

https://dspace.org/

Social work management and leadership in a democratic South Africa : perceptions of social workers in senior positions employed in non governmental organizations.

Maleka, Eileen

2010-11-10
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/8862

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

Management and leadership has, over the years, become the critical ingredient in organisational theory and practice. From its earliest conception and as studies of these practices developed, professionals occupying these positions experienced change. The profession of social work was no stranger to organisational instability; though ambivalent about the practice of management and leadership. This study therefore argues that an understanding of management and leadership will equip social work managers and leaders to attain organisational goals. The study thus aimed to explore the nature of social work management and leadership in non governmental organisations in Johannesburg, a city located in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. More specifically, the myriad roles and functions of social work managers and leaders were explored and an understanding of the differences between management and leadership in social work was attained. Further more, the study investigated the needs of managers and leaders in social work inclusive of the coping strategies, resilience and strengths employed by managers and leaders in social work settings. The study had an exploratory descriptive design which incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods. Semi structured interviews were conducted with key informants namely: social work managers and social work leaders. Qualitative thematic content analysis was used to analyse the transcribed responses of seven leaders and twenty managers to open-ended questions relating to the study's research questions. Three thematic categories emerged namely: Conceptualization of Leadership and Management; Needs of Managers and Leaders and Resilience and Coping. Analysis suggested that while participants' do have a rudimentary awareness of management and leadership, it is inadequate. The study concluded that formalized training for social work managers and leaders would benefit organisations, personnel employed in them, persons served and ultimately the cause of social work. Finally, this study provides some important suggestions for the management and leadership of social work; apt for non governmental organisations. It also highlights interesting variables and potential hypotheses for future research.