

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report entitled “*Social work as a scarce skill: Exploring the views of social workers regarding the retention strategies used by the human resource managers to retain social workers within the Department of Social Development*”, is my own original and unaided work. The research report was compiled under the supervision of Mrs. Roshini Pillay. In addition to that I declare that all references to other sources and other author’s work have been properly cited and referenced. Furthermore, this report has not been submitted previously for any other degree or examination.

Jabulile Mavimbela

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research project would not have been completed without the support and assistance of several people. Therefore, I would like to thank the following people:

My Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for giving me the wisdom, strength and knowledge that enabled me to complete my studies

My Supervisor Mrs. Roshini Pillay, for your patience and understanding. Your words of encouragement, advice and guidance were highly appreciated

Dr. Stacey for language editing and proof reading of the research report

The Department of Social Development (DSD) for allowing me to do the research with the social workers at the Department of Social Development Germiston office

The DSD employees and former DSD employees who took time from their busy schedule, to voluntarily participate in the study thus contributing to the success of the research

My family for being patient and understanding and for all the love and support they have given me

All my friends and colleagues who have made valuable contributions towards this study, especially Refilwe Nyandeni, Busisiwe Magengenene, Magash Makola, Mmapula Makgobe, Nthabiseng Sosibo, Nontuthuzelo Zondani, Noxolo Sithole, Millicent Radebe, Tsegofatso Mpane, Helen Mclare, Vuyisile Sithole, Ntombizesizwe Jara, Mpho Mabote, Yolanda Matikinca and Sakhile Mazibuko

ABSTRACT

Social work has been declared as a scarce skill in South Africa in 2008 and the need to recruit and retain social workers in the work place and in the country was identified as a pressing issue that required urgent attention. The problem came to the attention of the researcher through observing that even though social work has been declared a scarce skill, newly qualified social workers are still leaving the Department of Social Development for employment opportunities outside the DSD. The aim of the study was to explore the views of social workers regarding the retention strategies used to retain social workers at the DSD. The researcher has investigated the views of social workers employed at DSD Germiston office and former DSD employees (who are also social workers), regarding the retention strategies used by the human resource managers to retain social workers within the Department of Social Development. The research involved an exploratory-descriptive qualitative approach. Purposive non-probability sampling was used to select 20 participants, comprised of 10 social workers who had left the DSD to work in other departments or private companies and 10 social workers who are currently working for the DSD Germiston office. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews and analyzed through thematic content analysis. The results showed that current DSD interviewees saw the strategies used at DSD as not effective in retaining social workers as compared to former DSD interviewees who saw the strategies as contributing towards retaining social workers. Both current and former DSD interviewees were of the opinion that social workers can be retained at the department if the remuneration packages for social workers, working conditions and resource allocation are improved. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that the strategies used at DSD to retain social workers need to be reviewed and social workers need to be consulted and be involved in the process of developing new strategies to retain social workers.

Key words: Social work, scarce skill, retention strategies.

INDEX

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
ABSTRACT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1.Introduction	1
1.2.Statement of problem	1
1.3.Rationale	2
1.4.Purpose of research study	2
1.5.Research design and methodology	3
1.6.Definition of key concepts	3
1.7.Limitations of the study	4
1.8.Organization of report	4-5
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY	
2.1. Introduction	6
2.2. Social Work in South Africa	6-7
2.3. Social Work in South Africa Post 1994	7-9
2.4. Social Work Gender and Retention	9-10
2.5. Retention	10
2.5.1. International view of retention	10-12

2.5.2. South African perspective on retention	13-14
2.5.3. Retention of Social Work in Gauteng Department of Social Development	14
2.6. Importance of Retention	14
2.7. Skills to be Retained	15
2.8. Retention of Social Worker	15-16
2.9. Challenges in Retention of Social Worker and its implications	16-17
2.10. Factors that contribute to the Retention Challenge	17
2.10.1. Burnout	17-18
2.10.2. Job Satisfaction	18-19
2.10.3. Poor working	19-20
2.11. Occupational Stress	20
2.12. Theoretical Framework underpinning the study	21
2.12.1. Person-in Environment	21
2.12.2. Van Breda's Model of Occupational Social Work	21-22

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction	23
3.2. Research Question	23
3.3. Aim & Objectives	23-24
3.4. Research Strategy	24-25
3.5. Sampling of participants	25-26
3.6. Participants inclusion criteria	26

3.7. Research instrumentation	26-27
3.8. Pre-test the research tool	27
3.9. Methods of data collection	27-28
3.10. Data analysis	28-29
3.11. Ethical consideration	29-31
3.12. Summary of chapter	31

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction	32
4.2. socio-demographic profile of participants	33
4.3. Understand of workplace incentives	34-36
4.4. Participants views on workplace incentives	36
4.4.1. Participants view on housing subsidy	36-38
4.4.2. Participants view on car subsidy	39-41
4.4.3. Participants view on danger allowance	42-44
4.4.4. Participant's view on medical subsidy	44-46
4.4.5. Participant's view on Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD)	46-50
4.4.6. Participant's view on Performance Management Specific Dispensation	50-55
4.4.7. Participant's view on social workers salary at DSD	55-56
4.4.8. Participant's view on other incentives that may be introduced to retain social	

Workers	56-59
4.5. Job Quality and Job Satisfaction	59
4.5.1. Participants view on Job Quality and Job Satisfaction	59-61
4.5.2. Participants view on social workers work load at DSD	62-65
4.5.3. Participants view on how to improve Job Quality and Job Satisfaction	65-67
4.6. Workplace Support	67
4.6.1. Participants view on the relationship with colleagues and former colleagues at DSD	67-68
4.6.2. Participants view on their relationship with their supervisor at DSD	69-70
4.6.3. Participants view on their relationship with their manager at DSD	70-72
4.6.4. Participants view on what could be done to ensure that they get all the support they need to do their work	72-73
4.7. Opportunities for Growth and Development	73
4.7.1. Participants view on Opportunities for Growth and Development at DSD	73-75
4.7.2. Participants view on workplace trainings	75-77
4.7.3. Participants view on what could be done to provide more Opportunities for Growth and Development	77-79
4.8. Turnover	79

4.8.1. Participants view on strategies that are used at DSD to retain Social Work	79-80
4.8.2. Participants view on social workers leaving DSD	80-82
4.8.3. Participants view implications of Social Workers leaving the profession of Social work to work in other profession	82-84
4.8.4. Participants view on whether they have considered leaving DSD	84-86
4.8.5. Participants view on other strategies that could be developed to retain Social Workers at DSD	86-88
4.9. Conclusion	88

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction	89
5.2. Main findings	89
5.3. Summary of main findings	90
5.4. Conclusion	91
5.5. Recommendations	91-93
5.6. Conclusion comments	93
References	94-101

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1. Socio-demographic profile of participants	33
--	----

Table 4.2. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on housing subsidy	36
Table 4.3. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on car subsidy	39
Table 4.4. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on danger allowance	42
Table 4.5. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on medical subsidy	44
Table 4.6. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on Occupation Specific Dispensation	46
Table 4.7. Views of current and former DSD interviewees on Performance Management and Development System	50-51

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1. Job Satisfaction	63
Figure 4.2. Participant's views on whether they have considered leaving DSD to work in Other departments	84
Figure 4.3 former DSD interviewees views on why they left DSD	85

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Participant's information sheet	102-103
APPENDIX B: Interview schedule for Social Workers who are currently working at DSD	104-105
APPENDIX C: Interview schedule for Social Workers who are currently working at DSD	

	106-107
APPENDIX D: Consent Forms for participation in the study	108
APPENDIX E: Consent form for audio-taping of the interview	109