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**THE NEED FOR FORMAL TRAINING
IN SOCIAL WORK SUPERVISION**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Masters of Social Science (Social Work)

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By

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ABSTRACT

The research is based on the need for formal training in social work supervision with the emphasis on the experiences and feelings associated with the role change from supervisee to supervisor.

Practice has shown that the transition from supervisee to supervisor takes place with very little, if any, formal training. It is assumed that any experienced social worker could give supervision as if this is merely an extension of your field work activities – which include casework, group work and community work.

Whilst doing supervision cognisance was taken of the fact that the task of the supervisor was to help the supervisee gain access to a more advantageous position from which to consider or view their work. A supervisor had a crucial role in professional development. The opinion is upheld that there has to be a working alliance to attain this development.

This working alliance can be taken further when viewed by the fact that the supervisor also has to establish communication networks that enable the supervisor to work both at a managerial level while maintaining positive relationships with his or her supervisees – a process which is fraught with complications.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen social work supervisors and a focus group was conducted with five social work supervisors from the Department of Welfare and Private Welfare Organizations. These interviews were conducted to obtain their perspectives on the need for training in social work supervision and how training could help them in their supervision role which ultimately could result in a more efficient service that is rendered to the client.

The data analysis was conducted at the same time as the data collection. The researcher had a clear plan for the data management. The researcher utilized reasoning strategies, identified themes, categories and subcategories. It was borne in mind that there was no one way of performing data analysis. The researcher was open and flexible. Final conclusions of the data analysis was grounded in the data obtained. The key issue in ensuring the trustworthiness was the verification of the results of the data analysis.

The research study suggests that there is a genuine need for formal training in social work supervision. With training the supervisors can develop competencies, knowledge and professional attitudes, they can be helpful to neophytes and to each other. With training they can avoid some of the pitfalls in supervision and become more efficient and competent.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The researcher first conceptualized this research while observing how supervisors were appointed in the Department of Welfare. It occurred to the researcher that the supervisors were ill-prepared for the role of supervision and this often led to them giving little or no supervision to their supervisees. It appeared that the supervisors did not have an awareness of the demands of the role. Social work supervisors in general did not feel adequately skilled for the supervisory role.

The role change from supervisee to supervisor often results from promotion or natural progression to senior social worker. There often is very little, if any, formal training for the demands of this change. Verster (1992 : 11) argues that the complexity of the role change is centered around the exit from the role of social worker; the entry into the role of supervisor and all the behavioural changes associated with the giving up of functions which are unique to direct social work practice. In addition the newly appointed supervisor has to interact on a different relationship and communication level with staff and the comfort of established relationships have to be renegotiated (Holloway and Brager 1989 : 29; Shulman 1993 : 49). Often the supervisor is also expected to take on a more protective role towards the section unit over which he is given authority – this is sometimes experienced as contradictory to the social work practice ethos of sharing resources and information to the benefit of clients (Holloway and Brager 1989:29).

The relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee is a hierarchical and unequal one. No matter how sensitive this issue is handled, such inequality may result in conflict. This conflict can be brought on by cross-cultural issues and fear of being harshly judged.

If not adequately addressed within the supervisory relationship, these conflicts may stifle and inhibit the supervisees ability, need or desire to learn (Shipton 1997:15). Practice has shown that when faced with a conflict situation the supervisee or supervisor sometimes becomes defensive. The opinion is upheld that they tend to forget that conflict can bring out into the open alternate ways of thinking and behaving. It challenges us to manage our lives in ways that can create relationships among differences that embodies enough harmony and mutual satisfaction to nurture positive growth.

In the researcher's experience it has been shown that the very real inequalities of power in the supervisory relationship may be heightened or exacerbated by transference of issues out of past relationships with authority. The supervisor was seen as someone who checks up on people, told them what to do and one who knew everything.

If you reflect upon past supervisors who made a powerful, positive impression on you, you will probably see how they affected not only you, but the agency environment itself. A good supervisor is the hub in the agency's wheel; he or she gives a sense of vitality and immediacy to the agency and the work it performs (Taibbi 1995:8).

One of the complexities in this process of the role change is the establishment of communication networks that enable the supervisor to work at a managerial level while maintaining positive relationships with subordinates (Shulman 1993:49) – a process which is fraught with complications.

The negative effects of 'incorrect' supervision is a matter of grave concern as practice has shown that it ultimately leads to neglect of clients and communities as many of the supervisees were left to their own devices and this had far reaching effects on the service rendering.

The input from the supervisors regarding the feelings and emotions experienced at the onset of the role change from supervisee to supervisor without training should be valuable. It will help the researcher gain insight as to whether training could make the role change easier and less stressful and thus leaving the supervisor to concentrate on the supervisee's professional development.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The goals of the research are:

- To explore the feelings and experiences associated with the role change from social worker to supervisor.
- To examine the needs of the newly appointed supervisor (from their perspective).
- To explore the challenges that are brought about by the role change from social worker to supervisor.

Areas that will be explored are:

- Nature of tasks and responsibilities associated with being a supervisor in that particular setting.
- Challenges in the role.
- Preparation for the role.
- Issues of authority.

- Changes in relationships with peers and others in authority.
- Training needs.

1.3 ANTICIPATED VALUE OF THE FINDINGS

- It is anticipated that the research study will enable the researcher to offer a more effective, supportive and educative service to her supervisees and thus realize their true potential. The clients will then have access to this rich resource.
- The researcher will make recommendations based on the findings about where and how training in supervision should be offered. The findings will be made available to welfare organizations in the area and could contribute to policy review.
- The researcher anticipates that the research findings, identifying the need for training, could create an awareness that could lead to training prior to becoming a supervisor.
- It is anticipated that the dissemination of the findings through appropriate media and professional publications will create an awareness about the need for training in social work supervision.

1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Design

A qualitative exploratory research study was conducted. The decision to conduct research of this nature was chosen as it gave the supervisors the opportunity to relate their experiences from their perspective (Rubin and Babbi 1997:364). Grinell and Stothe

(Grinell 1988:225) suggested that the idea of exploratory research is to explore. It is not the intention of this method to come up with statistically sound data or conclusive results.

It is used to build a foundation of general ideas and tentative theories that can be explored later with more complete research designs and corresponding methodologies.

According to Silverman (1993:29), following Kirkman and Miller, “qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that fundamentally depends on watching people in their own territory” (1986,9). Qualitative research gives the researcher access to a client’s meaning systems, frame of reference, personal beliefs, cognitive schemes, values, cultural realities and personal motivations.

In order to explore the need for training in social work supervision, literature research was done. This was essential in order to gain an understanding of supervision and how the role change from supervisee to supervisor is normally effected.

Qualitative research is holistic, open-ended, individualistic, and process oriented. One seeks to discover subjective human reality. A qualitative study is highly congruent with social work practice in that the researcher is reliant on the respondent’s personal reality.

Qualitative interviewing was used as a data collection instrument. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen supervisors. Due to the fact that twenty respondents could not be obtained in the East London area, the researcher conducted a focus group with five of the respondents. The interviews conducted with these supervisors centered on the following themes:

- Biographic information

- Nature of tasks and responsibilities associated with being a supervisor in that setting

- Experiences and feelings associated with their role as supervisor
- Challenges in the role
- Preparation for the role
- Issues of authority
- Changes in relationships with peers and others in authority
- Training needs

The non-probability purposive sampling method was used as it gave the researcher access to the specialized insight or special perspective and experience that she wishes to study. The researcher handpicked the sample of the supervisors who had no more than two years experience in supervision in welfare agencies in East London (Yegidis and Weinbach 1991:156, Marlow 1998:142). Supervisors who had more than two years experience may be too far removed from the memory of the role change. It is also understood that as agencies differ so will the nature of the tasks associated with supervision. This added depth to the study.

The interviews were analyzed using qualitative methods of data analysis – the researcher analyzed the data into categories on the basis of themes, concepts and similar features which was coded accordingly (Neuman 1991:415).

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on supervisors with no more than two years experience in supervision. The scope of the study was thus limited due to the fact that most of the supervisors in the

East London area had more than two years experience in supervision. Hence the researcher could only get/obtain fourteen respondents.

The researcher conducted a focus group interview with five of the respondents and ensured that the questions posed fostered interaction that explored the respondents feelings in some depth and took into account the personal context that respondents used in generating their responses to the topic (Morgan 1997:45). Despite running the focus group the researcher was aware of the fact that the findings cannot be generalized beyond this sample as the sample is too small.

Limitations of the study will be further discussed in Chapter three.

1.6 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

The recording of the interview was a problem as the respondents sometimes spoke very softly and it was not easy to hear what they were saying when the researcher transcribed the interviews.

The researcher experienced problems with the respondents from the Department of Welfare when the focus group was supposed to be conducted. The focus group interview had to be postponed four times as the respondents were called to urgent meetings. On the other hand, when the respondents were available the researcher was not available as she had to attend urgent meetings in Bisho.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, the study is briefly introduced, by placing it into context, describing the aims and anticipated value of the findings of the research study, and examining the scope of the limitations.

The study is organized in the following manner:

Chapter Two: A review of the literature on supervision is presented.

Chapter Three: Discussion of the methodology and research design that has been used.

Chapter Four: Presentation and discussion of the findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Finally there is a bibliography of sources followed by the appendix of the semi-structured interview schedule and one transcribed interview.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

Supervision is an odd word suggesting both exceptional clear-sightedness and a superior vantage point from which to look, as if the supervisor only has to cast his or her eyes over the work in question for key elements to appear. Whilst this may be a true description of some supervisory consultations, most consultants feel that this is not the case and that, even when it is, the task of the supervisor is to help the supervisee gain access to a more advantageous position from which to consider their work (Shipton 1997:1).

According to Kaslow (1986:xiii), the pathway to competence has been through training and supervision. Innate sensitivity to others, self-understanding and practical experience are indeed also important, but it is training above all which have crucial shaping factors.

A supervisor carries the responsibility for insuring that treatment is ethical and efficacious (Kaslow 1986:2).

Supervision should be a central form of support where supervisees can focus on their own difficulties as a worker and have their supervisor share some of the responsibility of their work with the clients (Hawkins and Shohet 1989:21)

2.2 DEFINITIONS

The word "supervision" is generally applied to situations in which one person inspects or oversees another's work from a position of authority (Shipton 1997:13).

Supervision is seen as a professional task and an organizational responsibility of human service organizations, with the main functions of administration, education and support. It is perceived as a need for the inexperienced worker, providing him with a psychological and interpersonal resource for adequate professional social work intervention. It is seen as an interactional teaching and learning process within the context of a professional relationship (Rothmund 1992:3).

Another commonly used definition by Logansbill, Hardy and Delworth (1982) is that supervision is "an intensive interpersonally focused, one-to-one relationship in which one person is designated to facilitate the development of therapeutic competence in the other person" (Hawkins and Shohet 1989:41).

The new dictionary of social work defines supervision as a "Process whereby a SUPERVISOR performs educational, educative and administrative functions in order to promote efficient and professional rendering of services" (Terminology committee for social work - page 46)

Social work supervision can be viewed as looking at the client, counsellor, supervisor triangle in perspective. One does not have to focus on the notion of control that is often associated with supervision and rather view it as the process of enabling the supervisee to do the job as best they can. Through experience the supervisor can help develop their supervisees.

In a supervision session there is the opportunity to acknowledge emotions, suspicions hunches, doubts and much else that was partly or wholly suppressed at the time, with these out in the light, you are better informed, and so empowered to practice better (Houston 1990:2).

Supervision can be likened to a hill, where echoes of a counselling session, and echoes of the client's way of getting on with people, can be clearly heard if you listen out for them. The hill is not the counselling session. It is a place from which you can look back at it with a wider perspective. The high art of supervising is to do with hill climbing, keeping an eye on the range of hills or triangles around the counsellor, and helping her to scale them, from point to point. Then she will be able to see the landscape of her client's life, her own, the counselling itself, and the supervisory relationship, from different points of view than just her own (Houston 1992:56).

Configurations of supervision

- **Regular one to one sessions** with a designated supervisor, probably from your own discipline or training establishment. This is usually the first, and only kind of supervision some people have. For anyone in training this can be an enormous influence and at best of inspiration too. "There needs to be supervisory holding by an experienced person who believes in a supervisee's potential, to be in tune with and to comment helpfully". Patrick Casement.
- **One to one peer supervision**, in which each of you alternate roles. Each peer has a whole session focussing on his or her work with the clients. Or they may alternate within the session, so both have a chance to deal with preoccupations about how they are working. This can be run alongside sessions with a staff supervisor. In this way people overtly learn to supervise as well as to counsel.
- **Group supervision** within your discipline. Some group supervision is mostly individual supervision within a sympathetic audience. Here the supervisor can be used to chair a valuable

exchange between informed people, the group members, rather than represent the Voice of Truth for the group.

- **Group supervision** in a hybrid group. For this you need a supervisor who is good at working with groups. At best she will also be at home with all the disciplines in the room. If group members are experienced, however, then knowing about Moreno and all about Melanie Klein may be less important for the supervisor, than knowing how to enable people how to use the group to best effect.
- **Network supervision.** This is a combination of groups and pairs. A number of people wanting supervision meet at, say, monthly intervals. They meet with an outside supervisor or as a peer group. It is also a forum for discussing some of what goes on in the interim, probably weekly, meeting, of pairs and group members. Partner swapping can be arranged and difficulties dealt with.
- **Triad supervision.** This is an informed extension of the common training device of working in threes, with one person as a counsellor, one as client and one as observer. By halfway through training, this observer can well be extended, and renamed supervisor (Houston 1990:5-7).

2.3 QUALITIES NEEDED FOR SUPERVISION IN SOCIAL WORK

The qualities needed to be a good supervisor include empathy, understanding, unconditional positive regard, congruence, genuineness, warmth, self-disclosure, flexibility, attention investment, curiosity and openness (Hawkins and Shohet 1989:36). It should also be borne in mind that good counselling skills are a prerequisite for being a competent supervisor.

Practice has shown that a supervisor has to be capable. Their capability is enhanced if they are knowledgeable. Supervisors should have comprehensive knowledge, professional attitudes, and practice skills. They should be able to tie these attributes in with the organization and services of

their agency. Supervisors should also be acquainted with the current literature in order to give apt guidance to their supervisees.

The researcher would like to elaborate on practice skills. Practice skills are essential for competent supervisors and this means professional competency in all social work methods. They should be able to teach principles and skills, particularly those relating to the agency's services. This reaffirms what supervisees have learnt in their education and previous experience.

The opinion is upheld that an earnest conviction of the need for effective supervision is essential. Capable supervisors should have a dynamic interest in the agency, in themselves, and in their supervisees. Tying up with this point is that a sustained concern can be a positive motivating factor and can help increase the supervisee's knowledge and skills. It should also be borne in mind that a supervisee can tell whether this interest is genuine.

Effective supervisors are open-minded. They should admit that they do not have all the answers. They will acknowledge their mistakes when they make them. Supervisors who recognize that they are human are the ones most likely to reach workers.

Finally, regarding capability, the opinion is upheld that a capable and effective supervisor understands authority and uses it appropriately.

Good supervisory intervention skills are needed for supervision in social work. They can be divided into six categories according to Heron's model. There is no implication that one category is more or less significant and important than any other. The categories are:

Prescriptive. Give advice, be directive.

Informative. Be didactic, instruct, inform.

Confrontative. Be challenging, give direct feedback.

Cathartic. Release tension, abreaction.

Catalytic. Be reflective, encourage self-directed problem-solving.

Supportive. Be approving, confirming, validating.

These six types of intervention are only of real value if they are rooted in care and concern for the client or the supervisee (Hawkins and Shohet 1989:85).

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989:36), good supervision inevitably focuses some of its attention on the dynamics of the supervisee, but this must always arise out of work-related issues and must be done in the service of understanding and being able to manage the work better.

The researcher agrees with literature, and practice has shown, that there is no perfect or ideal supervisor. The visionary supervisor may be poor at implementing plans; the superb implementor may have difficulty in setting directions for the organization; the stickler for getting results may have poor interpersonal relationships (Bennett 1992:18-20). Indeed, supervisors come in all sizes and shapes: extroverted or shy, personable or aloof or cold, colorless or charismatic, self-centered or altruistic, highly logical or intuitive (Brody 1993:3). However, it should be borne in mind that it is not enough for supervisors to be aware of possible flaws in their personal behaviour that could effect their leadership effectiveness, they must also be able to discern how their strengths can be used to heighten the organization's performance (Brody 1993:10).

Supervisors should have a deep sense of integrity. They should be careful to promise only what they can deliver, and they expect others to do the same.

These qualities do not necessarily mean promotion to the supervisory role as good social workers do not necessarily make good administrators. Supervisory roles are best carried by those who have competence in that professional activity. Further, the social work supervisor, as part of the human

services field, has the responsibility to maintain the highest level of integrity for themselves and their peers (Ginsberg and Keys 1995:xv).

Effective supervisors minimize the use of command language and maximize the language of persuasion and request. They understand that they cannot coerce supervisees to excel; true motivation must come from within.

A good supervisor is the hub in the agency's wheel; he or she gives a sense of vitality and immediacy to the agency and the work it performs

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISION

According to Skidmore (1983:219), the principles of supervision include:

- Social work supervisors share knowledge principles, and skills, and then allow the workers basically to govern themselves.
- Social workers govern themselves by selecting goals and objectives consonant with the foregoing.
- Supervisors are available for help when needed.
- Social workers call upon their supervisors for help when needed.
- The workers give an accounting to their supervisors periodically.

2.5 OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISION

The primary objective of supervision is to render an effective service to the client and to improve the standard of service delivery.

According to Rothmund (1992:3), the objectives of supervision are both long term and short term in nature. The ultimate objective is the cultivation of the workers professional identity enabling him or her to render an effective and efficient client service. The objectives can be divided into:

(a) Objectives relating to the social worker;

(b) Objectives relating to the client; and,

(c) Objectives relating to the agency.

(a) Objectives relating to the social worker include promoting his or her opportunity for personal growth. This can be done by delegating more challenging tasks after supporting him or her into integrating theory into practice. Promotion of independent functioning through relevant field guidance should improve his or her practice skills. Supporting him or her into a planned work performance could ultimately lead to the supervisee experiencing maximum job satisfaction.

(b) Objectives relating to the client include the enablement of the supervisee to provide an effective and efficient service and thus meeting the client's expectations. The supervisee will be enabled to build a positive professional relationship with the client.

(c) Objectives relating to the agency are to provide the worker with a well-structured context which includes mandating him or her for his professional task and with access to relevant sources. The worker should be given support in the face of their emotionally draining professional

intervention. These aspects are enhanced with adequate orientation and in-service training. The objective is to justify the agency's existence by ensuring a high standard of social work practice (Kadushin 1985:22, Rothmund 1990:29-31).

The objectives of supervision can be aligned with the functions of supervision. The supervisor has to fulfill six functions of supervision, namely, training, modelling, administration, motivation, support and personal enrichment. The task of the supervisor is to bring about professional growth and development in the social worker (Verster 1992:11). The most important functions of supervision are administrative, educational and supportive. It is crucial for the supervisor to integrate all functions of supervision. There has to be sensitivity on the part of the supervisor as to when and how to emphasize a particular function given the needs of a supervisee.

As stated, the objective is to create an environment where supervisees can learn best and get the most out of supervision. The implications are serious for all stakeholders, that is, the agency, the supervisor, the supervisee and the clients. If the supervisor, in carrying out his or her function, creates a learning environment, it can reduce a lot of stress for both the supervisor and the supervisee. It would enable the supervisee to be independent and to provide an effective and efficient service to clients which in turn will improve the image of the agency (Nompolozo and Mcanyana 1993:16).

In practice supervisors are vested with a significant amount of power; he or she has to evaluate the supervisee's therapeutic competence. This inequality may result in some measure of conflict, cross cultural issues, ethical issues or fear of being harshly judged, according to Shipton (1997:15), if these issues are not adequately addressed within the supervisory relationship these conflicts may inhibit the supervisee's ability, need or desire to learn. A supervisor plays a crucial role in professional development. The opinion is upheld that this development can be attained if there is a working alliance between the supervisee and the supervisor.

Akin and Weil (1981) identify three basic goals of supervision. These are:

- To ensure that agencies provide adequate services.
- To ensure that workers function to their fullest potential
- To assist workers in their attainment of professional independence (Nompozolo and Mcanyana 1993:16).

2.6 THE TRANSITION FROM PRACTITIONER TO SUPERVISOR

2.6.1 ROLE IDENTIFICATION

According to Rothmund (1992:12), the changeover begins with role identification. Before a supervisor feels comfortable in the new role network, it is necessary that he familiarize himself with all requirements for the role.

This period which Holloway and Brager (1989:38) describe as the honeymoon period can also be observed in practice. During this period the supervisor makes himself at home in his new role. This period may last from three to six months. The supervisor may decide for himself whether he wishes to make immediate or systematic changes, although the latter is probably a better approach, since changes are made on the basis of more information and are better planned.

Initially, it may be difficult to learn the norms, values and behaviour within the supervisor's corps. Supervisor's meetings are usually very formal and are not geared towards building up meaningful mutual relations between supervisors.

A **power struggle** between existing supervisors makes role identification more difficult because the new supervisor may withdraw. He may be reluctant to become part of the undercurrents of unrest he observes.

The supervisor may also feel **guilty** towards his former colleagues about his newly exalted status. Pettes (1967:153) describes this as a feeling of "betrayal of friendship", which can sometimes be observed in practice.

Role identification is even more difficult by the **stereotyping and testing** of the new supervisor by management and other workers. The management may welcome the supervisor as someone with new approaches and ideas, but can also interpret too many changes too soon as threatening.

Social workers in an organization may be excited about the possibility of new learning experiences, but they may be worried about a new style of management. There may be resistance to change established behaviour patterns.

The way in which the supervisor's appointment takes place and the transfer of authority to the new person by management symbolizes the value attached to the role of the supervisor.

2.6.2 ROLE WITHDRAWAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The real role change occurs in this phase. Here the supervisor has to relinquish any therapeutic case that he or she has retained. The supervisor should also guard against placing the supervisee in a client role and become therapeutically involved in the latter in order to satisfy his or her own needs.

6.3 COMPLETION OF THE CHANGEOVER

In this phase the supervisor has already withdrawn intellectually and emotionally from the role of social worker. There are other aspects that affect the adjustment, namely, authority. Here we can distinguish between formal and functional authority.

Formal authority is embedded in the role of supervision and does not depend on the supervisor's personality traits, qualities and skills.

Functional authority, on the other hand, is acquired, depending on the impression that the supervisor makes on the social workers. Conflict may arise between functional and formal authority which could influence the supervisor's actions negatively.

2.6.4 ISSUES ABOUT NEW RELATIONSHIPS

The new supervisor that is promoted from within the ranks has to deal with staff whom he or she has had a social relationship and now has to withdraw, and is sometimes "ousted" of this relationship as the new supervisor has now become part of management (Shulman 1993:46-47). The supervisor may experience the change in the relationships as a loss of peers.

Holloway and Brager (1989:50) proposes that the new supervisor should build a network of relationships with this new peer group and superiors as soon as possible.

2.6.5 THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR IN THE MIDDLEMAN POSITION

The supervisor is the key person who looks in two directions, namely, towards the social workers and their client-centered orientation and management where policy making and accountability are priorities. The supervisor is then the channel of communication through which information flows vertically from management to the social workers and vice versa. Efficiency as a communication channel is achieved only with sensitivity and experience (Verster 1992:13).

How well managers and supervisors work with one another across and upward on the organizational chart is becoming a key factor in overall performance (Renton 1987:12). Further, if the supervisor does not make the expectations clear at the onset, even the most skilled supervisee can fall short.

Sometimes a supervisor may be caught in the middle between staff that are angry about policy and possibly management that expects the supervisor to "sell" the idea. Both the staff group and management expect the supervisor to identify with them rather than the other side of the dispute. It is expected of the supervisor to mediate in the process.

One could say that the supervisors are frequently the "pickle in the middle", caught between the conflicting expectations of their managers and those who work under their supervision. They are often called upon to reconcile expectations and policies of the organization with the needs and concerns of their subordinates (Havassy 1990:103-109). Managerial loyalties could then be pulled in several directions. The supervisor's ability to connect the needs and the requirements at one level of the organization to those of another ultimately determine their effectiveness. They diminish the "we-they" atmosphere, replacing it with the emphasis on teamwork (Brody 1993:141).

2.6.6 THE EFFECT OF PAST EXPERIENCES WITH AUTHORITY ON THE SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP / MODELLING

Previous experiences of supervision, both good and bad, can influence the current supervision. A bad experience can lead the supervisee to be wary, but a good one can lead to comparisons - no one will be as good as my last supervisor.

The beginning period of supervision is complicated by the experiences supervisors have had as supervisees. They know the usual feelings toward supervisors, having felt themselves, when as a supervisors most minute faults can be a topic for hours. This could lead to them wondering what is being said about themselves. Although the supervisor's judgement of the staff is powerful, so is the combined judgement of the staff on the supervisor (Shulman 1993:46)

If a supervisor's past experience with his or her supervisor was that of inefficiency, he or she could possibly try and not make the same mistakes to the point of becoming a "perfectionist".

The new supervisor's past relationship with his or her supervisor could have been flat, comfortable, protracted and challenging. His or her previous supervisors avoided

confrontation and would have rather had a climate that is facilitative and less taxing. This could influence the new supervisor's style regarding supervision in that he or she possibly also want a collusive and cosy supervisory relationship (Feltham and Dryden 1994:67-69).

According to Hawkins and Shohet (1989:33) one cannot expect to give good supervision unless you have learnt how to receive supervision and how to be a proactive supervisee.

Sometimes a hidden motive when giving supervision can be when staff do not know how to get decent supervision for themselves and compensate by giving other staff the sort of supervision they need and want for themselves in the vain hope that somebody will offer it to them.

The researcher agrees with literature that supervisors do have a powerful influence on their supervisees. Practice has shown that the supervisor has considerable influence over the personal and professional life of the supervisee. They either imitate or discard the good and bad qualities, respectively, of their past supervisors.

2.7. STRATEGIES REGARDING THE PREPARATION FOR THE ROLE

CHANGE

2.7.1 AUTHORITY

Authority can be a source of conflict and frustration. Although authority is part of the position of the supervisor (formal authority), it is important that a supervisor should acquire some respect (functional authority) and not simply enforce it. When this happens there may be conflict between

formal and functional authority, which could have a negative effect on the successful changeover of roles. This conflict will obviously be detrimental to the success of supervision (Verster 1992:14).

How could a supervisor acquire functional authority ?

The supervisor should be an innovator, have long-range perspective, challenge the status quo, "do the right thing" and focus on structures and systems. Supervisors should be able to provide visionary leadership and day to day administrative direction. Functional authority can be enhanced by referent influence which can take the form of instilling a sense of loyalty in supervisees or fostering identification with the supervisor's goals and philosophies (Brody 1993:3-4).

Some supervisors feel comfortable in enforcing authority and doubt their skills of knowledge in acquiring functional authority. Holloway and Brager (1989:44) emphasise the value of co-operation between supervisor and supervisee which could lead to the successful exercise of authority in supervision.

2.7.2 DECISION-MAKING STYLE

According to Verster (1992:14), decision-making ability has a determining effect on supervision. It influences the dynamics and politics of an organization. The supervisor then has to keep up to date with politics and dynamics of the organization and relay to staff what is expected of them. Through expectations staff will gain clarity about the challenges they must meet. It is important to tune into their individual motivations to find out what they want, and if reasonable, the supervisor should do your best to help the supervisee achieve it (Brody 1993:148-149).

It should be borne in mind that decision-making should be guided by aims and objectives of the organization.

The normative procedure for decision-making would take the supervisors through the cycle of:

- (1) Classifying and identifying the problem issue;
- (2) Developing a criteria for a successful solution;
- (3) Generating other possible solutions;
- (4) Comparing these solutions to the criteria;
- (5) Choosing one of the solutions generated;
- (6) Implementing the decision; and,
- (7) Monitoring the decision.

The resulting feedback would then be incorporated into any new definitions of the problem and so on (Coulshed 1990:97). The supervisors should bear in mind that the issue may not be straightforward and could be beset with conflicting needs and values.

The supervisor could then make use of a variety of tools that can assist him or her such as decision tree analysis, brainstorming, the delphi method and the nominal group technique.

2.7.3 RELATIONSHIP ORIENTATION

In the changeover of roles there has to be a change in relationships. The supervisor experiences this as a loss (of peers). The supervisor should guard against falling back into his or her old role and not enter into a therapeutic relationship with some social workers.

Holloway and Brager (1989:50) proposes that the supervisor should build a network of new relationships with their new peer group as soon as possible in order to obtain their support and

understanding. The effect of this will be that the supervisee will receive the correct information from the supervisor, which will serve to re-enforce the latter's authority and supervisory relationship.

How to enhance the supervisory relationship:

(The following guidelines will help foster a positive and productive relationship)

- Set a positive example through enthusiasm for the job. This enthusiasm and dedication can be contagious. Staff are keenly aware of whether the supervisor is committed to the work or is merely filling time.
- Take time to know staff. Good supervisors meet with their staff both formally and informally on a regular basis. They take time to find if supervisees are satisfied with their jobs and what gives them feelings of achievement. In turn, staff trust their supervisor as one who is responsive to their needs (Brown 1979:62).
- "Sell" rather than "tell". To gain enthusiastic support of staff, supervisors request should be accompanied by explanations of potential for the staff, the unit, or the organization as a whole.
- Foster a collaborative spirit. Get used to saying, "we are on the same team, so, when things go well, we will share the credit, and when problems occur, we will work together to solve them".
- Draw the line between supervision and therapy. Being a good listener and being empathetic are important, as long as the focus remains on improving the service to the clients. An effective supervisor acknowledges, but does not take responsibility for, personal problems of the staff. If personal problems are interfering with job performance and are disruptive to other employees, supervisors must take action, such as referring the supervisee to a counselling agency or an employee assistance program.

- Engage the staff in problem solving. Supervisors should actively seek ideas and suggestions from staff to improve productivity. They understand, for example, that supervisees can make useful suggestions on how best to handle clients complaints (Bureau of Business Practice 1991, Brody 1993:149-150).

When a supervisor encounters resistance from their supervisees they could use the strategy of positive reframing. Positive reframing should be designed with an emphasis on the supervisee's experience of personal power and self-esteem. The supervisor should capitalise on the experiences by modelling for the supervisee how to resolve the situation.

The reframing would involve the supervisor offering a different perspective on the supervisee's behaviour, allowing the supervisee to create a different meaning about his or her thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Masters 1992:387).

When conceptualizing resistance in the supervision process, it might be helpful to think of the sport of Sumo wrestling. The guiding principle in Sumo wrestling is to use the force of the opponent to one's advantage. The supervisee's resistance can be viewed as a force opposing further exploration due to some perceived threat. The resistance is ultimately a protective measure developed by the supervisee (Liddle,1986). The supervisor's intervention could further oppose the supervisee through confrontation, or join to the force in a manner that adds greater force to the movement of the supervisee toward more appropriate skills. When the supervisee is feeling threatened, the supervisor, through reframing the interaction, can "join" the supervisee, in the struggle to understand the current experience. This joining can decrease the threat, reduce the probability of a power struggle developing, and increase the chances that the supervisee will experience professional growth (Masters 1992:338).

Positive reframing is a valuable strategy for use in helping people grow in counselling supervision. The value lies in the supervisor's ability to facilitate supervisee's growth when they might otherwise stagnate because of the resistance.

Practice has shown that the supervisor does not have all the answers. The new supervisor should bear in mind that it is all right not to know. According to Shipton (1997:141), paradoxically it is from this place that a deep understanding and fresh insight can come, which in turn, can help the supervisor and the supervisee to know. Automatically an important place in supervision is created, a place where it is all right not to know.

2.7.4 ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION

The supervisor is responsible to the organization for the conduct of supervisees. He or she then has to measure the inputs of the social workers and evaluate their professional development regularly.

A positive supervisory relationship should characteristically be open, participatory, trusting, democratic, flexible, co-operative and mutually respectful in nature so as to enhance workers professional growth, increase his or her self awareness and promote his or her skills (Rothmund and Botha 1991:10).

In such a teacher learner alliance the worker is allowed to admit ignorance, to make mistakes and take reasonable risks. He or she is also allowed maximum autonomy with the limits of the agency structure and policy (Kadushin 1985:13, Levy 1973:15, Rothmund 1990:58, Shulman 1982:33, Weekes and Botha 1988:234).

It is important that both participants (supervisor and supervisee) should continuously work towards improving their relationship. Both must attempt to understand the dynamics created by two individual professionals at different stages of growth and development (Kadushin 1985:15, Shulman 1982:15).

The quality of the supervisory relationship, however, not only enhances or limits a supervisee's effective work performance, it also affects and influences the very course of the supervisory process itself (Rothmund and Botha 1991:9).

Evaluation should take into account an individual's progress, but should also ensure that the supervisees are accountable to the client for providing an efficient 'package' of services and are accountable to service planners for making known needs for new services and ways in which services can be used flexibly to fit people rather than the other way around (Coulshed 1990:171).

2.7.5 TRAINING

Supervisor training will always be most effective when it is part of a strategic plan to create an organizational learning culture. It, however, should be borne in mind that supervision courses can never be a substitute for having good supervision oneself.

It is necessary to ensure that teaching approaches, curriculum design, assessment form and methods, internal monitoring and evaluation schemes and external validation strategies are all capable of promoting deep constructive approaches to learning, and versatility in teaching and learning approaches (Gardiner 1989:144).

Supervisors that perform unsatisfactorily because of a lack of skills are prime candidates for training. The researcher is aware of the fact that training cannot solve all problems of ineffective performance; a sound training and development programme often instrumental in minimising these problems.

Training could avoid obsolescence in supervision and would keep the pace with new methods and processes, thus, enabling supervisors to remain effective.

Training in supervision before the role change is effected from supervisee to supervisor enables a social worker to acquire skills needed for promotion, and it eases the transition. Organizations that fail to provide training often lose their most promising supervisors.

Training can result in greater organizational effectiveness and increased personal growth.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Supervision should not be seen as a burden. Supervisors should accept their significant role in the agency and should have a deep respect for its importance in the effective delivery of social work services. This role can be seen as a way to offer a service that can benefit the individual worker as well as the agency.

In the beginning phases of supervisory work in the helping professions, preparatory empathy (tuning in) can help the supervisor to enter a new system, as well as integrate a new worker into the system. The contracting skills help the supervisor to clarify the purpose of supervision and his or her sense of function, reach for feedback from staff members, and deal with issues arising from authority.

According to Shipton (1997:6), it is clear that where supervision is carried out in an unethical way, that the "apprenticeship" of the supervisee can be to a malignant set of norms which lead to the abuse of patients and clients.

The mismatch between supervisor and trainee may, as Pilgrim and Treacher observe, be potentially very damaging (Shipton 1997:14).

A good supervisor is the hub in the agency's wheel; he or she gives a sense of vitality and immediacy to the agency and the work it performs (Taibbi 1995:8).

Whatever your supervision style you need to be sure that the person being supervised is:

Held, listened to, encouraged;

Challenged, confronted, stimulated

Disciplined, informed, answerable (Houston 1990:7).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The design of this study and the methodology used in obtaining the data is outlined in this chapter. The sampling procedure and the method used to collect the data will be explained, followed by the technique used to analyze the data. The chapter will culminate in the assessment of the limitations of the study and the problems encountered in conducting it.

Qualitative studies have been heralded by many as the best way to carry out research in the complex world of social work practice (Padgett 1998:373). A qualitative study was thus chosen by the researcher as supervision is very complex. Every interpretation will be backed up by empirical reference as to what the respondent said or done.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is exploratory in nature. The research aims to develop and understand the need for training in social work supervision before the role change from supervisee to supervisor is effected. The study attempts to explore how training can benefit the supervisory relationship. The researcher seeks to build a theory that training is needed in supervision before the role change is effected.

The study attempts to explore from supervisors what is needed to facilitate the role change. It also attempts to establish if training is needed or if experience in the field is

sufficient to successfully supervise. The understanding of supervisors perspectives as to how training should be done is explored. As Taylor and Bogdan (1984:6) suggest, for the qualitative researcher, all perspectives are valuable. The researcher seeks a detailed understanding of other people's perspectives.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory studies usually lead to insight and comprehension rather than the collection of accurate replicable data. The studies frequently use interviewing, analysis of case studies and use informants to generate data. Interviewing was used as a method in this research study.

Fourteen social work supervisors were interviewed and a focus group was conducted with five of the respondents. The supervisors were fully briefed about the objectives of the study as well as the anticipated benefits that are foreseen to come out of this study. The respondents were willing to be interviewed. In addition to the words, the researcher noted the body language of the respondents through observation. Interviews combined with observation would allow the researcher to understand the meanings people hold in their everyday life (Marshall and Rossman 1995:81).

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:145), interviewers can also bias the information by recording it inaccurately, either by translating the idea of the respondent into the interviewers own words and thus interpreting the answers according to his own views, or by writing down only a summary or part of the answer. The researcher prevented interviewer bias by using a tape recorder.

One of the criteria for participation in the research was that the supervisors should have had no more than two years experience in social work supervision in welfare agencies in the East London District. It was assumed that supervisors who have more than two years

experience in social work supervision might be too far removed from the memory of the role change. It was borne in mind that as agencies differ so would the nature and tasks associated with supervision. This would add depth to the study.

The participants were assured of complete anonymity and as Huysamen (1994:174) suggests, the subjects should feel free to express their opinions without fear or disapproval by the interviewer, the interviewer should neither approve nor disapprove of the participants actions but show understanding of it. The researcher ensured that she created a risk free environment. The respondents, being social work supervisors were further assured of confidentiality as it is entrenched in the social work discipline.

3.4 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

According to Huysamen (1994:27), qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, unlike quantitative researchers who aim for larger numbers. The researcher anticipated that the sample would be small because the ratio of supervisors to supervisees is small.

For this reason it was deemed appropriate to use non-probability sampling where the researcher handpicked a sample of fourteen supervisors (Yegidis and Weinbach 1991:156; Marlow 1998:142).

In this research study non-probability sampling was chosen because of considerations of convenience and economy. The researcher chose non-probability purposive sampling because the researcher relied on my experience to deliberately obtain subjects in such a manner that that the sample may be regarded as representative of the relevant population (Huysamen 1994:44).

The researcher started by contacting the heads of office at the various social work service offices in the East London area to find out which supervisors have two or less years

experience in social work supervision at their offices. Permission was sought to interview these supervisors after the aim of the research study was discussed with the office heads. The researcher then contacted the subjects telephonically whereby they were informed about the aim of the research and an interview was requested. If they were willing to grant an interview, an appointment would be made for a time that was convenient to the supervisor. Should a supervisor who was telephoned not be willing to grant an interview, the next person would be called.

The researcher also endeavoured to interview supervisors attached to different organizations in order to get a diversity of views in the hope that it would enrich the data collected thus adding depth to the study. The social work supervisors were easily accessible to the researcher. However, a focus group interview had to be conducted as there were few supervisors who had two or less years experience in social work supervision.

Interviews were conducted with fourteen social work supervisors who were fully briefed about the objectives of the study as well as the anticipated benefits that were foreseen to come out of the study.

3.5 INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative interviewing was used as the main technique of data collection because it facilitated co-operation from the research subjects, and it was useful in discovering complex interconnections in social relationships and it provided a context for more focus on activities and behaviour (Marshall and Rossman 1995:100). The subjects were fully briefed about the purpose of the study and their co-operation was essential in contributing to the study.

Lofland and Lofland (1995:70) states that in interviewing you “get at” your prime sources of data (words and actions) through a combination of looking, listening and asking.

The researcher remained acutely aware of social work methodology and terminology used by the social work supervisors. Silverman (1997:117) suggests that the validity of answers will depend on the ability of the respondents to convey experiences in terms that are locally comprehensible.

According to May (1997:109), interviews yield rich insights into people’s experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings. Interviews facilitate access for immediate follow up data collection for clarification or omission (Marshall and Rossman 1995:100).

Face to face interviews were conducted in order for the interviews to be individualized as needed to facilitate the collection of data. The interview form followed a semi-structured interview: it has a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as suggested questions (Kvale 1996:124). According to Rubin and Babbie (1997:390), this allows the interviewer to adapt the sequencing and wording of questions to each particular interview and to follow up on the answers given to obtain clarity.

Semi-structured interviewing offers a versatile way of collecting data. Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured and unstructured interviews allow the interviewer to use probes with a view of clearing up vague responses or to ask for incomplete answers to be elaborated on (Huysamen 1994:145).

A focus group interview was conducted to increase the sample size. The researcher created a permissive environment asking focused questions in order to encourage discussion and the expression of differing opinions and points of view. The questions

posed were deceptively simple and the researcher created a permissive environment to promote the participants self – disclosure (Marshall and Rossman 1995:84).

The focus group interview was chosen because, according to Marshall and Rossman (1995:84):

- It is socially oriented and the members in the group are more relaxed.
- It allowed the researcher the flexibility to explore unanticipated issues as they arose in the discussion.
- The results of a focus group have high face validity - because this method is readily understood, the findings appear believable.
- It is relatively low cost.
- It increased the sample size.

The one-to-one interviews lasted approximately sixty minutes. Each respondent was informed about the purpose of the interview and they were given the opportunity to ask questions to clarify issues before the interview started. The focus group interview lasted approximately two hours. Permission was sought for the use of the tape recorder. After permission was obtained, only then were interviews taped and notes taken of the proceedings. According to Silverman (1993:117), data observations have to be recorded in some way, for example, through field notes or pre-coded schedules. However sophisticated such recording devices may be, they cannot offer the detail found in transcripts of recorded talk.

Rubin and Babbie (1997:392) suggested that a tape recorder is an essential tool of the qualitative interviewer. It not only ensures verbatim recording but it frees interviewers to keep their full attention on the subjects, to communicate that they are listening to what is being said, and to probe important cues.

Despite the use of a tape recorder the researcher listened intently to the respondents and took notes in the course of the interview and kept close account of what was already talked about and what remained to be talked about. These notes were taken so that the researcher could have a basis for reconstructing the interview should the tape recording have failed (Lofland and Lofland 1995:67).

The researcher adhered to the ethics of interviewing by assuring the subjects of anonymity, confidentiality and that the information will only be used in the context of the research (Kvale 1996:153). The researcher had to be sensitive to the initial reluctance of some supervisors to divulge whether they were trained or not; their possible feeling of inadequacy was taken into account.

There are problems and limitations in any research method, which depends on the respondents self-reports, whether the data comes from questionnaires or an interview. However, this study is not about a sensitive topic and errors and biases could be excluded to a certain extent because the respondents did not have to reveal intimate and personal details of their own lives. This will add to the validity of the study because the respondents will not deliberately lie because they do not know what to answer. They thus experienced the interviews as non-threatening and they readily agreed to participate once the data and time of the appointment was agreed upon.

The respondents were chosen with two or less years experience in social work supervision so that they would not be too far removed from the memory of the role

change. It is assumed that they would be able to remember and thus not blend the truth with fiction to cover up the memory gaps.

The data was enriched by the scribe taking notes in the focus group and the researcher making notes on non-verbal communication and observation. It could in a lesser way assist in addressing some of the disadvantages mentioned above.

3.6 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data analysis in qualitative research is a challenging and highly creative process. Data analysis is conducted at the same time of data collection.

Permission was sought and obtained from the respondents to record the data. According to Marshall and Rossman (1995:79), the process of preserving data on tape and combined transcriptions and preliminary analysis greatly increases the efficiency of data analysis. Transcribing the interviews was very time consuming – to transcribe each interview took several hours.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:460), artificial intelligence research has contributed to qualitative analysis powerful techniques for managing documents and expressing theories. Computers can greatly enhance the process of data analysis where research is done where the use of relevant techniques is appropriate. The use of computer software in the analysis of the data, due to the small sample, was not considered appropriate for this research. The researcher did not pursue the different programs for computer analysis.

Clarification of the material can be done by eliminating superfluous material such as digressions and repetitions, distinguishing between essential and not essential. This makes the material amenable for analysis. However, this depends on the purpose of the

study. In this study the above method was followed but the researcher was mindful of the objectives of the study in not eliminating the data which is useful.

Data analysis is seen as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the data collected. According to Huysamen (1994:176) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994:371) notes of presumed non verbal communication on the part of the participant should still be kept as non verbal communication both informs and sets the tone for the interview. The data was enriched as the researcher made notes about the non verbal communication.

Four cognitive processes of Morse and Field appear integral to all qualitative data, namely, comprehending, synthesising (decontextualising), theorising and recontextualising (De Vos 1998:340-342).

The analysis proper involves developing meanings of the interviews by bringing respondents own understanding into the light as well as providing new perspectives from the researcher on the phenomena. The researcher compared the perspectives of the respondents with that found in literature, extracting themes.

Reflections and remarks in the margin of transcripts were used, identifying and highlighting similar themes, gradually elaborating a small set of generalizations and creating a formalized body of knowledge. These are some of the suggested analytic methods of Miles and Huberman (1996:9).

The test for goodness of qualitative research lies in checking for representativeness of the sample, checking for researcher bias, the possible influence of the the researcher had on the respondents, weighing the evidence and deciding which data can be trusted (Miles and Huberman 1996:262-263).

The quest for reliable analysis took place during the literature review where verification of rival explanations, which are time consuming, took place. In the data collection phase the respondents were the sources of corroboration.

The researcher addressed the question of Miles and Huberman (1996:277) as to how will anyone know whether the emerging findings are good, namely, possibly true, or probably true, reliable, valid, confirmable and dependable.

3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It was anticipated that the study would not be representative of the majority of social work supervisors in the East London District. This is due to the fact that only fourteen supervisors were obtained as respondents as most of the supervisors had more than two years experience in social work supervision. The findings cannot be generalized and does not claim to be representative of the views of all the social work supervisors in the East London District.

Non-probability sampling will result in limited generalizability of the findings, but it will be information rich.

At the onset of some of the interviews the use of the tape recorder made some of the supervisors uncomfortable. As the interview progressed they seemed to be less intimidated as the researcher adopted a reassuring attitude towards the respondents and the researcher is satisfied that this did not significantly impact negatively on the outcome of the research.

The researcher had to conduct a focus group interview as there were only fourteen social work supervisors with two or less years experience in the East London District. The focus group interview provided background context for more focus on activities, behaviours

and events and was useful in discovering complex interconnections in social relationships.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In qualitative research one is unconcerned with standardizing interpretation of data. Rather, our goal in developing this complex cataloguing and retrieval system has been to retain good access to the words of subjects, without relying upon the memory of interviewers or data analysts (Silverman 1993:99).

Qualitative research will help the researcher explore factors that are concerned with the new supervisor's socialization into the supervisory role. Emphasis will be on the issue of training, that is, whether training can make the role change easier.

A qualitative study is a method of inquiry whereby the respondents will be sought on their own turf. They will be more at ease to impart feeling and experiences associated with the role change.

Semi-structured interviews and a focus group interview were conducted because of the following:

- Qualitative studies are reliable due their inter-subjective depth which is obtained through open ended interviewing.
- Large amounts of expansive and contextual data could be obtained quickly.
- It facilitates co-operation from research subjects.

- Facilitates access for immediate follow-up data collection for clarification and omissions.
- Useful for discovering complex interconnections in social relationships.
- Good for obtaining data on nonverbal behaviour and communication.
- Facilitates nuances in culture.
- Provides background context for more focus on activities, behaviours and events.
- Great utility for uncovering the subjective side, the “native perspective” of organizational processes.

It is hoped that the qualitative research study will provide information about how to enhance the psycho-social well being of supervisors.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings are documented in this chapter. These findings explore the need for training in social work supervision with the emphasis on the feelings and experiences associated with the role change from supervisee to supervisor.

Most of the literature consulted did not pertinently discuss the need for training in social work supervision. This discussion focuses on the need for training in social work supervision.

For the purpose of this study, the presentation and discussion has been divided into six broad themes, namely:

1. Biographical Information
2. Nature of tasks and responsibilities associated with being a supervisor
3. Experiences and feelings associated with their role as supervisor
4. Challenges in the role change
5. Issues on authority
6. Training needs

4.2 FINDINGS OF THE TOTAL SAMPLE

4.2.1 CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOTAL SAMPLE

The total sample consisted of fourteen social work supervisors. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the respondents. A focus group interview was conducted with five of the respondents as the researcher could not obtain the twenty respondents in the East London District. The researcher accessed the respondents through the non-probability purposive method. Access to the social work supervisors was obtained without difficulty. However, the conducting of the focus group was fraught with difficulties due to both the researcher's and the respondents work commitments. Despite the difficulties the focus group interview was conducted and information obtained in the focus group added depth to the study.

4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

4.3.1 Social workers

The length of employment before the role change to supervisor across the sample for the social work supervisors ranges from one and a half years to thirteen years. All of them have experience in fieldwork and supervision. The social workers became supervisors either through promotion (within the agency or organization), natural progression to senior social worker or they applied for the post (from outside the agency or organization). Some of the supervisors were not sure whether they were promoted or whether it was natural progression to the supervision role.

The number of years in the supervisory role ranged from four months to two years. The supervisors worked full time for Private Welfare Agencies or the Department of Welfare. Eight respondents worked at the Department of Welfare and six respondents worked at

Private Welfare Agencies. Their ranking included Social Worker, Senior Social Worker, Chief Social Worker, Manager and Director. Their ages ranged between twenty and fifty years. The supervisors qualifications were B. A. Social Work, B. A. Social Science, B. A. Social Work Honours and Senior Diploma In Social Work.

4.4 NATURE OF TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH BEING A SUPERVISOR

4.4.1 Nature of Tasks and Responsibilities

Of the fourteen respondents that were interviewed, only seven respondents practiced supervision only. The other seven supervisors had additional tasks. One supervisor had two additional tasks; namely, she was in charge of Funding and had to do inspections at the Day Care Centers as well. The other six respondents additional task included, managing the office, financial management, being responsible for the Treatment Team, management of the Day Care Centers, working at the Care Center, working at the workshop and casework. A source of frustration was that the supervisors were “expected to do the impossible – there was too much work”. The supervisors that had other tasks had to juggle their responsibilities to the field and to supervision.

4.4.2 Communication of tasks

Nine of the respondents entered the role of supervisor without knowing what their tasks were as they were not communicated to them. Two respondents revealed that their tasks were “not really” communicated to them and three respondents tasks were communicated to them. All fourteen respondents stated that their tasks were not clearly communicated to them.

One supervisor stated that when she asked what she had to do regarding supervision, her supervisor answered: “No, it is simple and you are going to see what you are going to do and if you have a problem, ask.”

4.4.3 Needs of a Newly Appointed Supervisor

Social work supervisors agree that the needs of a newly appointed supervisor include the following (this is a summary of what the respondents voiced):

- Expectations should be clearly spelt out at the onset of their supervision role. Their roles, responsibilities and the supervisor’s capacity have to be outlined. The supervisor has to have a job description.
- Preparation for the role change should be initiated by the supervisor’s supervisor. Tasks in supervision that will improve your skill should be given to the up and coming supervisor before the role change is effected.
- Training on all aspects of supervision is needed. This would dispense with trial and error in their practice.
- Training should also include report writing, aspects on professional maturity.
- Courses on how to recognize strengths and weaknesses and thus deal with them accordingly is needed.
- Training on policies.
- A supervisor should not have additional tasks or a caseload.

- Guidance and support in the new role is important.
- The members in the focus group were of the opinion that the newly appointed supervisor should “start small”, that is, you should only have one or two supervisees at the beginning of the role change.
- Emotional wellbeing is very important according to the focus group members. “You can only give what you have got”.

4.4.4 The Qualities of a Good Social Work Supervisor

Good supervisors leave their mark on supervisees. They show the supervisee how to act or not act as a social worker. A good supervisor is the kind of supervisor who understands that supervision is more than checking files, worrying about caseloads and budgets, writing evaluations or any other administrative tasks that the agency work entails. A good supervisor is able to look beyond these mundane tasks and see the bigger challenge, that is, helping the supervisees find their working style and who they want to be as a professional.

The following opinions were expressed:

- A supervisor should be compassionate and understanding to the extent that they want the supervisees to develop.
- The supervisor should build on the strengths with a view to capacity building.
- The supervisee should be guided to independence by the supervisor.
- Professional and personal growth is at the heart of supervision.

Three of the supervisors mentioned that one of the qualities of a good supervisor is that they should have conflict resolution skills. This could also be viewed alongside communication skills and good relationship skills which was cited by six supervisors.

A supervisor should be a good guide who understands the developmental path that the supervisee must travel. This can be done by creating a risk free supportive environment, according to eight supervisors.

A good supervisor must be able to teach skills through the medium of practice, knowledge, wisdom and experience. He or she must not only be able to talk about the work, but about the role of the supervisee in the work situation. Four supervisors stated the qualities of a good supervisor include:

- A supervisor should be well grounded

- Guide the supervisee to independence

- Being organized

- Reflect the qualities that you want the supervisee to learn

- Give advice

- A supervisor should have a knowledge base.

Two supervisors expressed the opinion that good relationship skills are important qualities for a good supervisor. According to Taibbi (1995:7), a good supervisor, like a good parent, understands that change occurs within the psychological and physical space that lies between two people. The supervisory relationship provides a place of safety, an intersection where professional and personal worlds meet. At this intersection one

discovers the power of relationship to change individuals as well as the power of individuals to change the relationship. Seven supervisors felt that this power to establish these good relationships can also be influenced by :

- The supervisor motivating people.
- The supervisor being open to correction .
- The supervisor giving credit and acknowledgement of good work, congratulating the supervisee.
- The supervisors support regarding initiative.
- Mutual respect.
- A good supervisor should not be authoritative.
- A good supervisor should accept ideas from supervisees.

A supervisor should help the supervisee deal with the present situation and at the same time prepare them for what lies ahead.

The research study has shown that the respondents cited seventy-one qualities altogether that are needed to be a good supervisor. The total qualities that the respondents had when they entered the role of supervisor was thirty, collectively. The qualities were categorized according to similarity.

4.5 EXPERIENCES AND FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR ROLE AS SUPERVISOR

4.5.1 Does experience as a social worker prepare you for the new role?

Ten of the fourteen supervisors stated that their experience as a social worker prepared them to a certain extent for their new role as supervisor.

The following is a summary of points raised by ten supervisors:

- As a social worker you are expected to manage your own caseload. From your experience you are thus able to guide the supervisee regarding caseload management. You are further in a position to tell the supervisee how things are done regarding casework.
- In agencies where they specialized in certain services, for example, Foster Care, you could help your supervisee aptly.
- Generally speaking, your experience in social work helps you relate to people. Thus when the role change is effected you are able to communicate with your supervisee.
- As supervisor, your experience helps you during the orientation of a supervisee that is new to the field.

4.5.2 Feelings and Experiences associated with the Role Change at the time of Transition

Whenever one moves into a new position in an organization, a certain degree of anxiety and strain is to be expected. One source of anxiety is the unfamiliar and unknown set of actors with whom the newcomer must interact (Holloway & Brager 1989:26).

The supervisors agreed upon the fact that they experienced anxiety, but it was coupled with the following feelings:

- Eleven supervisors stated that they experienced fear, apprehension, anxiety, stress and that they were nervous. The fear and apprehension was brought on by the fact that they were not clear as to what was expected of them and that they had no training regarding supervision. Fear regarding control was also experienced by one supervisor. One of the supervisors was nervous because her training at university had set high expectations regarding the supervision role.
- One supervisor felt overwhelmed because she became what supervisees term, “this critical person”.
- Report writing caused a dilemma as the supervisee expected you(supervisor) “to do justice to the report”. At the same time the supervisee is a professional person and having to correct the report means that you are questioning or even “doubting” their skills.
- One supervisor did not feel happy at the onset of the role change as she was not promoted in the right way as there was no salary increase involved.
- Two supervisors who applied for the post internally stated that it was difficult to adjust as they were continually considering the persons who did not get the post. Their colleagues could not accept the fact that they had got the posts. One of the supervisors actually felt like giving up the post. It was “nightmarish” according to the

respondent who applied for the position internally and she was “shocked and could not believe” her former peers negative attitude.

- Six supervisors felt not ready, unprepared, incompetent and uncertain at the time of the role change. The uncertainty was brought about by the fact they were not sure as to whether they “could deliver or cope”. One of the supervisors was uncertain regarding her role because of her own emotionality – she bore in mind that “it could be a flaw that would bring her down”.
- One supervisor felt “heavy stressful” as she was still doing casework.
- One supervisor felt excited as she was entering a new sphere.
- Despite being nervous one of the supervisors stated that she was “motivated to learn more” about the work.
- A supervisor attributed her hard work to her being chosen as a supervisor – she deserved to be promoted.
- One supervisor was frustrated because she came from the former Ciskei and they never had supervision and now she was faced with a difficult task, to do supervision without any training or background regarding supervision.

The focus group felt that supervisors were very lonely. This was further aggravated by the fact that ‘supervisees speak in low tones when you are near and when you enter a room they stop talking’. Having someone to share your frustrations helps.

The members in the focus group felt that you have to “grow into the role of supervisor” and this puts a lot of strain on the newly appointed supervisor. You were further put

under strain because you did not want to admit to your supervisory peers and other members of staff that you were “inadequately equipped” to do supervision. It would be embarrassing to admit that you did not know.

It was revealed in the focus group that the new supervisor also experiences anxiety because you fear separation of your former peers.

Have these feelings changed /how have these feelings changed ?

Twelve of the supervisors feelings have changed since they became supervisors. The two whose feelings were still the same cited the reasons being that she still got the same salary and the other supervisor was not sure as to whether she was doing the right thing.

The supervisors whose feelings had changed stated that they were more at ease because with experience you became accustomed to the role of supervision. These responses in no way negated that formal training in social work supervision is necessary. Due to the fact that you are working with people there still is a sense of anxiety. One supervisor stated that her feelings had changed as she had managed to establish what the expectations were of the new role. Another supervisor had managed to restrain her emotions and had learnt to deal with her anger which was a problem at the onset of her role change.

The supervisors that had applied for the post internally stated that their feelings had changed as the supervisees had since adjusted and they were more co-operative now. They had made use of the director and staff who were supportive. They also stated that the courses had helped them.

4.5.3 Building of a network of relationships with new peers

Six supervisors found it difficult to build a network of relationships. Difficult in view of the fact that the supervisor did not know the other supervisors, trust had to be developed and there was no working relationship

Eight of the supervisors did not experience any problems due to the following reasons:

- One supervisor was assertive.
- There was a good relationship with the head of office.
- The new peer group was positive.
- The new peer group accepted the fact that she was going to be a supervisor.
- It was not a problem as the new supervisor had worked with the new peer group before.
- People were understanding and open.
- The new peer group was supportive despite the new supervisor experiencing problems because she did not know what to do.

4.5.4 Stresses associated with supervision

The highest stressor according to the supervisors are return dates that are not met and having to correct reports. The writing of reports is also stressful. The supervisors were of the opinion that they are undermining the supervisees skills when they corrected reports. Twelve supervisors felt that these two aspects were stressful.

Having to deal with difficult supervisees was stressful according to seven supervisors. Their lack of co-operation and defiance contributed to the supervisor's stress. The supervisees viewed supervision as "policing"- they did not see it as a way of communicating, gaining and sharing with each other. Another aspect is the misinterpretation of what transpired during the supervision session; they "twist" the information. Perhaps this ties up with what stressed one supervisor, namely, how you came across to people and how people feel about you.

Irresponsible supervisees were stressful according to five supervisors. Irresponsibility included letting the client wait, making the same mistakes and letting their work "slide". This ties up with the supervisor's accountability for the supervisee's actions.

Being a supervisor and also having to carry a caseload was stressful as there was not enough time to do both and one task inevitably was neglected.

Rapid changes in social work was stressful according to one supervisor. Having to give guidance without theoretical background.

Being a buffer between management and the staff was a stressor for two supervisors. According to one of the supervisors this was a "double dose stressor".

Extended supervision to the client was stressful for two supervisors.

The learning abilities of supervisees was a problem it was stressful to maintain the pace of the supervisee.

Poor management was stressful to one supervisor. Normally due to poor planning by management the supervisors are given short deadlines and this caused unending stress as

you had to stop what you are doing to meet these deadlines.

Another stress factor according to the focus group is that you co-sign reports all the time. You “have to take the blame” should “something go wrong”. Co-signing the report meant that you endorsed the recommendation that was made.

The members in the focus group felt it was a challenge to plan for five years in Private Welfare Agencies. It was also stressful as you don’t know what lies ahead.

4.5.5 Does working experience help in the transition from social worker to supervisor

Six supervisors stated that their experience was not sufficient for them to do supervision. One of these supervisors felt that training should be ongoing in order to help them cope.

Three supervisors agreed that experience helped them in their practice of supervision. However, they stated the following:

- “If I had training I would say my experience was sufficient, thus my experience alone was inadequate to do supervision”.
- “My experience was sufficient, but would have been good if it was combined with training”.
- “Experience was sufficient, but I needed training in supervision to be more confident”.

One supervisor stated that experience was not good, at the same time it was not bad, but that it was influenced by internal problems.

Experience did not help one supervisor as they were in the midst of changes in their service delivery.

For three supervisors their experience was sufficient because they were physically doing the work and could thus give proper guidance as they had practical experience and they were acquainted with the work. One supervisor also had varied experience.

According to one supervisor, “having experience does not prepare you for the role as there are many other aspects relating to supervision, for example, dealing with unions”.

4.6 CHALLENGES IN THE ROLE CHANGE

4.6.1 How being an outsider impacts on your relationships with supervisees

It was a challenge to find each other in the supervisory relationship according to one supervisor. It was tough to get the supervisees to adjust to her style of supervision; actually, tough on both sides as she also had to be receptive to the other supervisor’s supervision style.

One supervisor did not have a problem as she networked with the agency in the past and the staff actually informed her about the supervisory post.

A supervisor stated that being an outsider the staff members did not want to recognize her experience and they shunned her. It was a challenge to get the staff members to accept and respect her knowledge and experience.

4.6.2 Introduction of changes

Changes brought into the organization by nine neophyte supervisors included:

- Changes in intake. This change was accepted as the previous method of intake was cumbersome.
- Freedom regarding constructive criticism was introduced and was well received by the supervisees, but not by the supervisors.
- Information sharing and this was well received as people were willing to learn.
- One supervisor tried to capacitate the social workers so that they were not too dependent on her. They had to develop a sense of responsibility. This was not well received as they were used to decisions being made on their behalf. It was tough for them to adjust.
- Administrative changes were made and they were well received.
- One supervisor introduced Management by Objectives, time management and participatory management. These changes were well received except time management.
- Participatory management was also introduced by two other supervisors and this was very well received.
- Changes were made when looking at the reports - became more strict about correctness of the reports.

Five supervisors did not introduce changes. Reasons why changes were not made included the following:

- The supervisor thought things were going fine the way they were. They were coping.

- One supervisor did not make changes as she was the acting head of office and was waiting for someone else to make the changes.
- The one supervisor did not make changes as she first wanted to get the feel of supervision.
- Changes were not made in isolation by one supervisor, there were three of them at their agency who tried “to juggle things around”.

4.7 ISSUES ON AUTHORITY

4.7.1 New status' impact on relationship with former peers

The new status impacted negatively on the relationship with former peers according to six supervisors. The sudden change to supervisor was not readily accepted by former peers. One supervisor mentioned that her former friends were regarded as spies and they were isolated. These friendships were thus adversely affected. Regarding the supervisor that applied for the post internally, the other two former peers who did not get the post made life very difficult for her.

One supervisor of the six mentioned above mentioned that there was an attitude which she attributed to racial differences: the white supervisees were more defiant than the black supervisees.

Two supervisors were new to the agencies and thus did not have to contend with a former peer group and one was a student supervisor.

Five supervisors stated that becoming a supervisor did not impact on their relationship with former peers as one supervisor still done fieldwork, another supervisor respected individuality and confidentiality and her former peers expected the change to supervisor.

4.7.2 Challenges regarding delegating former peers

Three supervisors did not have any challenges. One attributed this to the fact that she was strong and could deal with resistance and opposition. One supervisor stated that there were no problems thus there were no challenges. The third supervisor stated that there was no resistance and this made the work easier and thus there was no challenge.

Eleven supervisors stated the following challenges they were faced with when delegating former peers:

- It was a challenge not to “pull rank”.
- Not delegating unpleasant tasks was a challenge as they did not want to shift the unpleasant tasks. Another aspect regarding delegation was the fact that “was it telling or enforcing?”
- Authority issues when dealing with older social workers. The refusal of holiday leave or allowing them to leave the office.
- Discerning the difference between petty and important issues.
- As asking supervisees to attend workshops as some were not willing.
- Dealing with absenteeism was a challenge.
- Having to scrutinize and correct reports.
- Planning for the areas where supervisees needed training (the supervisor also needed training!).

- Trying to remain at the supervisees pace.
- Dealing with rebelliousness and rudeness. Trying to remain calm and not reacting to people's personalities. The challenge was addressing these issues.

The focus group felt that you are in a catch twenty two situation; despite your knowledge base developing quickly, there are rapid changes in the work situation and you have to keep abreast of these changes. This is a challenge.

4.7.3 Past experiences with those in authority

Thirteen of the supervisors stated that their past experiences with those in authority had a effect on their style of supervision. They tried not to replicate the negative aspects of their past supervisors. These included the following:

- They tried not to be autocratic.
- Dispensed with top down management.
- Tried not to be judgemental.
- They emphasized the collaborative working process.
- Concentrated on and developed the strengths of their supervisees.
- They instituted joint decision-making.
- Avoided spoon-feeding.
- They treated their supervisees with respect.

The one supervisor used her past supervisor's style as they were her mentors.

It can thus be seen that past experiences with those in authority does have an effect on your style of supervision – you can either incorporate the positives or dispense with the negatives.

4.7.4 The role age plays in supervision

The general feeling was that age does play a role to a certain extent because of the following:

- People tend to respect age. The general opinion was that it is generally thought that older people have gained more experience and knowledge.
- In some cultures older people are respected and do not take instructions from a younger person.
- The age gap between the supervisee and the supervisor should not be too wide. Being older than the supervisee you would not be able to relate well to him or her; the supervisee cannot really do what he or she wants to do, that is, really express your emotions because of respect. You tend to be submissive.
- Older people are thought to be wiser, thus people respect you more
- One respects someone who has been for a long time.

Twelve supervisors thus felt that age does play a role in supervision

Two supervisors were of the opinion that age does not necessarily play a role. Experience more than age plays a role. Emotional maturity and professionalism actually play a role.

4.8 TRAINING NEEDS

4.8.1 Training received in supervision prior to the role change

Only two supervisors received training in supervision prior to the role change. Both supervisors were at the same agency.

Twelve supervisors did not receive any training prior to the role change or whilst being a supervisor

4.8.2 The necessity of training for the transition to supervision

All the supervisors felt that training is very necessary before the transition to supervisor occurs. Comments included :

- It is very vital. There should be training to supplement your experience. The training should include the supervisors reflection of the image of the office, developing the agency's efficient and effective service rendering.
- You are not born a supervisor.
- Ideally training is vital. You cannot be a supervisor without “theoretical, practical illustrations” of what you are getting yourself into or what it involves. The reality in most organizations, as stated by the supervisors, was that not much supervision is taking place because of lack of training.
- Training on how “inadequacies in one's personality influences people”. Knowing this information beforehand will enable one to “avoid traps” in the supervisory relationship.

- Training is very important because there are new aspects that you do not understand in the changing society today.
- It is very important because you have a lot of things to deal with. For example, racial and cultural problems, expectations from supervisees and vice-versa.

4.8.3 Suggested Training and Recommendations regarding preparation for the Supervision Role

The supervisors were unanimous that training in supervision per se was imperative. They highlighted the following areas regarding training:

- Three supervisors felt that the actual role of the supervisor and the role of the supervisee should be clarified.
- Six supervisors recommended on the job training, of which one supervisor recommended that it should be preceded by training in the form of courses. On the job training provided hands on experience.
- Training in support and management was a priority for eight supervisors.
- Nine supervisors felt that training was needed in organizational behaviour which includes relationships, communication skills, conflict resolution skills, leadership skills, and time management. (One should thus not assume that these are integral skills.)
- Four supervisors were of the opinion that training in stress management was important.

- Training on “how to train your supervisees so that there is personal growth in the work environment” was needed according to four supervisors; this encompasses staff development. How to attend to your own personal growth was also important. This would enable the supervisor to evaluate maturity of the supervisee.
- How to run workshops should be included in training.
- Two supervisors were of the opinion that training in personnel issues was needed.
- Two supervisors felt that training should be ongoing so that “you are one step ahead of your supervisee”.

All supervisors agreed that supervisors should have a support network where they also receive guidance. The supervisor should have a mentor.

The focus group strongly agreed that “a supervisor has to have a support system as supervision can be painful – you feel the pressure and experience burnout”.

One supervisor felt that contracting with the supervisee would facilitate the supervision process.

The general feeling was that when doing supervision one should not have a caseload. In the focus group interview it was felt that “one cannot sit on different chairs as somewhere along the line you are going to miss a chair”. Not only does it stress the supervisor, you actually neglect your supervisory duties. You have to free yourself to train the supervisee.

The focus group also felt that active training should take place. Training definitely makes a difference. Training can help people to cope and they also feel adequate. Training dispenses with the games that are played in supervision between the supervisor and supervisee. These games start when the supervisee is aware that you are not sure of your

work. The members in the group agreed that “lack of training makes the supervisor vulnerable and invites abuse from the supervisee”. Sometimes they “trick” you because they are testing you.

According to the supervisors, training should be as follows:

- Introductory courses
- One should have two years training before entering the role of supervisor
- Educational courses
- Management Courses
- People Management courses
- Courses on Relationships
- Courses on the Requirements for Supervision should precede the role change
- Formal training on Emotional Maturity
- Refresher courses
- CDU (Community Development Unit) courses
- Formal training in Supervision

4.9 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION / BODY LANGUAGE

All the supervisors readily agreed when they heard what the topic of the research study was and they came across as very excited and sounded somewhat relieved that someone was looking at the training needs of the supervisor.

All supervisors viewed the use of the tape recorder with a bit of trepidation, but soon relaxed when they were made aware of the fact that all information given would be treated as confidential.

When it came to the questions on whether their tasks were communicated to them all supervisors demeanour was that of regret that this was not so. They looked back wistfully and wished that they could have known what they know now.

Regarding the need for training all the supervisors stated adamantly that training was imperative before the role change. Tone in their voices was that of determination coupled with vehemence.

The supervisors that brought up the racial issue and the relationship problems were embarrassed when they spoke about it. They were hesitant and they distinctly created the impression that they did not want to be disloyal to their colleagues – this was a form of betrayal.

4.10 GENERAL

After the interviews were conducted the respondents either telephoned or told the researcher straight after the interview that the questions posed during the interviews caused them to do introspection about their own supervision style and how this affected their supervisees.

The supervisors that were included in the focus group interview requested that the researcher should establish a supervisor's forum in the East London area. They felt less stressed after having discussed issues in a group situation that bothered them as supervisors. They did express the need for formal training as well – they thus did not only need a support group.

4.11 CONCLUSION

A qualitative research study was conducted where the feelings and experiences were explored with social work supervisors regarding the role change from supervisee to supervisor.

The data collected revealed that supervision is complex and cannot really be effected without the necessary training on all aspects regarding supervision. Having no training in supervision has an adverse effect on supervision.

The focus group and individual supervisors alike felt that supervisors should have a support structure and a mentor.

In both the Department of Welfare and the Private Welfare Organizations the role change from supervisee to supervisor is effected without training. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that supervisors enter the role of supervision without a job description and in most cases, because of lack of training resort to trial and error method of supervision. One could almost say that 'to add insult to injury' the expectations of the supervision role is not clearly stated at the onset of the role change.

Without training the supervisors are ill-equipped to deal with the complexities of supervision.

After analysing the data, the opinion is upheld that training may help the supervisor reconnect the ties between the inner self and the outer work, between personal values or vision and what he or she does. In the process the supervisor may come to realise that supervision is truly a calling and the best way we can measure ourselves and our lives is by the impression we leave on the lives of our supervisee.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the conclusions and recommendations resulting from the study. The conclusions are based on the sample of fourteen supervisors. It is recognized that the conclusions and findings cannot be generalized to all the social work supervisors in East London. However, it gives an understanding of the need for formal training in social work supervision and how the lack of training can have an adverse effect on supervision of the supervisees which ultimately affects the client.

The supervisees that were interviewed were experienced in fieldwork and were practicing supervision in social work. They meet the criteria as determined in the research methodology, namely, that supervisors should have two and less experience in social work supervision.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Given the findings of the data analysis the following conclusions are made:

- New supervisors need clear, simple models of supervision practice that will help them learn how to implement their complex human relations task.
- Supervisors are aware of the need for training in supervision prior to the role change from social worker to supervisor. Presently the role change is effected without formal training. Very little training is done, if any. It is concluded that management in agencies assume that any social worker can do supervision if have experience in

fieldwork, that is casework; they, the social workers, should be able to make the transition on their own.

- The supervisors experience anxiety because they have feelings of insecurity and are left to mere trial and error supervisory practice. This has far reaching effects and impacts negatively on their rendering of supervision to their supervisees.
- There are transitional and situational problems posed by the shift that should be recognized and addressed (Holloway & Brager 1989:26). The findings have shown that without training in supervision these transitional and situational problems are exacerbated by the supervisors feelings of inadequacy.
- The lack of training can be stressful when the role change is effected, but the research findings has shown that excitement at the prospect of entering a new sphere accompanied by the role change as well. Further, lack of training motivated the supervisor to learn about the aspects of supervision. It is thus concluded that there are positives that accompany the role change even though there is a lack of training.
- The supervisors were of the opinion that your working experience can only help you in the practice of supervision to a certain extent. There is a diversity of tasks in supervision where the supervisor is a teacher, a guide, consultant and gatekeeper.
- The research study has shown that when we become supervisors, our methods and skills reflect the sum of supervisors that the supervisors have had and it seeps into their work. The supervisors, according to the research study have tried not to replicate the negative aspects of their past supervisors supervisory style.

It should be borne in mind that the future of our supervisees depends to a large extent on the quality of their teachers, the supervisors. The best teachers are those who care for their supervisee's development, who take an interest in their supervisees.

- A good supervisor, according to the supervisors that were included in the research study, must be able to teach skills through a medium of practice knowledge, wisdom that is enhanced by training and experience. The supervisor must not only be able to talk about the work, but about the self in the work. It is concluded that service excellence is a mixture of experience, training and being passionate about the work that you do. You cannot view yourself apart from your work.
- All supervisors agree that personal growth is at the heart of supervision. The developmental theory tells us that growth occurs in stages. At the onset of their new role of supervisor, apart from wrestling with the idea that they are inadequate, they experience a multitude other feelings and have to convert these feelings into challenges. However, lack of training sometimes leads to the supervisor being bogged down by these feelings and this has an effect on their supervision and they cannot effectively take the supervisee through the necessary developmental stages.
- Training in leadership is required because the supervisors felt that they avoid supervision as they were not aptly trained; this could lead to passivity regarding supervision. The supervisors felt that extended supervision (to the client) can be stressful. This passivity could thus have an indirect adverse effect on the guidance that the supervisee gives to the client. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the treatment is ethical and efficacious.

This passivity can deny the supervisee access to a more advantageous position from which to consider their work.

According to Shipton (1997:6), it is also clear that where supervision is carried in an unethical way that the "apprenticeship" of the supervisee can be to a malignant set of norms which can lead to the abuse of clients.

It can thus be concluded that to retire on the job, namely from supervision whilst being a supervisor, is detrimental not only to the supervisee but, also to the client.

- In most cases the supervisor became a supervisor in response to the request by management. The analysis of the data shows that specific training in supervision can help a supervisee who wants to become a supervisor. The majority of the supervisors felt that training prior to the role change is a prerequisite.
- It is concluded from the research findings that if managers are supportive towards the supervisor who applied for the post from within the agency the role change will be effected easier. As time goes by you become more relaxed in the role and your former peers become used to the idea and are less negative towards the new supervisor.
- The supervisor is not only responsible for the educational aspects of supervision, but also for the administrative and supportive functions.

The administrative function includes:

Efforts to direct, co-ordinate, enhance and evaluate the supervisees job performance.

The supportive function includes:

(1) Offering emotional support.

(2) Helping them deal with the day to day stresses, discouragements and frustrations.

Given the complexities of the supervisor's job, the research study has shown that there is a need for formal training regarding supervision as your experience only helps the supervisor to a certain extent. How can the supervisor train the supervisee if the supervisor is not formally trained in supervision.

- Pressure to perform creates anxiety during the early months, or even years, in the supervisory role, more often than not leaves the new supervisor feeling overwhelmed. If the supervisor was trained preceding the role change he or she would be better equipped to deal with this anxiety as feelings of inadequacy could be dispensed with. The feeling of anxiety is further exacerbated by the fact that supervisors do not want

to publicly make known that they are ill-equipped to do supervision through lack of training. It can be concluded that lack of training is embarrassing to the supervisor.

- The research study has shown that supervision entails monitoring, controlling, managerial and administrative responsibilities, ensuring that the social workers maintain appropriate standards of competence and professionalism. Two common functions of supervision are the transmission of information from supervisor to supervisee and monitoring the supervisee's work to ensure efficacy, and consistency with policy. Both of these functions are concerned the role of authority and according to the study, can be facilitated by apt training.
- There is consensus among the supervisors that it is the duty of the agency to provide training regarding supervision. This will ensure effective supervision that will benefit the client at the end of the day.
- Training may help the supervisor explore and reconnect the ties between the inner self and the outer work, between personal values or vision and what he or she does. In the process a good supervisor may find that work is truly a calling and that the best way we can measure ourselves and our lives is by the impression we leave on the lives of others. Training thus would dispense with dysfunctional supervision.
- The opinion is upheld that experience can be viewed as of good value. This brings to mind the following questions:
 - (1) What is competence and what are skills?
 - (2) Are skills and competence an objective issue?
 - (3) How do we empower a supervisee?Education is most important. The first thing one has to do before the role change is to get knowledge out. By this the researcher means information and training regarding

supervision and all its complexities. The pathway to competence in supervision is through training.

- The research study has shown that we have to rid ourselves of the notion that older people are in a better position to do supervision. The factor that does play a role is culture; in some cultures older people are revered.
- The research study has shown that expertise and knowledge are important in supervision, not age. What should be taken into consideration though is that the age gap should not be too big. If the supervisor is much older than the supervisee they might not be able to relate well to each other.
- The research study has shown that the working relationship between a supervisor and supervisee parallels the relationship between worker and client. It can be concluded that three elements that should be taken into account are:
 - (1) Rapport – the general ability to get along.
 - (2) Trust – the ability of the supervisee to be open with the supervisor and to share mistakes and failures, as well as successes.
 - (3) Role – the function played by the supervisor and the supervisee and the availability.
- The crucial shaping factors of a supervisee are training and supervision. Supervision can be regarded as a training approach. It should also be a joint venture to improving the quality of the supervisee's practice.
- A supervisor's behaviour constitutes a compelling model as to how supervision should be done or conducted. The research study has shown that the supervisors selected the positives of their former supervisors and carried it over to their style of

supervision. The negative aspects of former supervisors were set aside and replaced with positives in their supervision style.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Formal training should be revisited at agencies regarding supervision so that the supervisors are empowered and capacitated to render effective supervision to the supervisees.
- Formal training should precede the role change from social worker to supervisor. This could dispense with the feelings of inadequacy at the onset of the role change that could lead to the supervisor becoming passive regarding supervision.
- It is recommended that agencies should develop opportunities for supervisors to experience an indepth exposure to the supervisory role before they become supervisors.
- Organizations and agencies should set up opportunities for mutual coaching and team building of their supervisors. This in itself is a form of a support structure to the supervisor.
- In social work the paradigm shift where developments in techniques and methodology is taking place at a rapid rate, it is recommended that staff development, particularly of the supervisors, should be given priority attention by agencies. Staff development is important; it can help the supervisors increase their knowledge and understanding of human behaviour and social relationships. This will put them in a

better position to help and give guidance to their supervisees, who, in turn, will be in a better position to help their clients.

- It is recommended that the following methods should be included in agencies staff development:
 - Lectures by a staff member or an outside guest.
 - Case presentations should be done.
 - Role playing which could bring out feelings as well as ideas that are relevant to supervision. Although this involves imitation and simulation, it may provoke one to think, and particularly to feel intensely.
 - Staff development which involves programmed learning which could include values in decision-making situations. Supervisors should be encouraged to keep abreast of current developments by reading recent books and journal articles for publication and could thus learn in the process.
 - Continuing education in the form of enrolling at social work training instances, workshops and seminars.

- Further research should be conducted regarding all aspects of the role change and how it can be effected smoothly with necessary training.

- Training regarding supervision should be incorporated into the curriculum of all universities.

- A support structure for supervisors should be established in the broader East London area. This can be done in the form of a Supervisors Forum. A supervisory team could provide a change at agencies regarding the need for training. Their recommendations could make the agencies embark on training or developing training courses to capacitate and improve their supervisors skills.
The support structure could monitor, encourage, inform and inspire the supervisors.

- Workshops should be held on a regular basis. These workshops should be run by 'expert supervisors' and should offer an opportunity for neophyte supervisors to receive critique on their work. This can be done by viewing videotapes of supervisory sessions.
- Tying up with the point above it is recommended that a data base of 'expert supervisors' be established in the East London area.
- Visions and thoughts about good supervision at an agency are not good enough. It is recommended that there should be policies governing supervision and the appointment of supervisors if we want changes to be made. These policies will then serve as a monitoring mechanism.
- It is recommended that there should be people or units in agencies that just deal with supervision where they will continuously analyze supervisory practices. It is in this unit where supervision should be properly profiled to the needs of that particular agency. It is further recommended that this unit should establish a training format that could be revised often to keep up with the dynamic ever changing and expanding panorama of management.
It is further recommended that these units should look at a course on 'Developing Supervisory Leadership Skills' which covers leadership, communication, discipline, employee development, job satisfaction and morale.
Carefully designed programs in supervision are essential if objectives are to be accomplished.
- It is recommended that funds should be set aside in an agency's budget for training in supervision activities and time allocated for participation as part of the regular work expectation. This will ensure that supervisors receive high quality staff training, updating and expanding their knowledge and skills.

- It is recommended that agencies and organizations should liaise with other instances for opportunities to exchange supervisors and positions for three months. This would introduce new knowledge and skills to agency staff.
- Sensitivity training should be done at all agencies. With sensitivity training supervisors can become more aware of their feelings and learn how one's behaviour affects the feelings, attitudes and behaviours of others. In sensitivity training an open and honest discussion takes place among participants. The participants learn how their behaviour is perceived by others. Sensitivity training will enable the supervisor to become more competent in his or her personal relationships. They will learn more about themselves as a person. They will learn how others react to their behaviour. They will learn more about the dynamics of human relationships.

5.4.1 CONCLUSION

The study explored the need for formal training in supervision in the broader East London area from the perspectives of supervisors perceptions of the feelings and experiences associated with the role change.

Perhaps training will be seen as a prerequisite before the role change from supervisee to supervisor is effected. Training could meet the complex needs of the supervisor regarding the supervisory relationship and thus ultimately benefit the client. Inadequacy could stem from the fact that some supervisors are not trained; supervision is multi faceted.

Supervision is a prerequisite at any social work agency. Training could make the supervisor more useful, responsible and stimulating standard bearer. As supervisor you need to be open enough to yourself to know that you are teaching by example.

Whatever the setting, the supervisor needs to visualise her supervisee within it, and check that enough steps are taken to create a good working atmosphere.

With training the quality of the service will improve and dispense with mediocre social work supervision. Supervisors would then be good at coaching supervisees toward a superb performance.

Top quality leadership skills training can be upper management's greatest ally in helping supervisors produce a more effective and efficient service to the supervisees who will, in turn, render a qualitative service to the clients.

By taking a skilled coaching, developmental approach to the supervisory role, managers can continually build up the performance capability and motivation base of their supervisors. It should be borne in mind that skills could be expanded through quality training.

The way you supervise is a unique mix of what you have learnt, what you are skilled in by nature, and, most formatively, your attitude. There is no one way to be a good supervisor.

A supervisor should remain constant, using supervision as a means of support and change, remembering that people need to use their initiative and be praised for work well done.

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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SECTION A

IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

PLACE OF EMPLOY :

Dept of Welfare
Private Welfare Organisation

QUALIFICATIONS :

Diploma in Social Work
B.A. Social Work
B.A. Social Work Honours
Masters in Social Work
Other (specify)

AGE :

20 to 30 years
31 to 40 years
41 to 50 years
51 to 60 years

RANK :

Social worker
Senior social worker
Chief social worker
Other (specify)

HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU WORK AS A SOCIAL WORKER BEFORE YOUR PROMOTION TO SUPERVISOR ?

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE SUPERVISORY ROLE :

One
Two

HOW DID YOU BECOME A SUPERVISOR ?

Promotion (within the agency/organisation)
Natural progression to senior social worker
Applied for the post (from outside the current agency/organisation)

SECTION B

QUESTION 1

1.1 What are your tasks and responsibilities as a supervisor at your agency/organisation/department ?

1.2 Were all your tasks communicated to you when you entered the role of supervisor ?

1.3 Were your tasks communicated clearly ?

QUESTION 2

In your opinion what are the needs of a newly appointed supervisor ?

QUESTION 3

In what ways, if any, did your experience as a social worker prepare you for your new role ?
Please elaborate

QUESTION 4

Describe the feelings and experiences you associated with your role as supervisor at the time of your transition.

How have these changed since then ? Why ?

QUESTION 5

If promoted from within how did this new status impact on your relationship with your former peers ?

QUESTION 6

What were the challenges you were faced with when delegating former peers ?

QUESTION 7

7.1 If you were brought in from outside the organisation, how did being an outsider impact on relationships with your supervisees ?

7.2 Did you bring in new approaches or changes to the organisation when initially promoted ? What were they ?

How were these received ?

7.4 If you did not make changes right at the beginning, please explain your reasons.

Have you made any changes since then ? What ? How did you know when you should do this ? If not, why not ?

QUESTION 8

How did you experience the building of a network of relationships with your new peer group at the time of your role change ?

QUESTION 9

How did your past experiences with those in authority have an effect on your style of supervision ? Please elaborate.

QUESTION 10

10.1 What in your opinion are the qualities of a good supervisor ?

10.2 How many of these did you have when you started ?

QUESTION 11

What role does age play in supervisory relationships ?

QUESTION 12

What are the stresses you associate with social work supervision ?

QUESTION 13

13.1 Did you receive specific training for your role as supervisor ?

13.2 How necessary is training for the transition to supervision ?

13.3 What kind of training would you suggest ?

QUESTION 14

How sufficient was your own experience as a social worker for your transition to supervision ? Please elaborate.

QUESTION 15

What would you recommend regarding preparation for the supervision role ?

INTERVIEW WITH RESPONDENT 1 ON 09 SEPTEMBER 1999

The purpose of the interview was explained, confidentiality was addressed, the participants willingness to participate was confirmed and permission was sought to tape the interview.

(I = Interviewer, R = Respondent and [] = pause)

I: What is your place of employ?

R: Department of Welfare

I: You must speak louder please. I will come nearer to the tape as well.

I: What is your age?

R: I was born in 1962 , neh!

I: 37?

R: (Laughs) Ja...37.

I: What is your rank at the moment?

R: Is Chief Social Worker.

I: How many years did you work as a social worker before your promotion to supervisor?

R: (Silence)

I: When did you start?

R: I started working in 1984.

I: So that is 1984 to 1997...is 13 years?

R: Ja!

I: What is your years of experience in the supervisory role?

R: Two.

I: How did you become a supervisor?

R: (Silence)

I: Was it promotion, natural progression or did you apply for the post?

R: No, I think it was a natural progression.

I: What are your tasks and responsibilities as a supervisor at your Department?

R: Mmm...do you want me to be specific? Or lets say in this structure of mine, er, I am to ensure that the Day Care Centers are inspected and registered, neh, and then [] by saying that I am a supervisor, my ordinates

I: hm

R: and make sure that all these things happen and at the same time I have to identify training needs, of when, you know? []

I: Is this identifying the training needs of your supervisees?

R: Yes!

I: Okay, you are in charge of funding?

R: Yes, I am in charge of funding.

I: When you entered this role were your tasks communicated to you? When you entered the role of supervisor?

R: Not as such.

I: Were your tasks communicated clearly?

R: Not clearly.

I: In your opinion what are the needs of a newly appointed supervisor?

R: The newly appointed supervisor should...er...should always attend these super... like...er...supervision workshops and she should be [] told clearly of what is expected of her.

I: So that when she gets into the role she knows exactly what is expected of her?

R: Yes, ja.

I: Anything else?

R: (Silence)

I: In what ways if any did your experience as a social worker prepare you for the new role? Please elaborate.

R: Er...which role are you talking about?

I: The role of supervisor.

R: Okay, will you repeat your question, sorry!

I: In what ways if any did your experience as a social worker prepare you for the new role of supervision?

R: [] (There was along pause and it seemed as though the respondent still did not understand the question)

I: Remember, okay, I said you were a field worker for all those years and then you moved to supervision? So, that field work in which you were for 13 years, how did it prepare you for supervision? For your new role as supervisor? Did it prepare you or did it not prepare you? Were you able to use your experience in your work?

R: Yes it did prepare me (said thoughtfully). For instance when I am the type of person, you know, who always asks from my supervisor. So when I was, I began to be a supervisor I knew there was a need for me, for me, to open room for this supervisee to come to me because I know that...er...er...supervision is a two way process. So, whatever I am expecting from my supervisee, she is also expecting something from me.

I: So it helped you in your supervision?

R: Yes. []

- I: Describe the feelings and experiences you associated with your role as supervisor at the time of your transition.
- R: (Silence)
- I: What feelings did you experience when you moved over to the supervision role?
- R: In the first place I didn't feel good when I was told that I need to supervise two people in the office. I didn't feel good because, number one, I think of defiance, you know? I, I didn't feel competent enough to be a supervisor. [] And...I was thinking about the relationship. How will the relationship be between myself and my supervisee.
- I: So you were uncertain about the relationship?
- R: Yes! (said emphatically) I was...I had those ambivalent feelings. Let's say I wanted to be exposed to the supervision, but at the same time, you know, I did not want because of these fears. Fear of the unknown, you can say so. [] And I also was not sure of what is expected of me...being the supervisor.
- I: Have these feelings changed since then?
- R: Yes.
- I: Why?
- R: You know...(the respondent laughs uncertainly)...what must I say now? I can see... in fact I have learnt a lot about the relationship between a supervisor and supervisee, and, [] I've, I've changed to the extent that I, I could easily understand...the need of these people. What can I say now? There is an understanding between myself and my supervisees. So, another thing that I can point out, let's say, when as I mentioned already that supervision is a two way process so I mustn't expect my supervisee to respect me and in return, and in return I don't respect her, you know? So that is what I learnt from supervision...that I must also give her, her own respect. []
- I: If promoted from within how did this new status impact on your relationship with your former peers?

- R: When you are talking about my former peers you are not talking about my supervisors neh?
- I: Were they part of your peers at the time?
- R: Yes.
- I: So they were part of your peers.
- R: You know what Mrs Moss, in the first place, when it was announced that I was the supervisor of this person and that person, after that meeting there were flying remarks that 'my supervisor I am going'. Some just like that. There were some funny remarks after being appointed as supervisor, I can say so. There was an attitude, I can say so, which is coming from my supervisee together from, from these, from former peer group and I don't know whether I must be open about it now or I must close it up.
- I: No, I would like you to be open because everything you say here is confidential it is not going to be for anybody's ears; this is just for research purposes. It won't be stated that so and so said this and I would also not view your peers any differently. You don't have to mention names.
- R: Ja, for instance if you can be open about it, I had to supervise a white person and, you know, a b.l.a.c.k. (said softly) person, so now there were some attitudes. I couldn't sense because this very white person, I don't know that she was shocked to hear that her supervisor was going to be myself, you know, so that is the problem I encountered from the very onset. And there was a lot of defiance and you find that this white supervisor []
- I: You mean this defiance from the white supervisee?
- R: Yes, even from the black one, but it was more from the white one. [] For instance if I may quote one instance. One time when I went out, no, no, ja in fact one time when I went out and there this one was asking, "where is my supervisor coming from"? I went out and came back to the office. "where is my supervisor coming from"? so let's say even if I am coming late for work this person, you know, is having remarks.

- I: What remarks would you say? Is it petty remarks, or, snide remarks? To keep you on your toes?
- R: I can't, I can't say this which remarks (said with uncertainty). Because the reason why say which remarks are they, is because the reason why I can't say which remarks are they is because, okay, when I am coming in I do have my own supervisor, lets say, if I will be coming late or the day I will be late, I will come at quarter past eight. So my supervisee does not know about my coming late, but there are these remarks, you know, so I have some problems because my supervisor knew about my movements. So that is why I say that this is a two way process. Maybe I should have communicated everything with her, but all the same now I am communicating with them. If I have to go out I tell her even then, and, and my supervisor.
- I: So that will bring us to the next question...
- I: What were the challenges you were faced with when delegating former peers? When you had to delegate these tasks to these people, what would you regard as a challenge?
- R: When I have to delegate , in the first place, I have learnt that I must be sure of my work. I must do my work properly before I can come onto this delegation. And, I must know my work. I mustn't just delegate them without knowing my work. So it was a challenge because I also did not want my supervisees to find me with my pants down. I was always alert about my movements.
- I: Mh. So the actual challenge was that you had to keep one step abreast of your supervisees?
- R: Yes! Yes! [] (long pause)
- I: Any other challenges or would you say that, that is the only challenge?
- R: Any other challenge Mrs Moss is that I became confident of myself. You remember when I started, I said I did not feel confident. I was feeling incompetent

- if I can say so, but I became confident that even though I did not feel good at first. Now I can be [] be a leader in charge of them.
- I: So your confidence was challenged at first? You had to bolster your confidence?
- R: Yes!
- I: Okay, you were not brought in from the outside, so question 7.1 will fall away.
- I: Did you bring in new approaches or changes to the organization when initially promoted? Did you make any changes or did they just stay the same?
(The respondent looked puzzled)
- R: What can I say? Are you talking about the attitude? Because I think I brought...er...a change as far as the attitude is concerned because it was easy to call my supervisees and tell them, you know, "I don't like this thing". It was just a constructive observation, contradiction. I don't know how to say it.
- I: So the changes you brought in is that you initiated openness?
- R: Yes.
- I: A place where they can express their feelings without being "shot down"?
- R: Yes, and what I can also say I managed to establish that trust versus mistrust, inbetween, but I managed to establish trust and the relationship now was no longer that [] bad between me and my supervisees.
- I: How did your supervisees receive these, this changes where you created openness that was not prevalent before? Where you created a platform to discuss?
- R: I think they were positive because I also came to them being a positive person. So, they ended up being positive and I pretended that I did not notice anything about negativity and so on. So I was just continuing with my positive attitude.
- I: So I am going a little further, would you say that your attitude, the way you approach things is very important?
- R: Yes.
- I: Did you make the change right at the beginning?

R: Yes.

I: How did you experience the building of a network of relationships with your new peer group at the time of your role change?

R: (Silence)

I: Your new peer group were the other supervisors. How did you experience this? The building up of this new network, now. You were not an ordinary supervisee anymore, now you were part of the management structure.

R: I am stuck now.

I: Okay, let's see if I can tell you the essence of the question. Remember you were part of the other peer group?

R: Yes.

I: The supervisees, the fieldworkers, lets put it that way. Now you have become part of this supervision structure, the supervisors structure, a line function of management, so to say. Okay?

R: Yes.

I: So. How were you accepted in that sphere? You know, with the other supervisors. Did they accept you readily? How did you experience them? Remember, you had to assume another role? That is, of supervisor.

(The respondent still looked puzzled)

Okay, so let me try and put the question differently. Were you readily accepted by the other supervisors on the staff ?

R: Yes.

I: So the relationships that you had to build on was on this new level, how did you experience it?

R: You know, when you meet it depends, in my experience it depended on the fact that the other supervisors have been in this field for quite along time. So now I have to be coming in. I also felt as if I needed more training as compared to them.

- So there was that feeling that I must get more training because to me it seemed as though they were exposed to training and I was not exposed to training.
- I: So did that in any way make you feel inadequate?
- R: Ja, a little bit I can say so. Again input possibly. Okay Mrs Moss, do you know what? [] as I said to you that I have never been to a supervision workshop and so on. So I have never been exposed to a situation where we are the supervisors, if you know, so that is the problem [] Why I can't answer this question properly.
- I: You have never thought of this networking before?
- R: No, in fact, I did thought because I say I have been looking forward to these workshops with other supervisors. At the same time, let's say, if I had to consult another supervisor, I did. There was a group section of what I was looking for, but I never come across to the situation where we had to be all the supervisors, except that workshop we were in, remember that? When it came to the other supervisors.[]
- I: How did your past experiences with those in authority have an effect on your style of supervision? Please elaborate.
- R: [] it did affect my experience because I can say when I had the supervisors I could see that these supervisors were imposing most of the time. And, now I had to learn a lesson from that because I did not know. I did not want them to impose on me. I wanted this to make process, to happen to me and the supervisee. So now that experience helped me not to impose. [] And again it also helped me not to be full of suspicions with my supervisees. Let's say, they quickly come to me and say, "I want to go out", I mustn't think that person is going somewhere else, not to the place she mentioned.
- I: So it taught you how to trust?
- R: Yes. [] And at the same time how to open with her.
- I: With your supervisees?

R: Yes. I think openness and genuineness. You should be genuine in everything you say. My past experience also helped me not look at the weak points of a person. You must also concentrate on their strengths.

I: What in your opinion are the qualities of a good supervisor?

R: I can say that a good supervisor should be supportive, [] openness and then...I know man, Mrs Moss!

I: Look at the skills, anything in the line of skills.

R: Should be able to identify training needs of your supervisees. What else? [] and you should be able to establish a relationship, a good relationship between you and your supervisee. Conflict resolution skills – you should have these skills on how to resolve conflict between your supervisees. There are too many of them Mrs Moss, but I know.

I: How many of these did you have when you started?

R: I had communication skills. I could communicate with them in a right manner.

I: Were you supportive?

R: Yes.

I: Did you have openness?

R: Yes.

I: Did you have conflict resolution skills?

R: Yes, because I got them from the Day Care Centers.

I: You were saying you got them from the Day Care Centers that you were inspecting? So, you did not learn these conflict resolution skills in the work situation?

R: Yes, but I got it from the experience outside.

I: What role does age play in supervisory relationships?

R: Age, neh? Ja it does. Because if you are older than that supervisee at least you do get that respect. []

- I would also like to add negotiation skills and even management skills. []
- I: So, age evokes respect?
- R: Yes, and I also need to say [] age counts a lot, and again your experience counts a lot and again your qualifications count a lot. Because if you are less qualified than your supervisee, that supervisee tends to have an attitude toward you.
- I: What are the stresses you associate with social work supervision?
- R: That defiance and attitude. Return dates that are not met. The problem is I am having my own responsibilities and also the supervisees because I'm having a caseload with it.
- I: Mh.
- I: Did you receive specific training for your role as supervisor?
- R: No.
- I: How necessary is training for the transition to supervision?
- R: Er it is necessary, 100% necessary.
- I: What kind of training would you suggest?
- R: Workshops, seminars, in-service training. It should be built into the curriculum.
- I: How sufficient was your own experience as a social worker for your transition to supervision? Please elaborate.
- R: It was sufficient, but it needed me to be confident.
- I: What would you recommend regarding preparation for the supervision role?
- R: Preparation for the supervisory role? Training! (said very emphatically).
- I: Thank you for your time and fitting me into your busy schedule.