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Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng Provincial Government

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Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng Provincial Government

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Supervisor: Ayanda Magida

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Business and Executive Coaching.

Wits Business School

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Abstract

This research explored how Social Service Professionals (SSPs) in the Gauteng Department of Social Development (GDSD) perceive the role of coaching as a practice to develop and support the professionalisation of SSPs in the said department.

For this basic qualitative study, semi-structured interviews assisted with data collection from fifteen (15) participants employed as SSPs in GDSD.

Key findings are that coaching as a practice is non-existent for SSPs in GDSD and that the critical success factors for coaching in GDSD are no different from that in any other organisation. Most participants supported the contribution that coaching could be a practice to develop and support service professionals. Participants further indicated they would prefer a layered approach to introducing coaching to specific levels of staff in the SSP category. Participants favoured a systematic introduction of coaching to ensure its long-term sustainability and highlighted the organisational and personal hindrances that could impact its adoption and effectiveness as a practice.

The study contributes to a body of knowledge on the relevance of coaching for SSPs.

Key Words

Coaching, critical success factors; the practice of support and development, Social Work Service Professionals, Gauteng Government, Social Development.

Declaration

I, Amanda Marié Hartmann, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Business and Executive Coaching at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Signature: 

Amanda Marié Hartmann

Signed at Roodepoort

On the 28th day of February 2023

Dedication

I dedicate this research to the memories of my husband, André Hartmann, and my father, Hendrik Putter, and to the continued support and love of my mother, Sarie Putter, and my friend, Yolanda Kona. They encouraged and taught me the value of discipline and perseverance.

All the honour to God for carrying me through this and many other journeys since 2014.

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List of Acronyms

APP	Annual Performance Plan
COMENSA	Coaches and Mentors of South Africa
CSSP	Council for Social Service Professionals
GGT2030	Growing Gauteng Together 2030 Plan
GPG	Gauteng provincial government
GSD	Gauteng Social Development
HR	Human Resource
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MMBEC	Master of Management in Business and Executive Coaching
NDP	National Development Plan
NDSD	National Department of Social Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPC	National Planning Commission
NSG	National School of Government
POPI	Protection of Personal Information Act
SACSSP	South African Council for Social Service Professionals
SSP	Social Service Professionals
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
SWM	Social Work Manager
SWS	Social Work Supervisors
SWSF	Social Work Supervision Framework

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study

This qualitative study explores the perceived role of coaching in developing and supporting social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government.

1.2 Context of the study

Coaching in the Public Service (national and provincial government) has been explored and is gaining traction Nengwekhulu (2009). In the public service context, the public sector still experiences challenges in combatting poverty, providing good quality health and education services, addressing housing needs, and many other challenges. The slow pace of change and service delivery and the poor quality of services are often linked to a shortage of skills, corruption, nepotism, and political interference (Nengwekhulu, 2009).

The government developed numerous plans to improve its track record with a multidimensional focus. These plans focus on increased professionalism, linked to the improvement of skills. Mokoele, Masenya, and Makalela (2018) link the aims of good public administration to the principles and values of professional ethics, using resources (human and economic) effectively, and maximising human potential to inculcate high standards (human resource management; career development practices). Despite these aspirational aims as embedded in the Constitution, the South African Public Service faces various challenges pertaining to human resource management (Nengwekhulu (2009). Sound legislative and regulatory frameworks are in place, but what continues to be a top priority is the contribution of public servants themselves to building a capable and developmental state, one that is recognised for good governance and performance.

The National Development Plan (NDP) is a 30-year plan developed by the government. It strongly focuses on creating a skilled and capable public service

workforce that is innovative and, at its core, employs highly skilled staff, such as Social Work Professionals (NationalPlanningCommission, 2011). The NDP aims to build an inclusive South Africa with equal opportunities for all and a country free of the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment (NationalPlanningCommission, 2011; StatsSA, 2020).

Munzhedzi (2017) lists various ways the public service tries to impart knowledge and skills, namely induction programs, e-learning, job rotation, and coaching. In response to the NDP, the National School of Government (NSG) published a draft paper in December 2020 called *A National Implementation Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service* (NSG, 24 December 2020). This framework touches on what professional public servants should embody from the perspective of their skills, qualifications, experience, and desired attitudes. The Public Service requires managers who can lead themselves and their teams and make a difference in the lives of the citizens they serve. Exercising and displaying leadership (organisational, public, and personal) are required to make a difference (Ruiters, 2015). Each of these levels of leadership requires emotional intelligence. The latter includes an understanding and awareness of the self; self-management; societal and personal skills that comprise motivation and empathy (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). In line with this evolution, future public servants must aim to achieve and deliver significant results aligned with the government's agenda, priorities, and targets. Leadership must deliver on the government's plans and respond to change.

Pandemics like COVID-19, and the pace of change in the 21st century, affect the world due to their disruptiveness (Davies, 2020). The implications of change in the 21st century can be viewed from various perspectives (By, 2005). These perspectives include global competition and its impact, the information age (where knowledge is regarded as the future's "new gold"), and its disruptiveness. The context requires a perpetual need for organisations to re-invent themselves using foresight to capitalise on employees' energy and creativity. No process, skill, or system is not affected by change. Leadership, managerial and supervisory capacity, knowledge, and experience cannot stagnate; otherwise, it would not meet the demands of a new world

of work and existence (By, 2005). Therefore enhancing how officials behave and gear themselves to contribute to realising an agenda of a capable and developmental state could assist the government in achieving its aims. The question would then be how employees could perform better.

The Public Service employs Social Service Professionals (SSPs) across various levels of government (national, provincial, and municipal) and in various departments. SSPs have a specific mandate to effect social change, solve relationship problems, and empower the individuals and families they serve to grow, be mentally healthy, navigate their personal and environmental circumstances, and increase their ability to be self-sufficient (Martin, Harris, & White, 2014). Generally, the SSPs environment, particularly in the South African and public service contexts, requires leadership that can navigate change and support the development of a cadre of officials geared towards performance (Ndalamba, 2019).

The NSG Framework aims to effect what is encapsulated in the Public Service Code of Conduct and the Batho Pele principles in the drive to establish a professional cadre of public servants (NSG, 24 December 2020). Public Servants are at the forefront of guarding citizens' rights and showcasing the Constitution's values. This means being good at administration and demonstrating the managerial and leadership practices that help transform the aims of the Constitution into decision-making and service delivery. This can only be achieved if the South African Public Service actively seeks to employ, develop and support leaders and employees focused on transformation (NSG, 24 December 2020). This study focuses on SSPs employed by the public service, bound by the plans to professionalise public servants. They subscribe to both the Code of Conduct for Public Servants and the Code of Conduct prescribed by the South African Council for Social Service Professionals (SACSSP, 2012).

The Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) responded to the NDP with *The Growing Gauteng Together 2030* (GGT2030) plan (GPG., 2019). This action plan aims to deliver Gauteng to its desired state by 2030. The plan consists of seven priorities and 28 strategies to improve the lives of Gauteng residents. Essential to the GGT 2030 and the NDP Vision 2030's, success is a skilled, capable, ethical workforce supporting

initiatives to build a developmental state (NationalPlanningCommission, 2011). Therefore, significant change is required to ensure the necessary skills, experience, and capabilities are in place to improve performance and service delivery.

As part of its mandate, the GPG delivers social services by employing SSPs in the Departments of Social Development, Education, and Health (Gauteng Social Development, 2020). SSPs in each of these departments play different roles in fulfilling the needs of Gauteng's citizens. The Gauteng Department of Social Development (GDSD) employs 2131 SSPs (Gauteng Social Development, 2020) who deliver services to the 15,5 million residents of Gauteng (StatsSA, 2020). As mentioned above, these professionals are guided by two Codes of Conduct, and SSPs cannot practice if they are not registered members of a professional body such as the SACSSP (Mazibuko & Gray, 2004).

In turn, the SACSSP and the National Department of Social Development (NDSD) have a Supervision Framework for SSPs employed in government to ensure the professional delivery of social work towards quality social welfare services. This framework encompasses all professionals from "social workers, auxiliary social workers, student social workers, and learner social auxiliary workers in the social welfare sector and private practice" (SACSSP, 2012, p. 14). This framework is not a complete handbook but offers a means to enhance professional growth and development in the field. The Social Work Supervision Framework (SWSF) suggests supervision and mentoring as methods to support and develop SSPs working in government and outlines the roles and responsibilities assigned to various levels of work (SACSSP, 2012). Support in the field entails administrative, educational, and supportive aspects; it supports SSPs on an individual, group, or peer level (SACSSP, 2012).

In adhering to the call for increased professionalism and performance to ensure service delivery, the focus is always on what can be done to assist such a process. One way could be to develop supervisors and managers in the social service professional environment within the context and practice of business-related coaching (Trevillion, 2018). Reid (2012) argues that coaching can make a difference in the

delivery of services through increased performance. Akesson and Canavera (2018) studied how the global social service profession can be strengthened. Various themes from their study underscored themes relevant to this study, for example, applied learning, personal qualifications and characteristics, supervision, mentoring and coaching. It is acknowledged that applied learning takes various forms during and after entering the workspace, and if it is effectively applied, the quality of supervision strengthens learning (Akesson & Canavera, 2018). As part of the theme emerging from personal characteristics and qualifications, capacity was broadened to include motivation, performance management, and strong organisational support. Lastly, Akesson and Canavera (2018) highlight that supervision, mentoring, and coaching embody supervisory relationships that create flexibility for learners to grow by using coaching in conjunction with other formal and informal ways of learning. Therefore, this study focuses on the presence and nature of coaching and its potential value in the Social Work sector. Research and data can guide whether coaching could be a form of intervention to develop a skilled and capable social service workforce in the Department of Social Development (DSD).

One of the benefits of coaching is that it assists those coached to reach greater insight and change behaviour. In this case, it can assist teams of Social Work professionals in the said Department to better drive change as self-awareness and insight increase (Guthrie & Alexander, 2006; Munzhedzi, 2017).

The COVID-19 pandemic posed unique challenges to public sector managers, particularly SSPs, who was one of the groups at the forefront of fighting the pandemic in communities. The COVID-pandemic heightened the need for increased access to government services, including social work services (Rauhaus, Sibila, & Johnson, 2020). The resource base shrunk in the context of resources directed toward fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, and there was an increased demand to tap into a pool of skilled, capable workers.

Coaching creates awareness among people (employees and leaders) of how they impact the workspace. Coaching unlocks the ability to drive change and improves the potential of individuals to approach their work life and environment differently and more

innovatively. By embracing coaching as a capacity development tool, Gauteng may be able to deliver on its GGT2030.

Winchester, Fathauer and Egan (2013) researched how burnout affects Child and Youth Care Workers, a profession linked to the SSP category. Their study highlighted the importance of organisational climate and supportive relationships (Winchester, Fathauer, & Egan, 2013). In a field of work marked by high levels of work-related exhaustion, participants indicated that where the relationships between supervisors, employees and co-workers are good, they could handle stress better. Their levels of resilience were higher when the support from the organisation and their various relationships were strong (Winchester et al., 2013).

Mckenzie (2018) notes coaching as "a way of nurturing talent and helping individuals reach their true potential" and a "methodology to help build capacity for service delivery" (Mckenzie, 2018, p. 76). Therefore, the research aims to establish if coaching could play a role in developing and supporting SSPs active in the Gauteng Province.

1.3 Problem statement

The potential of coaching to enhance the ability of employees and managers is well documented (Allen, Hafer, & Brooks, 2020; Ganesh, Bozas, Subban, & Munapo, 2015; Mckenzie, 2018). This study envisaged that coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs to better deal with workplace challenges, such as pandemics like COVID-19 and the South African public sector triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment.

The focus of the government further supports this aim. As part of its future-orientated focus on how a public service corps should look, the South African Public Service constantly looks for ways to upskill its workforce to deliver quality services to all public stakeholders in the 21st century (Ganesh et al., 2015). The SACSSP supervision framework emphasises supervision and mentoring to ensure the profession responds to the need for upskilling. Research has shown that mentoring, for example, benefits

employees and organisations (Egan & Song, 2008). The work of Allen, Hafer, and Brook (2020) supports that the work attitudes of mentored and coached employees are typically better than those of employees who were not mentored (Allen et al., 2020). Coaching facilitates individual learning and growth (Van der Veen, Reid, & Cunningham, 2020), which could assist SSPs, especially those in managerial and supervisory positions, to provide better support and develop themselves and those they manage and supervise. The additional benefit is that it could hopefully, in the end, cultivate a culture of continuous learning flowing from self-awareness (Heller, 2013). This study aims to determine whether coaching could enable SSPs to work more innovatively to find solutions in their workspaces and improve their ability to assist their clients (communities and community members) to become self-sufficient (GDSD, Annual Performance Plan, 2021-22).

Limited research exists on how coaching can be used to develop and support SSPs in their work environment. The use of workplace coaching by managers and leaders has been depicted (e.g., Reardon (2016). Research exists regarding coaching for social work students, but this does not extend to the workplace (Botha, 2014; Van De Heyde, Stoltenkamp, & Siebrits, 2017), except as indicated in Dorkin (2009). Coaching social workers in the workplace can enhance the Supervision Framework for SSPs in government. This framework focuses on supervision and mentoring to support, develop, and enhance the profession's work. Therefore, this study explores how coaching could contribute to developing and supporting Social Service Professionals.

Three research objectives emerged from the problem statement. These will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.4 Research objectives

This study explores coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government. The objectives of this research are to*:*

- Examine the nature of coaching for Social Service Professionals in the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
- Explore the critical success factors needed for coaching to succeed in the Department of Social Development.
- Establish whether coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support Social Service Professionals in the Department of Social Development.

1.5 Research questions

Three research questions were identified to support the research aim of exploring coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs in the Gauteng provincial government.

Question 1: What is the nature of coaching in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?

Question 2: What are the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?

Question 3: What contribution could coaching make as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in Gauteng Social Development?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study contributes to a body of knowledge on how coaching can enhance the development and support of SSPs in GDSD and increase awareness of the difference SSPs can make. In addition, it could inform how learning and performance can be driven in the workplace through coaching, which may provide an opportunity for the

Department of Social Development (DSD) in the Gauteng Provincial Government to equip its SSPs better.

Coaching is accepted as a tool to support leadership development (Diseko, 2017; Reid, 2012). There is a dearth of literature on how coaching can be utilised to develop and support professionals' growth and development journeys. Therefore this study seeks to contribute to how it could be used in the SSP work environment.

In her study on transitioning engineers to managers, Wallace (2016) indicated that South African companies use coaching to nurture talent. Her research focussed on how companies, through coaching, can assist with transitioning employees to managers within the developing world. The findings might be significant for SSPs, and the DSD for enhanced professionalism under social workers. The study could assist HR practitioners in focusing on development and growth programs for social workers for improved self-awareness and growth (Diseko, 2017).

Therefore, this study aims to demonstrate how coaching as a practice can develop and support SSPs in government to develop an increased awareness of the difference they can make. In addition, it could inform how learning and performance can be driven in the workplace and may, through coaching programs, provide an opportunity for GDSD to equip its SSPs better to handle workplace challenges through their increasing self-awareness and insight. Supporting and developing SSPs could result in increased employee productivity and a difference in how services are rendered by SSPs, not to mention increased access to social work services by the 15,5 million residents in Gauteng (StatsSA, 2020). Executive and business coaching can increase personal and organisational productivity levels, impacting the return on investment (i.e., having social service professionals make a difference).

The research contributes to a body of knowledge that can inform future developments, such as a coaching framework for SSPs for which limited data and no coaching model exist within the sector. Coaching SSPs could contribute to social sector growth; the sector can manage change for impact, transform the face of service delivery, and develop employees' maturity and leadership stature.

The research report findings led to an understanding of the critical success factors for coaching SSPs, how it differs, or not, from the critical success factors for other sectors, and the key steps necessary for coaching to be a practice to develop and support SSPs. It further provides SSPs and their Employer (GDSD) insight into how coaching can enhance performance and productivity. Those responsible for governmental social work policy and programs and related Human Resource (HR) programs could benefit from a body of knowledge inclusive of guidelines for coaching as a method of support and development for SSPs.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The delimitations in this qualitative study provide focus and reflect the researcher's choices of what to include and exclude to make the study more manageable and improve its relevance (Coker, 2022). The research is situated in one provincial government department of GPG that provides social work services to communities in Gauteng. It confines itself to SSPs, especially Social Work Supervisors and Social Work Managers. It does not include the views of their managers who oversee the social work program holistically or of entry-level social workers. These managers are crucial in guiding and growing many Social Workers and Social Auxiliary Workers; they oversee, supervise, and mentor the junior staff reporting to them.

As the focus of the study is on SSPs in this department, the SSPs are a group that operates in an urban environment, localised in Gauteng, and it did not focus on SSPs employed in other sectors such as municipalities, NGOs, and other government departments/provincial governments. Where relevant, the study refers to previous research, and for this report, the current views of SSPs will form the basis of this study.

1.8 Definition of terms

The following definitions of selected terms provide context for the reader:

Leadership means focusing on yourself, others, and teams to achieve a common goal (Silva, 2016).

Wajdi (2017) defined **Management** as directing all tasks and processes to achieve goals and objectives using resources such as money and people.

Coaching differs from mentoring as coaching is about increasing insight or skills; it is self-directed, while mentoring is about a junior staff member learning from a more experienced one (Al Hilali, Al Mughairi, Kian, & Karim, 2020). Various types of coaching exist; Cronje (2015) listed business, executive, and life skills coaching as some forms.

Executive coaching blends professional and personal agendas, how to drive team objectives and deliver on business goals and objectives and is linked to the development agenda of the coachee. The main focus, as always, is to unlock the wisdom and potential of the coachee (Passmore & Lai, 2020).

Social Service Professionals (SSPs) refer to "social workers, auxiliary social workers, student social workers, and learner social auxiliary workers in the social welfare sector and private practice" (SACSSP, 2012, p. 14).

1.9 Assumptions

The following three (3) assumptions were considered:

The central assumption is that the organisation emphasises implementing the Supervision Framework for Social Service Professionals. However, the effectiveness of its implementation may not be at a level where it embraces coaching as a method to develop and support SSPs towards increased self-awareness and performance.

Secondly, it is assumed that SSPs on supervisory and managerial levels (Social Work Supervisors and Social Work Managers) and senior managers are the most appropriate audience to explore the research questions.

Lastly, interviewees' diverse managerial and technical backgrounds may influence the quality and themes of the interview results. Sedgwick & Greenwood (2015) elaborate on the Hawthorne Effect, which occurs when interviewees "put their best foot forward" in the interview context, skewing an accurate assessment of actual or changed behaviour.

1.10 Structure of the report

The research report is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters deal with the aim of the study, the relevant theory and literature, and the research methodology and design.

Chapter 1 contains an overview of the study by introducing and contextualising it. The study's purpose, context and significance are presented, followed by the delimitations, assumptions, and definitions relevant to the research as it links to coaching for SSPs in the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Chapter 2 reviews existing literature on coaching in general and on coaching for SSPs, aiming to give an evidence-based summary of the research topic. The pertinent theoretical concepts are explained.

Chapter 3 outlines the research approach and design, including the population and sample. Detailed descriptions of the research instrument and data collection procedures are followed by the data analysis and interpretation process. The research instrument's trustworthiness (transferability, credibility, confirmability, and dependability) is described. The study's limitations and how those were mitigated, as well as the ethical considerations, are presented.

The last three chapters outline the findings and how they relate to existing literature and theory and end with the researcher's conclusions drawn.

Chapter 4 is a presentation of the main findings of the study. The thematic analysis method outlines the findings concerning the study's research objectives.

Chapter 5 contains an examination of the results related to the research objectives. The results were critically evaluated within the context of existing literature on coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals.

Lastly, **Chapter 6** focuses on the conclusions drawn from the results and discussions. The researcher addresses the problem statements and discusses the possible implications of the research for SSPs in social development in the public sector. It further contains recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 reviews literature related to coaching in general and coaching for SSPs more specifically. The chapter aims to provide an evidence-based summary of the research topic. The pertinent theoretical concepts are explained.

2.2 Background discussion

Various methods exist for growth and self-development, and coaching is one of the latest methods (Schutte & Steyn, 2015). Developments in coaching are captured by a growing body of knowledge, with studies dating back as far as 2005 and earlier. Caspi (2005) and Rostron (2006) are two examples of 21st-century authors researching coaching as a tool. Although the preference in research studies is not to focus on studies older than ten years, these are mentioned to illustrate that coaching as a tool to support and develop employees generates more and more research exploring its relevance and application.

Initially, coaching, as an emerging and still largely unregulated field, meant a lack of empirical research showcasing the value of coaching (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2005). By 2009, views from Grant, Curtayne, and Burton (2009) were that even though coaching was not yet a well-regulated profession or discipline, it was developing into one. Fast forward to 2022, and there is clear evidence of a growing number of credible organisations now focused on coaches' training, supervision, and credentialing. Coaching has developed into a bona fide discipline, profession, and practice that supports leadership development (Ely et al., 2010; Fusco, O'Riordan, & Palmer, 2016; Kumkani, 2016).

Between 25% and 40% (International_Coach_Federation, 2012) of US Fortune 500 and European and Australian companies use coaches for leadership development. Many scholars, including Ely et al. (2010), have shown that it is limited primarily to

executives, leaders, and managers. Various reasons for excluding other groups of employees are cited, with cost and time intensity being the most quoted (De Vries, 2008; Kets de Vries, 2019; Ward, 2008). A survey measuring the return on investment through coaching, undertaken by the Association for Coaching in 2009, reported various benefits. These were improvements in job motivation, work-life balance, productivity, and people management (Federation, 2012).

Literature on coaching for managerial groups and executives illustrates how coaching can enhance individual career growth to the benefit of organisations, what these benefits are, how it is used as a practice of development and support, and how it can impact the potential return on investment (Bonneywell, 2017; Ganesh et al., 2015; Theeboom, Beersma, & van Vianen, 2014). The lasting change emanating from coaching is driven by whether the client/employee is coachable, sees coaching as critical for their development, and genuinely desires to drive their own development. In any organisation, coaching aids growth and development when there is a balance between the employee's goals and the organisation's (Bennett & Bush, 2013). This is further influenced by the support of management and various stakeholders, especially when coachees see the organisation engaged and interested in the positive results from their coaching journeys (Akesson & Canavera, 2018; Kahn, 2011; Sithole, 2017).

Opportunities to learn and enhance skills are a change driver in any organisation, and it happens in formal and informal ways. Formal learning methods include formal training (at external institutions, institutionalised coaching, and mentoring programmes), and informal ways will talk to on-the-job training (Manuti, Pastore, Scardigno, Giancaspro, & Morciano, 2015). Formalised organisational coaching programs, with the coach as a mirror, provide feedback and assist employees in expanding their thinking capacity and views, moving from a space of comfort to one where they stretch their goals for development and achievement. Coaching encourages thinking and exploring different ways to move to new frontiers. A coaching journey provides a recipe or a map to an employee focused on behavioural change that can impact developmental goals and performance. Being actively engaged in their growth story allows coachees to transform and transition more easily into

leadership roles, increase their performance, or better handle the challenges and opportunities related to their working environment (Freedman, 2011).

In the South African space, one of the major players in the coaching arena is Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA). COMENSA focuses on determining standards and ethical guidelines and ongoing research in its quest to regulate the coaching industry in South Africa. Despite the industry not being fully regulated yet, evidence suggests that coaching in the workplace is in demand, and it has become the new and preferred mode of intervention in corporate circles (Brockbank & McGill, 2012; Sherman & Freas, 2004). Coaching and mentoring have since 2008 become more prominent methods used at private and public institutions in South Africa towards effecting change in their workspaces and assisting employees with self-directed learning (Dorkin, 2009; Mckenzie, 2018; Stout-Rostron, 2011). As a practice, coaching improves relationships, trust and values (Mckenzie, 2018); it is experimental and uses the conversational space to unlock “a powerful developmental process for the client” (Mckenzie, 2018, p. 76).

The number of studies documenting coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs, and categories of staff not classified as executive-level leaders in public sector organisations is limited. Maxine Dorkin (2009) explored coaching as a new methodology for occupational social workers. Her study found that most occupational social workers do not understand coaching fully, and a significant recommendation was for social workers to take charge of their learning and development. The other recommendation was for social workers to invest in lifelong learning and education to ensure their relevance in the workspace by staying on top of developments in the field.

Engelbrecht (2019) captures the journey of social work supervision in South Africa. He captures how supervision is carried out individually and in a group format. His 2019 study highlights that in many workplaces, supervision may be carried out by managers who are not schooled in the social work profession (Engelbrecht, 2019). The study further revealed that supervisory education is lacking and that supervisors may not pay sufficient attention to supervision. Chibaya’s (2018) study explored frontline social workers’ supervision. The study concluded that a lack of knowledge and insight into

educational strategies for adult education resulted in supervisors struggling to assist their direct reports. SSP supervisors and managers have limited or no idea of what motivates their supervisees and what theories and models are available to assist them (Engelbrecht, 2019).

Available literature linked to the study's research questions is used in this chapter to highlight the theoretical foundation that this study will use to explore coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs.

2.3 The nature of coaching

Coaching is emerging as a feature in the public service to enhance self-awareness and drive self-growth amidst an ever-growing need to deliver more with less. The latter concept places a considerable demand on public servants, social workers included, to better perform and manage themselves and others.

COMENSA defines coaching as "a professional, collaborative and outcomes-driven method of learning that seeks to develop individuals and raise self-awareness so that they might achieve specific goals and perform at a more effective level" (Van Coller-Peter & Cronjé, 2020, p. 65). Coaching creates change as new learning is internalized, promoting insight and self-development, leading to further development goals, increasing ability and competency, supporting personal, professional, and organisational growth, and potentially leading to increased performance. The coach focuses on the client's agenda to guide the coaching journey (Van Coller-Peter & Cronjé, 2020). In a business or organisational context, coaching means a conversation between the client and coach regularly and in a structured fashion. Such a conversation aims to unlock awareness for the client into their patterns and behaviours, especially how they impact the business and the achievement of the organisation's aims which can benefit personal and organisational achievements (Wiginton & Cartwright, 2020a). In other words, the primary purpose is to elicit

behavioural change in employees and managers; in so doing, organisational results and performance will increase (Kahn, 2011).

Wallace (2016) focuses on transitioning engineers to managers through coaching, whether with a career, performance, or managerial aim. Her study outlines how coaching enhances and develops engineers' technical and non-technical strengths and skills. Just narrating their stories of development, growth or workplace experiences helped with meaning-making, increased self-awareness, generating different courses of action, and redefining goals and action plans. The additional benefits include (i) a greater understanding of their social situation and need in the workspace, (ii) deepening their understanding of the organisational context they function in and how they respond to stimuli, (iii) expanding their perspectives on complexity and paradox, and (iv) interpersonal relationships (Wallace, 2016).

Mckenzie (2018) reported that coaching positively affected behavioural changes by the coachee, ranging from improved leadership skills and job performance to skills development and a change in personal and work-related attitudes. Bonneywell (2017) quotes research by Theeboom et al. (2014) that echoes the above and points out coaching's "positive effects … on well-being, coping, work attitudes" (Bonneywell, 2017, p. 59).

In the South African Public Service context Ganesh et al., (2015) studied the mentoring and coaching programme at the Frontier Hospital, a public hospital in Queenstown, Eastern Cape. Their findings showed the program's impact and how it resulted in increased performance and better time management, to mention but two benefits (Ganesh et al., 2015).

As a management practice, the question is how supervision and mentoring can be enhanced and supplemented by introducing coaching to support and develop social work managers and supervisors. The supervisory framework for SSPs (SACSSP, 2012) requires social work managers and supervisors to supervise social workers regularly and consistently, and as such supervisory training takes place in a structured manner. Supervision practices include continuous development, and according to

Hughes (2010), three roles for supervision can be clearly distinguished: educative, supportive, and managerial. The supervision of social workers does not fall within the ambit of coaching. However, coaching is acknowledged as a powerful tool to help employees flourish. The question is how coaching can be utilised to enhance and support the development of employees in the selected categories and how it can elicit the benefits of coaching, such as increased performance or more profound insight into their own behaviours and patterns that may impact their practices.

The Supervision Framework for SSPs does not cater for coaching and only mentions supervision and mentoring. Mentors guide, instil knowledge and provide guidance (Dorning, 2009). Mentoring focuses on borrowing wisdom to eliminate “frustration and misguided effort” (Dorning, 2009, p. 40), and it aims to solve job-related or industry-specific issues. Supervision and mentoring are aimed at assisting employees to adapt and learn their world of work with a strong emphasis on what the organisation needs to teach the employee to fit into the organisation's culture. On the other hand, coaching assists with career, self-awareness, self-actualization, and life issues; the learning is self-directed and allows the employee to tap into their wisdom and motivation whilst taking personal responsibility for that (Dorning, 2009).

Social work is defined by The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) as:

> A profession which promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work (Hare, 2004, p. 409).

Dorkin (2009) explores the similarities between coaching and social work. Social work is about solving problems, empowering, and increasing clients' well-being. This definition of social work links to the humanistic and other coaching approaches, such as strengths-based and positivism, used in coaching. She argues that coaching for

occupational social work can be seen as a practice to develop individuals in organisations. Both coaching and social work are based on establishing a relationship (whether client and coach or client and social worker) to bring about change and improve personal or professional lives. Through social work and coaching, the ability to cope is a further goal, with a focus on empowerment. The aim is to help clients identify resources within themselves and their surroundings to better their situation (Dorkin, 2009). Both coaching and social work evoke creativity and the exploration of other options or lenses to solve challenges or approach situations. The researcher believes this link contributes positively to introducing coaching as a practice for developing and supporting SSPs.

Adapting to use a coaching approach as a practice to develop and support the SSPs they manage or using coaching for their own empowerment and development could therefore come naturally to SSPs due to the close link between coaching, psychology and therapy, which underpins the training and skilling of social workers (S. Palmer & Whybrow, 2018).

Proposition 1: The nature of coaching is about empowering clients through self-directed learning and unlocking wisdom that results in personal growth and maximising potential (Bresser & Wilson, 2010).

The proposition is that in GDSD, coaching is non-existent or limited to categories of staff that are not SSPs.

The investigation required is into the nature of coaching, its existence and how it may be different or similar for SSPs.

2.4 Critical success factors for coaching

Research by Kombarakaran, Bakker and Fernandes (2008) mentions that coaching results in changes in areas such as “people management, relationships with managers, goal setting and prioritization, engagement and productivity, and dialogue and communication” (Kombarakaran, 2008, p. 83). If the coaching programme is well

crafted and executed, it results in growth and the retention of talent (Merrick, 2014; Theeboom et al., 2014). The critical success factors were ensuring that coaches are selected with intention, that the coaching program has buy-in from executives, and that good project management and widespread support are provided to coachees. Other studies also underline the coach's competency and the coachee's level of engagement and commitment as critical success factors (Van Wyk, Odendaal, & Maseko Badelisile, 2019). Studies such as that of Augustijnen, Schnitzer, and Van Esbroeck (2011) categorized the characteristics of coaches into the "attitude, behaviour and experience of the coach" (Augustijnen et al., 2011, p. 158). These characteristics include, and it is not an exhaustive list, openness, honesty, non-judgemental, presence, commitment, and being a role model the coachee can respect. From a skills perspective, building trust, keeping confidences, and excellent listening skills are vital. Handling complex conversations, giving direct feedback, and providing mirroring for the coachee were identified as part of the mix of what makes a good coach. Other aspects that came to light in a study by Wise and Voss (2002) related to the competence of the coach who needs to be carefully "screened, educated, and certified" (Wise & Voss, 2002, p. 10).

Diseko (2017) highlights the readiness for coaching (a desire to be coached, openness to feedback and being prepared to invest time and make an effort) as another critical factor for coaching to be successful (Kauffman & Coutu, 2009).

Literature shows that the outcome and impact of coaching link to the relationship between coach and coachee (Brock, 2008; J. Rogers, 2012). Coaching becomes a safe space when mutual trust and respect exist; if absent, positive results may not manifest (Brock, 2008; J. Rogers, 2012). Kahn (2011) highlighted the importance of organisational leaders supporting coaching and the importance of synergy between the agendas of the coachee and the organisation, both of which impact coaching.

A preference for external coaches, as opposed to utilising internal coaches trained by the organisation, was expressed. The perception was that outsiders could maintain confidentiality better, are more readily available and bring fresh perspectives to the experience. On the other hand, internal coaches were perceived as not always

available when needed due to work pressures that may blur the lines between work and coaching (McComb, 2012; Wise & Voss, 2002). Organisational decisions and cost will dictate the route taken in the approach of whom to use, and hybrid models may even be considered. Using internal or external coaches has benefits and disadvantages; internal coaching may be less costly as there is no direct cost other than training managers and leaders as coaches. The added advantage is that they are familiar with organisational culture, policies, and procedures. A drawback in using internal coaches could be their reputation in the organisation. The inability to maintain confidentiality may be the most significant drawback, alongside their availability for coaching (McComb, 2012). One of the primary considerations in choosing to use internal coaches would be whether there is a high level of trust in the confidentiality of the process (Schalk & Landeta, 2017). The use of external coaches can lend more credibility to a coaching programme as they bring specialist skills, knowledge, and experience. They can question practices and behaviours firmly, and the organisational culture and practices are unlikely to affect them. On the downside, using external coaches is typically costly and unsustainable over time (Schalk & Landeta, 2017).

For the topic to be explored, it would be valuable to draw a correlation from the data to determine if the same factors are considered critical success factors for SSPs.

Proposition 2: It is proposed that the critical success factors for coaching SSPs are the same but not limited to executive buy-in, coachee commitment, availability, coaches selected, and support for the process (Sithole (2017); Dorning (2009); Akesson and Canavera (2018); Mckenzie (2018)). This study will explore if these factors are similar to those in the Gauteng Social Development context.

2.5 Coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs in the Gauteng provincial government

Various interventions could assist managers who operate in complex environments, such as training, mentoring, job shadowing and coaching (Wallace, 2016). Coaching is well-researched and confirmed internationally and locally as a practice to support and develop businesses and executives. Kombarakaran et al. (2008) touch on executive coaching as a means to maximise performance due to its learning and growth orientation. Wiginton and Cartwright (2020a)mention that the long-term effects of coaching could lead to action, increased performance, or growth. In addition, a study by Wise and Voss (2002) listed the key reasons for coaching as its developmental and problem-resolution focus. The study showed changes on intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organisational levels. Various literature sources, including the abovementioned, conclude that coaching is a process of learning, development, growth, and increased personal and organisational performance (Diseko, 2017; Grant et al., 2009). Many sources captured its positive impact on achieving goals, increasing resilience, and reducing work-related stress (Grant et al., 2009).

Stout Rostron and Van Rensburg (2009) and Palmer (2019) documented three (3) ways that show the effects of coaching. These are seen in visible behavioural change, increases in performance and business results, and growth in personal and professional development (Palmer, 2019). These positive outcomes of coaching are also documented by J. Rogers (2012), Brand and Coetzee (2013), Dagley (2010), Mckenzie (2018) and in the 2017 Sherpa Executive Coaching Survey (Pitts, 2017). Workplace coaching as an approach to employee learning and development in an organisation is captured in a study by Jones, Woods, and Guillaume (2016), where positive effects were observed. Overall the study showed that organisational performance in general was positively impacted by coaching. If well planned, coaching as a transformational process supports continued personal improvement, as showcased in the Mvelase (2019) study.

Mckenzie (2018) studied a government department that introduced development and coaching, namely the Department of Local Government and Housing in the Western Cape. The then Head of the Department is on record expressing her views about how good performers, unaware of their behaviour, attitude, skills, and lack of emotional intelligence, impact their progress from a career perspective. In her view, intellectual capacity and emotional intelligence are required to succeed (McKenzie, 2018). The Department at that stage experimented by introducing coaching for all their senior managers, and these managers worked with their coaches for six to nine months. Some outcomes were increased awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and how it can lead to failure.

Wallace (2016) demonstrated the benefits of coaching as support for engineering managers, especially early in their careers. It not only assists in not losing productivity and motivation but also aids in retention, thus avoiding the expense of recruiting new managers. In a study at the Frontier Hospital in South Africa, Ganesh et al. (2015) found that mentoring and coaching led to improved performance and positively affected the workplace (Ganesh et al., 2015).

Akesson et al. (2017), in the study, *Effective practices and approaches to strengthen the global social service workforce: Results from a Delphi process,* identify one of the themes flowing from the research as “Supporting Intrinsic Worker Motivation” (Akesson & Canavera, 2018, p. 38). The data from this study indicate that the SSPs’ capacity is linked to resources and tools of the trade. However, it also links to the motivation and performance management aspects. The views put forward are that a capable workforce of SSPs also means employees with positive attitudes; and the importance of organisational support to ensure this motivation (Akesson & Canavera, 2018). The latter theme of organisational support flows throughout the study. In addition, the participants were open to mentoring and other modes of support and constructive feedback. Coaching is mentioned as “a way to support and strengthen the social service workforce” (Akesson & Canavera, 2018, p. 39).

Research on how coaching can assist SSPs in South Africa is limited. Therefore, this study will focus on how coaching could play a role in supporting and developing SSPs.

It is envisaged that, if implemented, it could result in research on the authentic impact it makes in SSPs' performance flowing from greater self-awareness and maximising their potential.

In conclusion, empowerment, improved performance, and personal growth are at the heart of coaching (Bresser & Wilson, 2010). As seen in earlier paragraphs, the benefits of coaching can be summarized as increased motivation, self-awareness, and confidence, reaching goals, well-being, decision-making and the ability to manage change, thus growth in personal and organisational capacity (Bresser & Wilson, 2010; Godskesen & Kobayashi, 2016; Neenan & Palmer, 2012; Passmore, 2015).

Proposition 3 proposes that coaching is a practice to develop and support SSPs. Coached employees display increased feelings of well-being and performance, and self-awareness. The latter develops as part of self-reflection, bringing new ways of thinking and feeling. In the long term, this leads to sustainable behaviour change. The documented benefit of coaching shows positive changes in individual and organisational performance, e.g. skills, well-being, and productivity (individual performance), culture, change and communication (organisational performance). This study will aim to link these benefits in other sectors and how coaching as a practice can be used to develop and support SSPs.

2.6 Theoretical foundation

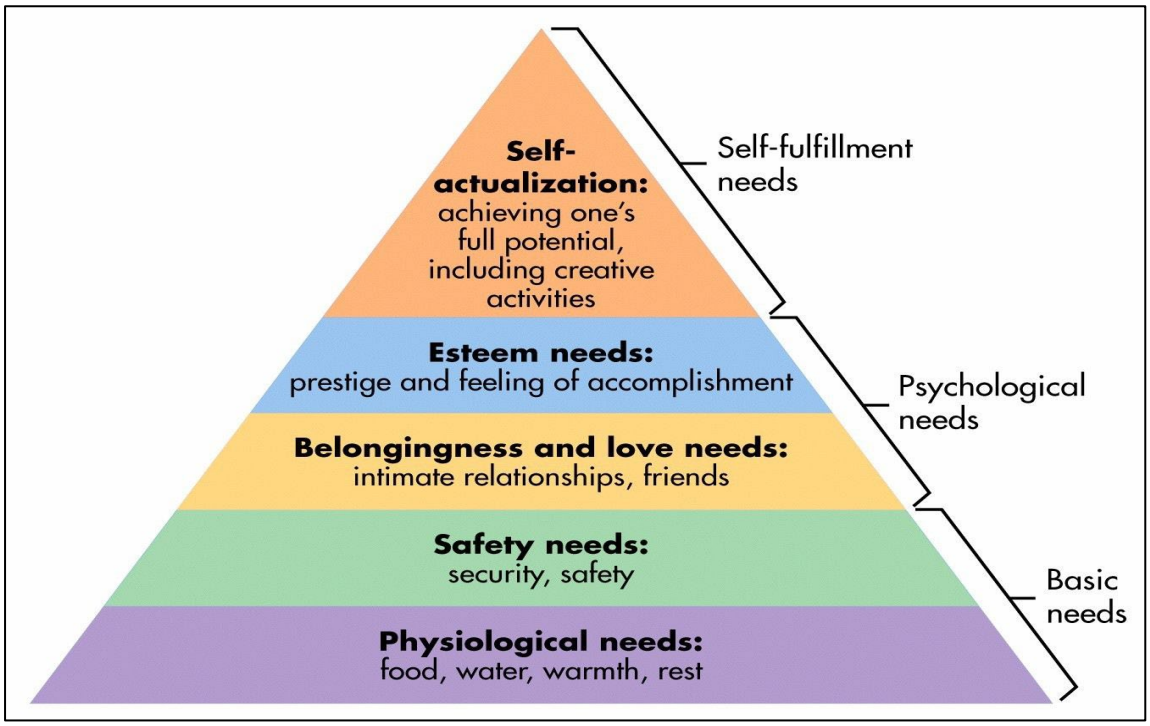
The humanist theory was chosen as the theory underpinning the study. Humanistic psychology is a study focusing on the whole person; people notice themselves through their own eyes and the eyes of others (Waterman, 2013). It studies self-perception, interpreting experiences, fulfilling needs and the environment, leading to growth and learning. Besides caring, love, and grief, it also emphasises self-worth. Humanistic psychologists believe humans have an internal drive and motivation to fulfil their human potential (Waterman, 2013).

A few theorists are considered the major contributors to Humanist Theory, and the most prominent are Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Kurt Goldstein, and Erich Fromm. As far back as 1943, Maslow focussed on themes such as self-actualization, individuality, and creativity, culminating in his Hierarchical Theory of Human Motivation (McLeod, 2007). Rogers developed Client-Centred Therapy, a client-focused approach to therapy. Both theorists explored the theme of self-actualization but from different perspectives; Maslow accredited it to the individual itself whilst Rogers placed a focus on empathy, a desire to grow and the influence of the environment (Geller, 1982).

Self-actualization is “psychological growth, fulfilment and satisfaction in life” (Greene & Burke, 2007, p. 117). Maslow and Rogers viewed it as a fundamental human motive: individuals seeking to grow and learn in different ways. However, their view on how to move to self-actualisation differed (Mercado, 2018). Rogers believed the perception and interpretation of personal experiences play a role in establishing how a person reaches self-actualization; the latter means when the ideal self matches the person’s actual behaviour, i.e. a state of congruence (Rodgers & Tudor, 2020).

On the other hand, Maslow linked self-actualization to potential and underlined that it is growth-orientated. Maslow illustrated these needs in the form of a hierarchy of needs. The following figure illustrates Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and the meaning of each.

Figure 2.1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (McLeod, 2007)



He pitched self-actualisation as the final stage in his hierarchy of needs (Osemeke & Adegboyega, 2017).

Coaching is about self-actualization, growth, learning and unlocking the coachee's potential and wisdom (William and Palmer, 2009). Therefore the study explores participants' views on whether coaching could be a practice that contributes to their growth and learning. The humanistic approaches of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow focus on the whole person and how to increase awareness towards inclusion and to be open to alternative views (Brock, 2008). Coaching focuses on the whole person and underscores the wisdom that lies in the coachee (Bachkirova, Spence, & Drake, 2016).

Rogers' humanist perspective focuses on person-centred principles, and Stober (2006) argues that humans are about positive change and self-actualization. In this vein, coaching, too, focuses on the inherent tendency of a client to self-actualize, and in so doing, it stimulates a client's inherent potential to grow. Both Rogers' client-centred therapy and coaching emphasize the client-coach/practitioner relationship,

one of the main ingredients of growth. The approach is holistic, meaning the person's negative and positive aspects are addressed. Both aim to enable the client to shift through learning rather than teaching to generate his/her own solutions. The difference is that coaching focuses on the present and future. In client-centred therapy, the past is also explored, namely the question 'why?'.

Coaching and Roger's client-centred therapy have a few themes in common. Firstly, it facilitates the client's learning. The experiences and perceptions of clients forever evolve as they operate in a system of constant change (Jeannotte, Hutchinson, & Kellerman, 2021). Secondly, being actively tasked with one's development and learning is more meaningful than being told what may be wrong with you or what you should do. Thirdly, the learning experience is enhanced by exploring options and being open-minded. It could therefore lead to a change of perception as various ideas are explored. Lastly, operating in an environment free from judgement means the client is relaxed, and boundaries can be broken down more effectively. Removing fear and judgement, embodied in the neutral and non-judgemental behaviour of the therapist and coach, leads to trust (Jeannotte et al., 2021).

The client-centred theory (C. R. Rogers, 1986; C. R. Rogers & Wood, 1974) has three elements that facilitate learning, which also appear in coaching. These are empathy, congruence, and responsibility. The coach is curious about the client yet responds empathically and allows the client to take responsibility for their own process. Carl Rogers likened counselling to contracting a friend (P. Williams, 2008), whilst a coach is seen as a partner that helps clients unlock their own learning and wisdom. The whole-person approach explores wellness, emotions related to changes and interpersonal relationships. Coaching does this too. For example, one will touch on all these elements in a coaching conversation on career changes.

Another similarity is that coaching and person-centred therapy facilitate positive change towards self-actualisation (Stober, 2006). In both, there is a strong emphasis on relationships as a primary factor for growth and on a holistic approach meaning all aspects are addressed.

Peltier (2011) saw coaching as “the process of equipping people with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to develop themselves and become more effective” (Peltier, 2011, p. xxxi). The difference between therapists and coaches lies in how questions are posed. Fairley and Stout (2003) describe it as two opposite ends of a continuum: In the relationship between a client and his/her therapist, the therapist is the source of knowledge, whilst with the coach/client, the basis is that the client is a whole, creative, and wise person and the source of knowledge (Fairley & Stout, 2003). In coaching, the client drives or sets the agenda with the relationship of being in a partnership (Abravanel & Gavin, 2017).

The other significant difference is that psychological disciplines aim to address dysfunctions, eliminate them, and deal with feelings in the process. In contrast, coaching has a future orientation (Grant, 2014), identifying what action/s are needed. Awareness is at the heart of humanist therapy and coaching, but everyone seeks different types of awareness. Therapists aim to help the client delve into their feelings, which is a therapeutic process and an end in itself (Yontef, 2005). Coaching, on the other hand, seeks awareness to make meaning of the current reality and to help define options towards solutions (Ives, 2008).

Rogers’ and Maslow’s theories and views on self-actualization could be used for this study. The choice fell on Maslow’s theory of human motivation and his view on how individuals self-actualize, namely the presence of potential and striving towards growth. The following paragraphs briefly outline how growth and development unfold and link to coaching. Dorkin (2009) quotes that Maslow believed humans employ curiosity and creativity towards self-actualization, concepts at the heart of coaching.

Maslow’s theory is one of the most influential theories of human motivation. All humans share these needs, and humans aim to satisfy their needs whenever possible, wherever they are. His theory states that satisfying higher order needs typically occurs when the lower needs are met. The theory indicates that higher-level needs take precedence over lower-level needs (physiological and safety) once basic needs are attained. Only needs not yet satisfied influence behaviour; once a need is met, it is no longer a motivator (Greene & Burke, 2007). The higher-level needs are psychological

by nature, with the ultimate goal of self-actualisation. The need to fulfil one's potential varies from person to person; it centres around developing and realizing one's full potential and is a lifelong pursuit. In other words a lifelong journey of growth and development. In short, this theory states that full potential is eventually achieved as part of growth through the various levels of need for self-actualization (McLeod, 2007).

Maslow's theory focuses on healthy individuals interested in growing psychologically and enhancing their potential. He believed humans gravitate towards self-actualization, employing curiosity and creativity (Dorkin, 2009). The desire to grow does not stem from lacking anything; it purely flows from seeking to maximise one's potential Dorkin (2009). The link to coaching is that coaching aids the growth and development of individuals in line with personal and professional goals. J. Rogers (2012) supports the view that coaching enhances work efficiency by facilitating learning, while O'Broin and McDowall (2014) view it as a process to move towards positive, directive and transformational change. Its core mission is that it supports the quest for self-actualisation, thus the higher level of psychological needs. Accomplishing goals feeds self-esteem, which means a greater level of self-confidence. The coaching relationship links to social needs and the bond between coach and coachee; if there is trust, liking and respect, the result will be positive outcomes, as demonstrated Hicks (2018). Coaching contributes to the satisfaction of all of Maslow's hierarchy of needs once the lower-order needs are met (Hicks & McCracken, 2011).

Coaching and Maslow's theory speak the same language regarding growth and unlocking potential; as the coachee grows and explores his/her potential, it leads to self-actualization. Both are tools for personal growth and self-discovery (Bax, 2011; O'Connor & Yballe, 2007).

Thus, the researcher wants to pursue whether coaching could be a method to support and develop SSPs as it has a focus on personal growth and self-discovery. Motivation impacts staff morale and performance, and motivated employees are needed in the workplace to ensure increased service delivery and to help organisations survive (Smith et al., 2006). Motivation impacts productivity and is a complex matter, as what

motivates employees are never stagnant (De Juana-Espinosa & Rakowska, 2018). Human motivation can be explained through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as the theory is underpinned by humans' motivation to fulfil their needs in a hierarchical order. It moves from the most basic needs to more advanced needs, namely "physiological (e.g. a need for food), psychological (e.g. a need for self-esteem) or social (e.g. a need for relationships with others)" (McLeod, 2007, p. 1). An example illustrating how needs change would be how an increased flow of money means it becomes less of a motivating factor (Greene & Burke, 2007; Hicks, 2018); just like when employees age, what motivates them is more meaningful work (Mathibe, 2008). Thus understanding how to motivate employees and linking their goals to the organisation's goals can lead to higher performance levels, as highly motivated employees will showcase different productivity levels than less motivated employees.

In keeping employees motivated, one could argue that it assists employees in fulfilling their needs and concentrating their effort in varying degrees on different levels of the hierarchy. As employees move through the levels and their basic needs are addressed, it becomes easier to move to higher-order levels and to increase self-awareness and self-confidence (Greene & Burke, 2007).

This study explored how coaching can support and develop SSPs to enhance self-growth, awareness, and their sense of how they impact others and the organisation. As the participants in the study are employed, the researcher assumes that their basic safety and security needs have been met and that basic training is in place. Therefore, the study will focus on how coaching assists them in growing and learning to move towards higher-order levels (psychological needs). As explained in the context of executive and business coaching earlier, coaching for SSPs could contribute to higher levels of self-awareness, unlock learning and growth, and fulfil the need to maximise their potential.

Therefore this study is underpinned by the humanistic theory using Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the link between coaching and self-actualization.

2.7 Conclusion of literature review

In conclusion, the literature review aimed to underline the nature of coaching broadly, the critical success factors and coaching as a practice of development and support. Exploring what is available in professions similar to social work, like nursing, medicine, and education, showed that literature is available in these areas. Literature is documented for coaching managers in government. However, the literature related to the research questions of this study is limited. The research questions will be explored using Maslow's hierarchy of needs, one of the humanist theories, as a conceptual framework. This theory focuses on human behaviour and how human needs can be fulfilled and satisfied one level at a time. Coaching brings self-awareness as one of its benefits, and self-awareness can be used to explore the various levels of this hierarchy of needs.

The three main research propositions are summarized as follows:

2.7.1 Proposition 1: Coaching is non-existent in GDSD.

The research question explored the nature of coaching in the SSP environment in Social Development. Proposition 1 is that coaching in this environment is non-existent or limited to a select group of individuals.

2.7.2 Proposition 2: the critical success factors for coaching SSPs in GDSD will be similar to those in other industries.

The research question was to determine the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the SSP environment in social development. Proposition 2 is that the critical success factors are similar to those in environments other than social development.

2.7.3 Proposition 3: Coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD

The research question was to explore what contribution coaching could make as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in Gauteng Social

Development. Proposition 3 is that coaching could contribute positively as a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD.

Table 2.1: Summarised consistency table - research questions and propositions

RQ	Research Question	Proposition
1	What is the nature of coaching in the SSP environment in Social Development?	The nature of coaching lends itself to developing and supporting clients through self-directed learning and the unlocking of wisdom (Bresser & Wilson, 2010). Therefore, the question explores what coaching is and if coaching is the same or different in the case of SSPs. The proposition is that coaching does not exist in the institution, or it is limited to a select few and that it may not be a practice to develop and support SSPs.
2	What are the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the SSP environment in Social Development?	Factors such as executive buy-in, coachee commitment, availability, coaches selected, and process support are important for coaching to succeed in work environments. This study explores if these or other factors are necessary for coaching to succeed in GSD ((Sithole (2017), Dorning (2009), Akesson and Canavera (2018) and Mckenzie (2018)). The proposition is that the critical success factors for coaching SSPs will be the same as in any other environment.
3.	What contribution could coaching make as a practice to develop and support SSPs in GSD?	Coaching to develop and support employees in work environments is well-documented. This study aims to determine the contribution coaching can make as a practice to develop and support SSPs. The proposition is that value may be derived from using coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the GSD

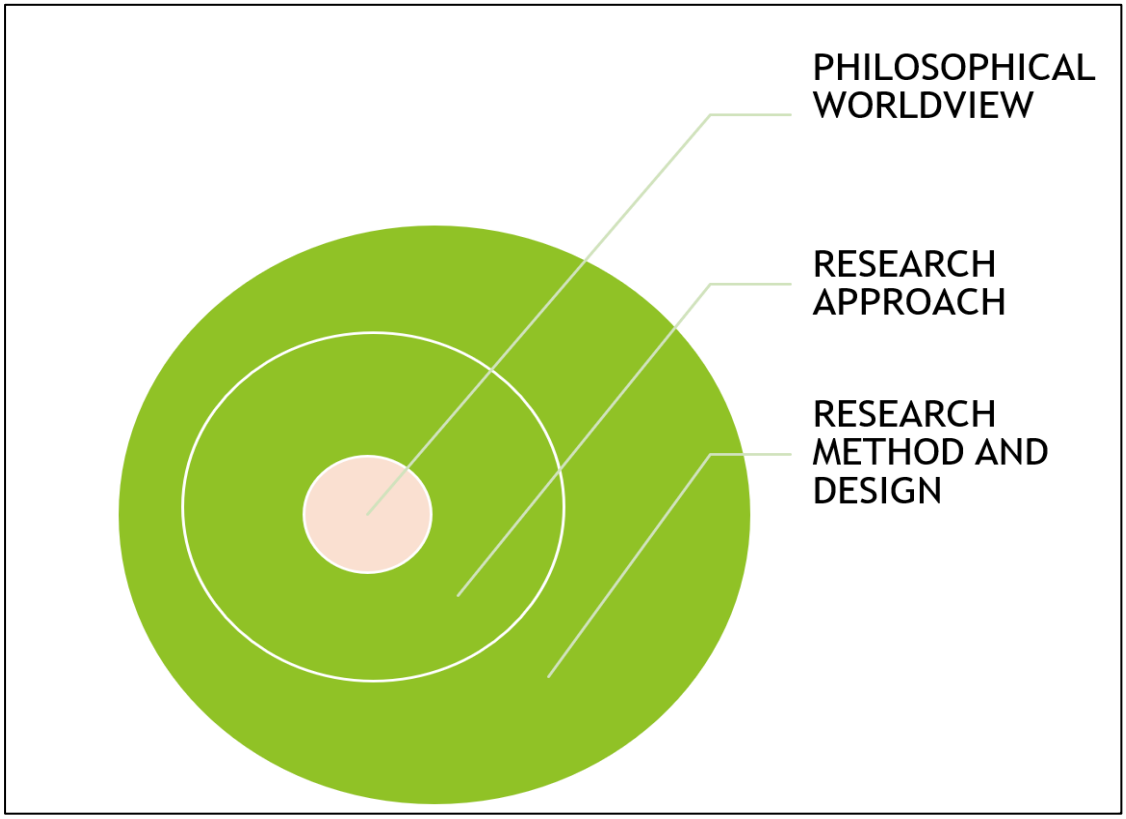
Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This Chapter covers how the research related to the topic was conducted, including the research approach, the design, data gathering aspects, sampling, and the data analysis techniques used by the researcher. Lastly, it touches on trustworthiness considerations and concludes with the study's limitations and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research approach

The research approach is a plan that describes the research process undertaken; the research is underpinned by a philosophical worldview, a research design, and a method that anchors the research. The figure below is a simplified graphic illustration of the contents of this Chapter.

Figure 3.1: Research methodology



Author-adapted from Saunders (2007)

Philosophical worldviews include constructivist, post-positivist, transformative or pragmatic worldviews. In turn, the research design outlines the strategies that inform the focus of the research aims. Furthermore, the research methodology includes a description of the population and sampling methods, data collection and analysis procedures, and the research instrument. It further elaborates on the study's limitations and elements relevant to rigour and ethical considerations.

The philosophical worldview that influences this research is the interpretivist/ constructivist worldview. This worldview flows from the philosophies of Husserl, Dilthey and Hermeneutics (Hunt, 2005). It focuses on how humans make meaning of experiences, a social construct of their reality (Hunt, 2005). This study relied on the participants' views, which are subjective meaning-making of the studied topic. It allowed their backgrounds and experiences to impact the research and make sense of it by exploring the emerging patterns in the research (Levitt et al., 2018). The study, therefore, relied on qualitative data collection and analysis.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) outline that interpretivism focuses on the significance of interpretations and observations in understanding the social world of participants. Carson, Gilmore, Perry, and Gronhaug (2001) argued that interpretivism builds theories from empirical insights. Existing theories guide and loosely frame a study, but interpretivism does not test prior theory as it focuses on the current reality for the participant (Carson et al., 2001). Data for this study was collected from interviews held virtually, allowing for interpretation.

Coaching as a practice to develop and support employees is available, but few studies are tailored to capture the views and experiences of SSPs specifically. For this study, the interviews allowed participants to share their views in their own words and to explain the meaning they make of the topics linked to this study. The participants' views on the nature, critical success factors and the coaching role were sought. Due to the qualitative approach, the researcher interpreted the views and perspectives of participants, which flowed from their experiences and opinions (Wa-Mbaleka, 2020). Therefore this study explores the views and perspectives of SSPs in Social

Development in Gauteng. The qualitative approach allowed for capturing rich and unique data, encapsulating SSPs' personal views and experiences (Palmer, 2019).

Ponterotto (2002) argues that qualitative research places the researcher in close proximity and contact with the interviewed participants. As such, it allowed the researcher to explore the topic in the participants' words and did not attempt to categorise and quantify experiences on pre-established quantitative scales. The role of the researcher was to understand and experience the diverse ways of meaning-making amongst the participants and to interpret the information she obtained.

Research on coaching-related topics is not new, as amplified in chapter 2. There is limited research on the role of coaching for SSPs in South Africa and how it can assist their growth and performance. This makes this study part of an emerging body of work; therefore, a qualitative research method was deemed appropriate for research involving a newly-emerging knowledge base (Becker, Bryman, & Ferguson, 2012).

Qualitative methods are used to understand concepts better and are not a precise science (Creswell, 2018; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) as it does not focus on numbers. It uses what participants bring in the form of their words, how they describe what they experience, their perspectives and how they interpret what happens or what they think. This is one of the advantages of a qualitative method as it may lead to theory in areas where knowledge is limited, as in this study.

This research topic is likely to have value for developing and supporting SSPs purely due to the limited research currently available on coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs. The participants' views in this study were sourced via semi-structured interviews to determine their insights, perspectives and how they make meaning of the topic for the research.

A qualitative interpretivist paradigm was deemed appropriate for this research study as it aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge on the nature of coaching and its potential role in supporting and developing SSPs. There is little known about the use of coaching to develop and support SSPs, the interpretive methodology provided

insight for the researcher, allowing her to develop themes that could assist future studies.

The drawback of qualitative methods lies in various interpretations that can be assigned to the collected data. Techniques to counter this include ensuring transparency, dependability, and confirmability, i.e., trustworthiness is built-in (Creswell, 2018; J. W. Creswell, 2012; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Following a generic qualitative design with semi-structured in-depth interviews resulted in detailed data. This was particularly important in understanding the research questions focused on the nature of coaching for SSPs, the perceived critical considerations and the role that coaching can play in supporting and developing SSPs to increase their performance. The following paragraphs outline the research design.

3.2 Research design

The research design is a generic qualitative design using semi-structured interviews to understand the perspectives and experiences of SSPs related to coaching, its benefits, and coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs. As mentioned above, semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' perspectives, resulting in data that was then interpreted. The data collected through the semi-structured interviews took the form of open-ended questions to determine the views and experiences of the participants. Eventually, this was linked to themes that emerged from the analysis.

The semi-structured nature of the data collection provided the opportunity to probe. It allowed for reflection on the dialogue between the researcher and the participants, which assisted in exploring any hidden or deeper meanings to responses (Palmer, 2019). As such, the interpretivist approach allowed for exploring hidden meanings and led to identifying questions for future research.

Unfortunately, an interpretivist quality research design is a resource-heavy and time-consuming process, and care has to be taken not to capture too little or too much data

(Bhattacherjee, 2012). Capturing too much data can confuse the researcher, whilst too little data could lead to false or superficial assumptions. Therefore, the researcher exercised great care to ensure the participants focused on the questions. On the other hand, the interview questions were designed to ensure enough data was captured to allow for rich and quality data (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Each transcript was analysed to identify emerging themes.

Another disadvantage of this design includes the researcher's potential impact on the research due to causal ambiguity and multiple interpretations available in the data (Creswell, 2018; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Cooper and Endacott (2007) indicate that the idea is not to test but to understand or develop a theory or phenomenon, making it an inductive process. This applies to this research study, which follows a generic qualitative approach rather than a case study or narrative study, to understand "a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved" (Cooper & Endacott, 2007, p. 817).

3.2.1 Population

The population is from the category of employees called Social Work Professionals (SACSSP, 2012). The sample consists of Social Work Supervisors and Social Work Managers who work across various sub-disciplines (foster care, substance abuse, etcetera). All participants are registered with the Council for Social Service Professionals and employed by the Department of Social Development in Gauteng. The participants were of different ages and from different sub-disciplines in social work to allow for diverse views (Jansen, 2010).

3.2.2 Sample and sampling method

Sampling can be done using probability and non-probability methods. Probability sampling means that it is probable that anyone can be included, whereas a

nonprobability sample is a non-random method used to select participants. Probability sampling comprises systematic, cluster, simple random, and stratified random samples (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Purposive, quota, accidental or incidental, self-selection, snowball, and convenience sampling are types of non-probability sampling (Etikan et al., 2016).

For this study, non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, was used as the researcher used her judgement in choosing whom to include in the sample in conjunction with the Researchers from the Research unit of the Department of Social Development. As mentioned in paragraph 3.2.1, the population for the study flowed from the categories of SSPs (Social Work Managers and Social Work Supervisors) employed by the Department. This sample of participants is registered with the Council for Social Service Professionals. A participant information sheet is attached as Appendix A. The sample population share similar traits as all are SSPs with years of experience. It allowed for interpretation from a range of SSPs with various levels of exposure to social work and, potentially, coaching.

A qualitative study aims to ensure a large sample size to determine various views and themes. However, it is critical to lessen discovery failure and not to generalise inappropriately (Bryman, 2016). The chosen population size of seventeen (17) participants assisted the researcher in lessening discovery failure by not focusing on too small a sample. However, there was no point in continuing at the point of saturation as saturated data does not serve the process. In the words of Bryman (2016), "the criterion for sample size is whatever it takes to achieve saturation" (Bryman, 2016, p. 426). Therefore the researcher ended the interview process with fifteen (15) in-depth interviews as it provided enough content to explore the research questions for this qualitative study (John W Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, & Morales, 2007).

3.2.3 The research instrument

As mentioned under the research design, in-depth semi-structured interviews were used as the research instrument. Semi-structured interviews provide the flexibility to

ask follow-up questions to understand the context and meaning better and, therefore, could result in a richer account of a participant's views (Adams, 2015; Kakilla, 2021). A semi-structured interview schedule is included in Appendix B. The schedule guided the interviewer to explore the experiences from the participant's point of view, allowing the researcher to collect data by accessing the participants' constructed reality and interpretation through their words (Alsaawi, 2014).

The interview schedule was designed around three themes:

- the nature of coaching under the target group,
- what participants deem critical success factors for coaching, and
- how coaching could aid their growth and development and contribute to a feeling of support.

Each theme had various sub-questions to allow the researcher to explore the theme fully with each participant. During the interview, the researcher used her discretion to ensure flow by not asking the questions in a specific order purely based on how the participants responded. Flexibility was built using probing questions relevant to each research question or sub-question, which assisted the researcher's understanding, meaning and interpretation of participants' responses to questions (Creswell, 2018).

In summary, the open-ended questions allowed the harvesting of detailed information about the participants' perceptions, emotions, and subjective experiences. The researcher asked additional questions based on the participants' responses, allowing her to probe and gain more insight. The semi-structured interviews are outlined in Appendix B.

3.2.4 Procedure for data collection

For the interviews, participants were formally approached telephonically, followed by an e-mailed letter of introduction and an invitation with the researcher's details and the purpose of the study. Appointments were organised telephonically or via e-mail once the participant agreed to be interviewed. Once the participant e-mailed the consent

form (Appendix C) back to the researcher, the interview invitation was issued via e-mail. The abovementioned process illustrates that the interview exercise required detailed planning to ensure the data collection was not hampered by logistical challenges such as cancelled appointments and interviews (J. W. Creswell, 2012). As a result of the detailed planning, none of the interviews had to be rescheduled.

At the start of the interview, the researcher explained to the participant how the information would be treated, namely as confidential, how her supervisor may access the recordings and transcripts, how it will be stored and when it will be destroyed. She further explained the purpose again at the start of each interview. Participants were then asked to verbally also consent that the interview may continue.

All interviews were conducted online and recorded using Otter.ai, a transcription tool. After the interviews, the recordings were reviewed, and notations were made of words, expressions, terminology, and emotions expressed. The duration of the interviews was between 60 to 90 minutes.

3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

A thematic analysis approach was utilised to analyse the data during this phase of the qualitative study. The analysis phase included actions to filter the substantial amounts of data gathered during the interviews by reading the transcripts, identifying codes, and capturing patterns or themes. The thematic analysis approach allows the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It was used as it allows for studying the experience of participants that goes beyond just the observable data.

The six steps for analysing data were applied (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), and data analysis was undertaken as outlined in the figure below.

Figure 3.2: Six-phase approach to thematic analysis

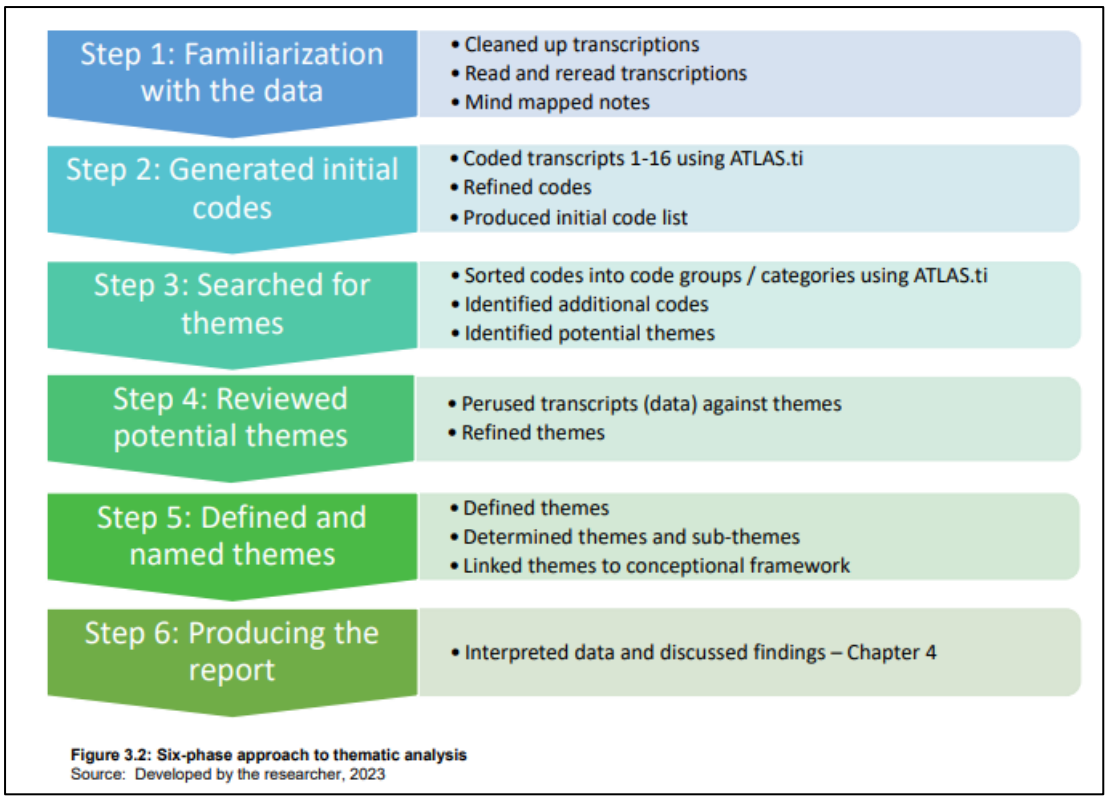


Figure 3.2: Six-phase approach to thematic analysis
Source: Developed by the researcher, 2023

In analysing and coding the data, the researcher used a hybrid coding method by first using a deductive approach (identifying codes from the research questions and literature review, thus a preliminary list of codes) and lastly an inductive approach (making meaning from the data). The results were checked for consistency to ensure reliability. Codes were sorted into themes by grouping matching codes together. The themes were named and led to a report on emerging patterns (Creswell, 2018; Palmer, 2019). The initial coding led to assigning codes and then clustering those into code groups where similarities occurred. These eventually helped to identify the main themes. Great care was taken during the data collection, analysis, and interpretation to ensure trustworthiness. These steps are outlined in the following paragraphs.

3.4 Rigour

3.4.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness focuses on what underpins quality and rigour in research that is qualitative. It has four components: transferability, credibility, confirmability, and dependability (Johnson, Adkins, & Chauvin, 2020; Lincoln, 1985).

Trustworthiness is essential; Hammarberg states that procedural descriptions are just as crucial in qualitative studies as in any other study (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & De Lacey, 2016). It means that how the research is carried out and all procedural decisions must be captured with vigour as, in the end, it will speak to the study's trustworthiness. At any future point, any study reviewer should be able to follow how the study unfolded, the decisions the researcher made and how data was generated and managed (Kitto et al., 2008). In other words, the question is whether the researcher exercised due diligence and care. As this study could add value for future researchers exploring coaching for SSPs, trustworthiness can be found in describing how the data was collected and analysed and what methods were followed (E. N. Williams & Morrow, 2009).

The four concepts linked to trustworthiness will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.2 Transferability

Transferability meant that the researcher provided detailed descriptions of the interviews and the process. This assists the report reader in judging whether they can use the findings for their study purposes or in their organisations (Johnson et al., 2020). The researcher accomplished this through her process of data analysis and coding to identify themes and subthemes. Her role was to ensure a thorough account of her analysis of coaching as a method to support and develop SSPs. The researcher paid close attention to the research workspace, context, and process to ensure that results could be applied in similar contexts.

Drawing on Korstjens and Moser (2018, p. 11), the analysis includes consideration of "exclusion criteria, interview procedures and topics, changes in interview questions based on the iterative research process, and excerpts from the interview guide" (p. 11).

3.4.3 Credibility

Credibility means that the researcher accurately interprets the views and experiences of the respondents (Hammarberg et al., 2016). It also means that supporting evidence related to the outcomes is available (Johnson et al., 2020). Researchers may consciously or unconsciously bring biased elements to any study (Wa-Mbaleka, 2020). In dealing with bias Norris (1997) indicates that triangulation can be used to ensure a comprehensive understanding of phenomena.

For this report, bias is acknowledged, and person triangulation was used to ensure credibility. This means that data was collected from more than one person and from participants whose work experience, years of experience, and work areas differ (Wa-Mbaleka, 2020). In addition, triangulation was ensured through the interview transcripts, effectively creating an audit trail to compare findings and insights. Where necessary during interviews, data was fed back to a participant to determine their understanding and to ensure an appropriate interpretation by the interviewer. As the sample of participants was drawn from different work areas in Social Development and from managers and supervisors whose years of managerial and supervisory experience varied, information was harvested from a broader sample. Doing so increased the credibility of the insights obtained (Creswell, 2018).

A simple interpretative approach was used to uncover repeated themes (patterns of meaning). The researcher searched for data that presented itself repeatedly (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017) and used the transcript of each interview to source these patterns. As the number of transcripts resulted in lots of data, she used a qualitative analysis tool called Atlas.ti to assign codes to the emerging patterns and to cross-reference across the various interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). These codes are merely a collective word to classify what flowed

from the raw data so that she could identify emerging themes and subthemes across the sample, capture related patterns of meaning-making and eventually analyse and interpret the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In short, this provided a systematic basis to ease the reading of the data multiple times to identify themes and subthemes.

This helped with credibility because identifying an array of themes brought about greater coherence. Credibility was further enhanced by linking these themes to the whole dataset, the research questions and the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). As the themes flowed from the collected data, it assisted the researcher in guarding against potential interpretive bias. The researcher, however, still made judgements in determining the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.4.4 Confirmability

According to Ys (1985), confirmability is whether other researchers can confirm one's findings and that the data or one's interpretations are derived from the data only and that it is not attributed to the creativity of or the thoughts of the researcher. The outcomes are grounded in the participants' information and reflected as such. Thus the researcher's bias, motivations and interpretations do not feature (Kyngäs, Kääriäinen, & Elo, 2020).

In this qualitative study, the researcher ensured the data is confirmable (others would reach the same conclusions) and transparent (whoever follows the trail of evidence should reach the same conclusions) (Creswell, 2018; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The researcher kept a record of the interviews and transcripts (recorded and transcribed by Otter.ai, a transcription tool). She used these to identify emerging themes and draw findings and conclusions about each proposition. As such, it will allow for any inspection or testing of her findings. Besides the data collection and analysis process, all findings were captured from the participant's view with the relevant links to specific notations from a participant/s. As the researcher proceeded, she regularly reflected on her conclusions by comparing them with initially recorded transcripts. This practice helped the researcher to capture participants' perspectives (Palmer, 2019). In addition,

the supervisor's role was to review and concur with the emerging themes and the evidence linked to them (Johnson et al., 2020).

3.4.5 Dependability

Lastly, the researcher aimed for dependability as part of creating trustworthiness in the findings of this research. Responding to this requirement, the researcher documented her work thoroughly and meticulously to ensure it could be repeated (Johnson et al., 2020). The advantage of this is that an appraisal of the research process can support the findings over time and by various researchers (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Here, questions posed by Hammarberg et al. (2016) are relevant. Would the questions of other researchers studying coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs in Social Development, Gauteng, be answered if they followed the researcher's process? Would they find the same emerging themes or patterns?

In moving towards dependability, the collected data was triangulated from samples of the semi-structured interviews. The interview instrument allowed for the collection of similar data from all participants. As it is a semi-structured interview, it allowed the researcher to dig deeper by asking follow-up questions. She could clarify her understanding so that the data is meaningful. Before approving her proposal, the researcher tested the interview questionnaire and tweaked it to ensure the data collected would be useful. The data was analysed based on emerging themes. The researcher's supervisor reviewed the information collected, the emerging themes' and their analyses, and the supporting evidence as a supporting mechanism to increase dependability (Johnson et al., 2020).

3.5 Limitations of the study

As the study focussed on SSPs in Gauteng Social Development, the research findings may not necessarily be generalisable to other SSP environments; thus, external

validity for this research (Findley, Kikuta, & Denly, 2021) may be a challenge. Findings may change over time, and if interviewed again, respondents may respond differently or respond differently to the same questions raised at a point in the future.

Trustworthiness is possible if the emerging theory and the researcher's observations are in sync. Therefore, the recommendations on how coaching can be used to develop and support Social Service Professionals flowed from the interview outcomes and the findings of this report.

The researcher is an instrument for the research methodology, which can be beneficial or a weakness. As such, the researcher identified the limitation and clearly mentioned her views and experiences (Klassen, Creswell, Clark, Smith, & Meissner, 2012). Interview outcomes could be affected by the researcher's position in the organisation where the study was conducted; her position is one of structural power. It could lead to participants not voicing honestly and truthfully what they believe about the topic for fear of not creating a good impression with the manager. To mitigate this, the researcher introduced herself as a student and emphasised the importance of participants sharing their views openly and freely. She referred participants to her ethics and title approval for the research (Appendix D) and the research permission request and response from GDSD (Appendix E).

Online interviews were conducted because participants worked remotely or at their offices across Gauteng province. Keeping in mind that virtually conducted interviews can be at the mercy of technology, the researcher ensured that she connected via camera with participants before the interview questions started. Loadshedding challenges and connectivity challenges by participants led to cameras being switched off after the initial 'face-to-face' connection in some cases.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The research complies fully with the Wits Business School Ethics Policy (See Appendix D). All information was handled with confidentiality, sensitivity, and anonymity as outlined in the policy and regulatory frameworks like the Protection of

Personal Information (POPI) Act. All participants volunteered their time and gave consent to be interviewed, and all participants' identities remain confidential. Before each interview began, the participant was informed of the study purpose, the right to participate or not and the role and responsibilities of the researcher (Appendix C). No participant invited to participate declined to be interviewed. Informed consent is an aspect of ethical conduct, as participants must know upfront what may reasonably influence their participation (Arifin, 2018). The consent of each participant was obtained and recorded (Appendix C).

Permission from the Department of Social Development was obtained via an application to the Department's Research unit. The organisation issued a formal approval letter (Appendix E) after approval from the Ethics Committee of the Business School for the proposed study was received (Appendix D). The researcher will avail the study report to the participants and the Department of Social Development as requested in the approval letter from the Department (Appendix E). This condition and undertaking placed the onus on the researcher to ensure the information gathering and interpretation process can be measured against the norms and standards for qualitative research.

In conclusion, Chapter Three outlines this qualitative report's research design and strategy to determine coaching as a practice to develop and support Social Service Professionals in the Department of Social Development in GPG with its SSPs as the fixed sample. It explains the aspects of trustworthiness, study limitations, and ethical considerations.

The next chapter contains an analysis of the data derived from the interviews undertaken with the identified respondents as per the sample.

Chapter 4 Presentation of Findings

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the findings related to this study. The main objective is to explore the perceived role of coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs in the Gauteng provincial government. The findings flow from the interviews with the participants selected for the study. As part of providing context, several direct quotations from the participants are included as their words express their views clearly.

Fifteen (15) participants were interviewed, and their demographical profile as it pertains to this study are as follows:

Table 4.1: Demographic profile of study participants

Participant number (P)	Region/Unit	Job title	Years of work experience in Social Work	Formal experience in coaching	Coaching arranged by	Beneficial?
1.	Head Office	Social Work Manager	28	No	n/a	n/a
2.	Head Office	Social Work Manager	32	Yes	GPG Coach*	Yes
3.	Head Office	Social Work Manager	34	No	n/a	n/a
4.	Head Office	Senior Manager: Social Work	25	Yes	GPG coach*	Yes

Participant number (P)	Region/Unit	Job title	Years of work experience in Social Work	Formal experience in coaching	Coaching arranged by	Beneficial?
5.	Sedibeng	Social Work Manager	15	No	n/a	n/a
6.	Sedibeng	Social Work Manager	8	No	n/a	n/a
7.	West Rand	Social Work Supervisor	16	No	n/a	n/a
8.	West Rand	Social Work Manager	9	No	n/a	n/a
9.	Tshwane	Social Work Manager	7	Yes	MMBEC student*	Yes
10.	Tshwane	Social Work Manager	38	No	n/a	n/a
11.	Tshwane	Social Work Supervisor	25	No	n/a	n/a
12.	Ekurhuleni	Social Work Supervisor	34	No	n/a	n/a
13.	Johannesburg	Social Work Manager	32	No	n/a	n/a

Participant number (P)	Region/Unit	Job title	Years of work experience in Social Work	Formal experience in coaching	Coaching arranged by	Beneficial?
14.	Johannesburg	Social Work Supervisor	20	No	n/a	n/a
15.	Johannesburg	Social Work Supervisor	18	No	n/a	n/a

* Approached by coaches who needed coachees for practical purposes/ their portfolios of evidence

Most of the participants are based at regional offices of GDSD. Of the fifteen, only three had fewer than ten years of experience in the social work environment at GDSD. Only three (3) participants had been exposed to coaching by a trained coach.

All interviews were conducted in 2022 and stopped once saturation was reached; the saturation point was reached when no new or additional perspectives or information were forthcoming. For this study, saturation was reached at fifteen (15) interviews.

The interview data revealed various themes with underlying sub-themes, presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Main themes and sub-themes

Main Themes	**Sub-themes**
Understanding Coaching and its existence in Social Development	Awareness of Coaching and the relationship of Coaching to mentoring and supervision Exposure to being coached & benefits of such. Existence of coaching practice in DSD
Critical success factors of coaching	Coach characteristics Choice and selection of coaches Potential benefits of coaching Potential beneficiaries SSP Framework incorporation
The viability of coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs	Viability of Coaching in GDSD Hindrances (Organisational & personal) Steps to institutionalise it

Themes and subthemes were organised according to each proposition and will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

4.2 Results for Proposition One

4.2.1 Understanding coaching and its existence in Social Development

In exploring the nature of coaching for SSPs in GDSD, three sub-themes emerged, namely a) the awareness of what coaching is and how it relates to mentoring and supervision; b) exposure to formal coaching programmes; and c) the existence of coaching programmes in GDSD. The responses to each of these will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.2.2 Awareness of Coaching and the relationship to mentoring and supervision

The majority of the participants in the study indicated that they have some understanding of the term coaching. Participants that had been formally coached (participants 2,4,9) had a clearer understanding of coaching and used words like it (i) “being a journey of introspection”, (ii) “the coach acting as a mirror”, (iii) “the client setting the agenda for coaching” and it being (iv) “a journey of professional and personal growth and a thinking space”.

When asked what informed their perspective, the candidates who indicated they were formally coached (P2, P4, P9) linked it back to their exposure to being formally coached. Some participants (participant 3) picked up on solution-focused coaching and quoted, “Coaching is an unknown term for me; what I hear about coaching is that a senior manager, and that's perhaps my perception, takes you under their wing" (P3, 2022).

The definitions provided included, “coaching is also a journey of introspection, where you allow yourself to look inward and see how you contribute to your workspace, challenges conflicts, or actually stopping yourself from developing your full potential" (P4, 2022) to:

> “I don’t have a formal definition ... to guide the person, to grow: personal growth, professional growth, and development… there's also specific terms

> and conditions during the coaching process… in the coaching session, the needs of the coachee is the centre” (P9, 2022).
>
> "Yes, you've got somebody but all they need to do is plant a seed. And then you can nurture that seed and you grow it to becoming a plant" (P4, 2022).

Some participants (P 9 and P13) linked it to a person that helps you find solutions, helps you work through blind spots, provides a space to ventilate, and even as “a person who drills you”. Alternatively, "…a person that can help you think through difficult things, a person that can help with difficult conversations or things that you feel is hampering you to you to be at your best." (P9, 2022).

> Participant 9 also touched on the coach meeting with the coachee where they are at "I determine … what we want to discuss. So it's all about meeting the coachee where she is at. … the coach meets that person where she is at. And the coachee will then determine the way." (P9, 2022).

Interestingly a few linked coaching to a soccer coach (P8, P9, P13 and P15), namely that the coach directs the conversation but leaves execution to you, just like a soccer coach will do with a soccer team. In the case of a coach and a soccer coach, both benefit the team or the coachee. In their words, the following :

> “I think of a process that enables someone to achieve their potential. What immediately comes to my mind is the soccer coach, that if the football players need a coach, his involvement is basically to help them win and to have the team come up with strategies and stuff. So a coach for me is someone like that, who is there to assist you see your own shortcomings and work around them to the benefit of the organiser, just like a soccer coach with a soccer team who operates to the benefit of the team.” (P8, 2022).

> Participant 13 added, "…the coach is sort of the person like how you see the coach in the soccer match on the side-line on the day….don't throw him/herself into the game." (P13, 2022).

Most of the candidates were very clear in what they understood supervision for SSPs to be and that it differs from coaching and mentoring. For example:

> "Supervision in our context, and social workers, has three elements; you supervise the administrative part of the work, like allocating work and ensuring that it's done, keeping, you keep the supervisee in check, ensuring work is happening and there is an element of education to it, that from time to time, you need to identify where they are lacking even as you supervise you get to see what are they struggling with, and you plan around that to say that maybe in our next session, we'll deal with a particular area that is a challenge. And also, it also has to do with dealing with personal issues if they have and if they need to be referred for outside external assistance, you do that. So that is supervision in social work. It has those three legs." (P8, 2022).

Differentiating between coaching and mentoring provided mixed responses from the participants. Some blurred the lines between the two definitions, with some seeing coaching as very informal and defining it as an *as-and-when-needed* intervention and some seeing mentoring as the more formal process of the two. Participant 4 summarised it well, responding that "…most people don't understand the difference between the three".

Participants 4, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 13 shared that mentoring is about helping the mentee with specific career-related matters and modelling how to execute tasks or conduct themselves (P12), a "watch, learn and you do" (P4) approach whilst coaching places you in "the driving seat" (P4, P9, 2022).

Some participants could not distinguish between coaching and mentoring, like participant 15, who shared that "coaching is mentoring" (P15, 2022).

The following tables show how some participants differentiated between coaching and mentoring, illustrating the lack of understanding of how the two differ.

Table 4.3: Differentiating coaching and mentoring

Coaching	**Mentoring**
"I see coaching as a way of, I think it's training and guiding people underneath you, people that is reporting to you. So for me, you coach them by teaching them to do things in a certain way and in line with the requirements of the job they are in. For me, there's a thin line, I think, between coaching and mentoring, but I think coaching is more task orientated to move a person from where they currently are to a space or to a place where they are required to be" (P12) *"Whereby with coaching, I think you want to create another environment whereby you try and teach them how to do the job."* (P12)	*"Coaching is mentoring. A colleague a supervisor or any other official within the workplace. At the moment, yes, I will refer to it like that mentoring"* (P15)
"But with Coaching, it's more relaxed. It's a more relaxed type of supervision for me, because when you quote a person, you don't have to formalise that by sitting down and saying now we will be doing 123. And for me it comes spontaneous." (P15)	
"Coaching is when like you support a colleague with a particular challenge or a problem at the workplace that she's having in an informal way. As with especially the newly appointed to social workers, as they come in to consult or to inquire about certain things, may it be report writing or may it be how to conduct themselves in how to	*"Mentoring for me, it's structured, mentoring, for me it's format, because you've got to sit down with an official, you have identified certain things, maybe in terms of supervision, maybe there is lack of supervision." (P6)*

Coaching	Mentoring
probe more, especially when they conduct interviews with the client, and then that is when you coach him or her in terms of how to go about in getting the answers from the clients. So for me coaching, it's done in an informal way. There is no structured like sessions or structured systems to be followed when you conduct coaching in my workplace at the moment." (P6)	
"Coaching is for me a process where you assist somebody you don't supervise …. where they kind of share information with one another" (P7)	*"Mentoring is kind of you steer somebody in a direction " (P7)*
"I'm not so clued up with coaching, ,,,,. so I take it that the coach make you aware that by the way, you're doing very well in this particular area and it can be developed further" (P8)	*"Mentoring has to do with being there to support and also to guide, more like someone learning from you" (P8)*
"Coaching is a process where an individual or a group because, remember in social development, we deal with work and casework, where a group receives individual or group guidance and advanced advice from a more experienced colleague. That's my understanding of coaching, with the aim of improving performance." (P11) *"coaching, I think the immediate goal is when you want immediate results, then like you have a project, then you will be able to coach a person so that you are you are able to meet a deadline of some sort"* (P11)	*"Then the mentoring you impart the knowledge in terms of your experience and your knowledge to say this is what I'm going to teach a person on how to do the work."* (P11)

This table illustrates that many participants have no clear definition of what coaching is, that coaching, mentoring, and supervision are intertwined, or that the understanding

of mentoring is not on par. Therefore this leaves room for GDSD to educate SSPs on the differences between coaching and mentoring.

4.2.3 Exposure to being coached and the benefits of such.

Three participants (P2, P4 and P9) indicated they were the beneficiaries of a formal coaching relationship with a coaching professional. The coaching was provided by Gauteng City Region Academy coaches or MMBEC students needing coaching exposure for their portfolios. These coaches approached the participants and offered their services. The participants indicated that they took the opportunity offered as self-development and growth are high on their list of priorities. None of the participants received coaching because it was a formal programme introduced by GDSD. These coaching relationships lasted between 6 to 12 months.*" I have been coached over a period of 8 months, and it was a structured relationship with a contract and set meeting times and dates. The agenda remained mine"* (P9, 2022).

> *"The coach was somebody that was my go-to person in any challenges or dilemmas I may have had to think through…. At a point when this person developed himself, he decided to ask me if he can coach me* " (P4, 2022).

Some participants (P12) mentioned attending workshops that helped them understand what coaching is. Participants could not elaborate on the details when prompted about the year and service provider: "Some workshop on coaching and mentoring a few years ago, by the department" (P8, 2022).

During the interview, P3, P7 and P13, after the researcher shared a definition of coaching, indicated that although they have not entered into formal coaching relationships, they believe they had informal coaching relationships with particular managers during their careers. The emphasis was on it being informal, as and when they needed it. It sometimes took the form of a meeting over coffee or an on-the-run encounter when they needed to brainstorm a solution or bounce an idea off the person. They all emphasised that they relied on managers or former managers whom they

looked up to, an expert in the social work field who created the space to help them think through a solution.

> “I wouldn't say that people, specifically called it coaching and said, I'm coaching you, but I had supervisors in my career, who saw potential in me, and they would give me opportunities to do certain things, to allow me to develop my potential even further” (P13, 2022).

> "No, I never had a coach in a private setting and then I believe in a certain percentage, my previous supervisor was also coaching me to a certain degree" (P5, 2022).

> "Like when you have difficult cases, I'll just bounce it with her. And then she will obviously give examples that will unravel whatever solution that was there in finalising the case" (P15, 2022).

Participant 10 mentioned that SSPs are very insular in their approach to the work environment, which could explain why there was no clear understanding of coaching.

> “I think we can be within our different professions, inward focused on what we do and our legislation and our ethics and this may cause that we often do not look outside the profession and see what is there that we can actually use to make us a better social worker. As Social workers we always need to keep our scope of practice in mind” (P10, 2022).

4.2.3 Existence of Coaching as a practice in DSD

All the participants indicated that coaching as a practice for developing and supporting SSPs does not exist, nor has it been introduced in Gauteng Social Development. Participants 2, 4 and 9 experienced formal coaching relationships, but these stemmed from students who offered managers in GDSD an opportunity of being coached as part of their practical coaching exposure.

"I'm not aware of any formal offering, the only time I had access to coaching is when officials within the department needed to do this as part of the practicals in terms of their own training" (P2, 2022).

"I'm not aware of any at the moment." (P12, 2022).

"So right now, I'm not aware of anything other than people doing it in their own spaces." (P13, 2022).

4.3 Results of Proposition 2

Proposition 2 focused on the critical success factors deemed necessary for coaching to succeed in the SSP environment in GSD. Five sub-themes flowed from the interviews with research participants, namely 1) coach characteristics, 2) the choice of and selection of coaches, 3) the foreseen benefits of coaching in GDSD, 4) perceptions around who could benefit most from coaching programs for SSPs, and 5) the value, or not, of incorporating coaching as a concept into the SSP framework. Each of the sub-themes are discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.3.1 Coach characteristics

Participants' responses about what they looked for in a coach were influenced by those who had first-hand experience in a coaching relationship (P2, P4, P9). In contrast, those who have not been formally coached (P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8 and P10-P15) responded after the researcher provided a baseline definition of what coaching entails. The participants listed various attributes and behaviours and touched on knowledge and skills.

Most participants (P2, P4, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13) listed good listening skills, trustworthiness, solution-focus, open-mindedness, firmness, emotional intelligence, maturity, good interpersonal skills and being able to keep discussions confidential as key attributes they will look for in a coach. Some participants (P3, P5, P6, P7, P14, P15) listed professionalism, confidence, self-awareness, honesty and integrity, empathy, commitment, motivation, non-judgmental and being able to walk the talk.

Some participants highlighted knowledge and skills requirements, namely, the coach should be an expert in the field of coaching, understand the social work sector and have experience as a coach. Only P11 indicated that the coach's accreditation and coaching qualifications would be an important requirement for her. She further highlighted that the reputation and profile of the coach would be an essential part of how she selects a coach.

> "…who's organised and systematic in their thinking because sometimes a coaching session can have so many layers of issues, and you need somebody to kind of nicely synthesise through it. And then, you know, take the other person out and say, Okay, let's focus on these areas because these are coming out more strongly, instead of us now trying to eat this elephant" (P4, 2022).

> "…demonstrating empathy and not see you making a mountain out of a molehill, empathise with what that person is going through. I think from a knowledge point of view, I think this is very important.: The coach should be well read, abreast on certain developments, but somebody who is clued up on international practices and is able to bring it down and say, you know, this is what they've tried, this is what work, who can maybe bring it closer to home, somebody who's well-read both from a South African perspective, but also from an international perspective. I think I find that draws my interest when somebody is able to draw on other case studies from an international level, somebody who's well-read and knowledgeable." (P2, 2022)

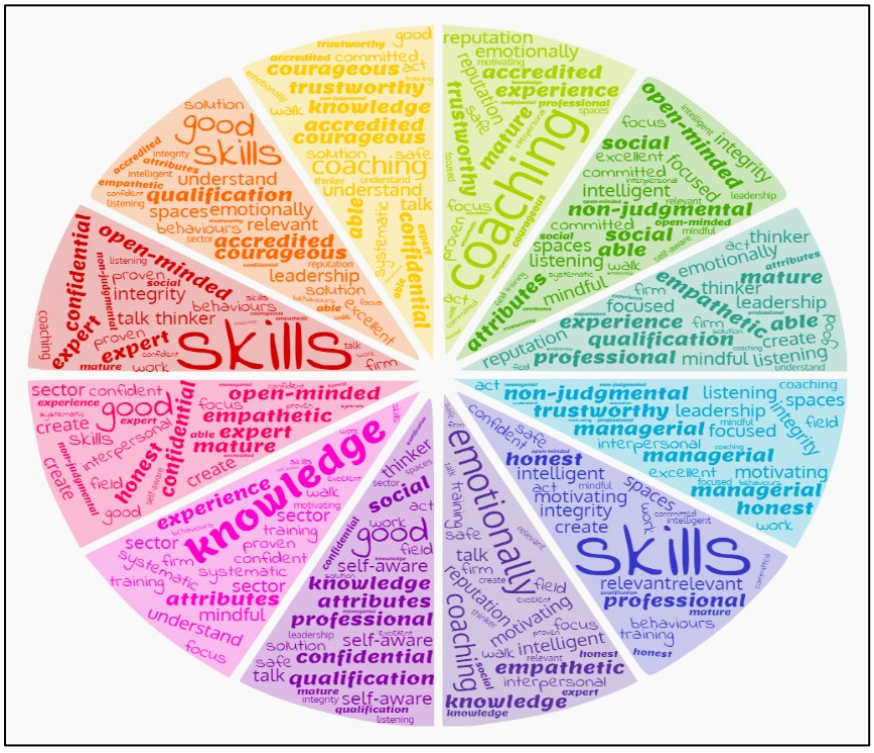
Some participants focused on how well the coach can create a safe space, focus the coachee, be mindful that it is a thinking space for the coachee and dare to point out difficult things to the coachee (P2, P9 and P12).

The words used by the participants to describe the attributes of a coach are captured in Figure 5. In words, the participants shared the following, *"a good listener, the one who is supportive, will be able to link theory to practical examples"* (P15) and, *"…coach*

needs to create a safe space; tapping into your deepest thoughts, your values, your beliefs and being vulnerable with someone, you need to feel safe." (P7).

> "…somebody who has a positive attitude….who is committed …. have self-confidence, is able to build that confidence in others as well …. it must also be a person who understand others, who understand diversity and who is able to understand that people are coming from different backgrounds and who knows how to deal with them, how to approach them, and it must be a person who is self-aware, about herself, aware about the organisation and must have qualities of a leader". (P6, 2022).

Figure 4.1: Attributes of a coach generated on *WordSaladApp*



Source: Author's own

4.3.2 Choice and selection of coaches

In their responses on the attributes of a coach, some participants, without prompting, shared their views on the choice of coaches and the selection of staff to be trained as coaches should GDSD decide to train in-house coaches.

The view raised was that clear criteria need to be in place for selecting managers to be trained as coaches (if the organisation decides to follow an internal approach), i.e. a screening process would be valuable. The reason provided lies in the reputation of some managers who may volunteer for such training but whose behaviour may not be what would be required from a coach (creating and keeping a safe space for the coachee). This perspective emerged from their experiences and perceptions of the behaviour of such managers in GDSD. Some participants shared that potential coaches should be nominated instead of volunteering to be trained and that criteria such as integrity, trustworthiness, and the person's attitude must be at the heart of such nominations.

> "…internal introspection is needed to before you agree to becoming a coach, you need to be clear about where you are at, your intentions and whether in becoming a coach whether you'll be a good influence or a bad influence. And then also if you have been in your department and you feel I can, I can be a coach because nobody can teach me anything, but I can teach a few people some lessons here. If you go with that kind of an attitude into the coaching session, then I think the coaching session might lose its essence in the sense that the coach will dictate, will dominate, and determine the direction in which the relationship would go compared to the coachee saying that this is what I would like us to discuss. This is my topic. This is where I want to grow and develop."(P9, 2022).

> *"The coach can make or break the effectiveness of coaching. So the person must also be strong and honest. You need to be honest with yourself, have you dealt with those things deep down that you might suppress but then those things that you have hidden influence the coaching relationship and it might*

just bring it to the fore, so you need to deal with yourself and be okay with yourself …in terms of why you become a coach, if your have intentions are to use it as a boxing glove in a boxing ring then I would say stay far away. So I think there should be some sort of a screening process. Should the department want to make this a compulsory thing, there has to be a screening criterion and then then I think it can work" (P9, 2022).

"…when you choose people to be trained to be coaches, that it should be a very careful selection of people because I think a coach should really also inspire people and they should have that energy that they pass on that make people feel that yes, it's something that I can achieve, it is something new that can go into my life" (P10, 2022).

Most participants advocated for coaches to be external service providers (some participants said with knowledge of the social work field though the majority did not list it as a requirement). In their view, this would create a greater level of trust in a coaching programme to support and develop SSPs, and it may increase participation in such a practice or program.

"Getting somebody from the outside is better. And I will go further, I will offer that an external coach will definitely bring a fresh perspective on things. Their experience on conflict resolution for example may be different or they'll be able to plant a seed; because you are interacting with the same people all the time, I just feel it may work for me" (P4, 2022).

"Being historic in this department also means that depending on how you conducted yourself you've a reputation. So the point I'm trying to make is your conduct, how people perceive you will influence your trustworthiness as a coach, if internal coaches are chosen " (P3, 2022).

P13 advocated for a hybrid model, suggesting that internal coaches do not coach staff in their regions but in other regions in GDSD. The perceptions around the selection of coachees and coaches to be trained showed that transparency and fairness would be paramount to avoid it being seen as an elitist program with only a few benefitting.

P4 advocated a balance in selecting participants, as some SSPs may volunteer to be coached or be trained as a coach. The “eager beavers” are invested in their own growth and development and use growth opportunities, whereas some participants may not volunteer. As a result, the participant suggested that supervisors and managers may need some leeway to nominate SSPs for participation (either to be coachees or to train as coaches).

Only one of the participants mentioned that the coaches would need supervision, so introducing coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs would meet the highest standard of professionalism.

4.3.3 Foreseen & experienced benefits of coaching

Participants identified various benefits that could flow from coaching programs for SSPs; these ranged from personal to organisational benefits.

Some participants shared their views on how the organisation could benefit from coaching through increased self-insight, awareness, and personal productivity. Most participants responded that it could assist coachees in understanding the demands of the work environment better and assist growth. Three participants (P2, P7, and P12) shared that introducing coaching could potentially increase the employer's reputation as a caring employer. Caring in the sense that GDSD will be seen as investing in the development and growth of staff, which in turn can change the staff's attitude towards how they experience GDSD as an employer.

> “…the department in a way is so compliance driven, and target driven, that there is rarely time for conversation or time for personal development. So should the department consider such a program? Obviously, the spin offs could be that people might feel cared for because the employer gives them time for development. It could create a safer space which might increase productivity and trust, … if the coaches that are assigned to coach …. embody trust and confidentiality” (P3, 2022).

"…if it helps me see my own blind spots, areas where I need development, it will make me a better person and a better manager. And if I'm able to go there and say I have a problem like confronting people or managing conflicts for example in my section, if it can help me in that area, then coaching may assist because I will not avoid dealing with those people." (P8, 2022).

"…coaching can bring about increased job satisfaction, … it can help us retain social workers because they may feel unmotivated, have no reason to come to work but if they know there's someone that can assist and listen and guide that can change that despondency around." (P11, 2022).

"We use our knowledge and our skills from what we have learned from school, and what we have been experiencing as we move along at the workplace. So with coaching, I think it will assist to improve our performance and to improve our relationships. And we'll create a space whereby we will engage, where we will deliberate. And we'll come up with a way, a positive way, or a developmental way in terms of how to improve our service delivery at the workplace." (P6, 2022).

The participants that were coached (P2, P4 and P9) shared the following views related to the benefits that flowed for them from coaching:

"… I think what the coaching assisted me with and because I came with a lot of emotions, a lot of unresolved emotions, what the coaching has helped me to do is to resolve those emotions and not let it affect me in the workspace." (P2, 2022).

"I could determine the direction or my coaching topic, I could determine in which area I want to grow, it was also not set in stone as it was a flexible process where throughout the coaching sessions, we would evaluate, we would stop and pause, backwards and forward and the coach would keep asking me at each session about the relevance of my coaching topic, the

> flexible element also helped as I could determine the pace at which we go, even though my coaching topic was to be the best public sector manager that I could possibly be." (P9, 2022).

Participant 4 touched on barriers that could have closed out reflective opportunities for her. She mentioned that a barrier could potentially be the familiarity with or gender of the coach. As her coach was from the GDSD space and a person she looked up to professionally, in hindsight, she realised that she kept the engagement focused on work-related growth, relationships, and performance. She did not share any challenges (children, marriage) she had experienced on a personal level. Naturally, in hindsight, she postured that she may have missed opportunities to delve into personal matters that could have affected her professional presence and growth. For this reason, she shared that external coaches, unfamiliar with who you are and how you show up in GDSD, could hold a more significant advantage for growth and increased self-insight in patterns and behaviours.

4.3.4 Perceptions of potential beneficiaries of coaching in GDSD

Most participants favoured a layered approach arguing that coaching should be introduced for SSPs on managerial and supervisory levels (the so-called promotional levels), specifically newly appointed supervisors. The reasons provided by participants ranged from preferring mentoring and supervision for new entrants (social workers) to familiarise them with the work environment and departmental practices and assisting to minimise conflict. In their view, conflict could arise where juniors become more assertive due to coaching, and managers are not mature enough to handle more assertive junior staff. Lastly, participants expressed that due to the cost and time investment related to coaching, it could be a better-positioned tool for managers and supervisors/ better value for money.

> “Target newly appointed supervisors and managers at middle management level because I find that it's easy to create an impression and direct them because they are more open and receptive to it, as opposed to those that have been in the profession for donkey's years” (P4, 2022).

> “…internally when you make the transition maybe from a social worker to a social work supervisor, the jump from being a social worker to a social work supervisor, needs a mind shift and putting things in perspective and you will look at the transition from a social worker to a supervisor and when you transition to a social work manager. That could maybe be first prize and then it especially for people that come from outside the public service, whichever level” (P9, 2022).

P10 and P12 expressed a similar view that all levels could benefit from coaching.

> “…as well as our social workers. They've got the literature, they've got their books, but not practical knowledge or exposure of what a social worker should be. Working in the field coming from university and then actually working with clients are two different things, they can benefit from coaching to make the transition.” (P12, 2022).

Participant 13 had a similar view with a slight condition: one or two years after assuming duty as an SSP, because the first year is typically devoted to finding your feet in the workspace.

4.3.5 Views on the incorporation of coaching as a practice in the Supervision framework for SSPs

The participants did not have a uniform view of whether coaching should form an element of the Supervision Framework for SSPs.

Some participants, like P4, felt that coaching as a practice should find expression in the SSP framework. She linked it to a systematic approach to work that guides operations better.

> "…if it does see expression in that framework, I think it will be more well received. People will be able to understand how it fits into the context of their work, how it would benefit them. And they will be able to also understand what the roles and the responsibilities are and what coaching can achieve . So, I'm thinking why not put it down in the framework. Supervision is about development. It's about guidance. It's about support. Mentoring has its place, and it will help to clarify what coaching is about, to clearly spell it out. I think more people will be more receptive to it. We work in a system; it can make it easy, more easily acceptable if people understand it in context especially as most people don't understand the difference between the three" (P4, 2022).

Most participants, including P8 and P9, believed that coaching should be introduced as a stand-alone practice. Some participants indicated that it should be captured in key performance indicators to ensure that managers and employees in the social work field make time for it. Participant number 9 expressed her view as follows:

> "…if we can maximise the concept of coaching and if it's separated, because in the Social Work supervision context, you talk work and what needs to be achieved in advancing the interests of employer. But then on the coaching level, there we can now focus on the things that makes good managers and were a person is at: am I growing and in charge of my growth trajectory? In a supervision session with a social worker, you would know exactly how to guide because it's in a work context. But on a coaching level, it can be a bit personalised: where you have your own slack or where do you need to find your source of strength" (P9, 2022).

P8 strongly felt that coaching would not risk being usurped in the supervision framework for SSPs if it were a stand-alone program. As a stand-alone program, the

emphasis on managerial abilities and interpersonal relationship skills will receive the required attention for these categories of SSPs.

The research participants listed conclusive views on who could benefit most from a coaching program in the SSP category. However, there was no shared view on which of the SSPs categories would benefit the most. In responding to whether it should form an element of the SSP framework, most participants did not support adding it to the SSP framework. However, they favoured coaching as a stand-alone support program to develop SSPs.

4.4 Results for Proposition 3

Proposition 3 explores perceptions of whether coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD. The sub-themes that emerged were the following: the viability of coaching as a practice in Gauteng Social Development, the hindrances foreseen both from an organisational and a personal perspective and the steps to consider when institutionalising coaching as a practice.

4.4.1 Viability of Coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs

When participants were asked whether coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs, the majority responded positively. They expressed that coaching could create reflective spaces for growth. As a result, it can increase confidence, especially as coachees tap into their own wisdom and abilities. It can also provide a space to calibrate their previous knowledge and experience with what is needed in their new/promotional environments.

> “I needed a strong person, somebody who understood the department, somebody who could guide because I spent about 17 years in the NGO sector in managerial positions. And I've applied for the job in government, but when

> I came over, it felt like I knew nothing. You know, it's like what they say about learning being a lifelong process" (P9, 2022).

One participant called it a "top-up" that can enhance self-development and growth and add another layer to the organisation's growth and development of SSPs, in addition to the supervision and mentoring mechanisms. The coach's ability to open different views on a topic was listed as a great advantage to allow SSPs to think beyond the obvious.

Some participants said no. In their view, various organisational and personal hindrances exist. The organisational hindrances they cited linked to capacity, time constraints, and individual and organisational behaviour and patterns. These are discussed in the next paragraph.

4.4.2 Hindrances (personal or organisational)

The participants listed hindrances that touched both on organisational and personal aspects. These hindrances ranged from how coaches will be sourced, whether internal or external coaches are used, the level of emotional maturity of managers, the limitations when internal coaches are used, and the time and energy invested in coaching relationships.

In responding to why it may not work, some participants listed concerns around the conditions linked to a coaching program: the sourcing of coaches, the time and energy needed, and how it is introduced and coordinated. In their view, coaching's drawback is the considerable time and energy investment both from releasing coaches (if internal coaches are used) to do the work (coaching) and releasing coachees (the time it will take employees away from their workstations). The other drawback, in their view, could be the emotional maturity of managers who could see coached staff as a threat, especially when they start experiencing the growth and development of juniors. A spin-off from coaching could be more assertive junior staff. As a result, managers may push back against coaching as a practice, particularly if they are not taught how to manage

more mature junior employees or are not well-versed in what they can expect due to employees' coaching (P4). One of the participants (P10) shared that SSPs, by nature, are very inward looking and do not easily explore new tools outside of their scope, and hence in her view, how it is introduced will be critical.

Some participants listed various reasons why they believed that, at this stage, it would not be viable practice for Gauteng's social development. Interestingly it is also participants who have never been in formal coaching relationships. Of this group, most cited that supervision is not done due to time and capacity constraints and according to the Supervision Framework for SSPs. This view is partly due to the vast deficit of supervisors versus social workers, ratios of 1:12 vs ideal ratios of 1:6, leaving them (social work managers and supervisors) with no time to supervise staff. Participants also indicated that supervisors and managers are expected to drive an ever-demanding organisational agenda (regular increases in the annual performance plan targets from head office), leaving little to no space for supervision. Lastly, they expressed that organisational practices have blurred boundaries (virtual work leads to supervisors and managers being caught in meetings, sometimes unplanned and irrelevant to them), increasing the demand for their time. As a result, supervision practices are sacrificed. Examples of these views are:

> "I think that the biggest challenge we have in social development, actually in the workplace for that matter, is the time to implement coaching. If they have to ask me: "Do you want to be part of coaching?", I think earlier in my profession, I would have loved to be coached because now sometimes you wonder if you're doing the things correctly. So I think the critical thing is to have time to implement coaching and then also the trust factor. It's the time and it's the trust and obviously the person who's going to coach, who needs to be a knowledgeable person with years of experience and expertise within the field" (P12, 2022).

> “I really think all of us need a coach. For me, the biggest stumbling block like I've explained to you earlier is to make time because we don't even really get time to do supervision. It's expected of us but because of running around, you plan, and you organise but within the workplace, it's not always happening the way we want it to happen due to time constraints. So for me, that is the biggest challenge, namely will we ensure that it's going to take place.” (P12, 2022).

> “…there's so much focus on performance and reaching targets and reaching return dates. That I really don't know how coaching is going to assist us. If it comes in, maybe coaching will enable us or show us how it can benefit the performance of the department if people understand more of what is expected of them. I think it is not what people do not know or understand but the expectations. It is the pressure of the constant return dates and times. And they are bombarding us with so many meetings. Teams’ meetings, like you will sit in three or four different meetings in the same day, not being able to really execute what you have planned for the day. So I think coaching can maybe assist us how to deal with this kind of thing. But I think the working environment at the moment is not a very friendly space because we are just pushing targets. We are just pushing priorities. And maybe we need to be coached how to deal with it because I don't think it's going to change. And for me that is a big challenge. It may be about time management, planning and organising, but even if you teach me and you coach me how to plan and to organise, but my employer is bombarding me with three meetings that I have to attend in a day, how am I supposed to stick to my time management, my planning, my organising?” (P12, 2022).

On a personal level, some participants (10 years and longer in the SSP environment) expressed that they have reached the stage where they are not interested in coaching as a formal programme.

> “To me, for myself, I feel I'm too old for these things. But I think there's always room for growth. And, and sometimes, yes, I do think, oh, my goodness, I wish I could have that person to just sort of bounce ideas off. So yeah, so I think we all would need it. But for me personally, it's not something that I would sort of look for or in a more formalised kind of way right now, where I'm at” (P13, 2022).

Some participants highlighted that the Department would need to guard against resistance it may encounter in implementing coaching, especially as buy-in and support from senior management and social work managers and supervisors are a cornerstone of driving coaching as a practice. If not well conceptualised and introduced, it can easily be seen as another bright idea from management, a burden or an extra child that needs to be adopted, *"they see it as a parent sees an extra child"* (P6).

Two participants expressed that resistance could flow from the fact that many projects have been implemented in the Department, are still ongoing, and are not completed. In the words of P13:

> “Are we in a position to actually start a program like this? Because I look at all of the half-done things, big things. Let's take a stupid example. Let's take ……, we think we've implemented it, but people are not using it. And millions have been spent on it. ….. So, my concern with things like this is that it shouldn't be half baked. If we do it, we're going to go full on. And I don't know if as a department, we are ready for something like this. Because that's my concern, we hype it up, and then nothing happens, or it gets done halfway.“ (P13, 2022).

Another potential hindrance could be how employees’ approach and use tools such as coaching and wellness. Participants listed that employees often approach these tools or programs with ulterior motives and see them as an opportunity to drive their own agendas. They either do not understand the role and space of it or aim to use it to their benefit. Many employees have approached wellness interventions from an

angle that it can be used to deal with a person they are in conflict with (instead of using labour relation mechanisms) or to solicit a transfer (instead of pursuing and relying on HR policies and practices).

Participants 9 and 10 also raised the attitude of officials towards new ideas.

> “I think sometimes people are becoming angry about things, sometimes when listening to some of the reasons why people are angry with the department, for example, in some instances, they are ill-informed or misinterpret policies and procedures and the prescripts of the department. It's misinterpreted or misconstrued or distorted or whatever. And that influence who you are and how you execute your duties in the workplace. And those things are critical factors that can make the coaching concept in the department to work or to fail, but I think it's an individual process. It depends on where that particular individual is at in their career journey in the department.” (P10, 2022).

> “So depending on the attitude of your officials, where are they at in their professional growth and development stage. I think that is a critical factor because they might feel been there done that, you know what, you can't teach me anything. Then the coaching sessions might not work for a person like that, especially if the person feels but I know it all. You can't teach me anything new.” (P9, 2022).

All the participants listed the manner in which coaching as a practice is introduced as critical. In their view, the nature of the organisational culture in Gauteng Social Development lends itself to gossip and perceptions. It can perpetuate a view of elitism without a fair and transparent way to introduce coaching. This view was e]explained in light of the absence of criteria of how coachees can join and benefit from coaching or how staff, if internal coaches are trained, are selected to become coaches. Some participants also highlighted that, in their view, some of the SSPs in Gauteng Social Development has a bad reputation. Time and experience have shown that they cannot keep matters confidential. Confidentiality is listed as one of the essential criteria for coaching to be a success.

Trust was a recurring theme; most participants indicated they would not be comfortable using internal coaches. This reluctance is expressed in the view that “your stories are heard in the corridors of the department regardless of whether you confided in your supervisor or in your wellness coordinator, who vowed to maintain confidentiality” (P9, 2022).

> *“…in Social Development we have had a lot of trust issues, trust issues in the sense that we don't trust anybody within our organisation to the point of opening up to them because of the track record that we've had”* (P4, 2022).

> “And for me there was nothing that I discussed with my coach (an internal person) that I ever heard elsewhere. Because you know sometimes, we will have a way of telling when you are in a crowd and people make comments. Then you listen and you would think oh, you know what, that could only have come from that person because that's the only person that I entrusted with it. When you leave you make the connection and then you're so disappointed, but I trusted that person and look now, it's public knowledge. You know…. it is the issue of confidentiality. There is no such in DSD even though we are social service professionals, and we assign to a professional code of ethics for SSPs.” (P9, 2022).

Most participants underlined that how coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs is sold will determine how it is received. One participant mentioned that it would be critical to understanding what coaching aims to achieve and its potential benefits. “…understand that coaching is a personal professional journey; taken to become a better professional, and it has nothing to do with the competencies of me as a supervisor or manager" (P4, 2022).

On the positive side, some participants shared that introducing coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs could work in favour of the employer. These views were expressed from the angles that a) the employees’ perception of the employer as caring can be cultivated due to the investment in your development and growth which flows from coaching, and b) coaching can lead to the creation of a safer workspace where

coachees have thinking and conversation space outside of mentoring and supervision to broaden their views, tap into their own wisdom and being able to think through various topics which they may not have time to do in their typical day and where they can share ideas with a neutral person.

> “So to even think that we can move to coaching you know, if we've not fixed the culture and the thing is time because in this department, there is never time for yourself. You're always goal driven. So I would think if you were allowed for an hour or six hours in work time perhaps to just focus on yourself. It can also show you that you've got a caring employer and make you want to work for them." (P 3, 2022).

4.4.3 Steps to institutionalise coaching

When asked about the steps that the organisation can consider in introducing coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs, the majority of participants spontaneously listed the following steps:

Conceptualise coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs outlining the reasons and benefits of it, capturing it in a policy position (P2) and documenting it in a booklet (e.g. P3, P5, P6, P7, P11). Documenting coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs, in their view, should address both the training of coaches and incorporating coaching exposure into the key performance indicators (KPIs) for SSPs. If internal coaches or a hybrid model of internal and external coaches are used, how participants in the coaching programme are selected (see paragraph 2.2 as selection criteria are outlined as part of the critical success factors) also becomes important. In addition, some participants mentioned that all material should assist SSPs in understanding the difference between supervision, mentoring and coaching and when to apply each. Participant 13 suggested a survey to determine if there is a perceived need before the concept is adopted. Most participants believed it is easier to introduce new concepts if they are institutionalised in performance contracts (P2, P4, P9). Since it requires a time and energy investment in growth and development, it will be easier

for SSPs to commit if it is captured in their performance contracts. The reasons for introducing coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs and how both parties (employee and organisation) will benefit will need to be clearly articulated according to participants. Many participants touched on this, for example:

> "…one will have to start by establishing the need to determine whether there is a need among staff and more or less where that need is located. Because then you will know where to focus. Yeah, I think that will be your starting point and then to raise awareness on the benefits of coaching, and a good understanding of what coaching is all about and then allow people to voluntarily get into such a program." (P10, 2022).

Participants also expressed a view that it be piloted initially or gradually introduced – a view expressed by most participants except Participant 13, whose perception was that GDSD is piloting too many projects with no tangible conclusions or evidence of success. Change management will need to feature strongly in making it a practice to support and develop SSPs (although none of the participants expressed it in these words, this is how the researcher made sense of it).

Create awareness via various communication platforms (majority of participants) inclusive of webinars (P4) and workshops (P6) that demonstrates the support of senior management as their buy-in was listed as a critical success factor. Creating awareness as part of the induction process was also highlighted by participants as an integral part of advocacy. Using SSP fora, like the SWSF, was listed by P1 and P6 as one of the mechanisms to introduce the practice and create awareness, monitor how it is utilised, and advocate for it its introduction.

Participants shared that showcasing the results of a coaching initiative can assist in creating more significant buy-in. This can be achieved by managing and supervising the implementation of a coaching initiative and documenting the return on investment. Sharing positive changes in individual and organisational performance due to the coaching initiative can help how it is embraced. These positive changes could be

increased skills, well-being, individual and organisational productivity, and a change in culture and communication practices under SSPs and in the organisation. Participant 2 suggested, *"*do a before and after research of pre and post coaching to give credence to it and to measure growth" (P2, 2022).

Lastly, some participants outlined that the budget allocation for such a program is part and parcel of whether its introduction will be successful (participants 2 and 4).

4.5 Summary of the results/findings

This chapter describes the results from the data obtained during participant interviews. It captures their views on the nature of coaching in GDSD, the critical success factors to consider for implementing coaching in the GDSD for SSPs, and whether coaching could be practised to develop and support SSPs. The themes from the data were organised around the three constructs that comprise the research title. The researcher attempted to present and organise the data thematically.

The table below captures how the themes link to the propositions and research questions from the researcher's point of view.

Table 4.4: Linkages: research questions, themes, and propositions

Research Question	Main Themes	Sub-themes	Conclusion
Question 1: What is the nature of coaching in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?	Understanding Coaching & its existence in Social Development	Awareness of Coaching and the relationship of Coaching to mentoring and supervision Exposure to being coached & benefits of such. Existence of coaching in DSD	Coaching is non-existent in GDSD. Participants may have benefitted from coaching, but it was not due to an organisational drive to implement or provide coaching services.
Question 2: What are the critical success factors for Coaching to succeed in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?	Critical success factors	Coach characteristics Choice and selection of coaches Potential benefits of coaching Potential beneficiaries SSP Framework incorporation	The critical success factors participants provide do not differ from what the theory and other studies provide.
Question 3: What contribution could coaching make as a	The viability of coaching is a practice to	Viability of Coaching in GDSD	All participants argued that coaching could be a practice to

Research Question	Main Themes	Sub-themes	Conclusion
practice to develop and support social service professionals in Gauteng Social Development?	support and develop SSPs.	Hindrances (Organisational & personal) Steps to institutionalise it	develop and support SSPs, provided the organisational conditions and culture are kept in mind.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, the definition of coaching was well explained by those participants who had exposure to formal coaching in the context of their understanding of what coaching is. Most participants did not understand what coaching entails, and some struggled to differentiate between coaching and mentoring.

Emerging from the results of the interviews, it is clear that SSP coaching programmes do not exist in GDSD. The understanding and awareness of coaching versus mentoring and supervision differ, with some participants describing mentoring as coaching and vice versa, which indicates that the awareness of coaching and its nature under SSPs are limited to non-existing. Where participants benefited from formal coaching relationships, it resulted from coaches reaching out to managers. These invitations were not necessarily aimed at SSPs in GDSD. The invitations for formal coaching relationships emanated from the coach's need to develop his/her coaching skills/repertoire. Therefore, coaching as a practice does not exist in GDSD. Therefore, the researcher could not determine if the nature of Coaching for SSPs is the same or different from other categories of staff who benefit from coaching, like executives and senior managers.

The critical success factors for coaching in GDSD are linked with executive buy-in, coachee commitment, availability, how coaches are selected, support for the coaching, coaches' professionalism, and their skills and experience. In short, it can be grouped into three categories: organisational approach and support, coachee approach, and coach competence. These factors are seen as similar to those listed in the abovementioned research.

In conclusion, some participants strongly believed that coaching is a potential practice to develop and support SSPs; being systematically implemented to ensure the time and energy investment is made and to realise value for money. Most participants advocated for it to be a stand-alone initiative from the Supervision Framework for SSPs. Only some participants believed adding it to the SSP framework could be beneficial.

The majority believed that coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs, which should be piloted initially, addressed in policy documents, and closely supervised. A major make-or-break factor is the organisation’s approach, buy-in from all parties, creating awareness via various platforms, and how return on investment is measured, monitored, and communicated. Some participants doubted whether it would gain traction due to various initiatives implemented by DSD and the Supervision Framework, which in their view, have not been successfully embedded in the general culture of Gauteng Social Development.

Chapter 5 Discussion of the Findings

Chapter 5 contains an examination of the results of the findings related to the three research propositions outlined in Chapter 4. The discussion of the results of each proposition is organised by presenting the findings and then presenting an analysis of the findings evaluated within the context of existing literature as it relates to the research topic. The aim of comparing the findings to the literature is to test whether they are similar or different.

5.1 Introduction

This qualitative study explored the perceived role of coaching in developing and supporting social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government. The link between the three propositions and the research questions can be demonstrated as follows:

Table 5.1: Summary: research questions and propositions

Research Question	**Proposition**
Research Question 1 What is the nature of coaching in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?	**Proposition 1** Coaching is non-existent in GDSD.
Research Question 2 What are the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?	**Proposition 2** The critical success factors for coaching SSPs in GDSD will be similar to those in other industries.

Research Question	Proposition
Research Question 3 What contribution could coaching make as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in Gauteng Social Development?	**Proposition 3** Coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD.

5.2 Demographic profile of respondents

The demographic profile of the fifteen (15) participants is outlined in chapter 4, Table 2; it is devoid of gender, race, and age, as these were not factors considered in answering the research questions. The research was exploratory, and the focus was not to distinguish between groups and their views. The study broadly focussed on SSPs' perceptions and views. From the analysis shared in Chapter 4, it is evident that most participants have not been coached or formally exposed to coaching, nor have they been trained as coaches. The sample of the participants interviewed has 7 to 38 years of experience in the SSP field, all functioning on a supervisory or managerial level related to social work. None were entry-level personnel (meaning social workers).

The following paragraphs capture the most prominent findings for each proposition.

5.3 Discussion of Proposition 1

The central focus of the theme is to reflect on the understanding of coaching and its existence in GDSD. The intention was to explore how aware participants are of coaching as a topic and its nature or prevalence in GDSD. Their perceptions of how coaching is similar to or different from two aspects featured in the Supervision Framework for SSPs, namely mentoring and supervision, were discussed, as was their

exposure to coaching, its perceived benefits and whether it is an existing practice in GDSD.

The research question explored the nature of coaching in the SSP environment in Social Development. Proposition 1 is that coaching in this environment is non-existent or limited to a select group of individuals.

The participants shared that coaching, as a program, does not exist in GDSD. This finding can be compared to a study by Sithole (2017), where most clinical managers (88%) at Gauteng public hospitals indicated a need for coaching to capacitate themselves better. Wallace (2016) explored coaching as an approach to help transition young engineering managers from one level to the next at a state-owned company (parastatal) in South Africa. The key finding was that coaching for levels below executives in this parastatal is not a practice to develop and support younger managers in their professional growth journey.

Coaching is a relatively unfamiliar theme for SSPs in GDSD. This conclusion is drawn from the various attempts at defining coaching; some provided textbook definitions, some participants (Participant 3) were formally coached, which influenced their definitions, and some confused coaching with mentoring. The unfamiliarity of SSPs with the concept of coaching is not surprising and is supported by the literature. Grant, Curtayne, and Burton (2009) observed that coaching is growing into a discipline. Their observations are supported by the 2012 ICF Report (International_Coach_Federation, 2012; Wise & Voss, 2002). However, coaching practice continues to grow, although due to the cost and time intensity of coaching, it is still limited primarily to executives, leaders, and managers (De Vries, 2008; Kets de Vries, 2019; Ward, 2008). After the researcher shared a baseline definition of coaching, some participants believed they had been coached over the years on an informal basis, mainly by previous managers or a person they looked up to and approached as and when needed. This perception flowed from how those managers assisted them in finding solutions to problems and asked open-ended questions. The participants indicated that the manager in question created a space where they could discuss solutions to problems without being judged

or told what to do. All the participants shared a sound view or definition of supervision and how it differs from coaching and mentoring.

Coaching and mentoring are intertwined in the minds of some participants, specifically those who have not benefitted from exposure to formal coaching. Some participants outrightly confused the two concepts; for example, some saw mentoring as the more structured approach with formal contracting documenting the relationship between mentor and mentee. Coaching is seen as the informal, “as and when needed” process. As a formal tool or practice, coaching does not exist in GDSD. The three (3) participants who have been coached benefitted from colleagues who needed coachees to fulfil their curriculum requirements while training as coaches. These participants shared some benefits of their coaching experiences. It helped them deal with emotional baggage, attitudes, and how they presented themselves in the workplace. Further, it allowed them to learn from a more experienced person (one they looked up to) about knowledge and experience to enhance their growth and development.

It can be further argued that the limited literature on SSP coaching supports this finding. It demonstrates that SPPs are unfamiliar with coaching as a practice to support and develop whilst they are very clear on what supervision entails (Engelbrecht, 2019; Chibaya, 2018). Dorkin’s (2009) study is one of a limited number of studies that further supports this view. The study explored the topic of coaching as a possible occupational social work intervention and further highlighted that SSPs do not understand the concept of coaching.

Some participants indicated that they received some theoretical training on what coaching is. However, after being prompted, they could not recall the year the training occurred, who the service provider was, or its intended outcome. Some mentioned that it was merely a topic covered in a workshop. Some managers shared that they had people in their careers who informally took on a similar role to a coach, illustrating that organisations have various ways of learning, which could be formal or informal (Manuti et al., 2015). Furthermore, coaching is still a relatively new tool in developing

personnel who are not executives in organisations (Ganesh et al., 2015; Kets de Vries, 2019).

Literature shows that coaching has inner and outer benefits. The outer benefits, listed by Kumkani (2016), touch on improved skills and behaviours. This is consistent with the coached participants' view that it helped them deal with how they evaluate their impact in the workspace and how they deal with emotions that create barriers for them in the workplace. The statements from coached participants on the benefits they experienced are supported by literature suggesting that coaching increases awareness and leads to behavioural changes (Kahn, 2011; Steyn & Schutte, 2015).

In conclusion, coaching is not a practice used to develop and support SSPs in GDSD. The awareness of coaching and its benefits are low and limited to those exposed to coaching practice. Furthermore, exposure was due to factors outside of GDSD and linked to the practical learning needs of coaches-in-training who required coachees to practice their skills. Therefore, the findings aligns with proposition 1: coaching is non-existent or limited to a select group of individuals who benefitted from coaches approaching them, not because it is a practice for growth and development in GDSD.

5.4 Discussion of Proposition 2

The proposition was that the critical success factors for coaching would be similar to those in environments other than social development.

The research confirmed that SSPs' perceptions of the critical success factors for coaching in GDSD are similar to what is relevant in other organisations. The findings provided information that is grouped around five aspects: the coach characteristics, coach selection and choices, the foreseen benefits of coaching in GDSD, perceptions around the potential beneficiaries under SSPs and the potential incorporation of coaching into the Supervision Framework. The following paragraphs outlines the views of the participants.

Literature shows that the coach's characteristics fall into three groups: attitude, behaviour, and experience (Bonneywell, 2017; McComb, 2012; Theeboom et al., 2014). Participants' inputs highlighted the coach's attitude, which includes openness, respect, honesty, empathy, commitment, and non-judgemental (Augustijnen et al., 2011); whilst Sithole (2017) highlighted the competency of the coach with a vast and adaptive set of skills.

All participants consider the selection and choice of coaches a critical factor. The critical success factors shared can broadly be categorised into three streams: the characteristics/attributes of coaches, their skills and knowledge, and training and accreditation. There was consensus about the characteristics of a good coach: good listening skills, emotionally intelligent, honouring integrity, confidentiality (trustworthiness), the ability to create a safe space, confidence, self-aware, empathetic, motivating, non-judgemental, demonstrated professionalism and a good reputation (walking the talk). The findings linked to coaches' knowledge, skills, and experience resulted from a consensus that coaches should be experts in the coaching field, which touched on both coach-related qualifications and experience in coaching. This links to the work of Wise and Voss (2002) about the education and certification of coaches.

Participants' input about the coach's ability to, for example, hold up a mirror and have hard conversations links to the views in the literature that coaching is not merely an exchange of ideas. At times, coaches must exhibit "confrontation, mirroring and giving direct feedback" (Augustijnen et al., 2011, p. 158). Participants highlighted the ability to intervene when the coachee is unfocused, to judge when to help and what support the coachee needs, and to create trusting relationships between the coach and coachee as well as the coach, coachee and the organisation as critical skills/success factors too. The other factor was the ability to mirror and point out matters that may be difficult for the coachee to face. Some participants highlighted that a coach should be accredited with a professional body and understand the social work sector. A few participants highlighted that coaches would need supervision to ensure their practices

meet coaching standards of professionalism. These views resonated with the coaching industry increasingly promoting the accreditation of coaches (International_Coach_Federation, 2012; Wise & Voss, 2002).

The selection of coachees was another critical success factor requiring clear criteria for the nomination process to participate as a coachee in a coaching program. The nomination process should be open to those who express their interest and to supervisors to nominate employees they feel may be ready for such a developmental step. Literature supports the research findings linked to the nomination of coachees (self-nomination or nomination by a manager) (Diseko, 2017; Kauffman & Coutu, 2009; Van Wyk et al., 2019).

The commitment of coachees to coaching is outlined by Van Wyk et al. (2019) as a critical success factor. If an employee is nominated to participate but is not willing, it could undermine the coaching program. Diseko (2017) and Kauffman and Coutu (2009) highlight the readiness for coaching from a desire to be coached and being willing to invest time and effort. The other critical success factors for internal coaches included a screening process for volunteers and nominees wanting to be trained as coaches. A balance between volunteers and nominees for such training was suggested. The view was that such a screening process could help root out those SSPs who may have a bad reputation in keeping confidences and are mature and experienced enough to take up such a role.

The participants' views on the perceived benefits of a coaching program to support and develop SSPs resonate with studies recording the range of benefits of coaching, from changes in interpersonal relationships to improved productivity (Diseko, 2017; Kombarakaran, 2008; Mvelase, 2019; Wiginton & Cartwright, 2020a). A positive impact on organisational performance is also recorded (Mvelase, 2019; Wiginton & Cartwright, 2020a). As outlined in the literature, the ability to create a safe space (Brock, 2008) and keep coaching conversations confidential have been described (Brock, 2008; Kahn, 2011; Sithole, 2017) as critical success factors. SSPs highlighted

this, especially in light of their negative experiences with confidences not being kept in GDSD.

The question of which SSPs could benefit most from a coaching program resulted in different views from the participants. Some stated how well coaching is received and its perceived outcomes for GDSD would determine the uptake; as well as which categories of SSPs are selected to participate in a coaching program that can make a maximum impact. The majority view was that it be limited to SSPs who have been in the organisation for a while and preferably when transitioning from social workers to social worker supervisors or social work supervisors transitioning to social work manager positions. Coaching is an aspect of professional development in an organisation. There are typically multiple learning and growth pathways in an organisation. For SSPs, this includes the Supervision Framework focused on mentoring and supervision, the Council's professional development requirements and the GDSD human resource development team's annual workplace skills plan. Where to focus or for whom to implement coaching in the SSP category may require complex consultation and decision-making processes.

This context is reflected in literature (Manuti et al., 2015) indicating that organisational learning happens formally and informally. Formal learning methods include formal training (at external institutions, institutionalised coaching, and mentoring programmes), and informal ways include on-the-job training (Manuti et al., 2015). Ultimately the literature shows that organisations may, due to the cost and time investment, opt to use executive coaches for executive staff, whilst a hybrid approach for other categories of staff may be followed, or internal coaches may be trained (Kahn, 2011; McComb, 2012; Schalk & Landeta, 2017).

The choice between internal versus external coaches rendered mixed views from the participants. Most participants preferred the organisation to use coaches external to the organisation. The reason was primarily linked to confidentiality and trust, as their experiences with supervisors and counsellors in GDSD had been negative. Participants also valued "the fresh pair of eyes" that a coach external to GDSD could bring. In their view, this could lead to greater trust in a coaching program. Some of the

participants highlighted that where internal coaches are used, they require training, and their reputations would need to be above reproach regarding trust and confidence. It was further suggested that GDSD consider an approach where internal coaches do not coach their own staff, as this “distance” would complement the need for a "safe space". In their view, using internal coaches has the added benefit of the coach understanding the environment and its pressures.

The findings concerning internal versus external coaches indicate that this may be a decision for the organisation. The participants explained why they would prefer external coaches. The literature outlines the benefits and disadvantages of external versus internal coaches ((McComb, 2012; Schalk & Landeta, 2017; Wise & Voss, 2002). Both have advantages and disadvantages. In light of the participants' views, confidentiality may be the most significant factor GDSD needs to consider if a coaching program is implemented. Organisational decisions will centre around cost. The other factor raised by the participants that the literature supports is the support and buy-in from executive management (Akesson & Canavera, 2018; Dorning, 2009; Mckenzie, 2018; Sithole, 2017). Publishing criteria on how internal coaches are chosen will be essential to ensure transparency and fairness and to build trust.

Participants shared that the perceived benefits of a coaching program could be increased self-insight, awareness, and personal productivity, assisting growth, and a better understanding of the work environment and its demands. For the organisation, it could mean a favourable view of the employer as caring, leading to a positive change in employees’ attitudes towards the employer due to the investment the organisation will make in their growth and development. Where coaching programs are implemented for SSPs, a key critical success factor was the inclusion in their KPIs to ensure it receives the coachee’s time and attention and that supervisors and managers respect this investment. These elements outlined are supported by studies such as those of Elek and Page (2019) and DiGirolamo (2015).

Most participants did not support the inclusion of coaching as a tool available for SSPs as part of the Supervision Framework. Only three (3) participants felt that incorporating it into the Supervision Framework would give it greater credence. However, several participants negated this view stating that GDSD has many initiatives which have not been implemented to full effect to date, one of which is the Supervision Framework and adding another element to it is risky. In their view, managing this risk would entail implementing coaching practice as a new standalone program receiving the attention it deserves. In this way, coaching is not usurped in the Supervision Framework, which focuses on developing social work competencies, whereas coaching focuses on developing thinking capacity and managerial competencies.

In conclusion, proposition 2, namely that the critical success factors for coaching for SSPs are similar to that for other categories of staff and in other organisations, is supported.

5.5 Discussion of Proposition 3

The research question was to explore what contribution coaching could make as a practice to develop and support SSPs in Gauteng Social Development. Proposition 3 is that coaching can contribute as a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD. Three subthemes flowed from the interviews with participants; how viable it will be to introduce coaching in GDSD, the organisational and personal hindrances, and what steps the organisation can consider when introducing coaching as a tool for development and support.

The research findings indicate that it may be a complex decision for GDSD and that several variables can impact the use of coaching for SSPs.

The professional career stage could influence the attitude or appetite for coaching. Early-career SSPs may be more enthusiastic and optimistic about a coaching program

than late-career SSPs. Late-career SSPs may resist change associated with implementing new tools or programs due to their experience of repetitive change and new initiatives throughout their career; as a result, they may be quite selective about where they participate.

The support and buy-in of executive management and all levels of supervisors and managers in the SSP occupational class will impact how coaching can be a practice to develop and support SSPs. Without executive support, coaching could quickly be relegated to a list of initiatives that GDSD has implemented over the years that have not reached their full potential or are not utilised as intended.

The emotional maturity of participants can colour how coaching is used as coaches may see it as a tool to settle scores or as a way to get what they want without using other organisational mechanisms such as labour relations mechanisms or wellness initiatives.

The data supports that in introducing coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs, the GDSD should consider several steps to build trust and confidence in such a program. Three factors were highlighted by participants namely a coaching framework, platforms, and mechanisms to promote the coaching programme and how to ensure sustainability of such a coaching programme for SSPs. Most participants shared a view that a policy and conceptual framework for coaching will clearly outline the organisational coaching program infrastructure. Such a document will contribute to ensure fairness and transparency and promote the purpose and the envisaged benefits for participants. They suggested that the framework could cover monitoring and evaluating mechanisms for the programme to measure the return on investment, outlining how performance contracting will be handled, and selecting participating coaches and coachees.

Promoting the coaching programme would necessitate the use platforms such as webinars, social media platforms, and internal workshops. All of which will assist in creating awareness of the purpose and benefits of the program, explaining how coaching differs from mentoring and supervision, and explaining the roles and

responsibilities of various role players. In addition, participants suggested the use existing SSP for a like the Social Work Supervisor's Forum to promote awareness and share best practices and experiences. Lastly, they shared that the coaching program sustainability be supported through budget allocation.

Coaching in organisations and how it is implemented can be complex. Both the broader literature review (Ganesh et al., 2015; Wallace, 2016) and this SSP-focused research study identified various factors to consider when implementing coaching. In developing and supporting SSPs, a primary factor to consider would be how coaching fits into a Supervision Framework (SACSSP, 2012) that caters for supervision and mentoring.

Interesting and mixed interpretations flowed from the participants about the value of coaching in GDSD for SSPs. Some of these views flowed from a negative space. Participants cited factors such as hostile work culture, strenuous work demands, and a lack of capacity, making them less amenable to coaching as a practice. They further outlined that the nature and pace of work and its demands on their available time affect basics such as adequate time for supervision and mentoring of their direct reports. This means that the fundamentals of the Supervision Framework for SSPs regarding mentoring and supervision are not implemented. Concerns were expressed about the energy and time investment that coaching will require, whether you are a coach or a coachee; the attitudes of supervisors and managers towards coachees who grow emotionally and the insular approach of the SSPs (we know everything). Some of the participants shared a positive outlook and saw a coaching initiative as "a top-up" (Participant 4, 2022), enhancing and creating thinking spaces (Participant 2, 2022). These participants were mainly from the group who experienced formal or informal coaching.

Literature (Ganesh et al., 2015; Grant et al., 2009) captures the benefits of coaching programs and links coaching to increased learning, growth and increased personal and organisational performance (Ganesh et al., 2015; Grant et al., 2009; Mvelase,

2019; Wiginton & Cartwright, 2020a), and its effect on achieving goals, increasing resilience and reducing work-related stress (Grant et al., 2009). The organisational decision for GDSD to implement coaching for SSPs will, according to Wise and Voss (2002), depend on whether it wishes to solve a developmental issue or adopt a problem-resolution focus. The latter study (Wise & Voss, 2002) showed intrapersonal, interpersonal and organisation changes. Similarly (Mckenzie, 2018; Palmer, 2019; Stout Rostron & Van Rensburg, 2009) captured positive outcomes related to behavioural change and business and performance results. Lastly, Akesson and Canavera (2018) argued that a capable workforce of SSPs would result in positive attitudes. The authors support coaching as “a way to support and strengthen the social service workforce” (Akesson & Canavera, 2018, p. 39).

Mihiotis and Argirou (2016) and Theeboom et al. (2014) capture that well-crafted and executed coaching programs have several benefits. The literature reinforces factors outlined by participants as to the steps and elements of a coaching program for SSPs in GDSD.

In conclusion, proposition 3, about coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs, is supported.

5.6 Researcher positionality

What surprised the researcher, indicating a research bias, is that SSPs function in a very professionalised environment. In the researcher's mind, SSPs always attempt to find new ways to assist clients. Part of the researcher’s bias is that it would mean they would be on top of new approaches in a field where the focus is firmly on assisting people to find solutions for themselves, which coaching lends itself to very well. One participant touched on how SSPs approach their profession and work very insularly and that SSPs tend not to look outside their profession to determine what tools exist to assist them. This “inward-looking” attitude or approach to their profession potentially explains this finding.

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

This Chapter presents and discusses the research findings as they link to the literature reviews and research propositions outlined in Chapter 2. The literature supports the research propositions.

In summary, the key findings are that coaching opportunities for SSPs in GDSD is non-existent and that the critical success factors for coaching in GDSD are no different from that in any other organisation. Most participants shared a belief that coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support SSPs, favouring a layered approach to introducing it. A layered approach meant focusing on some levels of staff in the SSP category, introducing it systematically to ensure its long-term sustainability and highlighting the organisational and personal hindrances that could impact its adoption as a practice and its effectiveness.

Chapter 6 answers the research questions, makes recommendations and outlines areas for potential future research.

Chapter 6 Recommendations & Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 focuses on the conclusions drawn from the results and discussions about the perceived role of coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs in GDSD. The researcher addresses the problem statement and discusses the implications of the research for SSPs in social development at GDSD. It further contains recommendations for future research.

The study explored *coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government. The objectives of this research were:*

- To examine the nature of coaching for Social Service Professionals in the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
- To explore the critical success factors needed for coaching to succeed in the Department of Social Development.
- To establish whether coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support Social Service Professionals in the Department of Social Development.

The study identified that coaching is non-existent as a practice for supporting and developing SSPs in GDSD. Nonetheless, the research participants clearly understand what could contribute to coaching success in GDSD and how coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support SSPs at this stage.

6.2 Conclusions on research question 1

The study revealed that coaching is not used in GDSD as a tool to develop and support SSPs. Where research participants utilised opportunities for coaching, it was not an initiative from GDSD. In exploring the term coaching and what it means, the research showed that participants understood the concept of supervision very well. Some understood mentoring, whilst others confused mentoring and coaching.

6.3 Conclusions on research question 2

In exploring the critical success factors for coaching SSPs in GDSD, the research findings showed that the participants did not have differing perceptions from other occupational categories or organisations concerning the critical success factors for coaching. A wide range of critical success factors was identified by participants centring around the attributes, competencies and training of coaches, the selection of coaches and coachees, as well as whether GDSD should use internal or external coaches. Participants believed that coaching interventions would be most beneficial for SSPs transitioning from one role to the next and for SSPs that are not entry-level staff (a social worker who just started her/his career journey). Those participants that had the opportunity of formal coaching experiences cited several benefits that they detected in their own behaviours and attitude. Lastly, participants did not share a uniform view on whether coaching should be a stand-alone programme or included in the Supervision Framework for SSPs.

6.4 Conclusions on research question 3

The advantages of utilising coaching to develop and support staff have been well captured in literature, except for the ambit of SSPs. In this study, which focused on SSPs in GDSD, the participants clearly outlined elements necessary for a successful coaching programme. Most participants doubted whether there was space for another

initiative in GDSD. They outlined that it would only be possible if the coaching initiative is well crafted, managed, monitored, and supported by policy frameworks, firm performance contracting, and executive and managerial buy-in. In conclusion, there is a need to understand how coaching can be used as a practice to develop and support SSPs better.

6.5 Recommendations

In light of the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

- Coaching is considered a tool to develop and support SSPs transitioning from entry-level roles to SW supervisors and managers. Coaching can play a role in developing the skills of emerging SW supervisors and managers and how they manage interpersonal relationships and conflict better. As coaching provides a reflective space, it can assist learning and growth through reflection and shared practices.

- GDSD considers developing a clear view of how coaching can be integrated into existing opportunities like the SSP framework that strongly focuses on mentoring and supervision.

- GDSD considers tailoring a coaching program to the unique requirements of SSPs.

- GPG considers determining the effectiveness of coaching interventions and their relevance for SSPs.

- Train managers to manage with a coaching style – this could be an alternative to a formal coaching programme which may be a more costly endeavour.

In essence, social work is about solving problems, empowerment and increasing clients' well-being. This definition of social work links to humanistic and other coaching approaches, such as strengths-based and positivism (Dorkin, 2009). She argues that

coaching for occupational social work can be seen as a practice to develop individuals in organisations. Both coaching and social work are based on establishing a relationship (whether client and coach or client and social worker) to bring about change and improvement in personal or professional lives. Through social work and coaching, the ability to cope is a further goal and a focus on empowerment in that the aim is to help clients identify resources within themselves and their surroundings to better their situation (Dorkin, 2009). Both coaching and social work evoke creativity, and other options or lenses exist to solve challenges or approach situations. The researcher believes this link could be a positive motivator for introducing coaching as a practice for developing and supporting SSPs.

6.6 Suggestions for further research

For this study, the population and sample were SSPs in GDSD in the Gauteng Provincial Government. It will be interesting to expand the sample to other social development departments in South Africa, both on the provincial and municipal levels, to see if a broader sample will yield different results regarding the viewpoints of the professionals taking part in this study. If the study is broadened, it could result in the generalisation of the findings, as it would mean that the conclusions flow from a larger sample. In turn, this could lead to recommendations that are more representative of the sector, which could influence the National Department of Social Development or the SASSCP in their thinking about coaching as a practice to develop and support SSPs and potentially could lead to the development of norms and standards on coaching for SSPs.

With the Public Service's aim to professionalise the public service, it could also be valuable to test the effectiveness and value-add of coaching interventions for SSPs, the relevance for this occupational category, and how it supports the Supervision Framework for SSPs.

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Appendix A – Participant Information Sheet

Participant number	Region/Unit	Job title	Formal experience of Coaching	Years of work experience in Social Work
1.	Sedibeng	Social Work Manager	No	15
2.	Sedibeng	Social Work Manager	No	15
3.	Sedibeng	Social Work Manager	No	8
4.	West Rand	Social Work Manager	No	9
5.	Ekurhuleni	Social Work Supervisor	No	34
6.	Ekurhuleni	Social Work Supervisor	No	25
7.	Ekurhuleni	Social Work Supervisor	No	15
8.	Tshwane	Social Work Manager	No	38
9.	Tshwane	Social Work Supervisor	No	34
10	Tshwane	Social Work Supervisor	No	25
11	Johannesburg	Social Work Manager	No	32
12	Johannesburg	Social Work Supervisor	No	20

Participant number	Region/Unit	Job title	Formal experience of Coaching	Years of work experience in Social Work
13	Johannesburg	Social Work Supervisor	No	18
14	Head Office	Social Work Manager	No	28
15	Head Office	Social Work Manager	Yes	32
16	Head Office	Social Work Manager	No	34
17	Head Office	Senior Manager	Yes	25

Appendix B – Semi-Structured Interview Questionnaire

The purpose of this research is to investigate the understanding and nature of coaching, the critical success factors and to determine how coaching could be a practice to develop and support social service professionals in DSD in the Gauteng provincial government. The findings will be analysed, interpreted, and then presented as recommendations for using coaching as a practice to support and develop SSPs.

Location		Job title		Years of work experience as an SSP
Formally coached		Coached by		How long coached for

What is the nature of Coaching in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development, Gauteng Provincial Government?

- How do you define coaching?
- What informs your understanding or perspective of coaching?
- In your view, how does coaching differ from mentoring and supervision?
- Kindly share with me details of any formal or informal coaching programmes or approaches that may exist in your department?
- Kindly share with me any coaching relationship you may have had in the workspace?
    ii. How did it begin?
    iii. How long did it last?
- If any,
    - What worked for you in the coaching relationship?
    - What did not work for you in the coaching relationship?

What are the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development, Gauteng Provincial Government?

- In your view, what would be critical success factors for a coaching programme in your organisation?
- What characteristics would you attribute to a good coach?

- Who could potentially benefit the most from a coaching programme and at what point in their career or growth trajectory?

In your view how could coaching enhance the SSP Supervision Framework?

- What would you regard as informal and what as formal coaching?
- What is your view on formal or informal coaching programmes and its relevance for SSPs?
- What contribution do you believe coaching may bring to you/ your workspace? If any?
- What topics for discussion during the professional coaching journey would you recommend?
- What process would you recommend to the Department to consider if implementing an informal or a formal coaching programme?
- In your view, how could coaching be utilised to enhance the Supervision Framework? Is DSD ready for another element?
- If trained as a coach:
    - What is your training and experience in respect of the utilisation of coaching as a practice to support and develop practitioners?
    - What benefits flowing from it have you seen in SSPs that you may have coached?
- In your view, does or could coaching make a difference in respect of performance and increased service delivery?

What in your view is the link between coaching and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, if any?

Is there any question iro this topic that I may not have asked?

Appendix C – Participant Agreement Form

Enquiries: Amanda Hartmann

Contact number: 082 909 3711

..... 2022

Dear .....

I trust that you are well.

Our telephone conversation has reference. As indicated in our chat, I am currently conducting a research study in fulfilment of my master's degree, a Master of Management in the field of Business and Executive Coaching, through the Wits Business School at the University of the Witwatersrand.

My research topic is "***Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government***" under the supervision of Ms Ayanda Magida. The study has been approved by the Wits Business School and I have permission from the Department to conduct the research.

I would greatly appreciate the chance to interview you as a participant in this research study. The details of the research are:

- The research aims to
    - examine the nature of coaching for Social Service Professionals in the Gauteng Department of Social Development, if any.
    - explore the critical success factors needed for coaching to succeed in the Department of Social Development; and
    - establish whether coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support Social Service Professionals in the Department of Social Development.
- The research entails collecting data from Social Work Managers and Social

Work Supervisors. The Department identified you as a potential participant.

- The collection of the data will be in the form of an interview with semi-structured questions, conducted via MS Teams or Zoom and it will last between 60-90 minutes.
- At the start of the interview your permission will be requested to audio record the session for the purposes of transcription, and analysis afterwards.
- Your responses will be treated confidentially, and your identity will be kept anonymous. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.
- You may withdraw your permission to be interviewed at any time during this project.
- All research data will be destroyed on completion of the research report.
- The results will be communicated in a research report.

Please let me know if you

a) require any further information; and

b) are willing to assist me. You can do so by signing the permission box at the bottom of this letter and by returning a scanned version via email, or you can confirm via email.

My contact details are as follows:

- Cell: 082 909 3711
- Email: amanda.hartmann@gauteng.gov.za

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Hartmann

Signature added electronically, ... 2022

I am willing to participate in an interview towards data collection for the research study as per the details outlined in this letter: Signature: Name: Date:

Date of interview:	 2022
Duration:	.... minutes
Recorded:	Ms Teams recording or Otter.ai
In session: agreed to recording & interview:	Yes/No
Participant No:	1

Appendix D – Ethics and Title Approval Notifications

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Wits Business School Ethics Committee
Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/BC720663/973
This certificate is only valid with a legitimate ethics protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below).

This certificate is only valid if accompanied by formal permission from the relevant stakeholder(s).

Project title	Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government
Investigator / Researcher	Ms Amanda Hartmann
Nature of Project	MM (Business & Executive Coaching)
Decision of the Committee	Approved, provided stakeholders and participants are guaranteed confidentialty.
Issue Date of Certificate	2022-05-20
Expiry date	Date of submission of the project / research report
Chairperson	Prof Anthony Stacey ☎ +27 11 717 3587 +27 82 880 4531 anthony.stacey@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

2022/05/23
Date:

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

Private Bag 3 Wits, 2050
Fax:
Tel:

Reference: Ms Jennifer Mgolodela
E-mail: jennifer.mgolodela@wits.ac.za

17 February 2022
Person No: 720663
PAG

Ms AM Hartmann
72 Disseldoringstreet
Roodekrans Ext 6
1724
South Africa

Dear Ms Amanda Hartmann

Master of Management: Approval of Title

We have pleasure in advising that your proposal entitled *Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government* has been approved. Please note that any amendments to this title have to be endorsed by the Faculty's higher degrees committee and formally approved.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marike Bosman
Faculty Registrar
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management

Appendix E – Research Permission Request and Response

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Wits Business School
2 St Davids Place, Parktown
Johannesburg

Ms Thembeni Mhlongo
Head of Department: Gauteng Social Development
69 Commissioner Street
Johannesburg
2000

For attention: Dr Sello Mokoena
Email: sello.mokoena@gauteng.gov.za

25 May 2022

Dear Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct research at Social Development

I am studying for a Master of Management in Business and Executive Coaching through the Wits Business School, at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am seeking permission to do research at Social Development, Gauteng Government.

I am conducting research on ***Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government.***

The research will entail collecting data from Social Work Managers and Social Work Supervisors. I will invite individuals from your Department to participate in this study and should they agree, they will be invited to an interview of 60 to 90 minutes each at your premises. Respondents will be asked permission to be audio recorded for purposes of transcription and analysis afterwards.

Participants will be asked to give their written or verbal consent before the research begins. Their responses will be treated confidentially, and identities (their names and the name of the organisation) will be anonymous unless otherwise expressly indicated. Individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

The results will be communicated in a research report.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The participants will not be paid for this study.

All research data will be destroyed on completion of the research report.

I therefore request permission in writing to conduct my research at your organisation. The permission letter should be on your organisation's headed paper, signed and dated, and specifically referring to myself by name and the title of my study.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,



Amanda Hartmann
T: 082 909 3711
E: 720663@students.wits.ac.za

Research Supervisor:

Ayanda Magida

E : ayanda.magida@wits.ac.za

T : +27 11 717 3953

GAUTENG PROVINCE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Enquiries: Dr. Sello Mokoena
Tel: 082 331 0786
File no.: 26/05/22

Dear Ms Amanda Hartmann

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for your application to conduct research within the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Your application on the research on ***"Coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government"*** at the **University of the Witwatersrand** has been considered and approved for support by the Department as it was found to be beneficial to the Department's vision and mission. The approval is subject to the Department's terms and conditions as endorsed on the 13th November 2019.

You have permission to interview departmental officials and beneficiaries, conduct observations and access relevant documents where necessary.

May I take this opportunity to wish you well on the journey you are about to embark on.

We look forward to a value adding research and a fruitful co-operation.

With thanks

Dr Sello Mokoena
Director: Research and Policy Coordination
Date: 27/05/2022

Appendix F - Consistency Matrix

RESEARCH TITLE : COACHING AS A PRACTICE TO DEVELOP AND SUPPORT SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS IN THE GAUTENG PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

PROBLEM STATEMENT: The lack of a coaching framework inclusive of critical success factors for coaching affects how social service professionals can be developed and supported as part of their task to deliver quality social welfare services to Gauteng residents. In an article by McKenzie (2018) she indicates that through coaching talent can be nurtured, and individuals could reach their true potential. She argues that this is a reason for government to look into how coaching can be used to enhance service delivery capacity (Mckenzie, 2018).
MAIN OBJECTIVE: The main objective of this *qualitative study is to explore* ***coaching as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in the Gauteng provincial government.***

Objectives	Literature Review	Propositions	Research questions	Phenomena/ Keywords	Source of data	Type of data	Analysis
To examine the nature of coaching, if any, for Social Service Professionals in the Gauteng Department of Social Development.	(Akesson & Canavera, 2018) (Chibaya, 2018) (Dorkin, 2009) (Dorning, 2009) (Engelbrecht, 2019) (Hughes, 2010) Ganesh et al., (2015) Manyaka et al., (2012) (Van Coller-Peter & Cronjé, 2020) (Wallace, 2016)	*Coaching is non-existent in GDSD.* In the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development, Gauteng provincial government the nature and existence of coaching need to be explored. The nature of coaching lends itself to develop and support clients through self-directed learning and the unlocking of wisdom (Bresser & Wilson, 2010) and therefore the proposition is that coaching is non-existent in GDSD; to explore what is and if the nature, if any, of coaching is the same or different in the case of SSPs?	What is the nature of coaching in the Social Service Professional environment in Social Development?	Nature of coaching. Social Service Professionals.	Actual interviews Desktop research	Qualitative Data	Thematic approach
To explore the critical success factors needed for coaching to succeed in the Department of Social Development.	(Akesson & Canavera, 2018) Ganesh et al., (2015) (Kampa & White, 2002) (Kombarakaran, 2008) McKenzie (2018) (Sithole, 2017)	*The critical success factors for coaching SSPs in GDSD will be similar to those in other industries:* For coaching to succeed in work environments factors such as executive buy-in, coachee commitment, availability, coaches selected, and support for the process, are important and this study will explore if any of these or which	What are the critical success factors for coaching to succeed in the Social Service Professional (SSP) environment in Social Development?	Critical Success Factors to succeed.	Data from Actual interviews	Qualitative Data	Thematic approach

Objectives	Literature Review	Propositions	Research questions	Phenomena/ Keywords	Source of data	Type of data	Analysis
	(Van Wyk et al., 2019)	other factors are necessary for coaching to succeed in Gauteng Social Development (as demonstrated by Sithole (2017), Dorning (2009), Akesson and Canavera (2018) and Mckenzie (2018)).					
To establish whether coaching could contribute as a practice to develop and support Social Service Professionals in the Department of Social Development.	(Akesson & Canavera, 2018) Ganesh et al., (2015) (Goldsmith, 2000) (Kombarakaran, 2008) McKenzie (2018) (McLeod, 2007) (Osemeke & Adegboyega, 2017) (Witherspoon & White, 1996b) (Wiginton & Cartwright, 2020b)	*Coaching could be a practice to develop and support SSPs:* can the adoption of coaching In Social Development, Gauteng provincial government, make it a practice to develop and support SSPs. The documented benefit for coaching shows positive changes in individual and organisational performance e.g. skills, well-being, and productivity (individual performance) and productivity, culture, change and communication (organisations).	What contribution could coaching make as a practice to develop and support social service professionals in Gauteng Social Development?	Coaching as a practice. Key performance indicators. Social Service Professionals. Support. Growth. Self-actualization.	Data from interviews. Coded data to highlight patterns, themes, subthemes.	Qualitative Data	Thematic approach