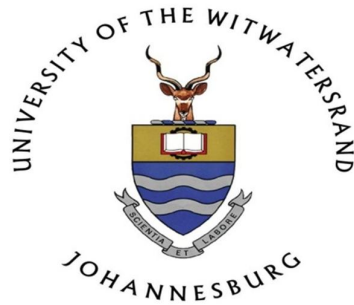


**An exploration of the exit plans of the beneficiaries of the foster care
grant in Soweto**



A Research Report presented to

The Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

In partial fulfilment of the requirements

For the Masters of Arts degree in Social Development

By

Rendani Rembuluwani

March 2014

Declaration

I declare that the proposed study is my own work and has not been published by another author; this is to the best of my knowledge. All external sources that have been included have been referenced according to the university standards.

Signed: _____

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I Rendani Rembuluwani would like to express my gratitude to all those who made it possible for me to complete this research report.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Professor Edwell Kaseke whose help, stimulating suggestions, knowledge, experience and encouragement helped me in all the times of study and analysis of the research both in the pre and post research period.

Very special thanks to my parents and siblings, for providing me with motivation and support during the entire research process. I wish to send my greatest appreciation to my spiritual guide for the spiritual and emotional guidance and always being there for me. Your efforts have never failed me.

I would also like to thank the Department of Social Development, without whom this report was almost impossible. It was a really good learning experience working with them and their support is highly appreciated. The practical guidance in the field of foster care you provided is too valuable to me.

Dated: March 2014

signed

Abstract:

Most social assistance programmes have exit strategies in place which require beneficiaries to end their participation in the programme either on an involuntary or voluntary basis. This can occur when the socioeconomic circumstances of the recipients have improved so they accomplish programme objectives and no longer need programme benefits (World Bank, 2000). Despite this ideal of being able to exit the grant system it seems that the withdrawal of the foster care grant can erode quality of life, particularly in circumstances where the foster parents do not have exit plans put in place. The aim of the study was to explore the exit plans of the recipients of the foster care grant in Soweto and the challenges they face in coming up with these plans. The study adopted a qualitative approach and it was exploratory in nature. Ten foster parents and four key informants from the Department of Social Development were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected using two separate semi-structured interview schedules for participants and key informants. The data gathered was then analysed using thematic content analysis. The results of the study revealed that there was little knowledge and understanding about the foster care grant and what it seeks to do. The study also revealed that there were no exit plans put in place by foster parents. These results of the study found that the participants had very little knowledge of what an exit strategy was and they did not have set exit plans to exit the grant. Other findings indicated that there was no support for participants from their social workers in terms of the sharing of information and the development of exit plans. This study will thus contribute to the discourse on social assistance in general and foster care grants in particular. Furthermore, it will help to sensitise social workers on the need for exit plans for the recipients of foster grants.

Key words: Foster care, foster care grant, recipients, exit strategies, poverty

Table of contents

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of contents	v
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
Background	1
Problem statement and rationale of study	2
Research questions	2
Aim of the study	2
Secondary objectives	2
Theoretical framework	3
Brief overview of the methodology	5
Limitations	6
Conclusion	6
Organisation of the report	7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
Introduction	8
Foster care and the foster care grant in South Africa	8
Poverty	11
Historical context of social assistance in South Africa	14
Exit strategies	17
Conclusion	20
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
Research approach	21
Study population and Sampling	21
Research instrumentation	22
Methods of Data collection	22
Pre-test	23

Data analysis	23
Trustworthiness	24
Ethical considerations	24
Limitations to the study	26
Conclusion	26
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
Introduction	27
Profile of participants	27
Views of the recipients on the purpose of the grant	29
Understanding of the importance of an exit plan	30
Alternative arrangements for the long term support of foster children	32
Challenges faced by foster parents in coming up with exit plans	35
Conclusion	37
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary	38
Conclusions	41
Recommendations	42
References	43
Appendix 1: Post graduate approval for proposal	46
Appendix 2: Human research ethics committee clearance certificate	47
Appendix 3: Approval for research from the Department of Social Development	48
Appendix 4: Participant information sheet	49
Appendix 5: Participant consent form	50
Appendix 6: Tape recording consent form	51
Appendix 7: Department of Social Development request for permission	52
Appendix 8: Key informants information form	53
Appendix 9: Key informants interview schedule	54
Appendix 10: Participants interview schedule	55
Appendix 11: Transcripts	56