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Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development

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Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development

A report or dissertation on a research study presented to

The Department of Social Work
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In partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree Master of Arts in Social Work in the field of Occupational Social Work

by

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Supervisor: Dr Laetitia Petersen

February, 2025

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I, **Jabulile Ndima**, student number **2404734**, I hereby certify that this work, in whole or in part, is my original research and was never presented for credit toward a degree at any other higher education institution. In compliance with the university's regulations, any additional content used had been acknowledged and referenced. Regarding the university policy, I am aware of what plagiarism is and its consequences. I also grant the University of the Witwatersrand authority to copy this research report in full or in part, in any format or way that the university sees fit, for use by any individual or organisations that requests it for academic purposes. Signature: 

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ABSTRACT

Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) collaborate with the government, specifically the Department of Social Development (DSD) to provide psychosocial support services to many communities. Furthermore, this partnership also enables employees of NPOs to get skills development programs such as Child and youth care work (ACYCW) learnerships. DSD has a learnership program for developing the capacity of (ACYCW and strengthening the response to many social ills addressed by DSD and NPOs. The intention ACYCW of the learnership is absorption into employment with NPOs. This study aims to explore the conditions of employment of ACYCW in NPOs in Soweto. The study employed a qualitative research approach. The research design adopted was a multiple case study design meant to gather an in-depth understanding of the conditions of employment of ACYCWs in NPOs in Soweto. The population from which the sample was drawn consisted of ten workers working at two NPOs located in Soweto and funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Purposive sampling technique was utilised for the sampling process. The data collection method used was the semi-structured interviews using an interview guide. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data collected from this study. The findings of the study were that indeed ACYCWs do have challenges within their employment, and they highlighted inadequate resources and salaries as main key issues. The findings of this study are that ACYCWs should be prioritised especially in terms of resource allocations to cater for their low salaries and ensure that they are always supervised by qualified ACYCWs.

Keywords: Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Work, Non-Profit Organisation, Employment conditions, Funded, Department of Social Development.

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List of Abbreviations

ACYCW	Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community-based organisations
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CYC	Child and Youth Care
CYC-Net	International Child and Youth Care Network
CYCW	Child and Youth Care Work
DSD	Department of Social Development
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HWSETA	Health and Welfare Sector Educational Training Authority
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
NACCW	National Association of Child care Workers
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental organisations
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Child ren
PIE	Person-in-environment
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SACSSP	South African Council for Social Service Professions
UNICEF	United Nations International Child ren's Emergency Fund
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the rights of Child ren
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background

Community workers are a vital part of the human resources of the social services as they assist the disadvantaged children and families infected and affected by Human Immune Virus (HIV). As observed by Bradford and Whethon (2018), the first line of contact for children in the line of professionalism are child and youth care workers. They further argue that child and youth care workers , as they operate in the child 's life space, are very critical in any institution. Services offered include child protection, education support, mental health counselling, HIV prevention, health care referrals, and social grant connections. In South Africa, Auxiliary Child , and Youth Care Workers (ACYCW) are largely relied upon to offer frontline services to vulnerable children and families. However, little is known about their well-being or the variables that may restrict their profession's effectiveness and sustainability. The ACYCW has been undermined because it has not been sufficiently defined and articulated (Phelan, 2015). With a predetermined corpus of theoretical and conceptual knowledge, Child , and Youth Care Work (CYCW) is a unique field. CYCW is unique in that it concentrates on working inside a child 's life space. The setting where young people engage in their daily activities is called their life space (South African Department of Social Development 2014, p.6).

Remarkably, given how important CYCWs are when working with children, there is not much empirical research evaluating their work experiences. In a Non-profit Organisation (NPO) environment, ACYCWs must divide themselves as an entry point into the organisations to ensure that everyone and everything is taken care of. This includes keeping an eye on the children, keeping track of incidents, cooking, escorting the children home from daily activities, and making sure everything is all right in their houses. In addition to their many duties, CYCWs work in a fast-paced atmosphere where they must make thoughtful decisions at the moment (Bertolino, 2014). Supporting the foregoing, Gray and Lombard (2022) note that there is ambiguity about the growth of social service professions in South Africa's dynamic social welfare system. CYCWs continue to do background work even after receiving accreditation, which would free up social workers to concentrate on legally mandated child protection issues. These practitioners assist primary care providers, social workers, educators, and physicians, among others in creating and maintaining environments that foster youth development across all domains, including academic, social, emotional, and physical (Ismail et al., 2020). Because

three parts of burnout are predicted by a grouping of social support, personality, and work environment, the CYCW job is highly diverse (Sean & William, 2010). ACYCW in South Africa is essential to the growth and welfare of children and adolescents. Over the past few decades, the field of supplementary child and youth care has changed, reflecting broader shifts in cultural attitudes about education and child welfare (Allsopp et al., 2018).

In the apartheid era, there were times in which no legal framework was available and little professional care was given to children and young people, particularly those from underprivileged homes or with special needs (Mashamaite & Lethoko , 2018). However, as the value of early intervention and comprehensive support has become increasingly apparent, this industry has formalised and become more professional. ACYCW is a vital sector for supporting the growth and well-being of young people. These professionals are essential in helping children realize their full potential because of their commitment and specialised training. The demand for knowledgeable and caring experts in the industry is high, and it is a fulfilling and significant care er choice as it grows and changes. Due to dearth of study, we do not know much about the working circumstances of ACYCW in Soweto's non-profit organisations that receive funding from the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem and Rationale for the study

The profession of auxiliary child and youth care work is experiencing a lot of problems, especially in the work context (Bardford & Whelton, 2018). According to Stuart (2013), Auxiliary child and youth care work is implemented in the space of children at a specific time. Garfat et al., (2018) agreed that Auxiliary child and youth care work focused on the occurrence of the here-and-now moment in this regard. Molepo and Delport (2017) argued that despite the efforts put in place to regulate the auxiliary child and youth care work profession and make sure they are offered proper training, they still experience challenges, especially in their work context. Bardford and Whelton (2018) lamented that the auxiliary child and youth care work profession continues to get disrespected from society because of being recognized as sub-profession to the social work profession. This causes the auxiliary child and youth care workers to be incapable of carrying out their interventions with the children.

Winfield (2020) argued that there needs to be some form of strengthening the systems in place to make sure that the Auxiliary child and youth care workers profession is sustained, and these professionals are also taken into cognisance as vital role players in the space of child protection. The authors also mention that there seem to be difficulties experienced by the

ACYCWs in line with their working conditions which needs to be given attention. Social service laws are intended to make up for historical injustices and foster social justice by addressing challenges experienced by the society post-apartheid era such as inequality, poverty, and social development priorities of the people (Department of Social Development (DSD), 2016). Auxiliary child and youth care workers have been acknowledged as one of the major service providers in the social services sector since 1997 by the White Paper for Social Welfare (DSD, 2016).

There are efforts by the government to address the difficulties experienced by the ACYCWs such as training more ACYCWs, professionalising this profession, and creating opportunities in non-profit organisations including the government. Gharabaghi (2020), highlights that professional CYC has grown significantly on a global scale over the past three decades, resulting in the implementation of CYC in environments like communities that are far more open and diverse. In the South African context, NPOs integrated ACYCWs into the community to keep up with the changes brought about by the democratic dispensation in 1994 (Mlambo, 2019). At Soweto, the existing and funded Drop-in Centres and Home Base Care organisations welcomed the initiative by the Department of Social Development as the care givers were taken to be trained to become professional Auxiliary child and youth care workers (DSD, 2019). There have been no improvements in the opportunities and conditions for those working in the child and youth care sectors since 2014 when obligatory registration was implemented (DSD, 2019). Consequently, the Professional Board for Child and Youth Care Work and the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) have demoralized registered child and youth care workers (Mhizha & Nhedzi, 2023). The organisations did not understand the job descriptions of ACYCW as it was like Social Auxiliary Workers work, hence they treated them like care givers. ACYCW are employed as care workers or care givers across the country (DSD, 2019). White (2021) assert that despite choosing to perform challenging, demanding, and significant work, CYC workers hardly ever obtain social or professional recognition.

However, despite these efforts they still experience some challenges such as inadequate working conditions leading to them being unable to render their services as stipulated in their code of ethics and this further exacerbates the social ills amongst many communities, (Molepo, 2014). There are several studies conducted in the South African context, one done by Mziha & Nhedzi, (2023) focusing on the child attachment challenges experienced by ACYCW. Another study conducted by Zondeka (2021) revealed that, despite the challenges experienced by the ACYCW the main key issue that is not given priority is looking at their working conditions as

they also contribute to the challenges they encounter in line with their work. Based on these study findings this necessitated the researcher to conclude that there is paucity of research studies conducted that focus on their employment conditions, especially in the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) sector (United Nations International Child ren's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 2019). This encouraged the researcher to conduct this study which focused on exploring the conditions of employment of ACYCW in NPOs at Soweto. This study aims to shed light on the difficulties faced by ACYCWs employed by NPOs at Soweto and provide insight into how they manage these difficulties. The main key problem is that literature highlight that there are employment challenges experienced by ACYCWs and they are not known in the Soweto context hence this study is exploring them and allowing the ACYCWs to recommend solutions to the employment challenges they experience.

1.3 Significance of the study

As per the aim of this research, the study makes a substantial contribution to understanding the coping strategies used by ACYCW who work in Soweto Drop-in Centre, and this is mainly to understand the conditions of employment for Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in a NPOs in in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The research results obtained from this study could help the NPOs to understand better job descriptions so they can improve their working conditions. Findings could also assist the NPOs to design job descriptions of ACYCWs employed in their NPOs to align more and have their working conditions challenges addressed through the development of standard operating procedures. Additionally, by steering more advanced steps to better social development for marginalized communities served by non-profit organisations that receive funding from the Gauteng Department of Social Development, the knowledge gained from this study benefits the working relationship between NPOs and the Department of Social Development. The results of this study could potentially be used to alter policies at NPOs that receive funding from the Gauteng Department of Social Development, with the goal of maximizing social development that benefits marginalized populations.

The research may also have established a foundation for future studies on topics like the oversight and assessment of funding given to non-profit organisations to support certain initiatives like the psychosocial basket of services.

1.4 Research questions, goal, objectives, and hypothesis

Research question.

What are the employment conditions of the Auxiliary child and youth care workers in non-profit organisations at Soweto funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development?

Research Aim

To explore employment conditions of Auxiliary child and youth care work in non-profit organisations at Soweto funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Research Objectives

1) To establish the experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions at Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
2) To explore how employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers working at NPOs at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives.
3) To discover the coping mechanism the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions.
4) To understand services rendered by the Non-Profit organisations to assist the auxiliary child and youth care workers in dealing with the difficulties they face at work.
5) To recommend additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

1.5 Definition of concepts

Auxiliary child and youth care work – According to either section 18 or section 19 of the rules to the Social Service Professions Act (Act No. 110 of 1978), a person who is registered with the SACSSP as a child and youth care worker is referred to as a child and youth care worker (DSD, 2014). The ACYCWs in this study were employed by NPOs in Soweto funded by DSD and they highlighted their challenges at work.

Non-profit organisation – NPO is the body or an institution whose purpose for establishment is not to make any income, but all its finances are geared to providing services to the beneficiaries. Non-profit organisations (NPOs) are a combination of community-based organisations (CBOs) and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). NPOs are also known as

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in various contexts. In the context of this study, organisations that hire ACYCWs are referred to as NPOs.

Employment conditions - Conditions of employment are the guidelines that both the employer and the employee agree to follow while they are both working for the same organisation. They define each party's obligations and rights. Terms of employment are another name for conditions of work (Shields et.al., 2021). In this study, the employment conditions refer to employment contracts and obligations from both the NPOs that employ the ACYCWs and the ACYCWs themselves.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework for this study was the person in environment. This theoretical approach is key idea in social work and human services is the Person-in-Environment (PIE) hypothesis, which highlights the dynamic connection between people and their environments (Kondrat, 2013). It makes the argument that one must consider the larger context of an individual's social, economic, and physical settings in order to comprehend their behaviour, mental health, and general well-being (Kondrat, 2013). Because PIE offers a comprehensive framework for analysing how different environmental elements, like family dynamics, community resources, societal norms, and economic conditions, influence individual results, it is essential for research projects. This all-encompassing viewpoint aids in the development of more efficient treatments and policies that address the needs of the individual as well as the contextual and systemic elements influencing their life.

1.7 Research methodology

A multiple case study design was conducted in this qualitative investigation. Purposive sampling was used in the investigation. Ten qualified ACYCWs professionals who work for non-profit organisations in Soweto and are supported by the Gauteng Department of Social Development were the subjects of one-on-one, in-depth face-to-face interviews for the goal of gathering data. These interviews were done utilising a semi-structured interview guide. Additionally, after receiving informed consent from every research participant who communicated interest in participating in the study, all of the interviews were tape-recorded. Data was analysed using thematic analysis as explained by (Thomas, 2017).

1.8 Organisation of the Report

Chapter 1 provided contextual information, and the research area context was presented in this chapter. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical underpinnings of the empirical research element as well as a review of pertinent literature. The study's research strategy and methodology are thoroughly explained in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 provides a detailed presentation and discussion of the study findings that come out from the investigation. Chapter 5, the last section of the research report, summarizes the main findings and recommendations of the research.

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a summary of the introduction and background, problem statement, definitions of key concepts, the significance of the study, research question, aim and objectives, theoretical framework and research methodology of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter focuses on the theoretical framework supporting the study's objectives and reviewing relevant literature. The theoretical framework for this study is Person-In-Environment (PIE). This section includes research studies consulted by the researcher in order to highlight the research gaps that culminated in the research problem. The following will be discussed under the literature review: Emergence of Auxiliary Child and youth care work in the Global, African, and South African context, the connection between social welfare services, child ren and auxiliary child and youth care workers; definition of Auxiliary child and youth care worker; the roles, responsibilities and services provided by Auxiliary child and Youth care workers.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Person -In-Environment Theory

Person-in-environment theory was the theoretical framework that underpins this study. A theoretical framework guides the research, determines variables, and influences data analysis (Fox et al., 2015).

According to Kondrat (2013), a person-in-environment perspective is considered to offer a more suitable framework for assessing an individual, their presenting issues, and their strengths than an approach that concentrates only on altering the behaviour or mental state of the individual or just on the environment. This viewpoint is also believed to broaden the scope of interventions that the practitioner can employ, giving them the choice to work directly with the individual, address environmental issues, or do both (Kondrat, 2013).

The person-in-environment approach views a person's multiple contexts as an interactive system that is dynamic and ever-changing, with each component having an impact on and being influenced by the others (Hare, 2004). The PIE, which is also informed by the ecological approach, highlights levels of environment the individual interacts with. The person-in-environment theory (PIE) helped the researcher understand how people interact with their surroundings. Using PIE in conjunction with ecological theory brings to light the complex

interactions that occur on many levels between people and their surroundings. Microsystems are concerned with how individuals directly interact with those in their local environment, including family and friends. The interplay between these immediate surroundings and human characteristics, like as personality and abilities, are highly valued in the PIE model. The mesosystem investigates the connections between several microsystems, including the home and the school. PIE emphasizes how important these relationships are in shaping each person's perspective on existence. The macrosystem encompasses social and cultural aspects. The PIE model emphasizes how these more expansive surroundings influence personal experiences. The chronosystem talks about how time influences growth. The PIE model can be used to study the relationship between past experiences and changes throughout time and current conditions,(Tyler,2020).The above theory has been integrated in the research study as part of reference to the study because it focuses on a holistic approach to the support structure and the function of a person in a working environment. A person`s working environment is important because one spends lots of time in it, henceforth the environment needs to be functional. A person can excel in a working environment that is conducive and structured, structure can shape a person's behaviour patterns. The ACYCs on the findings highlighted that, the environment they find themselves working has unique challenges which hamper their productivity, and it was discovered that, it is only the environment that could assist in addressing their challenges. So basically, the ACYCs are experiencing emotional tiredness as result from ongoing exposure to trauma and high-stress environments. Low job satisfaction and significant turnover might affect young people's development and trust by interfering with the continuity of care provided to them. Inadequate funding may result in insufficient resources for services and programs, which would restrict youth support. High caseloads can overburden personnel, making it difficult to give each young person the particular care they need.

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Definition of Auxiliary Child and youth Care worker

The field of child and youth care work has reached a point at which it can now be fully described, (Molepo, 2014). The field of child and youth care work is defined by Smith (2009) as the field that deals directly with child ren. According to Garfat, (2015) ACYCW practice is about how you are, who you are, and when you do what you do. However, during the years of its evolution, child and youth care work has eluded a clear definition. In this regard, Stuart (2013) stated that previously auxiliary child and youth care workers have been erroneously

defined because it is a field that was not understood by many researchers despite being a specialised field.

The residential care setting and the child and youth care approach to human services were frequently confused in the early attempts to define the field of child and youth care work (Charles & Garfat, 2009). This is clear from Maier's (1991) description of child and youth care work, which states that this type of work involves taking care of young people while they are not in their respective homes. Other definitions of the idea emphasised identifying who are auxiliary child and youth care workers and not (Ferguson 2008). In the field, there has been discussion about the issue of professional reputation (Stuart, 2014).

Definitions aim to establish boundaries in respect to identity and to clarify issues of legitimacy of the auxiliary child and youth care work profession (Stuart, 2014). The literature of the early seventies is full of these endeavours. An auxiliary child and youth care worker, for example, is a professional trained in advocating and mobilising resources to assist vulnerable child ren holistically in addressing their social well-being challenges (Beker, 1975). After several decades, White (2008) defined child and youth care work as being a profession aimed at encouraging the well-being, growth and development of child ren and youth.

In South Africa, Garfat, and Fulcher, (2012) pointed out that the National Association of Child Care Workers purposefully used an imprecise definition of auxiliary child and youth care workers by referring to all those who are interested in child care . Given the early stage of development of the subject at the time, Beukes (1990) noted that the definition was purposefully broad in order to include all individuals who were working in the area of child and youth care work. The South African definition projected a residential care emphasis and displayed a stumbling block in light of these advancements (Beukes & Gannon, 1996). This study adopts the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP, 2014) defines an "auxiliary child and youth care worker" as a person practicing auxiliary child and youth care work and registered under section 18 of the Social Service Professions Act, 1978 (Act No. 110 of 1978). These practitioners are required to work under the direct supervision and guidance of a registered child and youth care worker in the professional category. Their responsibilities include assisting young people, both individually and in groups, to address social, emotional, developmental, and behavioural challenges. To practice legally, auxiliary child and youth care workers must be registered with the SACSSP. Unregistered practice is considered an offense under section 16 of the Act.

2.3.2 Emergence of Auxiliary Child and youth care work in the Global context.

The emergence of auxiliary child and youth care work is a global phenomenon shaped by changing societal needs and evolving perceptions of child welfare. Historically, child care responsibilities were often informal and typically managed within family units or through charitable organisations (Balsells, et al., 2014). However, as societies have industrialised and urbanized, the traditional family structure has transformed, leading to an increased demand for professionalised care services (Johnco, et al., 2014). The recognition that child ren and youth require specialized support beyond basic care has driven the formalization of auxiliary child and youth care work (Balsells, et al., 2014). This trend is evident across diverse cultural contexts, from North America and Europe to Asia and Africa, where governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have established programs to address the complex needs of young people (Linnan, et al., 2020).

In many countries, the rise of ACYCW has been propelled by significant policy shifts and legislative reforms aimed at protecting child ren's rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), adopted in 1989, has been a pivotal international framework promoting the welfare of child ren and mandating signatory countries to ensure appropriate services and protections are in place. This has led to the proliferation of child welfare services, including the training and deployment of auxiliary child and youth care workers . These professionals are now integral to the delivery of comprehensive care services, bridging the gap between various sectors such as education, health, and social services, and ensuring that child ren's holistic needs are met.

The globalisation of ACYCW has also been facilitated by the trade of finest customs and the establishment of international standards and training programs. Organisations like the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net) have played crucial roles in promoting professional development and advocating for the acknowledgment of auxiliary child and youth care work as a vital profession (Linnan, et al., 2020).The sharing of knowledge and resources across borders has enhanced the quality of care and support provided to child ren and youth globally. Moreover, the adaptation of these practices to local contexts ensures that interventions are culturally relevant and effective, thereby improving outcomes for young people in various regions of the world (Linnan, et al., 2020).

2.3.3 Auxiliary Child and youth care work in the African, and South African context

It is vital to trace the patterns of emergence in the area, both locally and globally, in order to express the current situation of the child and youth care work field in South Africa. The Akan notion of Sankofa, which is defined as "we must go back and reclaim our past so that we can move forward; so that we understand why and how we came to be who we are today," (Rukuni, 2007, p. 9). Thus, the evolution of the global emergence of child and youth care work will be tracked in the following parts with the goal of understanding how child and youth care in South Africa came to be at its current point.

South Africa is conscious of the necessity to reject thought systems that have been transplanted from other settings (Qalinga and Van Breda, 2018). The colonisation of Africa imposed foreign knowledge and belief systems and alienated people from their own practices of thinking and being (Ibrahima and Mattaini, 2019). According to Kourie (2019) colonisation is one of the key attributes to the challenges experienced by every person employed in this era because the development, growth, and mental well-being of people are not being taken into account when choices are made about their working environment. The genesis of the field was set at the beginning of national networking and the emergence of a National Association of Child care Workers (NACCW), which took place in 1975 (Allsopp, 2015), then the child and youth care field in South Africa has a history of the organisation that is currently in its fifth decade. However, South African, and other African Countries thought has not made much of an impact on academic child and youth care practice (Linnan, et al., 2020).

Stephen and Gharabaghi (2019), argue that South African child and youth care work offers a great theoretical reference for how ACYCWs' work could develop by bridging the gaps between orthodoxies and counter-movements. This showed that the child and youth care work sector in South Africa is developing in a way that is significant in the field globally and in establishing local practice knowledge. The fact that this is being noticed by non-South Africans, however, emphasizes the fact that local authors have not elevated innovative local practice knowledge to the level of theory or academic knowledge. Hence this study is looking at bringing the local voice of the ACYCWs in addressing their employment conditions.

2.4 The connection between social welfare services, child ren, and auxiliary child and youth care workers

Since the beginning of democracy, the South African government has placed a high priority on reducing poverty and inequality (Fransman & Yu, 2019). Child ren in the country continue to

face multiple forms of deprivation a full 34 years after the end of the apartheid regime and the establishment of a democratic South Africa (Omotoso & Koch, 2018). Poverty and inequality primarily affect child ren (Omotoso & Koch, 2018). Due to the multiple deprivations, they endure, this has a variety of effects on their possibilities for healthy growth (Omotoso & Koch, 2018).

In addition to being restricted to financial hardship, poverty can also be quantified through subjective and objective methods (Fransman & Yu, 2019), and it is also linked to feelings of vulnerability, powerlessness, and helplessness (Fransman & Yu, 2019). Access disparities to social welfare services still exist throughout the nation, albeit the efforts by government and NPOs in addressing the challenges experienced by ACYCWs (Department of Social Development, 2016). In South Africa, child ren aged 0 to 14 comprise approximately 28.8% of the total population. Approximately 34% of the population were under 18 as of 2022, (Statistics South Africa, 2022). This indicates that of the estimated 62 million people living in South Africa, about 21 million are child ren. (Statistics South Africa, 2022). This statistic is to emphasise the need for employment of ACYCWs with fair, equal salaries and improved employment conditions.

There are many issues affecting child ren and youth in the nation, resulting in groups of child ren who are vulnerable and at risk and who need care and support. For instance, Hall (2019) examined the demographics of kids in South Africa and found that there are 33,000 homes with just kids and 55,000 kids overall. The upper bound poverty threshold, as of May 2023 prices, is R1 558 per person per month. Thus, even if there have been advancements since 2003 when 78% of child ren were deemed impoverished, the problem still exists. Many child ren are still impacted by the high rates of poverty and inequality, despite considerable progress in reducing child poverty (Statistics South Africa, 2023). Given that people's "dignity and ability to look after themselves" had been compromised by factors like inadequate education, a lack of employment opportunities, and prior inaccessibility to social services, it was acknowledged in the White Paper for Social Welfare that social services were necessary to help people live in some degree of comfort and security (Department of social welfare , 1997).

As a result, this fundamental policy paper established a clear connection between poverty levels and the requirement for efficient social services that are tailored to specific needs (Hall et al., 2019) . While impoverishment levels were initially a worry when the White Paper was being written, they remain a worry, continuing the need for social welfare programs to help sizable

portions of the population who are negatively impacted by poverty. The current state of child ren and youth in South Africa, according to the ministerial committee on the evaluation of the White Paper for Social Welfare, highlights the gaps in service provision for child ren and youth (DSD, 2016).

In summary, taking into account the substantial number of child ren who are vulnerable and at risk and teenagers in the nation, there is an expanding need for social service practitioners in South Africa (Jamieson 2013a). As stated by Allsopp et al., (2018), the nation needs multi-stakeholder approaches to the delivery of welfare services for child ren to realize its constitutional rights as enshrined in the constitution. According to Garfat et al., (2018), child and youth care professionals are perfectly positioned as the most influential professionals in the space of child ren and youth.

2.5 The roles, responsibilities and services provided by Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers

According to the National Strategic Plan for 2012-2015 (DSD, 2012), the Isibindi programme, with its developmental approach, shall offer a structure for community ACYCWs to deliver effective support services to Orphans and Vulnerable Child ren (OVC) (DSD, 2012). The National Association of Child Care Workers created the Isibindi model, and it is implemented on a nationwide scale by several partner agencies in many communities (Snell, 2017). The Isibindi model seeks to address issues confronting Orphans and Vulnerable Child ren at risk (DSD, 2019).

The Isibindi initiative (creating circles of care) uses a developmental ACYCWs response to create nurturing and loving communities for OVC and their families (Thumbadoo, 2013; Thurman et al., 2009). According to the authors, ACYCWs are recruited to hunt for and support OVC in their communities.

The process by which the ACYCWs create beneficiary lists involves identifying child ren and families who have been affected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (Thurman et al., 2009). According to Thurman et al., (2009), they also support low-income families by making house calls, making recommendations, and staffing program locations like community gardens and Safe Parks. The authors list the following support services provided by auxiliary child and youth care workers : medical monitoring and health information; assistance with social grant applications and obtaining

required documentation; lay counselling and conflict resolution in the home; and referrals to social and local agencies (Thumbadoo, 2013; Thurman et al., 2009). ACYCWs offer the following services, as stated by Allsopp et al., (2013):

- Providing child ren and youth with fundamental and developmental care that protects their physical, emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and social needs.
- Carrying out Child and youth programs and activities in accordance with determined developmental needs.
- Using behaviour management and assistance approaches
- Involvement during development

In South Africa, ACYCWs offer a variation of vital services and interventions that support the growth and welfare of child ren and teenagers. These interventions and services frequently involve direct care and supervision in a variety of settings, including schools, residential facilities, and community centres (Phelan, 2017). In educational settings, these workers help to manage classrooms, support students with special needs, and provide after-school programmes that improve learning and social skills. In residential care , they offer a secure and caring environment for child ren who have been taken from their homes because of abuse, neglect, or other family problems. In community-based services, they frequently plan educational and recreational events that encourage physical well-being.

Auxiliary child and youth care workers play a vital role in addressing these issues by providing emotional support, informal counselling, and connecting families with necessary resources and services (Ranahan, 2017) They often act as advocates for child ren's rights, ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard and that they receive the support they need to thrive (Phelan, 2017). These interventions are especially important in South Africa because of the high rates of poverty, HIV/AIDS, and social inequality, which disproportionately affect child ren and youth in the country.

In South Africa, the value of auxiliary child and youth care providers goes beyond providing individual care to include a larger communal influence. Through close collaboration with families, local organisations, and schools, these professionals contribute to the development of resilient and supportive communities. Through their efforts, the risk factors linked to poor developmental outcomes are diminished, and protective variables that improve children's and adolescents' general well-being are promoted. ACYCWs also contribute to breaking the cycle

of poverty and inequality by tackling the socioeconomic determinants of health and education, which promotes a more inclusive and equitable society. Their labour is vital in laying the groundwork for succeeding generations to come and making constructive contributions to the development of South Africa.

The working conditions of ACYCWs are often characterized by demanding schedules, emotionally taxing environments, and a lack of adequate resources. Studies show that these workers frequently operate in underfunded facilities, where they are responsible for a high number of children and youth with complex emotional, social, and behavioral needs (Linnan, et al., 2020). This can lead to high levels of stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction. Chinyenze (2017) highlights that the physical and emotional demands of the job, combined with insufficient remuneration and limited access to professional development, exacerbate the pressures faced by auxiliary workers in child and youth care settings.

Beyond demanding working conditions, these professionals face substantial obstacles that hinder their ability to perform their roles effectively. One significant challenge is the emotional strain that comes with supporting vulnerable and often traumatized children and youth. According to Ranahan, (2017) Auxiliary child and youth care workers are frequently exposed to situations involving neglect, abuse, and mental health crises, which can have a detrimental effect on their own emotional well-being. Additionally, elevated staff turnover rates and insufficient staffing levels contribute to increased workloads, ultimately compromising the quality of care delivered. Such challenges are compounded by a lack of formal recognition of auxiliary roles within broader child and youth care frameworks, which limits care er advancement and access to critical support services.

Coping strategies for auxiliary child and youth care workers are essential to mitigating the adverse effects of their challenging work environments. Studies indicate that workers use both personal and professional strategies to cope with stress. On a personal level, they seek support from colleagues, practice self-care , and establish work-life balance. Professionally, resilience training and regular supervision play a crucial role in enhancing emotional well-being and preventing burnout. Jones et al., (2021) mentioned that the introduction of peer support groups and mentorship programs within child and youth care institutions has been effective in providing emotional outlets and fostering a sense of community among auxiliary staff.

Despite the existence of these coping strategies, there remains a critical need for systemic changes to enhance the working conditions of auxiliary child and youth care workers . Policy

reforms aimed at increasing funding for child and youth care services, enhancing access to training and professional development, and recognizing the unique role of auxiliary workers within the care system are vital. Moreover, increasing the availability of mental health services for workers and creating a supportive organisational culture can alleviate some of the stressors inherent in this line of work. Future research should explore the long-term effectiveness of current coping strategies and evaluate how systemic changes could be implemented to support auxiliary child and youth care workers more effectively. This is circumvented in the findings of the study.

2.6 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter provided a thorough overview of the theoretical framework and literature review around which the research investigation is built. The researcher explored how ecosystem and systems theories contribute to our understanding of the relationship between an individual and their environment while debating the use of PIE. The theories are aligned with the study as they speak to the impact in a working environment and its influence in the person`s behaviour. The PIE theoretical framework provided a link to the research by detailing the experiences and challenges experienced by ACYCWs when working in their respective environment. This further explains how their employment conditions are making it difficult for them to grow as professionals. According to Jabareen (2009), the theoretical framework establishes important variables, constructions, or components and assumes a relationship between them. So, since the PIE and systems theories are looking at how the environment is influencing the behaviour of people therefore in this study it is found suitable to be used as the lens through which this research proposes to discover the conditions of employment of Auxiliary child and youth care workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto South Africa faces significant gaps in service provision for vulnerable child ren and youth, necessitating an increased demand for social service practitioners due to the nation's large number of at-risk populations. While research on child and youth care provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding potential developments in CYC practice, South Africa has not had much of an influence on this field's academic outcomes. In addressing the problems facing orphans and vulnerable child ren at risk, the Isibindi approach has been heralded as a game-changing breakthrough in the field. The theoretical framework was explained, used, and its relevance to the current study was discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The approach utilised to carry out the study in order to accomplish the goals and objectives specified in Chapter One was thoroughly discussed in this chapter. The demographic, sample, research setting, and research design and methodology are all discussed. Additionally, this chapter discussed the methods for gathering and analysing data.

3.2. Research question.

What are the employment conditions o ACYCW in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development?

3.3. Aim

To explore employment conditions of Auxiliary child and youth Care Work in Non-Profit Organisations Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

3.4. Objectives

1) To establish the experiences of Auxiliary child and youth Care workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
2) To explore how employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary child and youth care workers working at NPOs at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives.
3) To discover the coping mechanism the Auxiliary child and youth care workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions.
4) To understand services rendered by the Non-Profit organisations to assist the auxiliary child and youth care workers in dealing with the challenges experienced in their employment.
5) To recommend additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the employment conditions of Auxiliary child and youth Care workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

3.5 Research Paradigm

A positivist research paradigm follows a scientific and objective approach, emphasizing quantifiable data, hypothesis testing, and generalizable findings. In contrast, an interpretivist research paradigm focuses on understanding human experiences and social realities through qualitative methods, emphasizing context, meaning, and subjectivity (Bonache et al., 2020). Interpretivism was the paradigm most suited for this particular research project. Interpretivism premise that studying people cannot be done in the same way as studying physical events, it views humans as distinct from physical phenomena and adds depth to meanings (Bonache et al., 2020). Rather than trying to provide unambiguous truths that are relevant to all situations, regardless of important circumstances and conditions, the researcher was able to obtain richer insights by adopting an interpretivism paradigm. Interpretivism emphasises the subjective nature of reality, focusing on understanding how individuals or groups interpret their own world and make sense out of it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher decided to use this paradigm to investigate the significance and encounters of the ACYCW participants through methods such as interviews, observations, and case studies, recognising that every person has their own reality and it is unique. The goal here was ensure that in-depth understanding of the employment conditions of ACYCWs employed by NPO at Soweto is gathered. Interpretivism is often linked to qualitative research approaches because it is concerned with looking at interpreting lived experiences of human beings or where qualitative research method is concerned.

3.6 Research approach

In research there are different research approaches, such as the qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods and this study adopted qualitative research approach. Dudley (2017) mentions that a qualitative research methodology is a more prevalent method of inquiry since it enables participants to express their personal lived experiences. This strategy emphasises the subjective perceptions of the participants. It also maintains that research participants varied social and cultural upbringings lead to differences in how they perceive problems (Creswell, 2018).

As opposed to numbers and counts, data in qualitative research is offered in the form of words, images, descriptions, or narratives to better access the participants' unique and subjective experiences (Monette et al., 2014). According to Greener (2018) qualitative research largely concentrates on explaining human experiences within circumstances rather than focusing on forecasting behaviours. According to Creswell (2018) one of the key advantages of using

qualitative research approach is that it is mostly suitable when the researcher wants to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and the disadvantage is that it is very time consuming especially during the planning and implementing the qualitative research method.

According to Maxwell (2017), qualitative research is a broad phrase that includes research methodologies that investigate, depict, and clarify people's experiences, behaviours', interactions, and social situations without depending on statistical analysis or quantitative data. The qualitative approach to research, which examines individuals in their relevant setting and provides the researcher with rich is shared by these quoted authors (Creswell, et al., 2018, Maxwell, 2017). The qualitative research method will guide the researcher in terms of the whole process of conducting this research study. This method was found appropriate for this research because it explores the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto. The study aligns to the characteristics of qualitative research in that, it explores people's experiences, perceptions, and behaviour without inferring that data to numbers. Lastly, the nature of this study is both exploratory in that it explored the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto and describe the experiences of the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in relation to the employment conditions at their respective NPOs. A deeper knowledge of participants' viewpoints, feelings, and emotions is one of the many benefits of qualitative research, which contributes to our comprehension of intricate social phenomena. Qualitative approaches are adaptable and may be tailored to the particular setting of the study (Cresswell & Poth ,2018). Examples of these methods include participant observation, focus groups, and interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 2018). Qualitative research does, however, have certain drawbacks, including the possibility of researcher bias, which may affect how the results are interpreted (Braun & Clarke, 2021) . Since the samples are small and non-random, the results are frequently not generalisable (Saldaña, 2021). Furthermore, collecting and analysing data for qualitative research can be labour- and time-intensive, requiring substantial resources (Cresswell, 2018).

3.7 Research Design

The design for the study was a multiple case research design study. A case study design is a type of research methodology where a single subject, group, event, or organisation is thoroughly examined to explore and comprehend complicated themes in the context of real-

world situations (Yin, 2018).Looking at several cases, a multiple-case study design expands on this strategy and enables comparisons and a greater comprehension of the phenomenon in various circumstances (Sreejesh, et al., 2019). Multiple case studies may include an in-depth investigation of a program, event, organization, or one or more individuals., (Fawcett & Pockett, 2015). Multiple case studies provide a detailed descriptive account of a person's life or an event, they can also be referred to as life histories and/or narrative investigations (Monette et al., 2014). Most multiple case studies aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of a certain instance or case.

The researcher examines a programme, action, or procedure of an individual or group while employing case studies, (Creswell,2018). Comparing several situations, a multiple case study approach can provide a wider knowledge of a phenomenon and improve the findings' generalisability and robustness. Using this method, researchers can find trends and differences between cases, which can provide more thorough insights and help them create well-supported ideas. The drawbacks, however, are the heightened complexity and resource requirements, since gathering and analysing data for several cases takes more time, effort, and coordination. Managing large qualitative datasets from multiple cases is complex and may compromise both depth and breadth in the study. One benefit of employing case studies is that they offer a comprehensive and thorough depiction of people's experiences and situations. (Monette et al., 2014).

Investigating the working conditions of auxiliary child and youth care workers at nonprofit organisations in Soweto was the aim of this study. Characterising, analysing, and comparing the phenomenon under study were done by the researcher using the participant responses. According to Maxwell (2017), the multiple case study method allows the research issue to be evaluated through a range of lenses, which aids in a better understanding of the phenomenon under examination.

The researcher had an ability to comprehend the working conditions of auxiliary child and youth care workers at NPOs in Soweto through the usage of this design. The design has enabled the researcher to understand how auxiliary child and youth care workers manage their employment challenges in their line of work, and more importantly, the researcher had the opportunity to learn about the services that NPOs offer to address the challenges experienced by ACYCW in their working context.

3.8 Population, Sample, and sampling procedures

Curtis and Curtis (2017), describe a population as the entire set from which the study's sample or units are picked, or as a collection of things that includes all the measurements the researcher is interested in. In the Gauteng Department of Social Development there are 60 funded independent NPO within the HIV/AIDS and Expanded Public Works Programme Sub-directorate (Gauteng Department of Social Development Funding Framework, 2021) The researcher aimed at sampling two NPOs which formed part of the study from the population of the abovementioned 60 funded NPO. Further to that, the two NPOs that were sampled are not working directly with the researcher or under her own caseload as they are within the Partnership and Finance Directorate and the researcher falls within the statutory Directorate in the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Therefore, she further does not work also in their areas where the two NPO are from. The sample which was drawn from the described population consisted of 10 participants. In each of the NPOs the employees were between twenty-nine and thirty-six.

Sampling strategy

A sample is normally taken from a sizable population, and it may be assumed that the traits seen in the sample are likely also found in the population (Green & Thorogood, 2014). The sample consisted of 10 ACYCWs from Soweto NPO funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. These participants were selected through purposive sampling technique and equal numbers were drawn from the sampled NPO. According to Creswell (2018), when conducting purposive sampling, the researcher is free to exercise independent judgment in selecting study participants from the intended group who meet the criteria for being included. The selection criteria to recruit participants included:

- Qualified Auxiliary child and youth care workers employed by NPO in Soweto.
- Participants who are between the ages of 25 and 40 years, with at least 2 or more years of experience as qualified Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers who have vast information on this study based on their experiences.
- Participants who meet the criteria and are willing to voluntarily participate in the study.

The exclusion was based on not meeting the criteria listed above.

3.9 Research Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions was employed to gather information from the participants. An interview guide helps the interview process as an interactive exchange of communication (Leedy & Ormond, 2013). Its fluid structure and adaptability are intended to let the researcher delve into and examine unanticipated themes (Liamputtong, 2013). When conducting exploratory research, a semi-structured interviews are used, because they can assist the research to gather more precise information from the participants, unlike the structured interviews which are rigid (Monette, et al., 2014).The nature of this study involved human beings, and it is key to note that participation in this study was voluntary and a semi-structured interview guide was used to collect data from the research participants after having sought permission and consent from them through a written consent form. The interviews took almost an hour each and were done at their workplaces at the convenience of the participants.

Marshall and Rossman (2018) state that using a semi-structured interview guide has the advantage of helping the researcher to remember all the information that needs to be shared during the interview and guiding the direction of the discussion. One potential limitation of utilising a semi-structured interview guide is that the investigator may pose inquiries that fail to elicit the intended answers from the subjects (Maxwell, 2017). Participants might also be hesitant to share information.

3.10 Pre-Testing of the Research Instruments

A pre-test is typically conducted before starting the data collection process to identify any potential issues with the research tool (Ragin, 2019). The researcher worked out an arrangement to work with ten participants during the planning phase of the study, five of whom were from each NPO. She was unsuccessful in recruiting volunteers to carry out pre-tests by the time of implementation because the targeted organisations were confronted with issues of funding hence the pre-test was affected as the participants were not coming to work daily and others were deployed in other organisations. The researcher progressed into the actual research study and fortunately, the data gathered provided responses that were answering the research question and problem. The participants understood English but preferred to mix it with their native language (Isizulu). The researcher further acknowledged the importance of implementing the pre-test however due to the reason stated above she could not secure the sample for pre-testing. In a normal instance, she would have conducted the pre-test and where

applicable adjusted the instrument and addressed any other limitations that would have come as a result of pre-testing then communicated this to her supervisor.

3.11 Method of data collection

The method of data collection used in this study was in-depth face-to-face interviews. Creswell et al., (2018), defines interviews as a conversation that is either structured or semi-structured to gather information. Therefore, in-depth face-to-face interviews with participants were conducted in this study to gather information that was responding to the research question and problem as per the objectives of this study. The length of individually interviews took about 45 minutes to an hour. They took place in secluded offices in a setting that promoted privacy and confidentiality. The interviews were conducted at the participants' workplaces (NPO 1 and NPO 2) which were the NPO in which they are employed. Participants indicated their availability to the researcher and the interviews were scheduled at a venue suitable for them. Creswell (2018) says that employing interviews has both benefits and drawbacks.

One of the benefits of using interviews is that the researcher will gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and the researcher is also able to clarify any ambiguous comments from participants. Interviews allowed the researcher and participants freely communicate important information because the scope of work conducted by the ACYCWs is complex.

The researcher contacted the potential research participants through their respective NPO, and managers escalated the request to conduct this study to all ACYCWs. The researcher further sent emails to the said NPO explaining the purpose of this study and also attached the consent forms to request for permission. NPO 1 responded on time. After waiting for about two weeks with no response from the manager of the NPO 2, the researcher contacted the manager telephonically to check if they had seen her email and that is when most started responding to the request and gave permission for the researcher to come and conduct the study. Then the researcher scheduled appointments according to the participants' availability.

3.12 Method of data analysis

Data analysis is the process of giving the vast amount of gathered data organisation, order, and significance (Creswell, 2018) Data analysis is described as the method of going from unedited interviews to evidence-based interpretations supported by data that is used as the basis for reports that are published (Liamputtong, 2013).

Analysis is the process of categorizing, contrasting, weighing, and integrating information acquired during data collection in order to extract significance and ramifications, uncover trends, or combine different accounts of events to into a coherent story (Cresswell,2028). Thomas (2017) mentions that when conducting data analysis, there are five steps that the researcher follows which forms basis for the process of thematic data analysis. They are outlined below:

The first step according to Thomas (2017) was for the researcher to become acquainted with the data by transcribing the recorded information into textual form, reading the data several times over, and making notes. The researcher transcribed the recorded audio of the interviews and read through them to get an understanding.

Thomas (2017) further states that the second phase is the induction of themes, which enables the different categories to be labelled using the language of the informants rather than abstract academic terminology. The data is then categorised and grouped based on emergent themes, which will recognise the range of voices and perspectives of the research participants who participated in the study. The researcher documented the participants' responses to be able to identify differences and similarities from the participants' responses. After identifying the themes, the third phase is to find themes that are similar and corresponding with each objective of the study. The fourth phase involved the researcher evaluating the themes to determine how well they connected to the coded extracts, examining the traits of each theme, and continuously refining them. Until a clear explanation of what the data are illustrative of is generated, give each theme its unique definition and label (Waller et al., 2019). The example of themes picked up in the first research objectives was impactful engagement and codes were Working Conditions.

Lastly the final step was to write a report which included the final analysis of the phenomenon being studied. Yegidis et al., (2018) state that the final report will use chosen extracts as examples and conduct a final analysis of those extracts by connecting it to a review of the literature and research topics. In practice the researcher spent three weeks collecting data

through in-depth face-to-face interviews. Following that, she listened to the recordings and acquainted herself with the recorded data prior to starting data transcription. The researcher indicated codes and highlights on related concepts and qualities using different coloured highlighters. To create a thorough basis for analysis, the researcher coded each script. After that, the thorough framework was employed manually to perform additional in-depth coding and theme analysis. The researcher did a whole transcript analysis. The themes to be discussed comprehensively in chapter four include impactful engagement, resource limitations, innovation, and personal development.

3.13 Trustworthiness of the study

Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and reliability are the components of data trustworthiness in qualitative studies, (Waller et al., 2019). According to Thomas (2017), credibility is the degree to which the researcher's findings accurately reflect the real world as experienced by the study's participants. Tracy (2010) emphasised that a crucial element of trustworthiness in qualitative research is believability. The researcher contends that truthful representation of participant perspectives and experiences is necessary for research to be considered trustworthy. Several techniques can be used to assure the study's reliability as it examines the working circumstances for auxiliary child and youth care professionals in Soweto's non-profit organisations. These include extended participation and ongoing field observation, both of which aid in developing trust with participants and a deeper comprehension of the context.

According to Thomas (2017), dependability, which is comparable to reliability in quantitative research, was improved by the researcher personally conducting all interview schedules, leading all semi-structured interviews, and strictly following established procedures when analysing the collected data.. Dependability is related to the consistency of the research procedures and the data's long-term stability (Waller et al., 2019). Maintaining a thorough audit trail that records all research procedures, including data gathering techniques, choices made throughout the study, and adjustments to the research design, can help to ensure dependability in this investigation. Because of this transparency, the research process may be audited externally to confirm that the study was carried out methodically and that the results are reliable. The reliability of the research can be further increased by using a dependability audit, in which an impartial reviewer looks at the consistency and calibre of the data as well as the

procedures employed to gather and process it. According to Merriam and Tisdell, (2016), it is important to find out if the study's conclusions have been corroborated by other researchers.

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the findings of the study are shaped by the participants and not by researcher bias, motivation, or interest (Thomas, 2017). To improve confirmability, Yegidis et al., (2018) suggests that researchers may employ and employing correspondence checking, in which the researcher's supervisor verify the themes' classification. However, the researcher could not proceed with this process, and it got confusing for her. Keeping a reflexivity journal throughout the study can help in documenting personal reflections and ensuring that the interpretations are grounded in the data (Yegidis et al., 2018). The researcher had a note pad to take note of key issues highlighted by the ACYCW and not necessarily the reflexive journal.

Finally, making sure that the data gathered is thoroughly described, can further align to transferability. The term transferability describes how well research study results can be used or utilised in different situations (Yegidis et al., 2018).The possibility that the results are pertinent and transferable to comparable contexts can be raised by selecting a varied sample of participants that represents the spectrum of experiences and viewpoints within the population of interest. Through thorough documentation of the research technique and background, scientists can bolster the applicability of their findings. In this study the findings cannot be transferred however exploring the employment conditions in a different context can be done. This can be done to get different views of ACYCWs in another context compared to Soweto.

3.14 Ethical considerations

The study adhered to the following ethical considerations:

3.14.1 Ethical Permissions

Ragin (2019) asserts that all research should be subjected to independent ethical evaluation before the start of the data collection procedure by a competent and independent research ethics committee. The Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) of the University of Witwatersrand reviewed and approved this study's ethical application. The ethics clearance number is SW**23/10/01** ***(See Appendix A)***. Permission to conduct the study with Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in the two Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development was also obtained ***(See Appendix B & C).***

3.14.2 Informed consent

Informed consent, as defined by Greener (2018), is a standard in which individuals voluntarily participate in research after being fully informed of any potential dangers. Green (2020) stated that the respondents must be completely and honestly informed of the goal of the interview and the inquiry before the researcher can ask for their consent.

In this research, participant information sheets ***(See Appendix D)*** were shared with the potential research participants and prior to the actual data collection process it was also explained to the participants to give an insight in terms of what the study entails. The participants were then asked to sign informed consent forms before they could begin the study, indicating their agreement to participate. The researcher expedited the consent procedures by informing the participants of the purpose and length of the study.

3.14.3 Voluntary participation

The main principle for voluntary participation is to ensure that all the procedure of the research process is explained, so that they can make informed decision to participate or not (Halai, 2006). This will help the participant not feel coerced into taking part in the study. In order to encourage voluntary participation, the researcher in this study informed participants of the true aim of the study and assured them that their decision to decline would have no negative effects. Thus, the procedure made it possible for the subjects to voluntarily take part in the study, see the participant information sheet that is included ***(See Appendix E).***

3.14.4 Anonymity

Maxwell (2017) defines anonymity as safeguarding the identities of research participants. For the purposes of this study, Thomas (2017) has recommended replacing participant names and other identifying information with codes to maintain anonymity. In this study the researcher used participant A – J instead of the real names of the participants and further excluded any information that can easily identify the participants. In addition, when drafting the report or articles for publications no name of the participants will be mentioned in any publication.

3.14.5 Confidentiality and privacy

According to Liamputtong (2013), confidentiality tries to conceal the participants real identities. Based on the autonomy-respecting concept, people should have the freedom to keep

secrets and control who knows about them. Researchers must take all necessary precautions to secure participants' private information when they divulge it to them.

Participants' information has been always kept private throughout the study. Participants were made to be aware that the records will only be accessible by the researcher and study supervisor. Additionally, to further protect the confidentiality of the material, the data and transcript tapes will be maintained in a secure facility and destroyed after a period of six years.

3.15 Limitations and delimitations of the study

The following were the limitations and delimitations of the study:

- A pre-test was not conducted because the targeted organisations did not have funding, and the employees were deployed to other organisations.
- The use of native language as participants knew English however they preferred to express themselves in their native language during the interview.
- Literature focusing on auxiliary child and youth care workers (ACYCW) was limited, mostly the focus was on qualified CYCW.
- Methodology, focus group interview was going to work better to get diverse perspectives through interaction and considering the employees coming to work on scheduled days. Individual interviews took longer to transcribe, the researcher had to take leave from work to fast-track the process.
- The researcher clarified her positionality by declaring to the participants that she is employed by the same department that provides funding to non-profit organizations as a social worker. The purpose of this was to ensure the participant's professionalism and confidentiality. The researcher clarified that, in her capacity as a social worker, she is also bound by an ethical code.
- One of the other key limitations is that this study cannot be generalised as it was only done with the Soweto NPOs who have employed ACYCW.

3.16 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter's primary goal was to outline and explain the study's methodology and research design. Additionally discussed were the study's goals, secondary goals, research questions, sample techniques, pre-testing of the research tool, data collection, data processing, and study

boundaries and restrictions. A full explanation of the ethical considerations was given and the limitations, and delimitations of this study. The information gathered during the fieldwork is presented in the following chapter, which also discusses the results of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodology of this research study. This chapter provide the study's findings and analyses how they relate to the study's research questions, purpose, and goals. Exploring the working conditions of Auxiliary child and youth care workers in Soweto NPOs that are funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development was the main objective of the study.

The data gathered from the in-depth face-to-face interviews was examined, sorted, and classed accordingly. After synthesizing and assessing the patterns and themes found during data analysis, the researcher was able to make specific recommendations and findings.

4.2. Participants' Profiles

The research subjects who were questioned for this study had the necessary background working as auxiliary child and youth care workers in Soweto non-profit organisations that were granted funding by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The profile of the ten research participants will be presented below:

Table 4.2.1 Demographic details of participants**.**

No	Participant / Pseudonym name	Age	Gender	Education level	Years of experience as ACYCW
Participants from NPO 1					
1.	Participant A	27 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	5
2.	Participant B	29 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	6
3.	Participant C	33 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	6
4.	Participant D	31 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	5
5.	Participant E	26 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	2
Participants from NPO 2					

6.	Participant F	38 yrs.	M	ACYCW Certificate	8
7.	Participant G	39 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	9
8.	Participant H	35 yrs.	M	ACYCW Certificate	6
9.	Participant I	34 yrs.	M	ACYCW Certificate	6
10	Participant J	33 yrs.	F	ACYCW Certificate	6

The table 4.2.1 presents a summary of the demographic attributes and professional experiences of the individuals involved in a study that examined the working circumstances of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers (ACYCW) in Soweto's non-profit organisations (NPO). Each participant is given a pseudonym to protect their privacy, and they are classified according to the NPO with which they are associated. Age, gender, years of experience as an ACYCW, and education level (ACYCW Certificate) are among the details listed in the table. The comprehensive individual profiles of the participants offer an insightful examination of their viewpoints and experiences, offering significant insights into the variables impacting their work environment and level of job satisfaction.

The participant group in the table is predominately female, which is consistent with the gender distribution that is frequently seen in the field of child and youth care work based on. It is evident from the sampled participants that seven of them were females (Refer to Table 4.2.1). The age range of the participants, from mid-20s to late-30s, suggests that the workforce in this industry is comparatively youthful. Some ACYCW have more than five years of experience, indicating a mix of seasoned experts and more recent recruits into the sector. The years of experience for the sampled ACYCW vary between two and nine years as per the sampling criteria in Chapter 3. Despite the small sample size, the gender distribution was consistent to Luthuli (2018) findings. They discovered that 69% of the NPOs surveyed employed more women as compared to men. The study's conclusions are enhanced by the participants' diverse backgrounds and experiences, which enable a thorough examination of working circumstances from a range of angles within the ACYCW workforce.

4.3. Themes of the study

The results are provided in connection to the study's research questions, aim, and secondary objectives. The study's findings are organised into themes and sub-themes developed from the interview analysis. The next page presents Table 4.3's emerging themes.

Table 4.3.1. Table of themes that emanated from the study.

Objectives	Themes	Subthemes
Objective 1 ***Experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development***	1. Impactful Engagement	1.1 Work-Life Balance
		1.1 Supportive Work Environment
		1.2 Meaningful Connections
		1.4 Professional Development
Objective 2 ***Employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers working at NPOs at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives***	2.Resource Limitations	2.1 Boundary Challenges
		2.2 Workload and Time Management
		2.3 Limited Recognition and Support
		2.4 Financial Strain
		2.5 Emotional Impact and Trauma
Objective 3 ***Coping mechanism the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions***	3. Innovation and Personal Development	3.1 Innovation and Personal Development
		3.2 Debriefing and Case Review
		3.3 Peer Support and Sharing
		3.4 Professional Planning and Communication
		3.5 Communication and Support
		3.6Resourcefulness and Adaptability
		3.7Financial Planning and Management
		3.8 Document Management and Accountability
Objective 4 ***Services rendered by the Non-Profit organisations to assist the auxiliary child and youth care workers in dealing with the challenges experienced in their employment***	4, Professional Support and Development	4.1 Supervision and Mentorship
		4.2 Safe Spaces and Networking Opportunities
		4.3 Counselling and Motivation
		4.4 Resource Lists and Student Assistance
		4.5 Resource Management and Allocation

		4.6Financial Assistance and Donor Engagement
		4.7Financial Management Education
		4.8 Document Storage and Accountability
Objective 5 ***Recommendation of additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.***	5. Professional Development and Training	5.1 Skills Audit and Mentorship
		5.2 Resource Allocation and Support
		5.3 Resource Sharing and Office Space
		5.4 Contractual Clarity and Respectful Treatment
		5.5 Training for Management
		5.6 Investment in Education and Gender Equality
		5.7 Job Scope Clarity and Fair Compensation
		5.8 Permanent Employment and Departmental Placement

4.4. Presentation of the research findings as according to objectives themes and subthemes

Objective 1 is experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. This objective detailed the experiences of ACYCWs with the employment conditions at the NPOs in Soweto where they work.

4.4.1 Experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care workers

The first objective of the study was about establishing the experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The researcher asked the participants to share what their experiences are of being Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Based on this question asked the following themes emerged being, Impactful Engagement, Work-Life Balance, Supportive Work Environment, Meaningful Connections, Professional Development.

Theme 1 Impactful Engagement

In the Gauteng Department of Social Development-funded study examining the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers (ACYCW) in Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) in Soweto, the theme of *Impactful Engagement* highlights the significance of meaningful and productive relationships between ACYCW and the communities they serve. This theme explores the ways in which ACYCW interact with child ren's families, and other relevant parties in order to have a good influence and encourage holistic development. The study investigated the nature and results of these encounters through in-depth interviews, and observations, throwing light on the methods and techniques that ACYCW use to establish rapport, promote trust, and empower people and communities.

According to Gharabaghi and Stuart (2013), engagement is a fundamental component of child and youth care (CYC) practice and should ideally be present in both the environments in which young people live and the connections they have with these practitioners. Below are the experiences from participants A and B which showed impactful engagement while interacting with the child ren. Both of the participants felt that they have touched the child ren's life positively and that will have an impact in how they view themselves moving on. Stuart (2009) states that these specialists work to ensure child ren develop to their full potential, giving special attention to the holistic development of both typically developing child ren and those with special needs and impairments. These professionals operate in a variety of child care facility settings, all within the child 's life space. Two participants highlighted the below:

> *Positive experience as a child a youth care worker is a good experience is working in the moment giving positive guidance from wrong doing ...as a child and youth care worker working in the life space of client in need proper assessment assist with development of circle of courage for client in need, proper need analysis is developed and referrals made in the best interest of client in need. successful referral this means client life is being developed to be better. (NPO 1, Participant A)*

Another participant added:

> *The positive experiences which I had in CYCW was that most of the child ren which was under my care developed emotionally, physically, spiritually, and cognitively. Since I was a safe park coordinator it was my duty to engage them in extramural activities, which allowed them to express their God-given talents*

and also keep them away from unappreciated behaviour which they adopt from the streets on daily basis. The activities also allowed them to develop their confidence. During the sessions, it was easy to observe if there might be things which might be bothering them emotionally because it was a place where they should be free to express themselves. So, whenever I identified a child which is not in a good emotional state, I would usually talk them or even do referrals to relevant stakeholders. (NPO 1, Participant B)

The above findings focus on the positive experiences and impacts of working as a child and adolescent care provide. Both participants emphasise the necessity of creating a safe and supportive environment for the child ren in their care , as well as engaging them in activities that foster emotional, physical, spiritual, and cognitive growth. One participant cites the "Circle of Courage" framework, which is a framework for recognising and supporting the needs of child ren and youth founded on the principles of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity (Brendtro et al., 1990). This method, together with appropriate assessment and referrals, demonstrates a comprehensive and deliberate approach to care . Overall, the debate highlights the significant impact that positive participation and support may have on the growth and well-being.

Sub-theme 1.1 Work-Life Balance

Voydanoff (2002) defines work-life balance as the alignment between available resources, achieved when personal resources are adequate to meet the demands of both work and family responsibilities, enabling active participation in each domain. Finding a balance is essential when it comes to the amount of time spent on personal and professional requirements. According to Kirchmeyer (2000), when a person devotes the same amount of time, effort, and devotion to each function in life, balance is attained. One participant out of the ten shared that she does find a work life balance as she is supported at her organisation to balance her personal and work life.

I only work during weekdays. I am not forced to work during weekends or public holidays unless if there is an event. Whenever I worked during the weekend, I am allowed to take a day off but I arrange with it with my supervisor first. (NPO 1, Participant C).

Sub-theme 1.2 Supportive Work Environment

Baldwin & Ford (1988) defines supportive work environment as an environmental construct that creates a positive climate for employees within a business. Consequently, this fosters a sense of affiliation among staff members with their company (Naz et al., 2020). Three participants said they are content with their jobs and that they enjoy coming to work because their performance and well-being are respected, and the work environment is always positive. According to Kundu & Lata (2017), having supervisors that take the time to encourage staff members' personal and professional growth is another way to create a friendly environment. In a fun and safe setting, it fosters loyalty and beneficial professional relationships.

> *My work inspires me because of my work environment. My work environment enable me to be free and be able to ensure productivity. I have a safe space to conduct my interviews. My manager and the other staff members give me support, from administration and intake from. The administration part is always taken care of. Reports, referrals, and intake forms are taken care of. The support and encouragement I get is fantastic. (NPO 2, Participant F).*

It was further said:

> *Well, ngisebenze kuma [I work in] organisation adeala ngezinane [who are servicing child ren] for isikhathi eside manje [a long time now], and le [this]community I can see ukuthi inethemba kule [that it has hope in this]organisations because they depend kuyo nangama [in it even for] social issues abanawo[they have] . For me, as an ACYCW kule [in this]organisation it makes the work to be more easy. Njengama [like]cases engiwatholayo [I'm allocated] they through ama care givers and sometimes engiwathola[allocated] through beneficiaries. So i-experience yami [my experience]as an ACYCW is definitely enjoyable ngisho nama [I include even]home visit wam awekho [they are not] stressful because I also get help from my supervisor if I need something in any and everything. (NPO 2, Participant G).*

Another participant mentioned that:

> *My positive experience as an ACYW in my working condition is manageable and easy for me. I mean if I need anything I can contact my supervisor, we have a good relationship so it's easy for me to talk to her regarding issues. I really don't have any issues whatsoever. (NPO 2, Participant H).*

Sub-theme 1.3 Meaningful Connections

In describing meaningful connections, Ryan, and Deci (2000) state that meaningful connections, along with autonomy and competence, are essential psychological needs for people's capacity to adapt, grow, and thrive. Participant D supports the above when she emphasizes the value of supporting one another. Emotional connection occurs when some people are inclined to emotional connection by nature and like talking to others about their feelings. While they might only open up to those they can really trust, other people prefer to communicate more widely through humour.

> *You know I like working with parents who are willing to give me the correct information and also working with child ren who are able to express their feelings. I think it's important to connect with your beneficiaries so that you can also spot if there's something wrong you know. Also working with other social auxiliary workers who assist me in some of the cases that, creates growth for me. But more importantly, having meetings as ACYCWs to share our challenges or achievements also seeing to changes in the families that you work with it's really a reliever for me.(NPO 1, Participant D).*

Sub-theme 1.4 Professional Development

According to Mitchell (2013), professional development is advancement past the initial education, certification, and induction. Three participants shared how they have grown since were hired as care givers to being ACYCWs. Participant E's dream of becoming a social worker or a teacher was not reached but she managed to grow and touch other people's lives. Participant I learned a lot about human beings and believing in them while doing the ACYCW course. He has seen the importance of being in a team as he received a support from them. Participant J has been looking forward to study the course of ACYCW and embraced the opportunity as she saw a growth in her profession and given more tasks at work. The lack of equal opportunities to achieve one's goals may result from living in poverty as a result of limited access to resources and support networks in homes and schools (Carolissen, 2012; Lund et al., 2009; Pillay & Wasielewski, 2007). According to Masten et al., (1990), a resilience-based approach to youth development, which is closely tied to social justice, is founded on the notion that everyone can grow and overcome suffering regardless of their circumstances.

> *Okay so, the positive experiences uhm so, I like to work with child ren I wanted to be a social worker or a teacher or in a crèche. They reduce stress while working with them and also being able to change people and support them is big to me. Also like being an ambassador of the child ren that have been violated because no child will be violated in my presence. (NPO 1, Participant E).*

Other two participants highlighted:

> *I'm grateful to be called ACYCW in my work and in my community because I give hope to vulnerable people. I like my work because it places humans at the centre of everything, meaning that I view everyone as capable when supported. I didn't know that until I learned it while doing ACYCW. Our organisation is not big, but we reach out to many people in our community, and being part of the team that is out there to make change gives me joy. (NPO 2, Participant I).*

> *I didn't know of a profession called Child and Youth Care work until I saw it at my workplace. When I got the opportunity to become an ACYCW I was so happy and looked forward to being a professional. As an ACYCW we are entrusted with interventions unlike when I was still an ordinary care giver. (NPO 2, Participant J).*

The findings present a number of important themes, including work-life balance, a supportive work environment, profound connections with clients and coworkers , and professional growth in the field of ACYCW. In terms of work life balance the participants made remarks that they may plan time off with their supervisor and that they have a good work-life balance, with limited work on weekends and public holidays. Their general level of job satisfaction is influenced by this flexibility. A study conducted by Frost et at., (2018) found that professionals working in the space of child ren and youth are more likely to work very flexible working hours despite that their work can be stressful at times due to working with different cases in the spaces they find themselves. In reference to the supportive workplace. Participants displayed gratitude for the atmosphere at work, which enabled them to feel liberated and effective. They receive assistance from their manager and coworkers with a variety of tasks, including intake procedures and administration, which enabled them to concentrate on their primary duties. In their study, Mansfield et al., (2016) further supported that in most cases ACYCW are often in an environment that is supportive towards their work however, Águila-Otero et al., (2020) also argue that sometimes it is not the case because there

are many challenges that ACYCW are confronted with such as burn out in the work environment. The findings also reveal that, developing profound connections with child ren, parents, and coworkers is cited as one of the job's satisfying aspects. Through collaboration with other social workers , this relationship helps them to grow professionally and better understand and support their clients. The results of the study are consistent with that of Thurman et al., (2018), whose respondents stated that their main motivation for working with child ren and/or families was serving the community. The participants emphasised how much they value the professional development possibilities offered by ACYCW. Working with child ren, assisting people in need, and standing up for those who have been violated and vulnerable by providing them fulfilment. They can positively influence and contribute to beneficial changes in their communities because of their role. Considering the findings on the first objective of the study, the findings reveal a strong sense of contentment and purpose in the ACYCW profession, motivated by the chance to help and empower underprivileged people and families. Those working in the area report having a happy and fulfilling experience because of the encouraging work atmosphere, deep connections, and opportunity for professional progress. The study's conclusions concur with those of Thurman et al., (2018), who found that the main reason ACYCWs want to work with child ren was to benefit the community or child ren.

According to Hare (2004), the person-in-environment approach sees human and all of their environments as a dynamic, interacting system in which every element constantly influences and is affected by every other element. The PIE theory provided support for the meaningful engagement theme and its sub-themes, as the ACYCWs regarded the environment holistically. The workplace culture fostered the ACYCWs' ability to either build or realize their aspirations. They were given the chance to become ACYCWs because the management saw potential in them. They then enjoy what they do and radiate that joy to their clients. Johnson and Yanca (2001), together with Kondrat, (2002), highlight that this perspective sees each person and their surroundings as a whole, made up of the person, all the systems they interact with on a reciprocal basis, the larger environment they operate in, and all the relationships they have with each other and the different components, people live in an ecosystem where they both influence and are influenced by their surroundings.

4.4.2 Employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers working at NPO at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives

The second objective of this study was mainly focused on the employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers working at NPOs at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives. The Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers shared their views in terms of the employment conditions and challenges confronting them and their views are:

Theme 2 Resource Limitations

According to Valles (2024), resources are all the essential components required to manage a project or commercial activity. In terms of limitations three individuals mentioned that the NPO has limited resources. The lack of resources has major implication on effective service delivery. According to Participant A, this makes them less inclined to provide appropriate services and has an impact on their personal lives. Participant G brought out the point that not having a competent CYCW on hand for help was demotivating. Additionally, having a small office with few resources such as a printer and computer affects their ability to provide service on time. Participant J stated that they are impacted by not having an ACYCW office with cabinets for storing their documents. They are dependent on their colleagues to store their paperwork at their offices.

Two participants uttered:

> *Working in a vulnerable community with limited resources this delay proper service delivery and some cases take longer to be solved, lack of funding affects well-being of individual and overall strategy of the organisation is not met , personally this reduces the drive to work under the profession of social services lack of passion, uncontrollable measure like load-shedding delay deadline some monthly reports are submitted later and this affects compliance. (NPO 1, Participant A).*

> *"The issue is space and our equipment. Our office is not well resourced. We only have one printer, computer, and filing stations are not up to standard. At some point, I have to wait to write a report, and that delays the progress and update of files. I'm not allowed to use offices as my work needs me on the streets, so once a month I have to submit the typed report for stats. Some cases drain you emotionally and cause anxiety, like in a case where I know the family*

> *because I'm staying around the area where I am working. If that household has an abusive someone who is known within the community, I cannot be a professional ACYCW because I'll be restricted by knowing that family. At the same time, one has to handle the case for the betterment of the beneficiaries. At that time I would wish to have a mentor as we used to have working with NACCW. Some of the cases at times cause trauma even to us." (NPO 2, Participant G).*

Another participant highlighted a different issue in terms of resource limitations:

> *My issue is the misplacement of documents. At times you find that a child 's document is missing and now you must start all over again. Some beneficiaries are care less and sometimes the file gets lost by your supervisor. I mean those files are confidential. This impacts my professional life because it's a drag. We don't have cabinets for files, all files are kept by the supervisor who is an Auxiliary Social Work. We report to them as if they understand our work, hence they like to treat us like care givers. I don't like it because I'm also a professional like them actually we are at the same level but in the organisation they make Auxiliary Social Workers to be above us. (NPO 2, Participant J).*

Resource limitations have been highlighted as they key challenge that the ACYCW are confronted with when they highlight that because they are dependent on donors, they often lack resources at times which causes service delivery delays. Sometimes they even lack resources such as computers to write their reports and referrals. A study by Cook (2020) confirms this finding by indicating that most working spaces for professionals working directly with child ren and youth are often confronted with inadequate resources and that sometimes becomes a huge challenge as they fail to keep records. According to the SACSSP ethics (1986), and DSD (2005) Generic Norms and Standards all professionals who belong in this council must have lockable cabinets to safely keep documents of clients such as reports confidentially, and this is not the case based on the findings. ACYCW faces many difficulties, as highlighted by Schiff and Lane (2019). These difficulties include burnout and stress associated with the job, a lack of resources, low compensation, a lack of recognition, and unrealistic demands from management.

Working in an environment where there are limitations to service delivery is challenging. The ACYCW feels that they are not prioritised as their needs are not attended to such as having a

mentor and an office to keep their work. PIE theory gives an understanding of how people behave in different environments as it is based on the idea that an individual's surroundings can have a significant impact on them. It emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend a person and their behaviour by looking at their surroundings, (Kondrat, 2002).

Sub-theme 2.1 Teamwork and Communication

Teamwork involves collaborative efforts among individuals, requiring open communication and a clear understanding of the information shared between the speaker and the listener (Kaissi et al., 2003). The findings from this sub-theme highlight the importance of teamwork in enhancing problem-solving, increasing productivity, and improving morale and client satisfaction while reducing stress and providing employees with more control. Participant D shared that there is no teamwork within her workplace which makes things difficult for them as they are not supported by colleagues who are not ACYCW.

> *Well, I can say some of my colleagues were not cooperating regarding a teamwork this makes our work as ACYCWs quite difficult also I have some challenges regarding parents who are withholding information because I couldn't assist them fully so some of these cases it's because we not really corporative with each other me or the client or the beneficiaries that I work with. And also the workload I am expected to work maybe sometimes I'm supposed to work for 23 families and that's way too much and the issue of working with a lot of families is strenuous on my personal life because then I have to sort of be everywhere in manage things at the same time (NPO 1, Participant D).*

Sub-theme 2.2 Workload and Time Management

Time management involves organising, distributing, and prioritising workloads to ensure efficient resource utilisation and timely project completion, while workload management involves evaluating time usage and making plans in advance (Claessens & Associates, 2005). One participant shared a similar finding in that the workload allocated was not monitored effectively as they are left with cases to see how they handle them with no support, because of that they don't live a happy life as they always thinking about ways to help their clients.

> *So some challenges of my work are very difficult especially when I am faced with cases that result to sexual assault., there is limited support as the*

organisation does not know my work scope and expect me to work like a qualified CYCW whereas I am the assistance. Also child ren's right being violated by adults. This is because while working with kids they become your family and you become attached to them, meeting these challenges it drain you emotional overtime. At home they complain about me bringing my work home like stress or working beyond hours just to assist a certain family. (NPO 1, Participant E).

Sub-theme 2.3 Limited Recognition and Support

Recognition or acknowledgment by other professions was seen as a demotivating factor by all the participants including Participant B, further explained that it limits them from doing an effective intervention. They don't get support from the organisation hence they become attached to clients as well.

*I have observed they that being a CYCW is really vital to many young people. because they are able to open up about situations which are hard to express to their own parents. Thats where I realized that not only the young people need our intervention but even their parents, so that they experience a healthy environment both at home and the centre. I usually come across families which really need help but I don't have the power to help due to that now I have to stick to my role as ACYCW e.g. cases which cannot be solved because the beneficiaries are undocumented. Parents who won't comply to given tasks which help to better the family situation. Our profession is not recognized or taken seriously by other stakeholders. We walking long distances to visit the families which limit my time with my family due to being tired. I usually become emotionally hurt due to what I see and hear during visitation of beneficiaries, because some are child or youth-headed so I see sorrow in their eyes when the visitation time is over. Sometimes I observe they don't want to talk, all they need is just food which I cannot give them. We are not allowed to have personal relationship with families but they end up invading your space due to that now they see hope in you, even though you explained that the are boundaries meaning that u can only go this far. (NPO 1, Participant B)***.***

Sub-theme 2.4 Financial Strain

Financial strain refers to an individual's inability to meet expenses with available assets or their response to not meeting basic necessities (Kersten et al., 2015). Three participants shared that they are financially strained, Participant C indicated that the workload they have is sometimes left incomplete because there is no overtime compensation. Participant F shared that sometimes they give the child ren and youth (their beneficiaries) money from their pockets for transport when they refer them to other stakeholders. Participant, I indicated that the delay of stipends compromises them as they are expected to work while their minds are wondering about finances.

> *There is no compensation for overtime. It is very difficult to volunteer your time to service the clients because there is nothing in it for me. So, sometimes even if there is a lot of work, I leave it whenever the knock off time arrives which sometimes makes my work pile up. The pressure that is caused by too much workload makes me feel worried even when I am at home every time I think about it because I feel like I'm stuck*. (NPO 1, Participant C).

Another participant said:

> *One challenge anginayo [I have] is when I have a client that needs to be accompanied to a certain stakeholder because that needs financial assistance and at times we can't afford for many journeys. Bese [and then] regarding the professional impact of things ngingasho ukuthi [I can say that] I become frustrated when I refer a client to a stakeholder only to find that a client is not assisted when I make a follow-up. In other cases, I give them my money seeing the importance of the matter. The organisation won't repay me as the money for transport is very little and won't cover every client coming for assistance. Using my money for clients makes us fight in my home because my family suffers during the month. It's not easy hey, at the same time there is no one responsible for us to complain to other than the manager who will say we must not use our money. (NPO , Participant F).*

Furth more it was said by another participant:

> *"My challenge regarding the employment conditions is the issue of stipend. Because at times we get delayed for many months without pay and that influences our personal life. Some of us have child ren who need money for school, transport, and rent to pay. And at the same instance, you are expected*

to be productive at work. We can't be productive because we are financially strained, and this causes other strains like psychological and at times emotional strain" (NPO 2, Participant I).

Sub-theme 2.5 Lack of explanation of contractual agreements

Basson et al. (2005) defines an employment contract as a mutual agreement where an employee provides services for a fixed fee, granting employers control and supervision. In this study lack of explanation of contractual agreements was highlighted by the ACYCW because at each and every year their employment contracts are not clearly explained to them and because they are desperate for work they do not ask a lot to get clarity. Participant H expresses discomfort with short-term contracts.

> *One issue that is recurring for me or us as ACYCW is the issue of contracts. I mean the new strategy of renewing the contract every 3 months bothers us. I say this because you can't work properly now in fear that if you do something wrong or upset someone of a higher position you might get dismissed. In some instances, you can even get threatened over the contract just for you to do things that you are not hired for. (NPO 2, Participant H).*

The research reveals several challenges faced by ACYCW, including issues with teamwork, communication, workload, time management, limited recognition, financial strain, and lack of explanation of contractual agreements. According to Molepo (2020) stress and anxiety can be worsened by a heavy workload, such as the rigorous demands of the job, along with heavy caseloads and scarce resources. Prior research revealed that indeed ACYCW experienced difficult working conditions and inadequate remuneration (Krueger, 2007; Linnan et al., 2020). ACYCW often face difficulties in assisting clients due to lack of cooperation and information sharing among team members. These challenges include boundary challenges, workload and time management, limited recognition and support, financial strain, and emotional impact and trauma. ACYCW often struggle to maintain professional boundaries due to emotional strain and scarcity of resources, which can impact their emotional health and work-life balance. Organisations should provide support and clear rules to help ACYCW deal with these difficulties. Excessive stress and anxiety levels might result from a hard job with a heavy workload, as well as from high caseloads and scarce resources (Moleopo, 2020). Workload and time management are also significant issues, leading to stress and exhaustion. Organisations should implement policies that support reasonable workloads and efficient time management

to prevent burnout and ensure quality care . Limited recognition and support can significantly impact ACYCWs' motivation and job satisfaction. Financial strain, with low incomes and limited growth opportunities, can also negatively impact ACYCWs' ability to perform their jobs and personal wellbeing. Employers should offer competitive pay and opportunities for professional growth to retain skilled ACYCWs. Previous research has revealed that individuals providing child care services experienced a diverse range of health issues due to the physical and psychological strain of their profession (Linnan et al., 2020).

They also face financial strain due to delayed stipends and low pay, which can impact their personal lives and ability to provide for their families. Additionally, the lack of clarity and stability in their employment contracts can create uncertainty and fear of dismissal. These challenges highlight the need for improved support, recognition, and resources for ACYCW. The traumatic and demanding environment in which ACYCW work on a daily basis causes stress and burnout (Cook, 2020). ACYCW encounters a variety of challenges, according to Schiff and Lane (2019), including work-related stress and burnout, a lack of organised supervision at times, a lack of resources, low salaries, a lack of recognition, unreasonable demands from management, inadequate support, and the aggressive behaviour of young people.

As alluded by the findings, it is clear that ACYCW are often confronted by many challenges because their employers at times do not explain the employment contracts and are contracted for a shorter period which affects stability and how they render services. Furthermore, they highlighted that sometimes they cannot co-exist with their coworkers , and that creates division amongst themselves which also exacerbates the issue of being overloaded with work which they cannot manage at times. Lastly, the participants highlighted that lack of support and recognition also impact negatively in terms of how they render their services to their beneficiaries. According to previous research, child care providers faced a variety of health issues as a result of the mental and physical strain of their jobs (Linnan et al., 2020).

The findings highlight how crucial it is for ACYCW to have better resources, acknowledgement, and support in order to fulfil their jobs and deal with the complicated issues that the people and families they work with are confront by. By addressing these issues, ACYCWs' well-being, and the outcomes for the communities they serve can both be improved. In conclusion, organisations must provide adequate tools and support to help ACYCW cope

with the demanding workspace and maintain their mental health. According to Schiff and Lane (2019), CYCW encounter a variety of difficulties, such as burnout and stress related to their jobs, poorly organised supervision, a lack of resources, low pay, a lack of recognition, and unreasonable demands from management. The researcher used PIE theory to understand the difficulties that ACYCW encountered in light of scarce resources. Under this subject, it became evident that the ACYCWs' working conditions are unfavourable because they must contend with scarce resources in order to provide the community with appropriate services. Since there was no competent ACYCW to serve as their mentor, they received no support from the organisations. The organisations does not reimburse clients for transportation costs, so in order to help their customers, ACYCW are forced to pay out of pocket. Their personal life were then impacted by this in turn.

4.4.3 Coping mechanism the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions.

The third objective of the study investigated the coping mechanism the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions. The following themes emerged under this objective namely: innovation and personal development, debriefing and case review, peer support and sharing, professional planning and communication, communication and support, resourcefulness and adaptability, financial planning and management, document management, and accountability.

Theme 3 Innovation and Personal Development

Innovations are systems, practices, techniques, abilities, and technological tools that transform inputs into outputs (Zhuang et al., 1999). Innovation is the art of bringing a novel concept to fruition. Enhancing oneself, your abilities, your perspective, and your objectives is the process of personal growth. Participant A shared that she has developed techniques to stay innovative and self-motivated for personal growth.

> *The importance of thinking innovative and networking ,personality I have open business that keeps me motivated daily allows me to understand the importance of development ,I have adopted the 4 D daily decision determine your destiny, I have developed personally were I now know the importance of Ubuntu and communicating assertiveness(NPO 1, Participant A).*

Sub-theme 3.1 Debriefing and Case Review

In a case review, supervisors analyse and consider a client's case to make sure the services are efficient and in line with the client's objectives (Kadushin and Kadushin, 2017). In contrast, debriefing takes place in teams and involves talking about and interpreting events that happened at work to promote learning, (Cant & Cooper,2011). Participant B stated that debriefings are conducted, and they get to learn and share ideas about case management.

> *We normally have debriefing sessions by the Department of Social Development. Then auxiliary workers and our managers go through our case. The progress allows us to share ideas in terms of solving problems. (NPO 1, Participant B).*

Sub-theme 3.2 Peer Support and Sharing

According to Penney (2018), peer support is the profoundly felt compassion, support, and guidance that individuals who have similar experiences can provide to each other in a mutually beneficial relationship. Participant C revealed that, due to a lack of trust among coworkers , she only talks about her work-related issues with a select group of them. Participant D mentioned that discussing difficulties among coworkers benefits them since they gain a lot of knowledge and assistance from one another.

> *I usually discuss my challenges with coworkers , especially during the supervision meetings that are held at work. You see in NPOs you need to be care ful how you talk and who you are talking to, so to be safe I talk only about what is work-related, I also sieve it because I might lose my job. We are always told here that if one is not happy he/she is free to go. It's not like in a Department here, but I'm happy to give the service to my community because I see impact or get appreciation. But at the workplace its something else, we working because we have families to take care of. (NPO 1, Participant C).*

> *We are advised to talk to our colleagues about such cases and it helps because you find that a times we have similar cases and having someone who you can relate to ease you. (NPO 1, Participant D).*

Ncube (2019) contributed to the idea that supervision presents deeper and more expansive opportunities, including a great chance to help ACYCW grow and broaden their understanding and to foster an environment that supports good, efficient practice.

Sub-theme 3.3 Professional Planning and Communication

According to Koontz and O'Donnell (1960), planning is determining ahead of time what has to be done, when it should be done, how to do it, and who will do it. It is building a bridge between our current situation and our desired future state. Participant E described how she completed and carried out her planning, which is greatly beneficial to her and has the backing of her supervisor.

> *I was able to draw up a working plan that was going to suit my professional not forgetting my job description I also managed to set up a meeting with my supervisor in a workplace to discuss with them the kinds of services I am expected to deliver as a ACYCW within the community. I was also able to draw up a schedule for times that I gave service because I understood that as a ACYCW I need to do flexi hours. We then agreed to have a register on which I gave a service early hours before starting time at workplace. I can be able to refer to or fill the register will help me to regain the hours back. (NPO 1, Participant E).*

Sub-theme 3.4 Communication and Support

According to Waisbord (2019), communication is defined as association, discourse, expression, information, persuasion, and symbolic engagement. Participant F, one of the members, reported that during their debriefing sessions, there is clear communication between all parties and the supervisor provides support.

> *Normally we have briefing sessions once a month and my employer will have meetings with us care givers and the social auxiliary workers . She was a child and youth care worker herself so, this allows us to discuss the challenges we face. We also have one on one sessions with the manager and she asks us to report critical cases. (NPO 2, Participant F).*

Sub-theme 3.5 Resourcefulness and Adaptability

Resourcefulness guarantees that all available instruments are used to overcome obstacles and finish tasks, whereas adaptability refers to the capacity to assess all available possibilities. MacKinnon and Derickson (2013). Participant G shared how their productivity at work is impacted by the lack of resources, such as computers.

> *At work there is nothing I can do as there is a management responsible for seeing that resources are there for us, if they can't get them, we wait till we get*

time to use the computer to write reports. I don't have a computer at home, I would have taken the work with me to do at home. Sometimes I would type the report earlier and submit it when its needed. (NPO 2, Participant G).

Sub-theme 3.6 Financial Planning and Management

Financial planning entails evaluating your existing financial status and developing a strategy to reach your financial objectives. This can include budgeting, saving, investing, and planning for retirement (Alexander, 2018). Participant I described how he uses his stipend and saves money to cover his expenses.

I am playing stokvel at work to assist me to reach my goals. The stipend is little compared to the work we do ,but we are smart as well in utilising it. My landlord knows that I am working for NPO and I have explained to her that sometimes more especially ngabo [around] April, the rent might delay. However, I try to save to be able to pay society during dry season. (NPO 2, Participant I).

One participant highlighted:

I know that in April every year we don't get pain because funding wouldn't be available them due to late signing of SLAs[Service Levy Agreement] . So, I normally save for April and pay my burial society in advance. Sometimes it goes beyond April then I borrow money from family members to survive that month. On the issue on 3 months contracts, I do my best not get on the wrong side of my seniors, however I know as well they cant expel me as they wish because they know we can go report them at the Social Development and CCMA[Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration] .(NPO 2, Participant H).

Sub-theme 3.7 Document Management and Accountability

Saffady (2021) emphasises the importance of effective systems and procedures for managing documents and records, as they provide responsibility and accountability for the organisation's business operations. A participant named J mentioned that her place of employment lacks an appropriate method for managing records, and that paperwork that is turned in to the seniors frequently disappears. She made a book to record every document she turned in for accountability to deal with that circumstance.

> *The issue of misplacing documents is really frustrating because we're always blamed by our supervisors as if we had anything to do with office. As ACYCWs we don't share the office with our supervisors who are responsible in keeping all the documents we submit to them safe. So to deal with this matter I have created a book where I write every document I submit to my supervisor so that she can't say I didn't submit. I had few incidence where I have submitted copies of birth certificates and school reports to my supervisor. She denied that I have submitted to her. I was not happy because I had to go back and get the originals from those households, make copies at the office, and send them back.*(NPO 2, Participant J).

This is reflected in various subthemes, such as debriefing and case review, peer support and sharing, professional planning and communication, and resourcefulness and adaptability. Debriefing sessions help ACYCW process their experiences, develop new skills, and gain insights for professional growth. Peer support networks provide a platform for ACYCW to share experiences, seek guidance, and gain knowledge, fostering a supportive work environment. Professional planning and communication are crucial for ACYCW to collaborate with coworkers and stakeholders, and to establish goals and objectives for their professional development. Lastly, the study highlights the significance of resourcefulness and adaptability in overcoming difficulties and overcoming constraints.

The results under objective three highlighted that the ACYCW employ various coping mechanisms to manage their employment conditions. These include innovation, debriefing, peer support, professional planning, resourcefulness, financial planning, and document management. They focus on networking, problem-solving, and sharing ideas to maintain motivation and focus. They also engage in debriefing sessions with the Department of Social Development and managers to enhance their problem-solving skills. They find support from colleagues, engage in professional planning and communication, and demonstrate resourcefulness and adaptability despite limited resources. They also manage their finances through stokvels and maintain accountability through tracking submissions. These strategies help them maintain professional standards, manage workloads, and contribute effectively to their communities. This is supported by Biggart, et al., (2017), state that ACYCW rely on peer coaching, peer, and family as their support system. Furthermore, Biggart et al., (2017) assert that, despite the challenges experienced by ACYCW there are several coping strategies that they could use such as supervision from their superiors however this is a controversial debate

because as per the SACSSP ethics ACYCW are supposed to be supervised by only qualified and professional Child and Youth Care Workers instead of social workers . In order to handle the emotional demands of their work, CYCWs are frequently given self-awareness training, specialized skill training, and coaching on how to recognize their triggers in order to avoid engaging in counter aggression or power struggles with younger people (Modlin, 2013). These results corroborate those of a study by Linnan et al., (2020), which demonstrated that CYCW motivation is critical when working with child ren who demonstrate attachment issues.

Despite the challenges they faced at work, CYCW flourished due to their peers' leadership and support (McFadden, 2020). On the other hand, Frosch et al., (2019) argue that it is more essential for professionals in the child and youth care work to device coping strategies which aligns to addressing their challenges. A rich understanding of resilience proposed by Young et al., (2008) is one that describes resilience as the ability to bounce back despite the exposure to hardships, setbacks, trauma, crisis, disability, and other stressful life experiences.

For instance, to ensure that they can keep records properly there should be adequate supply of resources such as papers, computers to type their reports etc. This Author further indicates that financial planning for ACYCW is key because they earn below minimum wages especially in sub-Saharan countries which is a finding as per this study as well. To comprehend ACYCWs' experiences with innovations and the subheadings that fall under them, PIE theory was employed. Productivity and personal development are influenced by an individual's interactions with their surroundings. In terms of documentation and responsibility, the ACYCW was let down by the system, which forced her to adopt a creative mindset in order to uphold her professionalism. Despite having a meagre stipend, ACYCW members have become adept at budgeting and managing their money to suit their needs. A person's surroundings are seen under the PIE approach as fluid, ever-evolving system in which every component is impacted by every other component (Hare, 2004).

4.4.4 Services rendered by the Non-Profit organisations to assist the auxiliary child and youth care workers in dealing with the challenges experienced in their employment.

The fourth objective of the study was to understand the services rendered by the Non-Profit organisations to assist the auxiliary child and youth care workers in dealing with the challenges experienced in their employment and the below are the themes that were discovered under this objective.

Theme 4 Supervision and Mentorship

Supervision monitors healthcare professionals' performance, providing direction, encouragement, and evaluation. Mentoring, on the other hand, involves experienced professionals assisting less experienced ones in learning and development, aiming to support both professional and personal growth, Gopee (2015). Participant A shared that her supervisor conducts one-on-one sessions regularly in addition to monthly supervision and mentoring at her place of employment.

> *Service provided by employer de-briefing every month, care of care givers end of the year ,one on one session for quality improvement, and Assessment of individual swat analysis to assist with linkage to training for academic and work growth. (NPO 1, Participant A).*

Sub-theme 4.1 Safe Spaces and Networking Opportunities

Safe spaces provide emotional and physical safety for marginalised groups, allowing them to express themselves without fear of harm. They offer social support, networking opportunities, and access to services like medical, legal, and psychosocial help. Networking is crucial for job advancement, enabling individuals to find new opportunities and mentors (Perloff, 1997). Participant C said they feel free at work because her supervisors have given them a safe space to network and grow, they also engage with other professions.

> *My employer allows us to vent our frustrations. He has created a safe space for us to be able to network with other professionals like us. We attend supervisions from different social workers and our manager. As Child and youth care workers , we normally join Social Auxiliary work supervision when the social worker from the Department of Social Development is with them so that we benefit as well because we don't have our own CYCW to do that for us. We are doing almost the same work so we talk the same language hence we can join in. We also do outings as a staff to refresh and to recharge our minds but we pay ourselves because the organisations doesn't have funding for that. (NPO 1, Participant C).*

Sub-theme 4.2 Counselling and Motivation

Corey (2016) defines counselling as a collaborative process in which the counsellor and client work together to address personal, social, and emotional challenges. Motivation involves

biological, emotional, social, and cognitive factors, Deci, and Ryan (2000) found that counsellors provide constant support and inspiration, even without an ACYCW supervisor, to foster teamwork and unity. Two participants talked about their experiences with counselling and motivation. Participant B said that although her supervisor is not an ACYCW, she gets constant support and is inspired to work. Participant D revealed that, in addition to inviting stakeholders to lead team-building exercises and organizing vacations to foster togetherness, her boss consistently inspires them.

> *One-on-one supervision sessions with my supervisor and group supervision with the supervisor and other colleagues. I love my work so I try by all means to make it work for me and have a positive attitude. I appreciate the supervisor even though he is not a ACYCW but an auxiliary worker ,he does give a support. From the Department, we don't have a supervisor, even our job descriptions are the same with social auxiliary workers but they are out supervisor don't ask me how because I don't know as well.(NPO 1, Participant B).*

Another participant added:

> *The manager does one-on-one with us, offers basic counselling, and refers us to relevant places for assistance. He sometimes invites people to motivate us, for instance, we had a visitor from Joburg Child Welfare who came to motivate us about teamwork, the importance of going the extra mile for our clients and overlooking minor challenges within the organisations. The organisations also assists with trips, which is where we bond and connect as colleagues*. (NPO 1, Participant D).

Sub-theme 4.3 Resource Lists and Student Assistance

According to Veeser and Blakemore (2006), student placements are an excellent opportunity for students to engage with an organisation while gaining real-world experience in their field of study. Resource lists are a list of stakeholders with their complete contact information used for referrals. Participant E talked about how they value the help of students who are gaining experience in their industry.

At the organisations there is a resource list that we use to refer cases. One of the challenges we had was not clear on when exactly to refer a case as others expected us to run with the case until it was resolved. We have student Social workers who stay with us for a period of a year and they assist with cases, which is one of the interventions done by the employer. (NPO 1, Participant E).

Sub-theme 4.4 Management of the allocation of resources

Resource allocation is the strategic management of resources that includes time, labour, and capital, to enhance productivity and achieve desired results across various tasks and functions (Bower and Gilbert, 2005). Participant F stated that although her workplace is making every effort to distribute funds and other resources efficiently, they still need to urge referred clients to make their own way to referred stakeholders.

The organisation is doing its best to cater for everyone's needs but in reality, it can't be due to limited funding. To get out referrals successful, they do give money for transport but it doesn't last the whole month because of the number of clients we have. We are encouraged to remind clients that they also need to sacrifice to get things done because the organisation does not have money for the whole community. (NPO 2, Participant F).

Sub-theme 4.5 Financial Assistance and Donor Engagement

According to Klafke et al., (2023), donor engagement is the process of establishing and preserving ties between a nonprofit and its funders. In regard to finances and donor money, two participants spoke. Participant G stated that although the manager and the board of directors are making every effort to draw in donors, more work still has to be done because they are still short on funds. Participant H discussed how they felt contracts were made to control them, and they were not happy about it.

"The management and the board have been active in applying for private donors and the additional computers were from them. The thing is the staff number is more than the resources, so we're always told to be patient with each other when we have to share the resources. When cases a allocated, the supervisors try not to allocate cases to someone who resides in the same area. However, the community will end up knowing that we are ACYCWs and

approach us. We are always reminded to revert the case to the person responsible for it." (NPO 2, Participant G).

The management had a meeting with us and explained the 3 months contract matter that its not meant to make us feel as if we are not recognised as employees but to cover themselves as we as staff members take advantage of a 12 months contract and end up abusing them since they won't be able to expel us until our contracts expires. The 3months period is made to control as measure. Thats what they say but we know its used against us. (NPO 2, Participant H).

Sub-theme 4.6 Financial Management Education

Financial management education, as defined by Brigham and Ehrhardt (2021), aims to enhance decision-making, strategic planning, and financial literacy by instructing individuals or organisations on proper financial resource management. Participant I stated that although they receive financial literacy from stakeholders, they would still like to have an increase in their stipend.

The usually bring people from FNB to render a session of financial management to inform us on how to plan with our stipend. It's good that they give us information but it would be better if they can get a sponsor to top up our stipends as its too little. Since we don't have any private sponsor and rely on the Department of Social Development for funding, we wait for them to fund us and endure dry season which can last for 3 months. (NPO 2, Participant I).

Sub-theme 4.7 Document Storage and Accountability

Saffady (2021) highlights the need for efficient systems and procedures for handling papers and records since they offer accountability and responsibility for the company's business activities. Participant J stated that even though they have cabinets, they are not in good condition, and the supervisor shouldn't hold them responsible if the client's documents disappear.

In terms of the storage of the documents, the organisation does have cabinets though some are not in good conditions but they can safely store them. It is up to the seniors to ensure that they are they don't lose them and blame us after we have submitted. (NPO 2, Participant J).

The theme of Professional Support and Development emerged as critical to the effectiveness and well-being of ACYCW in this study that examined the working conditions of Auxiliary Numerous subthemes were included in this subject, such as Supervision and Mentorship, which stressed the importance of continuing supervision and mentoring for ACYCW. These opportunities provide ACYCW guidance, feedback, and encouragement for their professional development, enabling them to improve their methods and get past challenges at work. Additionally, Gharabaghi and Phelan (2011), pointed out that companies frequently link performance management with supervision because it is assumed that it helps to motivate employees to achieve the tasks allocated to them in line of their duties.

The locations and networking opportunities helped ACYCW feel like they belonged, which enhanced their general job satisfaction and general well-being. The subtheme counselling and motivation also emerged, highlighting the importance of providing counselling and motivational support to ACYCW. Working with vulnerable populations under pressure can have a negative effect on ACYCW motivation and mental health. Motivational speakers and counselling programmes provided ACYCW with the support they needed to handle stress and maintain their work-related excitement.

The need of providing ACYCW with access to resource lists and student support initiatives was emphasised in this theme. These programmes and tools allowed ACYCW to get additional knowledge and assistance to enhance their professional development and role-effectiveness. As resource management and allocation makes evident, NPO need to have efficient processes for both resource management and allocation. ACYCW often had few resources at their disposal, thus it was essential that they distributed and managed those resources wisely in order to achieve their obligations and meet the needs of the child ren and youth they supported.

Findings also revealed that under the theme financial assistance and donor engagement it was emphasised how important it is to provide funding opportunities and opportunities for ACYCW to engage with donors. Donor engagement activities helped non-profit organisations raise money and resources to support their services and programmes, but financial assistance programmes helped child welfare academies get over their financial challenges. Financial management education underlined how important it is to provide ACYCW with financial management education and training. ACYCWs' capacity to handle their money, save money, and make a budget was essential to their personal and professional growth. These objectives were met with the aid of this instruction. According to Russ et al., (2019), organizations that

provide child and youth care provided a wide range of training possibilities, which participants noted were essential to preparing them for their most demanding jobs. The importance of NPO having effective processes for both document preservation and accountability was stressed in the theme document storage and accountability. Ensuring the efficient and safe handling of the vast quantities of documentation that ACYCW often handled required robust storage and accountability protocols.

It is highlighted by the participants in these findings that, NPO play a crucial role in supporting ACYCW in their employment. They offer supervision and mentoring, safe spaces, counselling, motivation, resource lists, resource allocation, financial assistance, financial management education, and document storage. These services help ACYCW reflect on their work, receive feedback, and access training for personal and professional growth. Employers also create safe spaces for ACYCW to vent their frustrations and network with other professionals. NPO also manage resource allocation, but the staff-to-resource ratio remains a challenge. Financial management education is offered to help ACYCW plan with their stipends, but additional sponsorship is needed. Document storage is also emphasized, with seniors responsible for ensuring safe storage. A study conducted by the Health and Welfare Sector Educational Training Authority (HWSETA) (2018) supports the above findings in this objective in that they found that it is critical for NPO to play a crucial role in supporting CYCW by offering training, supervision, emotional support, a safe work environment, financial support, recognition, flexible work arrangements, access to resources, and advocacy. These organisations provide training on child development, trauma-informed care , and counselling techniques, as well as supervision and mentorship sessions. They also offer counselling services and mental health support to help CYCW cope with the emotional demands of working with vulnerable populations. NPO also provide financial incentives, such as health insurance and retirement plans, to support their well-being. Overall, NPO play a vital role in supporting the well-being of child ren and youth in need (DSD, 2020). Applying the PIE theory to understand the ACYCW's experiences, it was discovered that financial literacy, professional growth, and money management skills influenced the participants' monthly survival in their households, workplaces, and ways of thinking in dealing with the situation. The ACYCWs were expected to handle records and information professionally, with care , and to maintain confidentiality at the same time, thus storage and responsibility remain a concern since it is Social auxiliary workers ' (SAWs) responsibility, it is perplexing that their managers expect them to accept accountability for records management. The ACYCW learned how to handle the situation to

keep their workplace conducive since it had an impact on their working environment, which in turn affected their well-being. The effects of the lack of donors to supplement their stipends was discussed, and the short contracts.

4.4.5 Recommendation of additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

The last objective of the study explored recommendation of additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Key themes that emerged from the research question asked by the researcher are presented below:

Theme 5 Professional Development and Training

According to Carter (2019), leaders can recommend pertinent training, provide growth opportunities, and facilitate care er progression in a manner that complements the team's specialisation. When a leader has a thorough understanding of the work that their subordinates do, they may be able to lead more successfully, motivate their team, and help the organisation succeed. It contributes to the creation of a solid, encouraging, and effective work atmosphere. Participant A mentioned that when the team is led by someone who knows the profession, strive to better the profession and empower the members.

> *The individual leading profession should understand child care , have enough resources and organisations provided with training for capacity building and improvement of service delivery. Training on how to develop policies that align to what the government needs. (NPO 1, Participant A).*

Sub-theme 5.1 Skills Audit and Mentorship

Johnson (2023) points out that whether an employee takes part directly in an audit or works in a job supporting audit-related tasks, they can still make a substantial contribution to the accuracy, efficiency, and success of auditing operations. According to Participant B, staff members ought to receive auditing skills training in order to boost productivity and draw in donations.

> *One of the solutions is that we get a skills audit to be able to evaluate our skills and knowledge with regard to our work at all times. Practical and mentoring*

from Social workers that deal with different issues like foster care , substance abuse, and empowerment seminars and workshops to enhance our understanding or relevant issues. Family support and reconciliation is another program in our work scope. However, funding organisations and the government need to support us financially to make our work easy because the organisations that we work for are not fully funded so we have to improvise, and it affects the quality of our work. (NPO 1, Participant B).

Sub-theme 5.2 Resource Allocation and Support

Bower and Gilbert (2005) define resource allocation as the strategic management of money, labour, and time to maximize output and achieve desired outcomes across various tasks and functions During a discussion with the three participants regarding resources, participant C suggested that equipping employees with gadgets like laptops and mobile phones which allow them to work remotely would boost productivity. Even though Participant D begged to be stationed nearer to the SAW office so they could share resources, their request was denied, and they are still having resource difficulties. It was suggested by Participant D that the ACYCW and SAW have different resources for accountability.

Fewer cases allocated to me will help. If I can be given Resources such as laptops and cell phones, that will help me work whenever I am and not depend on work-based resources such as PCs and landlines. Overtime payment. (NPO 1, Participant C).

This theme was also confirmed when two participants said:

The resource is only at SAW offices, but we also refer cases. we have asked that its better be moved to the admin office where everyone can have access to it because SAW office has limitations, the plea was not granted hence we have to see ourselves. (NPO 1, Participant D).

Its better they share the resources amongst us, meaning us the Auxiliary child and youth care workers and Social Auxiliary Workers and we have our separate offices because this thing of shifting the blame is making us to fight a lot. (NPO 1, Participant E).

Sub-theme 5.3 Contractual Clarity and Respectful Treatment

Brown (2022) asserts that treating others with respect creates a healthy and professional workplace and that contracts should be clear so that all parties know their responsibilities and expectations. These ideas work together to create business partnerships that are productive and peaceful. Participant F shared that in her workplace the environment is not pleasant as they have signed a 3-month contract which they are threatened about to be terminated, and there was no respect given to them as employees.

> *It's not right to work but uncikiselwe[mistreated] , one is bound to make mistakes. We have signed the contract with the Department of Social Department, which is for 12 months, now this internal 3 months contract is made to abuse us and its not right. (NPO 2, Participant F).*

Sub-theme 5.4 Training for Management

Every organisation's success depends on its ability to handle training. Good management training aids in the development of the abilities and know-how needed for leaders to lead their teams, promote a happy workplace, and advance organisational objectives, Johnson (2021). According to Participant H, managers need to receive training so they can treat employees fairly and refrain from abusing their position of authority.

> *The management must get training on how to treat fellow colleagues as they think they are untouchable when is positions*. (NPO 2, Participant H).

Sub-theme 5.5 Investment in Education and Gender Equality

Smith (2022) highlights the strong correlation between gender equality and educational investment, highlighting the societal benefits and equal growth resulting from education, promoting gender equality. Participant, I stressed the significance of the organisation supporting gender equality and investing in staff education.

> *The organisation must invest in education a, training of their staff members and should promote gender equality*.(NPO 2, Participant I).

Sub-theme 5.6 Job Scope Clarity and Fair Compensation

According to Tumi et al., (2022), two fundamental components of a happy and productive work environment are clearly defined job responsibilities and equitable compensation. Clear job descriptions encourage employees and help them understand their obligations and boundaries, and equitable pay makes sure that they are fairly compensated for their contributions.

Employee happiness, organisational efficacy, and general success are all influenced by these two variables. Participant G expressed her dissatisfaction with the job scope and compensation, stating that it demotivates them as employees and that the management shows no regard for them.

> *They should treat employees with respect and remember that we all have needs. If they are not coping with the salary they get, how do they think we doing with the little salary we get. It's frustrating that they don't put themselves in our shoes. (NPO 2, Participant G).*

Sub-theme 5.7 Permanent Employment and Departmental Placement

A person who works for an employer without a set expiration date is said to be in a permanent employment agreement. Employees are assigned to departments within an organisation according to their qualifications, background, and business requirements. Kalleberg (2018). Participant J voiced her displeasure with the placement of ACYCW following their qualifying. According to her, all ACYCW ought to work for the Department before being sent to organisations where they would receive equal pay and benefits.

> *ACYCW should not be involved in washing the dishes, pots, and cleaning. They should only engage or focus on the families that they have engaged. The salary that we get at NPO is not the same as that of the ACYCW who are working for the Department, it should be the same. Not getting benefits as an ACYCW should be looked at and the employment should be permanent. ACYCW should be employed directly by the Department then can be placed in NPO. (NPO 2, Participant J).*

The theme of professional development and training emerged as crucial for the growth and productivity of ACYCW in funded NPOs at Soweto. This theme included a number of subthemes, such as Skills Audit and Mentorship, which emphasised the value of regularly carrying out skills audits and giving ACYCW the chance to be mentored. The findings revealed that these programmes assisted ACYCW in identifying their areas of strength and growth, and mentorship offered them direction and encouragement to advance their knowledge and abilities.

Resource allocation and support, another subtheme, highlighted how important it is for NPO to set aside funds and offer assistance for training and care er advancement. This included

financing for classes and workshops, support for visiting conferences and seminars, and access to training resources. These tools and support systems allowed ACYCW to stay current on industry trends and best practices, which improved their ability to assist child ren and youth.

Resource sharing and office space sub-theme emphasised how crucial it is to give ACYCW access to suitable office space as well as shared resources. ACYCW needed shared resources including phones, laptops, and office supplies in order to carry out their jobs well. Furthermore, having an appropriate office space gave ACYCW a comfortable setting for working and collaborating with coworkers , improving their performance.

Contractual clarity and respectful treatment highlighted the need of treating ACYCW with respect and having employment contracts that are both explicit and transparent. In order to minimise miscommunications and conflicts, clear contracts enabled ACYCW understand their roles, duties, and benefits. It takes respect to treat ACYCW fairly and equally in order to establish a healthy work environment and to give them a sense of value and belonging. A number of research studies (Johnco et al., 2014; Linnan et al., 2020) supported this and demonstrated how crucial it is to have management listen to you because that creates a conducive working environment for all. Training for management emphasised how crucial it is to give management personnel in NPO support and training. In order to ensure that NPO operated well and to provide a supportive and favourable work environment for ACYCW, effective management was essential. Their management training enabled them to acquire the abilities and knowledge required to guide and assist ACYCW in their jobs. According to Ropafadzai. and Abyshey (2023), for example, mentioned that professional recognition can have an effect on an individual's motivation and morale when they do not receive acknowledgment and gratitude for their services as vital community workers .

Investment in education and gender equality emphasised the value of supporting gender equality among ACYCW and making educational investments. ACYCWs' professional development was enhanced by investing in their education, which included offering scholarships and bursaries to enable them to advance their studies and develop their abilities. Encouraging gender equality made sure that all ACYCW received fair treatment at work and equal opportunity for advancement.

The study’s aim was to explore the employment conditions of ACYCW in NPO in Soweto funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Key themes included professional development and training, skills audit and mentoring, resource allocation and support,

contractual clarity and respectful treatment, management training, investment in education and gender equality, job scope clarity and fair compensation, permanent employment, and departmental placement, and ensuring equal pay and benefits for both ACYCW and Department employees. The research also highlighted the need for financial assistance from funding organisations and the government to ensure the quality of work. The study also suggested that resources should be shared among ACYCW and Department employees, and that management should receive training on treating colleagues fairly. The study also suggested that ACYCW should focus on their families and be paid the same as their department counterparts.

The participants expressed that, they needed to be given opportunities for professional development based on conducting skills audits so that they could grow and be in a position to look for other better opportunities. Molepo (2020) criticized the difficulty of the field's practical professionalization, noting that it had not yet to satisfactory levels. Further to that, they mentioned that resource allocation is one of the key things that must be prioritised by both government and other donors so that their services are enhanced and of quality. In addition to that, it was highlighted that, management of their NPO needs training as well in terms of treating employees fairly and prioritising gender equity so that everyone gets a fair chance of growth. Lastly, these participants highlighted that to address all these challenges they experience especially in terms of salary disparities they need permanent absorption by the government instead of NPO. They however also mentioned that they do not mind being employed by the government and placed in NPO as permanent employees. This outlines a serious cry by the ACYCW to give the government a mandate on how their challenges should be addressed.

The researcher used the PIE theory to completely comprehend ACYCW and their work environment. She found that while workers were motivated to progress in their professions, they felt that their representatives did not have enough experience in the ACYCW field, therefore more work was required to have an impact on policy. The researcher understood ACYCW who were receiving skills audit and coaching by using PIE. The staff made it clear that they wanted to improve their performance through auditing skill training, but the company did not see the need for it. Due to their lack of precedence in the distribution of resources, ACYCW encountered difficulties in resolving issues related to assistance and resource allocation. The problem of resource responsibility remained even after they tried to adjust. The researcher used the PIE theory to determine that the employee contracts, which were altered

from a 12-month to a 3-month term in an attempt to scare the workers , increased their stress levels. They felt uneasy at work since they might not have their contracts renewed for the next quarter. They received assurances from the business that the contract only addressed issues pertaining to internal management. The aspiration of ACYCW was to be hired by the Department and assigned to a secure establishment where their employment would not be jeopardized. Due to their supervisors' lack of understanding, lack of support, and ignorance of the nature of ACYCW, ACYCW did not have a positive work environment. They gave in to the fact that they were not prioritized.

4.5 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented and discussed the findings arising from the study objectives and research problem. This study explored the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The experiences, challenges, coping strategies, mechanisms utilised by employer Non-Profit Organisations employing the ACYCWs to assist them in their work environment, so they are efficient and effective, including the recommendations on how to improve the working circumstances of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPO at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. The next chapter is Chapter 5 and presents the summary, conclusion and the recommendations pertaining to this study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter offers a thorough review of the employment conditions and its effects on Auxiliary Child and Youth Care workers . It explored a range of facets of their work life, including their experiences, obstacles they have faced, coping strategies, and resources for support. Understanding the complex dynamics that affect ACYWs' effectiveness, work satisfaction, and general well-being depends on this analysis. The sections that follow offers an overview of the main research findings, make specific recommendations for improving the working environment of ACYW so they can keep giving the child ren and youths in their care excellent care and support.

5.2. Summary of study

The below were the aims and the objectives of the study and they are discussed in light of the following findings:

Aim

To explore employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Work in Non-Profit Organisations Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Objectives

1) To establish the experiences of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers employment conditions Non-Profit Organisations at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.
2) To explore how employment condition challenges confronting Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers working at NPOs at Soweto impact on their professional and personal lives.
3) To discover the coping mechanism the Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers adopt in addressing their employment conditions.
4) 4) To learn about the services provided by non-profit organisations to help auxiliary child and youth care workers navigate the difficulties they face on the job. To recommend additional coping strategies that can be used to improve the

employment conditions of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in NPOs at Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

This study's main objective was to explore the conditions of employment of ACYW, who are employed by Gauteng Department of Social Development-funded NPO in Soweto. Understanding these workers ' experiences particularly about meaningful participation was the main objective. Topics like work-life balance, meaningful relationships, professional development, and encouraging work environments were all covered in the interview guide. These elements are crucial in determining how ACYW see their roles and the support they get from their employers, highlighting the importance of a positive work environment for their overall productivity and contentment in their jobs. The study examined how ACYCW in Soweto's non-profit organisations (NPOs) deal with their working conditions and how this affects both their personal and professional lives. One of the main obstacles that the participants identified was dealing with issues related to resource restrictions. In addition, the participants illustrated an image that said that working in locations with inadequate resources had a detrimental effect that made it difficult to implement appropriate service delivery, which in turn harmed their enthusiasm for their work. Their inadequate resources and deficiency of computers and other necessary office equipment, including printers, made matters worse and prevented them from being productive and compliant when reporting was called for. Managing the cases of diverse individuals from different communities can be emotionally taxing. As a result, appropriate and sufficient support systems should be in place to help participants with debriefing. These systems include mentorship, which is necessary to help staff members and reduce the likelihood that they will experience trauma or anxiety.

Under objective four this study emphasized how crucial it is for organisations to commit to providing adequate resources and clear rules that would enable ACYCW to manage obstacles and preserve their psychological health. The ACYCW emphasised the importance of having access to adequate resources in order for them to comprehensively implement their duties and responsibilities accordingly.

Time, effort, and management have emerged as more significant themes. ACYCW face an overwhelming workload as a result of managing several families, which can be very stressful and puts a lot of strain on them. As a result, they find it difficult to control their stress levels while still doing their jobs. The service users' and co-workers ' conspicuous lack of cooperation, along with the organisation's inadequate comprehension of their responsibilities, exacerbated their stress levels and emotional health. These factors' effects exacerbate burnout

and further hinder the productivity of ACYCW and the services they provide to child ren and youth. The significance of organisational policies and practices that enhance and encourage a reasonable workload and efficient time management in order to prevent burnout and assure quality care , all these were highlighted in the study.

The second objective discusses the challenges that ACYCW encounter at work and how these difficulties impact their personal and professional lives. The study explored issues like scarcity of resources, difficulties establishing boundaries, managing workload and time, inadequate acknowledgment and assistance, financial hardship, and the psychological effects and trauma related to their employment. The research intended to shed light on the major obstacles that prevent ACYW from carrying out their responsibilities efficiently and from maintaining a healthy work-life balance by identifying these issues.

The third objective investigated the coping mechanism used by ACYCW to deal with their difficult work environments. Topics like financial planning and management, document management and accountability, peer support and sharing, debriefing and case review, creativity and personal growth, professional planning and communication, resourcefulness and adaptability, and professional planning and communication were examined under this objective. For ACYCW to handle stress, navigate their demanding tasks, and preserve their personal and professional well-being, they needed to know these coping mechanisms.

The fourth objective looked into the services that non-profit organisations offered to help at-risk ACYCW overcome challenges. The study examined a number of topics, including resource management and allocation, financial aid and donor involvement, safe places and networking opportunities, counselling and motivation, professional support and development, supervision and mentorship, and record archiving and accountability. These services are essential in providing ACYCW with support, assisting them in managing the demands of their jobs, and guaranteeing their professional development. The fifth goal entails suggesting more coping mechanisms to enhance the working conditions for ACYCW, including professional growth and training, resource distribution and assistance, clear contracts, treating people with respect, and funding for gender equality and education. Then lastly, the ACYCW were afforded an opportunity to recommend strategies that could help address their employment conditions.

The study further explored the coping strategies required by ACYCW in the sphere of the NPO in Soweto to better manage their challenging work conditions. Several significant themes which were identified were innovation and personal development. Participants emphasized the

significance of critically thinking innovatively and participate in activities that are oriented with development. Some of the strategies they use, entail opening small businesses and implementing daily motivational practices to stay focused and motivated. This is a proactive method helped them to maintain a positive mentality which essentially fostered a sense of personal and professional growth. This study depicted a picture on how these innovative activities enabled ACYCW to steer their work environment challenges more efficiently.

Debriefing and case review were found to be significant coping mechanisms. The Department of Social Development's regular debriefing sessions gave ACYCW the chance to discuss ideas and examine cases with their management. The ACYCW benefited greatly from these debriefing meetings since they allowed them to digest their experiences, share knowledge, and ultimately acquire new and creative abilities. One of the important aspects that stands out is peer support and sharing, which provides ACYCW with a safe space to talk about their professional and personal struggles with peers and during supervision meetings. Again, this peer support network brought about a sense of companionship and working together, fostering more supportive and cohesive work environment. The act of sharing their experiences and advising one another, ACYCW managed to improve some of their emotional and professional burdens they encountered.

Having enough resources and being able to adapt is one of the aspects which were highlighted as the key characteristics in managing limited resources and unforeseen challenges. ACYCW portrayed creativity when addressing resource stumbling blocks, such as other ways to complete tasks when they do not have the office equipment. Financial planning and management were also significant coping mechanism, having ACYCW partaking in stokvels to save money and plan for instances where their stipends get delayed for payment. Management of documents and accountability practices, such as to maintenance of detailed records for documents which need to be submitted, enabled ACYCW to manage professional responsibilities and avoid disputes and conflicts with supervisors. All these coping strategies collectively helped ACYCW to uphold professional standards, management of workload, and efficiently contribute to their communities regardless of the various challenges they experienced.

The fourth main objective of the study dealt with services which are provided by NPO to help ACYCW on how to deal with the challenges they encounter within the scope of their employment. The theme Supervision and Mentorship has emerged as significant, noting how

critical it is to have regular debriefing sessions, one-on-one supervision, and end-of-year care giver care . All these services together with individual strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis and training linkages, offered ACYCW with required guidelines, feedback, and effective support that is required to improve their professional practice and address challenges that are related the scope of their work. To render continuous mentorship, NPO helped ACYCW to develop their skills, professional and academical growth.

Another theme which was identified as significant was space and networking opportunities, where in NPO created environments for ACYCW to vent out and share their frustrations and network with their fellow colleagues and other professionals. A conducive environment created and opportunity and allowed ACYCW to participate and attend supervision sessions with social workers , and partake in outings to recharge, and build supportive professional relationships. Counselling and motivation was another important subtheme, which put an emphasis on providing basic counselling, referrals to various stakeholders for further assistance and motivational sessions. The above-mentioned services, contained visits from motivational speakers and team-building trips, played a huge role for ACYCW to keep a positive attitude, ways to manage stress, and stay motivated regardless of the demanding scope of their work.

The subtheme resource lists, and assistance and management of resource allocation highlighted the significance of providing ACYCW to have access to resources and effective management of limited supplies. The list of resources played a significant role to help ACYCW and enabled them to know when it is feasible to refer cases, and student social workers provided additional support. Funding limitations posed some challenges, however NPOs have done their best to accommodate the needs of ACYCW, and financial assistance for transporting and endeavours to secure private donors for additional resources. Financial Management Education emphasized on training provided by NPO on budgeting and financial planning, helps ACYCW to manage their stipends more effectively. Documents Storage and Accountability stressed the emphasized the significance of authentic documentation practices and storage solutions which are secured, to ensure that ACYCW could manage their duties without conflicts pertaining lost documents. In general, all the above services jointly supported ACYCW to maintain professional values, handling and managing workloads, and contributing to efficiently to their surrounding communities.

This is the final objective of the study, and it explored recommendations for additional coping mechanisms to better and improve the conditions of employment for ACYCW within NPO in

Soweto, that are funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development. Some of the key which have emerged in the study entail, professional development, and training. This theme explored the significance of management in child care having a clear understanding of their field, to have enough and sufficient resources, and providing training to build capacity and policy development. Frequent skills audit and mentoring rendered by social workers was also a suggestion as means to help ACYCW to consistently evaluate and improve their skills, particularly in foster care and substance abuse. There were also recommendations such as mentorship and empowerment seminars intended to enhance their understanding ability to handle various cases.

Resource allocation and support came as another critical theme which highlighted the need for the distribution of resource and support systems. Recommendations which were recommended by ACYCW entailed a minimum number of case allocations, access to personal laptops and cell phones, and remuneration for overtime to better their effectiveness and work balance. Furthermore, the study explored that if ACYCW and SAW can share resources and have separate offices, they would be able to reduce conflicts and improve collaborative engagements. According to participants, necessity to move resources and allocate them to accessibility and ensure equitable access to tools and equipment required for their work.

The fifth and key theme were contractual clarity and respectful treatment, which highlighted the need for contracts that are clear and transparent, ethical, and respectful treatment from managers. Participants voiced out things that frustrate them such as short-term internal contracts and supported the view of the standardised 12-months contracts with the Department of Social Development. Managers should be trained on how to treat employees fairly and to conduct themselves professionally at all times, was recommended to bring about a supportive work environment. Investment in education and gender equality was also emphasized, stressing out the significance of the provision of educational opportunities and promotion of gender equality within the NPO sector. ACYCW alluded that there is a call for a fair and just compensation, permanent employment, and the process of departmental placement should ensure secure jobs and equal benefits across the employees compared to their counterparts in the department. The above-mentioned recommendations intend to set the tone and address the issues which are encountered by ACYCW and enhance their working conditions.

5.3 Conclusions

A supportive work environment is crucial, as demonstrated by the study's exploration of the employment circumstances of ACYW employed by Non-Profit Organisations (NPO) in Soweto. Work-life balance, positive work cultures, deep connections, and professional growth were found to be important elements affecting ACYWs' job satisfaction and productivity. In addition to improving these employees' personal wellbeing, a supportive and caring work environment helps them interact more deeply and profoundly with the kids and young people they support. It is clear that encouraging meaningful involvement and work satisfaction among ACYCW requires offering sufficient assistance and chances for professional development.

The study also revealed that it is critical to address the issues that ACYW encounter in order to support their emotional and professional wellbeing. Significant obstacles are highlighted in the report, including a lack of resources, difficulties defining boundaries, problems managing their workload and time, a lack of recognition and support, financial pressure, and the psychological effects and trauma connected to their jobs. These barriers make it challenging for ACYCW to fulfil their duties efficiently and preserve a positive work-life balance. To improve ACYWs' working circumstances and guarantee that they can provide the child ren and teenagers they serve with high-quality care , these issues must be understood and mitigated.

In conclusion, the assistance offered by NPOs, and the methods of resilience used by ACYCW are essential for helping them manage the demanding nature of their jobs. For ACYW to successfully navigate their demanding roles, coping strategies like creativity and personal development, debriefing and case review, peer support and sharing, professional planning and communication, resourcefulness and adaptability, financial planning and management, document management and accountability, are crucial. The services provided by NPO, such as financial aid, document storage and accountability, safe spaces and networking opportunities, mentoring and supervision, counselling and motivation, professional development and support, and resource management and allocation, are also essential in helping ACYW. The study's suggestions for further coping mechanisms, which centre on resource allocation, professional development, contractual clarity, and investments in gender equality and education, are meant to further improve the conditions of employment and the well-being of the ACYCW.

5.4. Recommendations

The study's conclusions led to the following recommendations:

Recommendations for Soweto NPOs employing Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers

- Strengthen Caring and Supportive Work Environments: Foster a work-life balance and strong bonds among ACYW in a caring and supportive work environment to boost job satisfaction and effectiveness. This means that NPOs who employ ACYCW needs to foster an employment environment that supports ACYCW fully with all the resources they need.
- Establish comprehensive programs for ACYW that offer opportunities for skill enhancement, care er advancement, and ongoing training as part of their professional development initiatives. This means that ACYCW needs to be given opportunities such as upgrading their certificates to Degrees at tertiary level.
- Allocating Sufficient Resources: This will help ACYW avoid burnout and reduce stress by providing enough resources to address difficulties with time management and workload. The most key resource for the ACYCW is increased and adequate salaries because that is also their way of sustaining themselves.
- Create a system for regularly recognizing and assisting ACYW to express gratitude for their dedication and hard work, as this will boost morale and improve job satisfaction. Foster a system between government and NPO as employers of ACYCW that recognises their years of service and professional growth.
- Financial assistance: Offer stipends or emergency funds to ACYW in order to alleviate their financial stress. Due to that ACYCW earn inadequate stipends or salaries, it is key that their salaries be relooked and improved so that it aligns with the cost of living.
- Offer Emotional Support Services: Counselling and debriefing sessions are examples of emotional support services that can help ACYW manage the trauma and emotional repercussions associated with their profession.
- Peer Support Networks: Assist ACYW in creating peer support networks that encourage collaboration, sharing, and mutual aid, thereby enhancing their ability to handle stress at work.
- Create clear lines of communication for professional planning and problem-solving in order to guarantee that ACYW can effectively convey their needs and difficulties.

- Employment contracts and procedures should be clear on matters such as fair salary, courteous treatment, and clearly defined job responsibilities in order to promote a stable and polite work environment.
- Mentoring and Supervision: Provide all-encompassing programs that enable ACYW to get the guidance and support they need to thrive in their roles.
- It is further recommended that ACYCWs should be supervised by qualified Child and Youth Care workers .

5.5. Recommendations for future studies

- • Perform ongoing studies to look at how working conditions affect ACYWs' personal and professional growth over the long run. This will lead to a deeper understanding of how regular support or lack thereof affects their lives and professions over the long run.
- To identify disparities in employment situations, challenges, and coping mechanisms, compare ACYW in various places or with funding from diverse sources using comparative analysis. This could highlight areas that need to be improved upon as well as best practices in certain situations.
- Evaluate training programs by looking at how specific training and professional development activities affect ACYWs' performance and job satisfaction. Identify the training methods that yield the greatest improvements in emotional resilience and skill acquisition.

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APPENDIX A: Ethic Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW23/10/01**
PROJECT TITLE	Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto.
INVESTIGATOR	**J NDIMA**
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR	SOCIAL WORK
DATE CONSIDERED	17 November 2023
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
RISK LEVEL	LOW RISK
EXPIRY DATE	17 November 2026

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE 18 December 2023 **CHAIRPERSON**
(DR L PETERSEN)

cc: Supervisor: DR L PETERSEN

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am are 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/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature **Date** 22 / 12 / 2023

APPENDIX B: Permission Letter from NPO 1

IKUSASA LETHU YOUTH PROJECT
Home Based Care & Community Education
Operating in the informal settlement of Freedom Park, Soweto
PO Box 347, Eldorado Park, Soweto 1813
Registration 021-792 NPO
Contact person: Joey Monane (project director)
Contact number: 0833560838
Fax No: 086 750 3186
Email: monanejoey@webmail.co.za

Dear Jabulile Ndima,

Subject: Acceptance for Practical Placement at Ikusasa Lethu Youth Project for 2024.

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you officially of the acceptance of your application for a practical placement at Ikusasa Lethu Youth Project. We are pleased to offer you an opportunity to gain hands-on experience and contribute to our organization's noble cause.

Your interest in our organization and commitment to enhancing your skills align perfectly with our mission at Ikusasa Lethu Youth Project. Your enthusiasm for learning and dedication to community development resonate deeply with our values.

Your practical placement will commence on **08th January 2024** and conclude on **6th December 2024.** During this period, you will have the chance to engage with our experienced team, participate in various projects, and contribute to our initiatives aimed at empowering youth through the **research** you will be doing with one of our finest CYCWs.

We are excited about the prospect of having you as part of our team and believe that this practical placement will be mutually beneficial. Your contributions and fresh perspective will undoubtedly add value to our projects, and we are eager to assist you in your learning journey.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us at **011 028 9551/ikusasalethuyouthproject@gmail.com** .

Thank you for choosing Ikusasa Lethu Youth Project for your practical placement. We look forward to welcoming you and working together towards a brighter future for our youth.

Warm regards,

Joey Monane
Project Director
Ikusasa Lethu Youth Project

IKUSASA LETHU YOUTH PROJECT
REG:021-792 NPO
6554 BISMUTH CRESENT
P.O BOX 347 ELDORADO PARK
CONTACT:0833560838
Date: 23 NOVEMBER 2023

APPENDIX C: Permission Letter from NPO 2

Tshilidzi Drop In Centre and Families
27 Khosa Street
Dobsonville
1863
NPO: 136-920
Tel: 011 023-8886

To: Miss Jabuli Jameela Sebeela

From: Tshilidzi DIC and families

Date: 22 November 2023

Registration number No: 136 - 920

Re: **Granting you permission to conduct your research Study**

This is a letter that grands you permission to conduct your research study for the period of your study. We will avail our Child and Youth Care Workers to participate in your research study.

Our doors of continuous growth and development towards research studies have been open for such important research study.

As Tshilidzi DIC and families we will support you where we can for the success of your research study.

Kind regards

Abu-baker

Project Manager

Tshilidzi DIC and families

TSHILIDZI DROP IN CENTRE
AND FAMILIES
NPO 136 920
DATE: 22/11/2023

078-945-3534

Lwaziabubaker@gmail.com

APPENDIX D: Participant Information sheet

Title: Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

Good day,

My name is Jabulile Ndima, I am a post graduate student registered for the degree Master of Arts in Occupational Social Work at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research on the ***Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.***

It is hoped that the information gathered from the study will assist in enhancing the conditions of employment for ACYCWs in NPOs at Soweto.

I therefore invite you to participate in my study. Your participation is entirely voluntary and refusal to participate will not be held against you in any way. There are also no financial or material benefits that you will get from participating in the study. If you agree to take part, I shall arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The in-depth face-to-face interviews will last approximately one hour. You may withdraw from the study at any time, and you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. Information gathered will be shared with my supervisor. The tapes used and the interview schedule will be stored in a locked cabinet for two years following any publications or for six years if no publication emanates from the study. Please be note that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report.

Please feel free to ask questions regarding the study. I shall answer them to the best of my ability. I may be contacted on 078 694 1092 or at 2404734@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Dr Laetitia Petersen on 011 717 4474 or at laetitia.petersen@wits.ac.za . Should you wish to receive a summary of the results of the study; an abstract will be made available on request. If you have any concerns and complaints about the study, please contact Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) contact details: hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours sincerely

Jabulile Sebeela

APPENDIX E: Consent form

Name of the researcher: Jabulile Ndima

Tittle of the project: Exploring the conditions of employment of Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Workers in Non-Profit Organisations in Soweto Funded by the Gauteng Department of Social Development.

I understand that:	**Yes**	**No**
• My participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study without being disadvantaged in any way.		
• I may choose not to answer any specific questions asked if I do not wish to do so.		
• There are foreseeable benefits or risks associated with participation in this study.		
• My identity will be kept strictly confidential, and any information that may identify me, will be removed from the interview transcript.		
• A copy of my interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.		
• I understand that my responses will be used in the write up of an honours project and may also be presented in conferences, book chapters, journal articles or books.		
• The recording will be stored in a secure location (a locked cupboard or password protected computer) with restricted access to the researcher and the research supervisor.		
• The recording will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed.		
• When the data analysis and write up of the research study is complete, the audio recording of the interview will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study.		
• The transcript with all identifying information directly linked to me removed, will be stored permanently, and may be used for future research.		

• Direct quotes from my interview, without any information that could identify me may be cited in the research report or other write-ups of the research.		

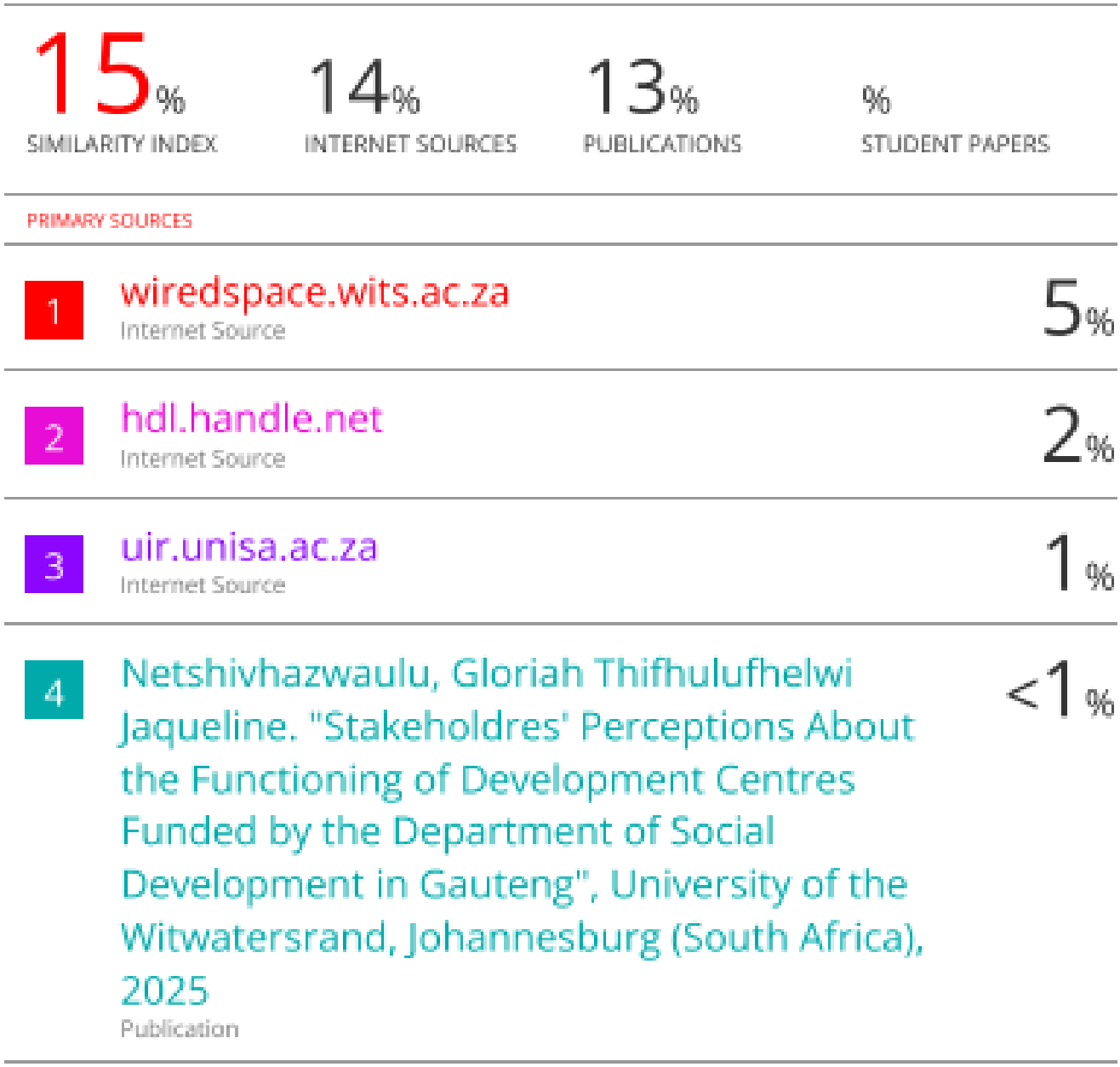
Signature of Participant:

Date:

Appendix F: Interview guide

- *What are the positive experiences you have about your employment conditions as an Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Worker?*
- *What are your employment condition challenges and how do they impact on your professional and personal life?*
- *Share with me, what are the coping mechanisms you adopted in addressing the employment conditions?*
- *Kindly share what services are provided by your employer to assist you with dealing with the challenges experienced in your work?*
- *What alternative solutions could you recommend that may be used to improve your employment conditions as an Auxiliary Child and Youth Care Worker?*

APPENDIX G: Turnitin report



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