The belief that they are not allowed to show weakness or inability to solve problems also increases the pressure. A further belief identified was that social workers are not supposed or allowed to be burned out, as you should have all the skills to address and prevent this. The difference between stress and burnout, and the

causes of burnout were then explored. It was stressed that a healthy balanced work life must be obtained and each individual needs to take personal responsibility for it.

During the development of the action plan, members started moving around as well as contributing to each other's action plans by providing ideas. A support group feeling was created. Modern background music contributed to a relaxing atmosphere.

During the summary members realized that they were burned out or close to it but that assertive preventative behaviour can bring them in control again. The mood was a lot less helpless and more positive. Members realized again that they could change the situation by breaking it down into smaller steps and addressing them separately. Some members even retracted from saying they were totally disengaged or burned out – to just tired. They felt this could be addressed.” *It is not as bad as I initially thought*”. According to the facilitator, the feeling of being in control was re-established. This lightened the mood of the members.

9.5. Session 5: Stress

During session five, stress was explored. After the introduction and overview, a breakaway session addressing the following question was held: *What could cause stress in the social work profession specifically?* Again, members identified several aspects contributing to stress in the social work profession. Members indicated high workload, not networking, unsupportive colleagues or supervisors, unrealistic expectations and unwilling or demanding clients as some of the main stressors affecting the social work profession.

The definition of stress, the nature, and the phases of stress were explained to the members. Symptoms, responses, and ways to react to or adapt to stress followed the discussion. The last breakaway session focussed on what support or resilience the members have used or are using to prevent or cope with social work stress.

During the summary, one member mentioned that she realized she needed to link more with colleagues! She has developed certain coping skills, which might not have been effective in the past, and she needed to readdress them. This particular member has grown during the workshop as she initially blamed her colleagues for not being supportive after which she realized it was her responsibility and she needed to interact more in order to change the status quo. A second member realized that she could do more to relax and focus more on herself to prevent stress. It was her own priority and responsibility to build resilience against stress. The third member realized that there are just certain areas, which are out of control but can be addressed. Another member concluded, *“I need to focus on my personality style in order to prevent stress”*. Another member that was quite negative at the beginning

indicated that she would need to scale down – be more assertive and needed to delegate a lot more in order to prevent stress.

9.6. Session 6: Toolkit

During this session, the CD tool was explained and explored with the members. Members were positive that the tool will be able to assist them in dealing with some of the issues identified, but will also support them in dealing with other social work issues.

9.7. Session 7: Conclusion and evaluation

During this session, an overview was provided to the group members on the nature and content of this program. After summarizing the outcome and experiences of the different sessions, the members provided verbal feedback on the experience of the program. They had enjoyed the relaxing atmosphere of the programme as well as the creativity presented. They indicated that the programme was useful and refreshing. During the summary, the mood of the sessions had changed drastically from the beginning of the workshop where most members were negative, felt burned out and disengaged. During the first session, members struggled to find hope and solutions for their problems, but turned around in the last two sessions. Members appeared, according to the facilitator, more in control, more positive and less hopeless. They had ideas on how to address issues at work, which influenced their engagement and stress. They indicated that they were empowered to address the aspects that needed attention to increase engagement and prevent burnout, stress and job dissatisfaction.

The filling out of the evaluation questionnaire, as well as the Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) questionnaire followed this discussion. Members were presented with their CPD certificates (**Addendum: 12**) and requested to hand in the third **Work & Well-being Survey (UWES)** questionnaire in a month's time. Contact details were exchanged.

9.8. Conclusion

Through the facilitator's reflections, observations and process notes it was concluded that the participants gained from this empowerment programme. The introduction session underlined the need for this programme as the social workers voiced their feelings of disengagement, burnout, and tiredness. They needed to be supported and empowered to rekindle their joy for the profession. It soon became evident that although the social workers knew how important self-care and engagement was, they did not realize that they had a responsibility to address their own negative feelings. They felt lost and disempowered.

They had knowledge of the effects of stress and burnout but had not up until then realized that it should be a priority and monitored on a regular basis. These two days gave them the opportunity to do introspection and voice their own concerns and needs. By drawing up care plans and action plans together with fun and creativity, they were placed back into control of their professional life again and this allowed for feelings of empowerment, engagement, and job satisfaction to grow.

10. DISCUSSION

An empowerment programme was developed after a needs assessment and literature study in the previous articles. After evaluation of the newly developed programme it appears that, the needs identified correlated with the content of the empowerment programme and that by addressing the identified issues a successful intervention programme could be developed.

10.1. Interpretation of the UWES questionnaire

The quantitative measurements proved the value of this programme for regaining positive work engagement among social workers. After the pre-test, post-test, and postponed post-test it was evident that an increase in the participants' Dedication scales and Vigor scales contributed to an overall increase of feelings of engagement. This improvement was more prominent after a time lapse of four weeks, which emphasized the long-term influence of the empowerment programme.

10.2. Interpretation of the self-developed evaluation questionnaire

The self-developed questionnaire consisted of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

10.2.1. Interpretation of the quantitative measures (open-ended questions)

The participants indicated that the overall quality of the programme was excellent and that the balance between presentations and hands-on activities was in good ratio. They found the personal impact on feelings of engagement very useful and valued the printed manual. The programme contributed to the development of new viewpoints and insights. According to the participants, the programme did indeed make an impact on and improved the group members' engagement, attitude and knowledge regarding the included aspects.

10.2.2. Interpretation of the qualitative measures

The participants indicated that the content and presentation of the programme as well as the nature of the support group used, contributed mostly to the success of the programme. The

support group assisted in making the participants feel less isolated and lonely and thereby gaining a sense of empowering and control. The group offered understanding and support, which fostered the participants' willingness to explore problems they had brought with them to the group (Corey, 2008:6). It is the researcher's opinion that the layout of the workshop in relation to the nature and activities chosen contributed to the aims of the programme being met.

10.3. Interpretation of the presenter's feedback

The presenter's observations and verbal comments of the participants during the programme presentation indicated the strong need for this programme. It also further highlighted the positive impact and empowerment experienced by the social workers attending the programme. The growth, resilience, and increased positivity of the group members reflected their newly found self-care responsibility. Due to the participants taking self-control of their happiness at work, the feeling of "not being in control" vanished and was replaced by engagement, dedication, and vigor.

11. FUTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The intervention research model was utilised during the empirical investigation of this study. One of the steps of this six-phase model is to disseminate the programme to possible users. This research report is being prepared into various articles to be sent to different professional journals for publication for a wider audience of readers. National journals include the *Social Work* as well as *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher*. The international journals may include *International Social Work* and *Practice Social Work in Action*. This programme can have an impact on preventing turnover in social workers by increasing their engagement, building their vigor and dedication to the profession. For this reason, organisations and departments can present this programme to retain the social workers in their organisations and to increase their professional life expectancy. This programme can have implications for future coursework and educational preparation for students to work effectively in their roles as social workers.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

The social work profession is at a crisis point. With our community needs rapidly rising and the decrease in the profession, it is clear that significant efforts must be made to ensure an adequate social work workforce for the future. This empowerment programme was

developed with the aim of doing just that. Having tested this programme, the following recommendations can be made:

- This empowerment programme increased the engagement social workers experienced in their current professions. The recommendation was made by the participants that the programme be kept “as is”, with only minor changes to be made.
- The information provided within this programme assisted social workers to regain control and take responsibility for their own well-being. It was recommended that the layout of the programme remains the same apart from one or two suggestions.
- The nature of the session should be kept informal and relaxed, as this was one of the positive points stressed by attendees.
- The researcher also experienced that instead of requesting members to go through the tips at the end of each session by themselves- it would have been more empowering to go through it as a group.
- More attention could have been given to discussing the different themes of the resource CD.
- Encouraging members to move around during mind mapping activities encouraged group discussions.
- Presenting the programme over a period of several weeks instead of a once off activity would allow more social workers to attend as two days in a row is difficult to “take off” from their busy schedule and it would also allow for continuous follow-up sessions whereby motivation to implement the Care Plan and usage of the toolkit could be monitored.
- This programme should be presented to fourth year students in Social work before they enter into practice in order to empower them and prevent them from burning out in their first three years.
- This programme should be presented to social workers on a regular basis to empower them continuously and to retain them from leaving the profession.
- This programme can be modified in order to provide supervisors with the necessary empowerment and skills to monitor and prevent disengagement and burnout in their social workers.
- It is further recommend keeping the number of attendees 10 to 12 to ensure the facilitator can provide more individual attention to members especially during their mind mapping exercises.

13. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article was to evaluate and determine the effectiveness of the newly developed empowerment programme. This empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement improved the engagement social workers experienced by means of group work as method and was thus successful. It increased their feelings of dedication as well as vigor and empowered them to take care of their own well-being in order to prevent turnover and burnout.

It provided them with tools, knowledge, skills and motivation to monitor their own well-being and to take responsibility for their own self-care. It further provided them with the necessary feelings of control in order to lessen the negativity they experienced within their current social work positions.

The following article consists of a summary of the research report with conclusions and recommendations.

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SECTION C

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

1. INTRODUCTION

This research was conducted to identify the current factors influencing the job satisfaction and work engagement of social workers, and comparing this with the skills required to prevent stress, burn out and job turnover. This information retrieved from a need assessment was used to develop, implement and evaluate an empowerment programme that can be utilized by social workers and supervisors to enhance and develop the necessary skills social workers might need to prevent turnover.

This research project was executed in two phases. The first phase focused on the needs assessment as discussed in articles 1 and 2. The second phase centred on the development, implementation and evaluation of the empowerment programme as discussed in articles 3 and 4. The research report includes the following:

SECTION A: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

SECTION B: ARTICLES

- ARTICLE 1 -** The dynamics of social work retention
- ARTICLE 2 -** Needs identified by social workers that affect their job satisfaction, stress, and burnout levels
- ARTICLE 3 -** An empowerment programme to rekindle the joy of social work
- ARTICLE 4 -** Evaluation of the empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement

SECTION C: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, the researcher will give a summary, conclusion and recommendations for this study. The aim, objectives, and the central theoretical assumption will also be tested by means of the findings and conclusions.

2. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The most imperative findings and conclusions of this research are summarized in this concluding article and each article will be discussed separately.

2.1. Section A: General introduction

The recruitment and retention crisis in social work is acute and is having a destabilising effect on our local communities, negatively affecting this primary mission (Anon., 2005:12). Addressing delegates, Social Development Deputy Minister Jean Benjamin said, “Social workers are a key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society” (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1). During this speech, measures were proposed to rectify the shortage of social workers in this country. According to statistics the country needs 16 000 social workers to provide over the next three years the services that children are entitled to in terms of the Children's Bill. However, universities only produce about 300 social workers a year (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1; Ngomane, 2010:1). A draft Recruitment and Retention Strategy for Social Work was presented to retain and reclaim social workers for the profession. This included the improvement of the remuneration package for social workers in government, new generic job descriptions, which provide opportunities for career paths for social workers and scholarships for social workers to the tune of R2.8 million. The main problem with recruiting and retaining social workers is further attributed to the availability of more lucrative offers in other sectors within the country as well as abroad. It is also indicated that the inability to retain social workers was further exacerbated by poor working conditions and the fact that social workers are multi-skilled and therefore are easily absorbed into other fields (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1; Department of Social Development, 2009:9).

Gaining a better understanding of the key factors influencing the recruitment and retention of social workers will promote the essential worth of social work, and with that, greater recognition will follow for the challenging nature of the job and the serious responsibilities allied with it. One approach to this problem is to focus on recruitment, and to develop educational initiatives that will bring more people into the Social work profession. Another approach, and the aim of this study, is to focus on retention, and to ensure that social workers experience positive fulfilling and sustainable careers. Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2002:74). In essence, work engagement captures how workers experience their work: as stimulating and energetic and something to which they

really want to devote time and effort to; as a significant and meaningful pursuit; and as engrossing and something on which they are fully concentrated (Bakker & Leiter, 2010:230). For this reason, a group work empowerment programme focusing on reclaiming positive work engagement for social workers was developed and evaluated.

Reflecting on the above mentioned, the following questions arose:

- What affects job satisfaction, positive work engagement and lead to burn out?
- What degree of work engagement and job satisfaction do South African social workers experience in their current positions and how does this influence job turnover, level of burnout and the intend to leave the profession?
- Which activities must be included in an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement?
- Can the presentation of an empowerment programme be effective in enhancing the work engagement social workers experience in their profession?

Taking into account the last-mentioned questions, **the aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout and job turnover of social workers.**

The objectives were

- To determine by means of a literature study what affects the retention of social workers with specific focus on stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover.
- To determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers and social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intend to leave the profession.
- To develop and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing positive work engagement social workers experience in their profession

2.2. Central theoretical statement

An empowerment programme for social workers can reclaim positive work engagement and decrease the high job turnover rate and burnout in social workers.

2.3. Method of investigation

This research attempted to clarify whether an empowerment programme could assist social workers to reclaim positive work engagement through a literature and empirical study.

2.3.1. Literature review

A literature study equips the investigator with a complete and thorough justification for the subsequent steps, as well as with a sense of the importance of the research (Fouché & Delport, 2011:133-135). An investigation was carried out into the existing literature on factors influencing work engagement, job satisfaction and job turnover. Attention was further given to aspects contributing to stress and burnout as well as preventative measures to address last-mentioned. The central focus of this study was to develop an intervention programme that could empower the social worker and could contribute to positive work engagement, job satisfaction and the prevention of burnout.

Evaluation of the existing literature revealed that there appeared to be very limited research available on **how** to improve positive engagement and prevent burnout in social workers. Most of the interventions reported in the literature are individual-orientated and provide treatment, not prevention. No specific programmes, workshops or direct intervention methods were found focussing specifically on social workers and especially South African social workers.

2.3.2. Empirical Research

In this intervention, research the Design and Development model (D&D) was used. De Vos and Strydom (2011:475) define the intervention research model as research, which is targeted to address the practice application of research. The D&D model according to Rothman and Thomas (1994:12) may be conceptualized as a problem-solving process for seeking effective intervention and helping tools to deal with given human and social difficulties. Rothman and Thomas (1994:9) stipulated the following six phases of the D&D model and furthermore called intervention research: Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning, Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis, Phase 3: Design, Phase 4: Early development and testing, Phase 5: Evaluation and advanced development and Phase 6: Dissemination. Each phase contains a series of steps. The intervention research is a

practical and useful model for social work research, supplying new and innovative programmes.

- **Research design**

Mouton (2001:55) and Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:89) state that a research design refers to a plan or blueprint of the way a researcher intends to conduct the research. According to Delport and Roestenburg (2011:171), a research design is a guideline according to which we determine the data collection methods. In this research, the experimental design was applied using quantitative data and qualitative collection methods.

Quantitative research focuses on the use of surveys and measuring instruments. The interpretation of collected data forms part of qualitative research. According to Fouché and Schurink, (2011:308) qualitative data analysis is the search for generalizations and relationships, the building of structure and the making sense of accumulated data. This method often employs measuring instruments. Measurement instruments refer according to Delport and Roestenburg (2011:171) also to questionnaires and scales. During the needs assessment in phase two (Information gathering and synthesis) a self-developed questionnaire was used containing open as well as closed-ended questions. During phase five (Evaluation and advanced development) the standardized version of the Utrecht Work Engagement scale was used.

Neuman (2000:23) states that the basic research provides a foundation for knowledge and understanding. Applied research, however, is aimed at solving specific policy problems of helping practitioners accomplish tasks. It is focused on solving problems in practice. In this study, applied research is used, as the planned intervention programme with social workers and supervisors will teach them to deal with problems in their natural work environment. This study takes a combined approach between the exploratory as well as the descriptive and experimental research design.

The Quasi-experimental design with the comparison pre-test-post-test and a postponed post-test was used and purposive sampling was applied (Fouché *et al.*, 2011:149).

- **Respondents**

In the first part of this study, a snowball sampling was used to distribute ninety (90) questionnaires to social workers from the North-West province that are practicing social work. Social workers from the following institutions in North-West were approached: NG Welsyn, Child Welfare, South African Women's Federation (SAVF), Correctional Services, South African Police Service, Department of Social Development, Department of Health, Ondersteuningsraad, Department of Defence, Department of Education, Child Line, North-

West University and SANPARK. The focus of the questionnaires a need assessment addressing job satisfaction of the social workers in practice, as well as their stress and burnout levels.

In the second part of this research, a purposive sampling method was used to evaluate the newly developed (Strydom, 2011a:232). Twenty-five participants were selected to form part of the experimental and comparison groups. The participants were requested to indicate one of two dates for the workshop if they were interested. The first date was the 29th and 30th of September 2012 and the second date was 1st and 2nd of November 2012. The first date was the experimental group and the second date was the comparison group. 11 Social workers took part in the experimental group while 14 were part of the comparison group.

- **Measuring instruments**

For purposes of this study in phase two (Information gathering and synthesis) of the research a survey was conducted, often called needs assessment (Royse, 2004:177). Data was collected by means of a personal completed self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first part A was based on biographical information. The second part B contained closed questions. A Likert rating scale was used for these closed-ended questions. Section C consisted of open as well as closed-ended questions focusing on what affects work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout of social workers (Rossouw, 2003:186; Strydom, 2003:116). Areas were identified by the respondents, which needed development in order to enable them to regain positive work engagement.

The questionnaire was pre- tested and revisited with four social workers before final use. According to Schurink *et al.* (2011:397), data gathering is the process of structuring and assigning meaning to a mass of collected data. The Statistical Consultation Services of the North-West University Potchefstroom Campus documented data collected from the closed-ended questions. The researcher analysed data collected by the open-ended questions by hand. This means that the responses of the respondents were documented word for word in the report.

During phase four (Early Development and Pilot Testing) of the research the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was used to measure the positive work engagement of the members by means of the empowerment programme. This measuring scale was used on three different occasions, namely before the programme started, after the programme ended (thus 32 hours apart), with both the experimental and comparison group. A self-developed

questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was also designed to evaluate the Empowerment programme at the end of the last session with the experimental group (Toseland & Rivas, 2012:406-421). In this research, evaluation was used to monitor the group members, as this would give a picture of the effects of the group, and the value of the intervention.

2.4. Section B: Articles

2.4.1. Article 1: The dynamics of social work retention

The objective of this part of the study was to determine by means of a literature study what affects retention of social workers with specific focus on: Stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement and turn over.

The research has clearly documented there are many recruitment and retention issues of health professionals, including social workers. It appears to be one of the main problems in the South African Welfare system. This is not surprising when looking at the existent literature and studies examining the reasons behind these recruitment and retention issues. However, while the empirical evidence is scant, there are current discussions for workable and possible effective strategies to alleviate these retention and recruitment issues of social workers. Through a literature study, the researcher aimed to answer what affects retention of social workers.

Before conclusions could be made it was necessary to look at the question of “why the retaining of social workers is important? From the extensive literature study, it became clear that a nationwide shortage of social workers is experienced and is expected to get worse (Department of Social Development, 2009:7). Social workers are viewed as the key strategic resource in addressing the needs and challenges of society and high turnover rates in child welfare agencies are a major obstacle to timely investigations, compromising the ability of agencies to protect children. The country needs 16 000 social workers to provide over the next three years the services that children are entitled to in terms of the Children's Bill (South African Migration Project (SAMP), 2006:1). The retention of social workers will increase the number of qualified social workers, and help reduce the shortage of social workers. It will further better meet the more complex client needs of today. Lastly, it will reduce training and recruitment costs for organisations.

It could therefore be concluded that, social workers are important and they are leaving the profession. This can be prevented by assessing factors related to retention including stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover of social workers. It became clear from the literature study that general job satisfaction; self-efficacy and

personal motivation was strongly related to remaining on the job. The presence of stressful job conditions, the high degree of role conflict and caseload size were all related to job turnover. Components of “human caring” are importantly predictive and also related to retention of child social workers. The lack of organizational support was strongly associated with higher job stress, burnout, and engagement. Further linked to burnout, stress and lack of job satisfaction and engagement was the lack of sufficient resources. Burnout is strongly linked to social work turnover and supervisor support and caseworker training have been cited as causes of retention.

In sum, burnout via stress, job engagement and job satisfaction seem to consistently predict intention to leave and thus turnover of social workers.

2.4.2. Article 2: Needs identified by social workers that affect their job satisfaction, stress and burnout levels

The objective of the study was to determine (through a self-constructed questionnaire) what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influenced job turnover, burnout and the intend to leave the profession. The recruitment and retention crisis in social work is acute and is having a destabilising effect on our local communities, negatively affecting its primary function (Anon., 2005:12). The primary mission of the social work profession is the delivery and commissioning of responses to the needs of society’s most vulnerable people, to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (National Association of Social workers, 2009:6). Gaining a better understanding of the key factors influencing the recruitment and retention of social workers will promote the essential worth of social work, and with that, greater recognition will follow for the challenging nature of the job and the serious responsibilities allied with it.

Considering their experiences of insufficient time to complete day-to-day work tasks, heavy workloads, poor compensation, challenging and/or difficult clients, and few resources, long work hours, and unclear job expectations, it is not surprising that social workers experience work-related stress. Under these less-than-optimal work conditions, social workers are often “pushed to the limit” when trying to complete their job requirements.

Over time, this can result in burnout, increased risk for work place injury, impaired performance, poor mental health, impaired cognitive functioning, decreased concentration, and health-related problems for social workers. Additionally, these issues may cause social

workers to consider a career change. In conclusion from the data gained from these questionnaires there are certain conclusions and needs identified:

In summary then, 71% of the respondents in this research were mostly engaged with their job and experienced job satisfaction, but nearly half contemplated leaving the profession. 41% experienced a reduced work performance in the last six months. This could indicate high stress levels with possible burnout unless circumstances are addressed. Nearly 30% of respondents appeared already disengaged and experienced less job satisfaction.

These findings confirm the research outcomes in this area. Social workers do experience stress and burnout due to their workload and time management; they tend to feel emotionally drained and unproductive as a result. This could lead to feeling unsatisfied and contemplation of turnover intend. The organizational climate and reward an organization provides can affect this process. In order to address these issues themselves, an increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills improvements is necessary , in order to assist dealing with the stressors and keeping the social workers excited and interested in the profession.

The researcher concluded from the results of this research, that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the job engagement social workers experience. Focus should be placed specifically on issues affecting job satisfaction, stress, and prevention of burnout, including aspects such as assertiveness skills, motivation and effective time management skills. A resource CD containing resources needed which could further support the worker when supervision is not available or not appropriate, could contribute to enhancing positive work engagement for the social workers in the North-West province. An empowerment programme needed to be developed based on the need for a support group whilst at the same time teaching new skills and addressing continuous professional development. The toolkit provided in the form of the CD could further enhance the development of new skills and the provision of new knowledge.

Re-establishing a sense of control, mastery, and competence in one's work situation may seem, at first glance, a daunting task. However, it was the researchers opinion, based on the research defining the underlying relationships between job satisfaction, burnout, stress, job turnover and positive work engagement (Dollard *et al.*, 2003:5; Halbesleben, 2010:102; Leiter & Maslach, 2009:331; Prins *et al.*, 2010:237; Richer *et al*, 2002:2104), that with strategies like stress management, burnout prevention, and increasing job satisfaction,

increased positive work engagement, was an attainable goal. These entire elements combined together can enhance support opportunities and better coping strategies for social workers. It is in such circumstances, along with the prerequisite provision of essential resources and manageable workloads, social workers can thrive and develop positively. It was impossible though to give assistance in this regard to social workers without doing the thorough study of the needs of these workers.

2.4.3. Article 3: An empowerment programme to rekindle the joy of social work

The aim of this study and article was to develop, and implement an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers. Different activities were included in this programme after the needs assessment done in article two. The researcher concluded from this needs assessment, that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and the learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the job engagement social workers experienced. In order to address these issues a programme was developed that focussed on the increased need for support, support groups, supervision, knowledge and skills, in order to assist social workers to deal with the stressors, keeping them excited, and interested in the profession. Designing a social programme is a creative problem-solving process to complex social issues. A good programme design should incorporate sound research knowledge and best practices to determine the best fit of elements required for a programme to be effective. Programme design involves translating the programme objectives, with a thorough understanding of the social issue and needs of the target population, into new or improved services. The goal of programme design was to establish those services, which would have the best possible chance of achieving the program's objectives and create measurable positive change for participants (Maine, 2011:11). According to Geyer (2006:15) a social group work empowerment programme, suggested a series of group meetings where the collective needs and challenges of the group members were being met in a group context. This occurs through the application of an empowerment process in the social group work from a strengths perspective. This was the aim and purpose of this research programme as well where the needs of social workers were addressed through the empowerment process in a group context.

2.4.4. Article 4: Evaluation of the empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement

The specific objective for this article is to evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme on enhancing the work engagement social workers experience in their profession. This empowerment programme was developed after a needs assessment and literature study in the previous articles.

During this part of the research the quasi-experimental, **pre-test, post-test** and **retention tests** comparison group design was used. The participants were purposefully selected according to their proximity to Potchefstroom and then the participant selected a date for the workshop. Those who selected the first date were the experimental group while those who selected the second date were the comparison group. A pre-test was done before the workshop and 32 hours later, a post-test was taken followed by the postponed post-test four weeks later. Twenty-five participants who were currently employed as social workers in the North-West province, who could attend the scheduled sessions, and who participated in the needs assessment were selected to form part of the experimental and comparison groups. The experimental group consisted of 11 social workers and comparison group consisted of 14 social workers. The programme was presented as a two-day group session. The first day the introduction, engagement and job satisfaction themes were covered while burnout, stress, the toolkit, and the conclusion themes formed part of the day two programme.

With evaluation in mind, the two groups were quantitatively evaluated by means of the Work & Well-being Survey (UWES). This survey was used to measure the positive work engagement of the members. This measuring scale was used on three different occasions, namely before the first session started, after the last session ended (thus 32 hours apart) and a month after the last session, with both the experimental and comparison group. A questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions was also designed to evaluate the Empowerment programme at the end of the last session with the experimental group.

The quantitative measurements proved the value of this programme for regaining positive work engagement in social workers. After the pre-test, post-test, and postponed post-test it was evident that an increase in the participant's Dedication scales and Vigor scales contributed to an overall increase of feelings of engagement. This improvement was more prominent after a time lapse of four weeks, which emphasized the long-term influence of the empowerment programme.

The presenter's observations and verbal comments of the participants during the programme presentation indicated the strong need for this programme. It also further highlighted the positive impact and empowerment experienced by the social workers attending the programme. The growth, resilience and increased positivity of the group members reflected their newly found self-care responsibility. Due to the participants taking self-control for their happiness at work, the feeling of "not being in control" vanished and was replaced by engagement, dedication and vigor.

The participants indicated that the content and presentation of the programme as well as the nature of the support group used, contributed mostly to the success of the programme. This group work empowerment programme for social workers to regain positive work engagement improved the engagement social workers experienced and was thus successful. It increased their feelings of dedication as well as vigor and empowered them to take care of their own well-being in order to prevent turnover and burnout.

This programme provided social workers with tools, knowledge, skills and motivation to monitor their own well-being and to take responsibility for their own self-care. It further provided them with the necessary feelings of control in order to lessen the negativity they experienced within their current social work positions.

After evaluation of the newly developed programme it appears that, the needs identified correlated with the content of the empowerment programme and that by addressing the identified issues a successful intervention programme could be developed. This programme can have an impact on preventing turnover in social workers by increasing their engagement, building their vigor and dedication to the profession.

3. TESTING THE CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

This research was based on the following theoretical argument:

An empowerment programme for social workers can reclaim positive work engagement and decrease the high job turnover rate and burnout in social workers.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this research, as discussed previously, the central theoretical argument was proven based on this quantitative and qualitative research studies.

3.1. Aim and objectives of the study

3.1.1. General aim

The general aim of this study was to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North-West province through an empowerment programme addressing the issues contributing to low job satisfaction, burnout, and job turnover of social workers. The aim of this research was reached by achieving the following objectives:

3.1.2. Objectives

The objective, to determine by means of a literature study what affects the retention of social workers with specific focus on stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement and turnover, **was reached in Article 1 by doing a thorough literature study.**

The objective, to determine what degree of work engagement and job satisfaction South African social workers and social workers in the North-West province experience in their current positions and how this influences job turnover, burnout and the intend to leave the profession, **was reached in Article1 as well as Article 2 through a needs assessment and a literature study.**

The objective, to develop an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement, **was reached in Article 3 through the development and compilation of an empowering group work programme.**

The objective, to evaluate the effectiveness of an empowerment programme for enhancing work engagement social workers experience in their profession, **was reached in Article 4 by implementing and evaluating the designed group work empowerment programme.**

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions/ the following recommendations are made:

- More research is needed in other parts of South Africa to determine if similar findings will be experienced.
- This empowerment programme increased the engagement social workers experienced in their current professions. The recommendation was made by the participants that the programme should be kept “as is”, with only minor changes to be made.

- The information provided within this programme assisted social workers to regain control and take responsibility for their own well-being. It was recommended that the layout of the programme remain the same apart from one or two suggestions.
- Presenting the programme over a period of several weeks instead of a once-off activity would allow more social workers to attend as two days in a row is difficult to “take off” from their busy schedule and it would also allow for continuous follow-up sessions whereby motivation to implement the Care Plan and usage of the toolkit could be monitored.
- This programme consisted of seven sessions of which four were the same in nature. The researcher recommends changing the experiential learning in one of the sessions in order to provide more stimulation and creativity. Preferably, the “stress session”, since social workers already have a huge amount of information on stress, and using a different approach might teach them more skills. Making use of video clips and other media was suggested in the evaluation forms.
- The nature of the session should be kept informal and relaxed, as this was one of the positive points stressed by attendees.
- Giving more attention to background music during mind-mapping activities can relax the atmosphere more.
- The researcher also experienced that instead of requesting members to go through the tips at the end of each session by themselves, it would have been more empowering to work through it as a group.
- More attention could have been given to discussing the different themes of the resource CD.
- The mind-mapping exercises worked very well and attendees enjoyed the creativity of the sessions. In the evaluation sheets, one suggestion was to possibly use Magazines for more “boundary-free” mind-mapping.
- Encouraging members to move around during mind-mapping activities encouraged group discussions.
- The researcher further recommends that follow-up sessions after the workshop to motivate members to implement the Care plans might decrease the relapsing of members into their old routines. Follow-up sessions might secure continuous sustainment of positive work engagement.
- This programme should be presented to fourth-year students in Social work in order to empower them and prevent them from burning out in their first three years.
- This programme should be presented to social workers on a regular basis to empower them continuously and to retain them from leaving the profession.

- This programme can be modified in order to provide supervisors with the necessary empowerment and skills to monitor and prevent disengagement and burnout in their social workers.
- It is further recommended keeping the number of attendees 10 to 12 to ensure the facilitator can provide more individual attention to members, especially during their mind-mapping exercises.

5. CONCLUSION

Through exploring existing literature, it became obvious that there are many recruitment and retention issues of health professionals, including social workers. It appears to be one of the main problems in the South African Welfare system. The literature study focussed on what affects the retention of social workers with specific focus on stress, burnout, job satisfaction, positive work engagement, and turnover. By identifying and exploring the needs of social workers in the North-West province it became evident that a support group, which also focuses on continuous development and learning of new skills for the social work profession (thus empowerment), could enhance the job engagement social workers experience.

After compiling a profile of the retention issues social workers experience as well as defining the needs of social workers, new technology was developed, implemented, and quantitatively evaluated as successful in empowering social workers to reclaim positive work engagement.

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SECTION D

ADDENDUMS

Addendum: 1

Respondent No:		←	For official use only
SELF DEVELOPED JOB ENGAGEMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE			
Please indicate with an X the most appropriate choice			
A	Biographical details		
1	Age	Years	
2	Gender	Male	Female
3	Home language		
	Afrikaans		
	English		
	Tswana		
	Xhosa		
	Other - please specify		
4	Highest qualification		
	Dipl (SW)		
	BA(SW)		
	MA(SW)		
	PHD (SW)		
	Other- Please specify		
5	Family set-up		
	Married with children		
	Married without children		
	Divorced with children		
	Divorced without children		
	Unmarried with children		
	Unmarried without children		
6	Main support network		
	Relationship (Partner, Husband, wife)		
	Family (Parents, siblings...)		
	Friends		
	Colleague		
	None		
	Other - Please specify		
7	Social work experience	Years	
8	RACE	Black	White
		Coloured	Indian
9	Current organization employed at		
	SAVF		
	Child Welfare		
	NG Welsyn		
	SAPS		
	Correctional Service		
	Department of Social Development		
	Other- Please specify		
10	Most time spend at work with (mark only one)		
	Case work (Family, children, adults)		
	Group work (Therapeutic, Informational, Support etc.)		
	Community work (Programmes, Workshops, Projects etc.)		
	Research		
	Administration		
	Managerial (Management, Supervision)		
	Other- Please specify		
11	Work set-up you would prefer (mark only one)		
	Occupational		
	Educational		
	Forensic		
	Residential		
	Child and Family		
	Private Practice		
	Industrial		
	Justice		
	Other - Please specify		
12	Are you, or have you (within the last 6 months) used any medication for stress, anxiety or depression related illnesses?	Yes	No

SELF DEVELOPED JOB ENGAGEMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE						
B	Evaluation of job satisfaction					
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE						
Indicate how often you have any of the following experiences by using the scale given below. 1 20% of the time Never 2 40% of the time 3 60% of the time 4 80% of the time 5 100% of the time Always						
		Never 20%	40%	60%	80%	Always 100%
1	Social work is a real plus in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	As a social worker I am doing what I always dreamed of doing.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I love my work as a social worker.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I feel valued at work.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I feel appreciated at work.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I feel involved in decisions that affect our organizational community.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Creativity/Innovation is supported in our organization.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I have the resources I need in order to do my work.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I have the opportunity to do what I do best at work.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am satisfied with my salary.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I am satisfied with my benefits.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am satisfied with the connection between pay and performance.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Have you experienced recently (within the last six months) an increase in the use of addictive substances (Alcohol, Cigarettes, Drugs, Medicine)?	1	2	3	4	5
14	Have you recently (within the last six months) experienced reduced work performance?	1	2	3	4	5
15	Have you recently (within the last six months) experienced higher levels of absenteeism/sick leave?	1	2	3	4	5
16	I get the opportunity to attend job related seminars or continued education on practice issues.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I experience job-related support from co-workers/peers.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I want to leave my current job as social worker.	1	2	3	4	5
19	New skills or knowledge can change my attitude towards social work positively.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I am satisfied with my work load in general.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I am satisfied with the flexibility of my working hours in general.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I am satisfied with my physical working environment in general.	1	2	3	4	5
23	I am satisfied with my opportunities for promotion in general.	1	2	3	4	5
24	I am satisfied with the communication with my supervisor in general.	1	2	3	4	5
25	I am satisfied with my supervisor's management capabilities in general.	1	2	3	4	5
26	I am satisfied with my supervisor's active involvement in my career development in general.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I am satisfied with my overall relationship with my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
28	I am satisfied with my relationship with my peers in general.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I am satisfied with my relationship with my clients in general.	1	2	3	4	5
30	I am overall satisfied with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
31	I feel engaged with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
32	I experience my work as challenging.	1	2	3	4	5
33	I experience my work as stimulating.	1	2	3	4	5
34	I have the opportunity to share best practices with other social workers/professionals.	1	2	3	4	5
35	I can measure success in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
36	I believe I am a competent social worker.	1	2	3	4	5
37	I have enough energy for activities besides work.	1	2	3	4	5
38	I have other stimulating activities beside work.	1	2	3	4	5
39	I believe I can make a difference in my clients life.	1	2	3	4	5

C SELF DEVELOPED JOB ENGAGEMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions as completely as possible by using the explanations for terms as guidelines.

Explanation of terms:

Describe:	Describe if you have the ability or not...
Evaluate:	Judge critically
Define:	Give more information and detail
Explain:	Because....
Motivate:	Give reasons and where possible examples

Job engagement:	Job satisfaction:	Burn-out:
"...a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli <i>et al.</i> , 2002).	"...the degree of positive affect toward the overall job or its components" (Weisman <i>et al.</i> , 1980).	"A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment..." (Maslach, 1982)

1 What do you love about your current position as social worker? Motivate your answer.

2 What do you hate about your current position as social worker? Motivate your answer.

3 Have your views and expectations of social work changed since you were a student? Evaluate your answer.

4 Do you intend on remaining in the occupation of social work until you reach retirement age? Motivate your answer.

5 Are you currently more or less passionate about social work than compared to your first year in the occupation? Motivate your answer.

11	According to you what needs to change in your current job circumstances for you to engage more positively with your work (e.g. enjoy your work more)? Motivate your answer.
12	Have you ever contemplated to leave your current job or occupation? If yes, define your reasons.
13	If you have answered yes to the previous question, but have not left your job/occupation, explain what prevented you from doing so.
14	Would you be interested in an Empowerment Programme that could increase your job satisfaction and work engagement? Motivate your answer.
15	What programme activities do you think must be included in such a programme?

Thank you for your participation!!

Ms Taetske Calitz

PhD- Student

North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus

Student number: 10651535

Addendum: 2

UWES Manual; page 48 English version

Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 17 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the '0' (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

	Almost never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy* (VI1)
2. _____ I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose (DE1)
3. _____ Time flies when I'm working (AB1)
4. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous (VI2)*
5. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job (DE2)*
6. _____ When I am working, I forget everything else around me (AB2)
7. _____ My job inspires me (DE3)*
8. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work (VI3)*
9. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely (AB3)*
10. _____ I am proud on the work that I do (DE4)*
11. _____ I am immersed in my work (AB4)*
12. _____ I can continue working for very long periods at a time (VI4)
13. _____ To me, my job is challenging (DE5)
14. _____ I get carried away when I'm working (AB5)*
15. _____ At my job, I am very resilient, mentally (VI5)
16. _____ It is difficult to detach myself from my job (AB6)
17. _____ At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well (VI6)

*Shortened version (UWES-9); VI= vigor; DE = dedication; AB = absorption© Schaufeli & Bakker (2003). The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale is free for use for non-commercial scientific research. Commercial and/or non-scientific use is prohibited, unless the authors grant previous written permission.

Addendum: 3
Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire
26/27 September 2012

Top of Form

1. Please rate the overall quality of the workshop.
☐ Excellent ☐ Very good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

2. Please rate the balance between presentations and hands-on activities.
☐ Not enough presentations ☐ Good ratio ☐ Not enough hands-on instruction
☐ Too many presentations ☐ Too many hands-on activities

3. How useful was this workshop in relation to your feelings of engagement?
☐ Very useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Uncertain ☐ Minimally useful
☐ Not very useful

4. How useful was the printed manual?
☐ Very useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Uncertain ☐ Minimally useful
☐ Not useful

5. How useful were the activities in relation to the presentation?
☐ Very useful ☐ Somewhat useful ☐ Uncertain ☐ Minimally useful
☐ Not useful

6. Has this workshop given you new viewpoints and insights?
☐ To a great degree ☐ To a moderate degree ☐ Somewhat ☐ Minimal
☐ Hardly at all

7. What did you like most about the workshop?

8. What was least useful about the workshop?

9. What would you suggest to improve the workshop?

Addendum: 4

ETHICAL AUTHORIZATION



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

Dr. AA Roux

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

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

Ethics Committee

Tel +27 18 299 4850
Fax +27 18 293 5329
Email Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL OF PROJECT

The North-West University Ethics Committee (NWU-EC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-EC 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 : An empowerment programme to regain positive work engagement for social workers in the North West Province

Ethics number:

N	W	U	-	0	0	0	9	1	-	1	0	-	A	1

Approval date: 2010-11-24

Expiry date: 2015-11-23

Special conditions of the approval (if any): None

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principle investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-EC:
 - 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-EC. 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-EC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-EC retains the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected,
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the NWU-EC 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

Prof MMJ Lowes
(chair NWU Ethics Committee)

Addendum: 7
INFORMED CONSENT

I, _____, hereby accept the terms and conditions regarding the research about social work engagement being done by Taetske Calitz (hereafter called the researcher). I have been informed about the nature of the research as well as what is being researched and I approve and give my contribution voluntary and without pressure put upon me.

I give permission for the researchers to use whatever data they have received from me in her study, which includes, but is not limited to;

- a. voice recordings,
- b. written statements,
- c. questionnaires and
- d. socio-metric tests

I however retain the right to remove my personal details if I find it:

- a. demeaning to me,
- b. discriminatory of nature and
- c. not portraying me in a positive manner.

I thus give the researchers full permission to publish the information I gave as well as the results obtained from it for their study.

This consent letter is in compliance with the universities research & ethical requirements, and it is in accordance with the values and beliefs grounded in Social Work.

Name: _____

Signature:

Date:

Addendum 8: CONTRACT

EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO REGAIN POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT

CONTRACT FORM

As a group member, I agree to:

- Attend all the group sessions, from the beginning until termination.
- Arrive on time for each group session.
- Maintaining the issue of confidentiality that is, refraining from repeating anything that is said during group sessions to anyone outside of the group meeting.
- Complete any readings, exercises, and any other work that I agree to in the group.
- Participate in exercises, role-plays, demonstrations, and other simulations conducted during group meetings.

As a group leader, I agree to:

- Be prepared for all the session.
- Begin and end all group sessions on time.
- Provide refreshments and program material needed for each session
- Discuss the group only with my colleagues at work and not outside of the work context.
- Evaluate each group session to ensure that the group is helping all members to resolve their problems and is personally satisfying to all group members.
- Provide members with appropriate agency and community resources to help them resolve their problems.

Group member

26/09/12

Date

Facilitator: Group Leader T Calitz

Date

Addendum: 9
INVITATION LETTERS

INVITE LETTER 1:

T Calitz
9 Koedoe Street
POTCHEFSTROOM
2531
30 August 2012

To Social Workers of the North-West province

CPD WORKSHOP: REKINDLE YOUR JOY FOR SOCIAL WORK: AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO RECLAIM POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

A workshop to empower social workers of the North-West province to reclaim positive work engagement is planned. The aim is to empower social workers by teaching them about burnout, stress, engagement and providing them with necessary skills and tools to prevent and address the negative factors influencing their engagement and possible turnover intentions.

Empowerment, motivation, group discussions and small-group discussions together with the practical tool of Mind mapping will be used, to increase knowledge, awareness, skills, reflective practice, increase productivity and quality service delivery. It forms part of the empirical research (PHD) of the presenter and therefore this programme will be presented free to the social workers. Only two workshops are planned: 26/27 September 2012 and 1 /2 November 2012.

Only 3 places still available!

The workshop is accredited for 6 CPD points and a certificate will be provided.

Name of workshop: Rekindle your joy for Social Work: An Empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers

Date of workshop: 26/27 September 2012 and 1/2 November 2012

Time of workshop: 8:00-16:30 on both days

Venue of workshop: Potchefstroom: To be communicated

CPD: 6 Points awarded

Costs: None (Members are responsible for their own accommodation if sleep over is planned)

Refreshments: Coffee/Tea and lunch will be provided

Please indicate if you would be interested in this workshop. Only 10 attendants per workshop can be accommodated. Indicate your interest by e-mailing to CalitzT@saps.gov.za or contact Taetske Calitz at 018 299 7447/082 449 8877 on or **before 15th of September 2012.**

Preference will be given to respondents who completed the research questionnaire at the end of 2011 /beginning of 2012 (Job satisfaction/Engagement).

If any information is needed please feel free to contact me.

Friendly greetings

Taetske Calitz

INVITE LETTER 2:

T Calitz
9 Koedoe Street
POTCHEFSTROOM
2531
30 August 2012

Dear

CPD WORKSHOP: REKINDLE YOUR JOY FOR SOCIAL WORK: AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO RECLAIM POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

You have booked a place for the abovementioned workshop. Here are the details as promised:

Name of workshop: Rekindle your joy for Social Work: An Empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers

Date of workshop: 26/27 September 2012

Time of workshop: 8:00-16:30 on both days

Venue of workshop: NG Kerksaal, Miederpark Potchefstroom: Aarbei Avenue

CPD: 6 Points awarded

Costs: None (Members are responsible for their own accommodation if sleep over is planned)

Refreshments: Coffee/Tea and lunch will be provided

Please confirm urgently your attendance by e-mailing to CalitzT@saps.gov.za or contact Taetske Calitz at 018 299 7447/082 449 8877 on or **before 20th of September 2012.**

If any information is needed please feel free to contact me.

Friendly greetings

Taetske Calitz

INVITE LETTER 3:

T Calitz
Koedoe Street
POTCHEFSTROOM
2531
11 October 2012

Dear Social worker

CPD WORKSHOP: REKINDLE YOUR JOY FOR SOCIAL WORK: AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME TO RECLAIM POSITIVE WORK ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

You have booked a place for the abovementioned workshop. Here are the details as promised:

Name of workshop: Rekindle your joy for Social Work: An Empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers

Date of workshop: 1 AND 2 NOVEMBER 2012

Time of workshop: 8:00-16:00 on both days

Venue of workshop: NG Kerksaal, Miederpark Potchefstroom: Aarbei Avenue

CPD: 6 Points awarded

Costs: None (Members are responsible for their own accommodation if sleep over is planned)

Refreshments: Coffee/Tea and lunch will be provided

Attached please find a compulsory pre-programme test. It must be completed today preferably, and tomorrow again (same questionnaire 24 hours apart) as it forms part of the comparison group for the research. It is only 17 quick questions. The questionnaire can be e-mailed or faxed back to me (or arrange to be picked up).

Please confirm urgently your attendance by e-mailing to CalitzT@saps.gov.za or contact Taetske Calitz at 018 299 7447/082 449 8877 on or **before 20th of November 2012.**

If any information is needed please feel free to contact me.

Friendly greetings

Taetske Calitz

Addendum: 10

ATTENDANCE LIST:

ATTENDANCE LIST: RIKINDLE YOUR JOY FOR SOCIAL WORK

NAME	SPELLING FOR CERTIFICATE	REGISTRATION NUMBER	TELEPHONE CELL	TELEPHONE OFFICE	FAX	ORGANIZATION	SIGNATURE DAY 1	SIGNATURE AY 2
Cindy Rademan	CINDY RADEMAN	10-24271	0820400066	(018) 2910833	(018) 291 4528	DEPARTMENT		
Arlene Green	Arlene Green	10-20825	0846612653	(018) 4628415	(018) 462 8587	SAPS		
Petro Boshoff	Petro Boshoff	1012851	084-5712413	018- 299-7313	018- 299 7324	SAPS		
Pumelo Leeuw	PHEMELO LEEUW	10-20002	0837313600	018 299 7314		SAPS		
Karin Van den Berg						CORRECTIONAL		
Bonita Pieters	Bonita Maboeta	10-20844	082304487	018- 299 4679317	018- 086623 9406	EDUCATION		
Yolanda Lohn						OR		
Capt Koeshed Koeshe	Valentia Puleng Koeshe	10-23025	0835808326	(018) 218 1312	(018) 218 1312	SADF		
Capt Moabi	MPHO CALVIN MOABI	10-20692	0163710670	(018) 239 1312	018-239 1312	SADF		
Deon Kondos	Deon Kondos	10-27150	0721726742	018 297 5240	018 297 5244	SAVF		
Mesack Moholeng	Mesack Moholeng	10-31356	082 511 6722	(018) 297 5240	018 297 5244	SAVE		
Luce' Kleyghans	LUCE' KLEYNHANS	402 7153	082 856 7678	018 299 7350	018- 299 7324	SAPS (intern)		
OUTWILE NTSIE	OUTWILE CLEOPATRA NTSIE	10-21871	0761415748	018 293 4400	018- 299 7324	HEALTH		

Addendum: 11
VENUE APPLICATION LETTER

T Calitz
9 Koedoe Street
POTCHEFSTROOM
2531
21 September 2012

To NG Church Miederpark: Ds Willem Louw

Requesting the Miederpark church hall as venue for community project

Social workers form part of the backbone in our society and are desperately needed. Losing them to other professions makes a huge impact on supporting the families in need. In order to prevent and support them two workshops are planned: 26/27 September 2012 and 1 /2 November 2012.

The workshop “**rekindle your joy for social work: an empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers**” is aims to empower social workers of the North-West province (mainly Potchefstroom) to reclaim positive work engagement. This will be done by empowering social workers through teaching them about burnout, stress, engagement and providing them with necessary skills and tools to prevent and address the negative factors influencing their engagement and possible turnover intentions.

This workshop is presented free of cost and it would be an honour to link it one of your community projects.

Name of workshop: Rekindle your joy for Social Work: An Empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers

Date of workshop: 26/27 September 2012 and 1/2 November 2012

Time of workshop: 8:00-16:30 on both days

Venue of workshop: Potchefstroom: To be communicated

Costs: None

Refreshments: Coffee/Tea and lunch will be provided at no cost to the church

Number of attendees: 15 per workshop

If any information is needed please feel free to contact me at e-mail to CalitzT@saps.gov.za
or contact Taetske Calitz at 018 299 7447/082 449 8877

Friendly greetings

Taetske Calitz

Rekindle the joy of social work!

This certificate is awarded to:

.....

Registration number:

For attending

**AN EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME FOR SOCIAL
WORKERS TO REGAIN POSITIVE WORK**

On

26th and 27th September 2012

(A total of 6 CPD points awarded)

Ref: 312/12

Addendum: 13 CPD APPLICATION



S A Council for Social Service Professions

Dear T. Calitz

The Registrar wish to inform you that your CPD application was approved by the CPD panel

3 CPD points per day was awarded to your **Workshop on: 27- 28 September and 25- 26 October 2012**. Your CPD approval number is: **312/ 12**. This number is valid from the **15th August 2012** until the **15th August 2013** and should appear on your attendance certificates.

Please inform all delegates to keep their certificates in their Portfolio of Evidence

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this e- mail

Addendum: 14

LETTERS OF PERMISSION (UWES)

Van: <calitz.taetske@gmail.com [mailto:calitz.taetske@gmail.com]

Verzonden: maandag 23 april 2012 19:47

Aan: Schaufeli, W.B.

Onderwerp: Contact Form Submission from Taetske Calitz

Name: Taetske Calitz

Email: calitz.taetske@gmail.com

Comments: Dr Schaufeli

I am currently a PHD student in social work South Africa. Part of my PHD is work engagement social workers experience. My aim is to develop a programme, which would address disengagement in social workers to prevent them from leaving the profession. I am interested in utilizing your UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT SCALE. Am I allowed? Should it be a psychologist or can a social worker also facilitate the questionnaire?

Thank You

Taetske

Geen virus gevonden in dit bericht.

Gecontroleerd door AVG - www.avg.com

Versie: 2012.0.1913 / Virusdatabase: 2411/4954 - datum van uitgifte: 04/23/12

Forwarded message -----

From: Schaufeli, W.B. <w.schaufeli@uu.nl>

Date: Mon, Apr 23, 2012 at 8:35 PM

Subject: RE: Contact Form Submission from Taetske Calitz

To: "calitz.taetske@gmail.com" <calitz.taetske@gmail.com>

Dear Taetske,

As long as you use the UWES for non-commercial purposes, you are free to do so. For more information, see my website (address below).

With kind regards,

Wilmar Schaufeli

Wilmar B. Schaufeli, PhD | Social and Organizational Psychology | P.O.

Box 80.140 | 3508 TC Utrecht, The Netherlands |

Tel: (31) 30-253 9093 | Mobile: (31) 6514 75784 | Fax: (31) 30-253 7842

| Site: www.schaufeli.com | |

-----Oorspronkelijk bericht-----

From: Taetske Calitz [calitz.taetske@gmail.com]

Sent: 23 April 2012 19:34

To: Bakker, A.B.

Subject: Contactform for Arnold Bakker

Contactform

Name: Taetske Calitz

Email: calitz.taetske@gmail.com

Message:

Dr Bakker I am currently a PHD student in social work South Africa. Part of my PHD is work engagement social workers experience. My aim is to develop a programme, which would address disengagement in social workers to prevent them from leaving the profession. I am interested in utilizing your UTRECHT WORK ENGAGEMENT SCALE. Am I allowed? Should it be a psychologist or can a social worker also facilitate the questionnaire?

Thank You

Taetske Calitz

From: "Bakker, A.B." <bakker@fsw.eur.nl>

Date: Mon, 23 Apr 2012 17:46:35 +0000

To: Taetske Calitz<calitz.taetske@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: Contactform for Arnold Bakker

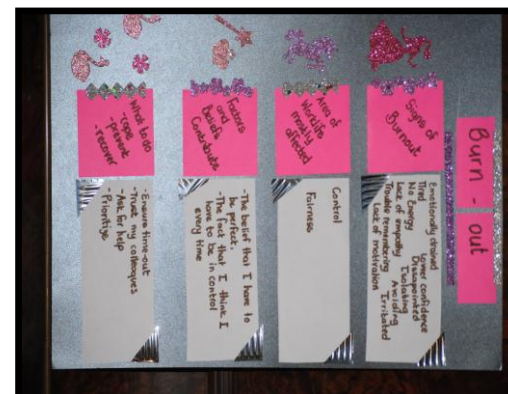
you are allowed, and a social worker can do this, good luck!

Arnold

Addendum: 15
PHOTOS OF GROUP WORK PROGRAMME



PHOTOS OF GROUP WORK PROGRAMME



Addendum: 16

FEEDBACK FROM RESPONDENTS AFTER GROUP WORK PROGRAMME

From: Deidre Badenhorst [mailto:deidre1983@webmail.co.za]

Sent: 12 November 2012 09:39 AM

To: Potchefstroom Social Work Service Admin

Subject: Re:

More Teenske.

Baie dankie ek is op kantoor die week behalwe Vrydag maar ons kan 'n reeling tref. Ek vind die CD baie waardevol!

Baie dankie.

Deidre Badenhorst

Office Manager (Social Worker)

Child Welfare SA Rustenburg

Tel: 014 597 0913

Fax: 014 597 0932

From: Potchefstroom Social Work Service Admin

Sent: Monday, November 12, 2012 9:08 AM

To: Deidre Badenhorst

From: Mahikeng EHW Molosiwa
Sent: 09 November 2012 12:30 PM
To: Potchefstroom Social Work Service Admin
Subject: DANKIE TOG!

Haai Taetske, kan jy glo mens kan so besig raak dat jy vergeet om te doen wat jy gese het jy gaan doen! Ek wou al lankal jou bedank het...Ek wil tog se baie dankie vir die werkswinkel van laas week. Daar is beslis 'n verandering in my, ek is nou besig om my stress vlak te beheer en aan my grootste issue te werk which is die feit dat ek so hard op myself is oor dinge wat ek geen beheer oor het nie. I now take it one day at a time, I also started with making my office look much more attractive (jy weet mos hoe lyk die kantore hier by ons), ek doen my bes. Het geskuif na die groter kantoor langsaan so ek het nou baie spasie☐

BAIE BAIE BAIE DANKIE VROU, JY HET MY LEWE GERED!!!!

MWAH MWAH MWAH

Ons gesels weer wanneer ek eendag bietjie airtime het lol.

Tata

Blanche

From: Hannie Reyneke [mailto:reynekeh@lantic.net]

Sent: 06 November 2012 12:09 PM

To: 'CalitzT@saps.gov.za'

Subject: Rekindle the joy

Taedske, wil net weereens dankie se vir die oulike kursus en bederf, met jou tyd, heerlike kos en CD. Dit het goeie vrugte afgewerp in ons kantoor. Los maar die artikels wat ek wou he. Sal jou kontak as dit nodig is. Seeeeeeeeen op jou werk. Jy kan nog baie bekend raak en suksesvol in n privaat besigheid eendag. Hannie

From: Rustenburg Social Services
Sent: 06 November 2012 03:23 PM
To: Potchefstroom Social Work Service Admin
Subject:

Middag Daar

Dis vreeslik besig hier, kry nie eintlik kans om te bel nie, kan gelukkig tik terwyl ek op d foon praat. Ek het vandag 'n pienk pen wat ek nie voorheen gehad het nie. Ek dink jy het vandag 'n pienk pen minder wat jy wel voorheen gehad het. Jammer, onthou my asb om vir jou 1 terug te gee.

Thanks vir verlede week. Eks vandag somer weer lus vir werk. Kan weer multi-multi-multi task. Dit is ongelooflik hoe alles altyd soos 'n puzzle inmekaar val, want die vorige datums moes verander word sodat ek die training kon bywoon op 'n tyd wat ek dit werklik nodig gehad het. Het nie regtig besef hoe nodig dit was nie, totdat ek daar was.

Thanx

Addendum: 17

SOCIAL WORK. A PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE SOCIAL WORKER! MAA TSKAPLIKE WERK. 'n V AKTYDSKRIF VIR DIE MAATSKAPLIKE WERKER

EDITORIAL POLICY/REDAKSIONELE BELEID

The Journal publishes articles, book reviews and commentary on articles already published from any field of social work. Contributions may be written in English or Afrikaans. All articles should include an abstract in English of not more than 100 words. All contributions will

- be critically reviewed by at least two referees on whose advice contributions will be accepted or rejected by the editorial committee. All refereeing is strictly confidential. Manuscripts may be returned to the authors if extensive revision is required or if the style or presentation does not conform to the Journal practice. Articles of fewer than 2,000 words or more than 10,000 words are normally not considered for publication. Two copies of the manuscript as well as a diskette with the text, preferably in MS Windows should be submitted. Manuscripts should be typed in 12 point Times Roman double-spaced on one side of A4 paper only. If possible the manuscript should be sent electronically to hsu@sun.ac.za. Use the Harvard system for references. Short references in the text: When word-for-word quotations, facts or arguments from other sources are cited, the surname(s) of the author(s), year of publication and page

number(s) must appear in parenthesis in the text, e.g. "... (Berger, 1967: 12). More details about sources referred to in the text should appear the end of the manuscript under the caption "References". The sources must be arranged alphabetically according to the surnames of the authors. Note the use of capitals and punctuation marks in the following examples.

Die Tydskrif publiseer artikels, boekbesprekings en kommentaar op reeds gepubliseerde artikels uit enige gebied van die maatskaplike werk. Bydraes mag in Afrikaans of Engels geskryf word. Alle artikels moet vergesel wees van 'n Engelse opsomming van nie meer as 100 woorde nie. Alle bydraes moet krities deur ten minste twee keurders beoordeel word. Beoordeling is streng vertroulik. Manuskripte sal na outeurs teruggestuur word indien ingrypende hersiening vereis word, of indien die styl nie ooreenstem met die tydskrif se standaard nie. Artikels van minder as 2,000 woorde of meer as 10,000 woorde sal normaalweg nie oorweeg word vir publikasie. 'n Disket met die teks, verkieslik in MS Windows, moet twee kopieë van die manuskrip vergesel. Manuskripte moet in 12 pt "Times Roman" dubbelspasiering slegs op een kant van 'n A4 bladsy getik word. Indien enigsins moontlik moet die manuskrip ook per e-pos versend word aan [hsu\(5\)sun.ac.za](mailto:hsu(5)sun.ac.za). Verwysings moet volgens die Harvard-stelsel geskied. Verwysings in die teks: Wanneer woordelike sitate, feite of argumente uit ander bronne gesitatie word, moet die van(ne) van die outeur(s), jaar van publikasie, en bladsynommers tussen hakies in die teks verskyn, bv. "... (Berger, 1967:12). Meer besonderhede omtrent bronne moet alfabeties volgens die vanne van die outeurs aan die einde van die manuskrip onder die opskrif "Bibliografie" verskyn. Let op die gebruik van hoofletters en leestekens by die volgende voorbeelde

TWO AUTHORS/TWEE OUTEURS: SHEAFOR, B.W. & JENKINS, L.E. 1982. **Quality field instruction in social work**. Program development and Maintenance. New York: Longman.

COLLECTION/BUNDEL ARTIKELS: MIDDLEMAN, R.R. & RHODES, G.B. (eds) 1985. **Competent supervision, making imaginative judgements**. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

ARTICLE IN COLLECTION/ARTIKEL IN BUNDEL: DURKHEIM, E. 1977. On education and society. In: KARARABEL, J. & KALSEY, A.H. (eds) **Power and ideology in education**. New York: Oxford University Press.

JOURNAL ARTICLE/ARTIKEL IN TYDSKRIF: BERN STEIN, A. 1991. Social work in addition, a new South Africa: Can social workers meet the challenge? **Social Work/Maatskaplike werk**, 27 (3/4):222-231.

THESIS/TESIS: EHLERS, D.M.M. 1987. **Die gebruik van statistiese tegnieke vir die ontleding van gegewens in maatskaplikewerk-navorsing**. Pretoria: Universiteit van Pretoria. (M tesis).

MINISTRY FOR WELFARE AND POPULATION DEVELOPMENT 1995. Draft White Paper for Social Welfare. **Government Gazette**, Vol. 368. No. 16943 (2 February). Pretoria: Government Printer.

NEWSPAPER REPORT/KOERANTBERIG: MBEKI, T. 1998. Fiddling while the AIDS Crisis gets out of control. **Sunday Times**, 8 March, 18.

INTERNET REFERENCES/ONLÏN WYSINGS: MCKIERNAN, G. 1998. **Beyond Bookmarks: schemes for organizing the Web**. Available. <http://public.iastate.edu/CYBER-STACKS/CTW.htm>. [Accessed: 18/06/1998].

Addendum: 18

International Social Work

An official journal of the International Association of Schools of Social Work, International Council on Social Welfare, International Federation of Social Workers

Information for Contributors

International Social Work is a scholarly journal for the extension of knowledge and the promotion of communication in social work, social welfare, social development, and human services, through its focus on international themes in service delivery, and the education and functions of social workers, in the context of social policy and social service provision. Emphasis is on cross-national research and comparative analysis, as well as trends and issues in social welfare policy and practice beyond single nations. New developments in the roles and training of social service personnel are reported and the notion of 'international social work'¹ is explored. Occasional thematic issues focus on specific international developments.

Manuscript preparation

Submissions must be in English and about 4000 words, typewritten and double-spaced throughout including notes and references. An abstract of no more than 50 words describing the article's main findings and conclusions and 5 or 6 key words must be included on a separate page; this will be translated into French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Russian if the article is published. Please send your submission as an electronic file, preferably in Word.

In addition to full articles the journal is interested in brief notes of up to 2000 words on topics such as reports of research in progress, examples of unresolved problems, descriptions of policy, and current programmes that would be of interest to the international community.

Titles and subtitles should be clear and brief. Quotations over 40 words should be displayed. Notes are indicated by numbers in the text and printed at the end of the article. Tables and figures should have short titles; please give sources and indicate their placement in the text. Please supply figures as camera-ready artwork.

Omit points in abbreviations such as USA; use the fewest numerals possible in dates and page numbers (e.g. 42-5, 1991-2). Write dates as 22 November 1998; spell out numbers from one to nine, but use numerals for 10 and over, for percentages and for all tables.

Give citations in the text as Schmidt (2004: 33-4), LeBlanc and Virdee (1999, 2005). Use 'et al.' for works with more than two authors, but give all surnames in the references list. Use 'a', 'b', 'c', etc. for different works by the same author in a single year: Dominelli (2002a). All the cited references should appear in full at the end of the article, using this style:

Articles in journals: Chan, K.L., and CL. Chan (2005) 'Chinese Culture, Social Work Education and Research', *International Social Work* 48 (4): 381-9.

Books: Ife, J. (2002) *Human Rights and Social Work: Towards Rights-based Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Contributions to books: Sewpaul, V. (2004) 'Globalization, African Governance and New Partnerships for Africa's Development', in N-T. Tan and A. Rowlands (eds) *Social Work around the World*, pp. 62-89. Bern: IFSW Press.

Unpublished works: Comely, S. (1998) 'En la busqueda de caminos para el mafiana', Younghusband Lecture, 36th IASSW Congress, Washington, DC, 20 July.

Author affiliation and address should be submitted with the article, but on a separate page for blind refereeing. Articles will be considered on the understanding that they are not simultaneously submitted for publication elsewhere. Manuscripts and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Editor: Karen Lyons, Honorary Professor of International Social Work, London Metropolitan University, Department- of Applied Social Sciences, Ladbroke House, 62-66 Highbury Grove, and London N5 2AD, UK. Email: isw@londonmet.ac.uk

Book reviews should be sent to Annie Huntington, Book Review Editor, *International Social Work*, University of Central Lancashire, Preston PR 1 2H E. Email: AEHuntington@uclan.ac.uk

Addendum: 19

PRACTICE SOCIAL WORK IN ACTION

Instructions to authors

All submissions should be made online at *Practice's* Manuscript Central site at [http; //mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cpra](http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/cpra). New users should first create an account. Once a user is logged onto the site submissions should be made via the Author Centre.

Authors should prepare and upload two versions of their manuscript. One should be a complete text, while in the second all document information identifying the author should be removed from files to allow them to be sent anonymously to referees. When uploading files authors will then be able to define the non-anonymous version as "File not for review".

Practice is intended, as the name suggests, as a forum for research and ideas related to the practice of social work. We particularly welcome contributions from practitioners. If we feel an article can be improved, most of our assessors will provide detailed suggestions as to how this might be done.

Material submitted to *Practice* should not knowingly give offence and should demonstrate sensitivity to anti-discriminatory practice. The confidentiality of identifiable individuals should be maintained unless informed consent has been obtained, and a statement confirming this must be included. We encourage the model of emancipatory research, which respects the rights, and dignity of those participating in it.

Major articles should be 3000-5000 words in length but shorter notes on research in progress, innovations in practice, or comments on papers previously published in the journal are also welcomed. Although the bulk of the journal's readership is within the UK it also has a substantial international readership and papers from overseas are welcomed. In considering, papers for publication the journal's assessors take into account not only the intrinsic merit, but also readability and interest to the range of journal readers. Assessors are asked to look for relevance to practice, wider applicability of the material, the appropriateness of language and the ability of the writer to keep the reader's attention. The paper must include a section, which explicitly draws out the messages for practitioners and for social work/social care practice.

All submissions will be sent to two assessors for their comments. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, with ample margins of at least one inch and the approximate number of words should be stated. The first page should include the title of the paper, name(s) of author(s) and the academic and/or professional qualifications as commonly used by the author, main

appointment, and address. Please state whether you are a previously published author as the journal seeks to encourage and supports new writers. The second page should repeat the title, and contain an abstract of not more than 200 words and 3 key words. Where English is not the language in which the article is first written, a further summary should be provided in the author's first language. The third page should repeat the title as the heading to the start of the main text of the paper. All pages should be numbered. Proofs for checking will normally be sent to the first author named, to whom any correspondence and reprints will also be addressed. Footnotes to the text should be avoided wherever this is reasonably possible.

Authors should also provide a brief biographical note (not more than 50 words) together with an email address.

Papers will be considered providing that they be not submitted simultaneously elsewhere for publication.

References should follow the Chicago author-date system, i.e. they should be indicated in the typescript by giving the author's name, with the year of publication in parentheses, e.g. Smith (1997), Smith and Jones (1998), Smith, Jones, and Baker (1999); if there are more than three authors, Smith *ET al.* (2000). A page number must be given where a direct quotation is made, e.g. (Smith 2001, 277). References to more than one publication from the same year by the same author should be distinguished by a, b, c, etc. All references cited in the text should be listed in full at the end of the paper in the following form:

Carnaby, S. 1997. What do you think? A qualitative approach to evaluating individual planning services. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research* 41 (3): 225-31.

Community Care Archive. 2001. Carers act must be funded to succeed [accessed 15 February 2001]. Available [atwww.community-care.co.uk](http://www.community-care.co.uk).

Department of Health. 2002. *Planning with people: Towards person centred approaches*. London: The Stationery Office.

Milner, J., and P. O'Byrne. 1998. *Assessment in social work*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Reed, J., and D. Stanley. 2001. Discharge from hospital to care home. In *Care services for later life*, edited by A. M. Warnes, L. Warren, and M. Nolan. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Titles of journals should, not be abbreviated.

Illustrations should not be inserted in the text but each provided separately and numbered on the back with Figure numbers, title of paper and name. Three copies of all figures must be submitted. All photographs, graphs, and diagrams should be referred to as Figures and should be numbered consecutively in the text in Arabic numerals (e.g. Figure 1). A list of captions for the figures should be submitted on a separate sheet and should make

interpretation possible without reference to the text... Captions should include keys to symbols.

Tables should be typed on separate sheets and should be given Arabic numbers (e.g. Table 1). Their approximate position in the text should be indicated. Units should appear in parentheses in the column heading but not in the body of the table. Words or numerals should be repeated on successive lines; 'ditto' or 'do' should not be used.

Proofs will be sent to the author by email if there is sufficient time to do so. Proofs including proofs of illustrations are supplied for checking and making essential corrections, not for general revision or alteration. Proofs should be corrected and returned within 3 working days of receipt.

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Addendum: 20



18 March 2013

I, Ms Cecilia van der Walt, hereby confirm that I took care of the editing of the thesis of Ms TM Calitz titled *An empowerment programme to reclaim positive work engagement for social workers in the North West Province.*

MS CECILIA VAN DER WALT

BA (*Cum Laude*)
HOD (*Cum Laude*),
Plus Language editing and translation at Honours level (*Cum Laude*),
Plus Accreditation with SATI for Afrikaans and translation
Registration number with SATI: 1000228

Email address: ceciliavdw@lantic.net

Cell phone number: 072 616 4943

Fax number: 086 578 1425

SECTION E

CONSOLIDATED LIST OF REFERENCES

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