

**AN EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRES IN
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S CHILDREN'S ACT**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Leonard Munyaradzi Agere, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own, except where due acknowledgment is made with full references in the text and that it has not previously been submitted to any university or institution of higher learning for any qualification or certificate.

Signed: A.AGERE

Date: 13 January 2014

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dearest brother, Engineer Lloyd Kudakwashe Agere. You are my inspiration, hero and source of strength. I am the man I am through your hard work, modelling and resilience.

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I wish to express my sincere gratitude and give recognition to the persons who showed me unconditional assistance and support while I completed this study. First I would like to thank the Almighty Father, the omnipresent God for giving me the strength, wisdom and courage to make this work a reality. I wish to express my sincere appreciation and my deepest respect to my supervisors, Professor P. Tangwe Tanga and Professor Simon Kang'ethe for their unwavering support, patience, encouragement, guidance and direction throughout the writing of this entire dissertation. Without their support I would not have completed this work and for that I am really grateful. May you be blessed and continue to be a blessing to others.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to evaluate the role played by CYCCs to provide support and protection to children who have been found to be in need of care, according to the criteria given in the Children's Act No. 38/2005 as amended. The study made use of a qualitative approach and the research design was provided by the case study. Data was gathered by means of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The most important findings to emerge from the study were that the factors which affect the operation of CYCCs are either institutional, or else challenges arising from issues pertaining to infrastructure and human resources. However, it was also acknowledged that, despite the challenges which affect their ability to provide their services to young people, the CYCCs had also made progressive steps to halt the suppression of the fundamental rights of children.

It has been recommended that the government should apply comprehensive funding to the objectives of the Children's Act, which would entail increasing the subsidies to CYCCs. It has also been recommended that the Policy on Financial Rewards should call for the same benefits and salary scales to apply for professional staff working in the government and to those working in the CYCCs. The repercussions from failing to adjust to these recommendations will inevitably lead to the employment of a remedial model of care.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Children's Act No. 38 of 2005
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based organisation
CYCC	Child and Youth Care Centre
CYCW	Child and Youth Care Worker
DSD	Department of Social Development
HIV	Human immune Virus
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NPO	Not for profit Organisation
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAW	Social Auxiliary Worker
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The South African welfare policy makers have drawn on the lessons of both First World and Third World countries in the restructuring of the welfare system towards a social development perspective (Patel, 2009). Many families in South Africa face a great many difficulties resulting from social, economic and policy issues when caring for their children. On one hand, the country has inherited a legacy of violence, extreme inequality and social dislocation from the apartheid regime, which has found expression in high levels of domestic violence, substance abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. The South African Police Services (SAPS) report that 50 000 children are the victims of crime every year, with sexual offences constituting about 40% of these cases (Mahery et al., 2011:3). On the other hand, the country carries the highest burden of HIV in the world, with over 5.7 million people currently infected (Mahery et al, 2011:13). Parents are dying and leaving behind orphaned children. It is estimated that there are 3.7 million orphans in South Africa, half of whom have lost one or both parents to AIDs, and that 150 000 children are believed to be living in child-headed households (Mahery et al., 2011:13).

Many children who are abandoned, neglected and abused find themselves placed in child and youth care centres (CYCCs). Statistics of children in institutional care are not complete, but it is known that there are 345 registered child and youth care centres in South Africa and that these look after 21 000 children (Mahery et al., 2011:15). These child and youth care centres seek to establish a system of

specialised alternative child care programs, with standards and governance structures which are in accordance with the stipulations of the Children's Act.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which was promulgated in 1996, covers civil rights, political rights and socio-economic rights. The South African government adopted the provisions inherent in numerous international charters, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRC, 1990), to meet the needs of local standards, beliefs and cultures for the common good of children in South Africa and to facilitate socio-economic transformation in all communities. One of the results of this initiative is the Children's Act, which is a comprehensive piece of legislation which seeks to afford children the necessary care, protection and assistance to develop to their full potential (The Children's Act No. 38/2005). The Children's Act was promulgated to reflect and to enforce the values and principles of the UNCRC and the White paper for Social Welfare, and it advocates the development of social welfare services. The earlier Child Care Act of 1983 as amended had provided care and protection of children according to the residual social welfare model, legislation dating back to the apartheid era. It was largely centred on a divisive paradigm in which services for children were based on their skin colour and race (September and Dinbabo, 2008).

The objectives of the Act express principles fundamental to the manner in which children are treated and protected. According to the Department of Social Development (2005:1), the following are the key objectives of the Act:

- To make provision for structures, services and means for promoting and monitoring the sound physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional and social development of children.
- To strengthen and develop community structures which can assist in the providing of care and protection for children, protect children from discrimination, exploitation and any other physical, emotional or moral harm.
- To provide care and protection for children who are in need of it.
- To Recognise the special needs which children with disabilities may have.
- To promote the protection, development and well-being of children.
- To promote the preservation and strengthening of families
- To give effect to the constitutional rights of children.

The implementation of the Children's Act is essentially a state-driven process engineered by the Department of Social Development, which facilitates the rendering of the services provided in the Children's Act through Not-for-Profit Organisations (NPOs), which assume organised roles in the implementation of the objectives of the Act in South Africa. The Department of Social Development, however, assumes a traditional role and the responsibility to make available the resources needed to fulfil the objectives of the Act, and NPOs which are funded are required to make monthly and quarterly reports to the department.

1.2 The research problem

The Child and youth care centres (CYCC) play a crucial role in the advancement of concerns pertaining to child welfare and the providing of social services to children

in South Africa. The Department of Social Development depends upon the CYCCs to provide residential care to children, to enable it to fulfil the terms and provisions of various laws governing the rights of children and the Children's Act in particular.

Proudlock (2011), maintains that there are various constraints where the human resources required for the effective implementation of the Act are concerned. This shortage is further exacerbated by the discrepancies in salaries between the NGO and the government sectors, which results in the CYCCs being placed in a precarious position.

The funding for most of the NGOs comes from the state, in the form of subsidies and, whether this funding is sufficient for the services provided by these NGOs to be sustainable, has been questioned, (Proudlock, 2011). In addition, Proudlock presented to parliament the discrepancies in the funding patterns that exist among the various provinces, and this imbalance results in a great deal of pressure being exerted on CYCCs in terms of service delivery, as they struggle to meet the expectations of the developmental model prescribed by the Act. As most CYCCs are dependent on funding from the state and from a dwindling base of donors, the full implementation of the terms of the Act will remain a pipe dream until the prescribed programs are given solid financial backing.

According to Giese (2008), the CYCCs are the victims of the shortcomings of the discarded and discredited Child Care Act, as some of the children had been inappropriately placed, placing both organisations such as the CYCCs, and the children in a difficult position, in view of the fact that the new Act has no provisions for remedying problems of this sort. In addition, the removal of statutory powers from

social workers in CYCCs places enormous pressure on those social workers who have been designated to reunite children placed in CYCCs with their families, and the lack of social workers who have the necessary powers creates frustration and tension, and hinders development for both the children and the institution. The ultimate result is that there is little, or no, movement of children to and from the CYCCs and, as a consequence, the obligations to the children are not fulfilled .

1.3 Aims and objectives of the research

1.3.1 General objective

The aim of the study is to evaluate the role of CYCCs in the providing of care and protection to children who are in need of care and protection.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The study seeks to achieve this objective by pursuing the following specific objectives:

- To examine the extent to which CYCCs are able to provide care and protection to children who are in need of care and protection.
- To assess the accomplishments of the CYCCs in providing care and protection to children
- To identify and investigate the challenges, in terms of resources, faced by CYCCs when providing holistic services to children.

1.4 The research question

The main research question which this study seeks to answer is “What is the role played by CYCCs to provide care and protection to children who are in need of care and protection?”

1.4.1 Specific research questions

This study is guided by the following specific research objectives:

- 1) To what extent are the CYCCs providing care and protection to these children?
- 2) What are the accomplishments of the CYCCs in the care and protection of these children?
- 3) What are the challenges, in terms of resources, which are encountered by the CYCCs in their endeavour to provide holistic services to children?

1.5 Significance of the study

The Children’s Act No. 38/2005 represents a significant overhauling of the Child Care Act No. 74/83 and has been regarded as a ground-breaking statute in its advancement of children’s rights and their protection (Bayes, 2000). The findings of the study will provide the premise from which suggestions and recommendations may be made and forwarded to policy makers. The study will also contribute to the literature concerning care and protection for children, and it should provide information which could aid the further refining and reformulating of policy, in order to advance the best interests of the children.

1.6 Scope of the study

The research explores the nature and extent of care and protection of children placed in CYCCs. It places focus on the challenges and also achievements of CYCCs in fulfilling the objective of the Children's Act; to provide care and protection to children in need of care.

1.7 Definition of key Concepts

The definition of the key concepts is a prerequisite for any disciplined scientific endeavour (De Vos, 1998:19). Without a clear definition of the basic concepts it would be quite impossible to come to grips with the particulars of any field of study.

The following definitions are relevant to this study:

1.7.1 Child and youth care centre (CYCC)

A child and youth care centre is a facility for the provision of residential care to more than six children outside the child's family environment, in accordance with a residential care program suited to the children in the facility (Children's Act No. 38/2005)

1.7.2 Social worker

A social worker is a professional who works with other occupational groups and community members to provide a wide range of protective, preventative and developmental services to children and families. To practise social work, a four year Honours degree and registration with the South African Council for Social Service Professionals (SACSSP) are both prerequisites (Mahery, 2011).

1.7.3 Social auxiliary worker

A social auxiliary worker is a professional who is trained over a one year period. These workers assist and work under the supervision of the social worker.

1.7.4 Child and youth care worker

Child and youth care workers are professionals who work in residential care services (CYCCS), whose role is to provide preventative and early intervention services to children at community level. It is an emerging field of service in South Africa and it involves the providing of support pertaining to the development and the psychological and emotional well-being of the children who have been placed in child and youth care centres (Mahery, 2011).

1.7.5 Department of Social Development

The Department of Social Development is an arm of government which has structures at both the provincial and the national levels. It aims to develop and monitor the implementation of social policy which creates both an enabling environment for, and leads to, a better life for all South Africans.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will present an introduction and a general orientation of the study, and it includes the formulation of the research problem, the goal and objectives of the study, a statement of the research questions, significance of the study and a definition of the key concepts.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter focuses on the theoretical orientation of the study and the literature review.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

In this chapter, the research methodology used in this study is outlined. This includes a detailed explanation of the research design, the methods for collecting data, sampling techniques, an analysis of the data and ethical issues.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

The presentation and interpretation of the findings as well as the discussion of the role of CYCCs in the implementation of the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 (as amended), is presented in this chapter. The discussion is presented in the light of the theoretical framework.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents a summary of the findings and the conclusions drawn thereafter. Recommendations based on the conclusions and findings are also presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The main thrust of this chapter concerns an investigation of the nature and extent of the deprivation to which South African children are exposed, and the provisions which have been made to provide alternative care to children who have been found to be in need of care and protection. The literature review is an important component of a research study, as it provides the theoretical background to the study being undertaken Hart, (1998). Accordingly, this chapter will attempt to provide a detailed and in-depth analysis of the context of this study.

2.2 Historical development of CYCCs in South Africa

South Africa has a history which is characterised by racial prejudice and discrimination. Before the country's first democratic elections of 1994, many institutions had attempted to respond to and to remedy the effects and results of the racial discrimination enforced by the apartheid regime. One of these initiatives was the starting of child and youth care centres by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to provide care and protection to children who had been made vulnerable as a result of abandonment, neglect and orphanhood (Mazibuko, 2002). It should be noted that the development and operation of NGOs in South Africa is inextricably linked to the political history of South Africa (Mazibuko, 2002). Child care was a pivotal area which needed attention, owing to the neglect and abandonment suffered by children whose parents could not, or would not, take care of them. As a consequence, a population of street urchins who lived a life of crime in the streets of the cities emerged. In response to this rapidly escalating social ill, a former mayor of

the city of Johannesburg, who was sympathetic to the plight of these children, formed the Johannesburg Child Welfare Society (JCWS). As an extension of the JCWS, a home for abandoned African children, who needed to be cared for, was established in 1940 in Orlando, Soweto, which is a residential area for black people in the south-west of Johannesburg. The Orlando Children's Home continued to be supported by the JCWS until 1976, when support was withdrawn when the JCWS claimed that there were insufficient funds to run the home.

However, a group of Soweto residents took over the children's home and continued operating it as an independent NGO to care for children in need of care and protection. After the elections in 1994, the home attracted the attention of the new government, with the result that it secured a subsidy from the government, and it is supported by various initiatives aimed at providing care for children who are deprived and found to be in difficult circumstances.

The care for children deemed to be in need of care and protection by NGOs is provided for in the Policy Act No. 71 of 1997. This policy saw the establishment of a NPO (Not for Profit) directorate to administer the Register of NPOs in South Africa. The Register of NPOs is a voluntary registration facility which enhances the credibility of registered NPOs, as it reports to a public office. The NPO directorate, as a public office, holds information concerning registered NPOs to which the public has access. In this way the transparency and accountability of the organisation are increased beyond the immediate role which it plays, and also improves the governance of the organisation, in that that NPOs which are registered are required to comply with the requirements of the NPO Act.

2.3 Collaboration between the Department of Social Development and Not-for-Profit Organisations to support children

The child and youth care centres play a crucial role in advancing child welfare issues and the providing of social services to children in South Africa (Mahery et al., 2011). The Department of Social Development is dependent on the CYCC's to provide residential care, for which the department is responsible in terms of various laws, in particular, the Children's Act 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005).

In order for the government to facilitate development through the NGOs, there needs to be a friendly working relationship between the government and the NGOs (Kang'ethe, 2010a). Accordingly, the government of South Africa has a mutual working relationship with those NGOs which render services on its behalf. It funds and monitors all the activities of those NGOs. Although there is ample will to fulfil these responsibilities, the government is now faced with challenges to provide the best possible social services to orphans and other vulnerable children. For many institutions caring for children who are in need of care and protection this has meant complying with international, national and regional expectations of what constitutes the best interests of the child (United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) 1989; Organisation of African Unity (OAU), 1990; RSA 2006). Accordingly, some literature sources and researchers have suggested that even if the availability of finance were an obstacle affecting the ability of institutions caring for orphans and other vulnerable children to do so, the biggest bottleneck could, nevertheless, be the results of problems concerning management and administration (Csaky 2009; Ministry of Local Government, 2008). Although, historically, social welfare services have been a joint responsibility of government and NPOs, with the government

providing financial support to organisations through subsidies, the calls for the government to review the manner in which it is expending its resources, to ensure that there is an equitable redistribution of resources to the historically disadvantaged segment of the population, are growing louder.

These calls demand that the government should review its policies, especially those concerning funding. Policy concerning financial awards is aimed at guiding the country's response to the financing of service providers in the social development sector, to facilitate transformation and the redirection of services and resources, and to ensure effective and efficient services to the poor and vulnerable sectors of society. This was succinctly provided for in the crafting of the White Paper for Social Development and other legislation to achieve egalitarianism to counter the erstwhile policies and ideologies of apartheid (White Paper, 1997; RSA 1996). The financing policy strives to facilitate the achievement of the mission of the Department of Social Development, which is "to enable the poor, the vulnerable and the excluded within the society to secure a better life for themselves, in partnership with them and with those who are committed to building a caring society" (White paper for Social Welfare, 1997).

2.4 Challenges facing South African children

2.4.1 HIV and AIDS

HIV and AIDS constitute the greatest threat of the 21st century to health and development, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (Barnet & Whiteside, 2006; Ramphela 2007; Kang'ethe 2013a). Across the world there are more than 33.3 million people who are infected with HIV, of which 22.5 million are in Sub-Saharan

Africa, with South Africa alone being home to more than 5.7 million people living with HIV and AIDS. In addition, of the 2.5 million children in the world estimated to be living with HIV, 2.3 million are in Sub-Saharan Africa, and most of these children are in South Africa. To this heartbreaking statistic can be added the fact that South Africa has the largest number of children orphaned, or made vulnerable, by HIV and AIDS (Katie, 2010).

In many of the countries hardest hit by the pandemic, there has been a corresponding negative effect on the fulfilment of a number of Millennium Development Goals such as number two, which envisages seeing countries achieving universal education by the year 2015. In a great many cases, orphaned children are either pulled out of school, or not enrolled at all, owing to the financial constraints faced by their adopted families, and many have to assume the responsibilities of heading or providing for households. This phenomenon has, in turn, resulted in children who are minors acting as caregivers for their ailing parents (Kang'ethe, 2010b). Kristin (2012) maintains that children living with HIV may be subject to decreased social functioning in comparison with their peers and also might have a relatively lower level of cognition. This decline in social functioning and peer relations may signify the increased difficulty experienced by the child in managing his or her HIV diagnosis and, possibly, the treatment regimen. Moreover, this decline may become more apparent as the child grows older and the significance of his or her HIV infection changes in relation to his or her particular developmental stage. These children also face untold hardships owing to the ripple effect of the pandemic and, in most cases, their survival is hand-to-mouth, as they may not have the resources to support and sustain themselves.

2.4.2 The stigma associated with HIV and AIDS

An important difference between HIV and AIDS and other chronic or terminal illnesses is the magnitude of the stigma which is associated with the former. The stigma often seems to stem from a lack of knowledge concerning HIV and how it is transmitted (Kang'ethe, 2013a), and it can affect children and their caregivers in adverse ways which have long-term negative psychological and social implications for them (Katie, 2010). For many years HIV and AIDS was simply not a subject for discussion in black communities, and anyone who was found to be HIV-positive would be treated differently, in that family members would often refuse to let the HIV-positive individual use the same utensils as they were sharing, would force the individual member to live alone in a room or make sure that he or she did not share a bed, or a bedroom, with any of his or her sisters or brothers. In extreme cases, family members and friends would refuse any contact whatsoever with the HIV-positive individual, even handshaking (Barnett & Whiteside, 2006; Kang'ethe, 2010; Barrett-Grant, Fine, Heywood & Strode, 2001).

Many people believe that HIV and AIDS affect only people who are infected with the virus, but there are serious detrimental effects for the psycho-social capacity of children's lives as well (Clacherty and Associates, 2004; Smart (2003) in Uys & Cameron, 2003). In this regard, Kristin (2012) notes that children growing up with parents who are HIV-positive can also experience exclusion from the community and be judged according to the ways in which their parents are perceived by the community. This can affect the children's social, emotional and psychological well-being and, as a consequence, affect their moods, their ability to socialise, their emotions, their performance at school and every other facet of their lives, which

makes coping with the normal demands of their lives extremely arduous. In addition, these children live with constant reminders of the imminent deaths of their parents, which causes them to live in perpetual fear of what may become of them when their parents die. The problem of a stigma being associated with children whose parents are HIV-positive needs to be remedied, through education, if a sane and healthy society is ultimately to emerge from the devastating pandemic of HIV and AIDS. Fortunately, improvements in health education and developments in antiretroviral therapy seem to have contributed to a general reduction of the stigma associated with HIV and AIDS in many communities.

2.4.3 Abandonment

According to Newton (2010), abandonment is characterised by relinquishing interest in and claims over one's offspring, with the intent of never again resuming or reasserting them. Poverty is often the root cause of abandonment. People who are not financially capable of maintaining children are most likely to abandon them. Another factor contributing to the abandonment of children is the escalation of unwanted pregnancies among teenage mothers, largely owing to the social, financial and psychological anxieties and distress experienced by teenage mothers both before and after childbirth. Driver (2012) expands upon the theme by asserting that "child abandonment occurs when a parent, guardian, or person in charge of a child either deserts the child without any regard for the child's physical health, safety or welfare and with the intention of wholly abandoning the child, or in some instances, fails to provide necessary care for a child living under their roof." Abandonment of children is rife in South Africa and it has great adverse implications for the lives of the children who are its victims. Abandonment is one of the factors which

contributes to the numbers of children who are placed in alternative care. Accordingly, particular emphasis is given to the need to care for abandoned children in both the now-discarded Child Care Act No. 74 of 1983 as amended and the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005. Abandoned children, who are also referred to as foundlings in some of the literature, whose physical, emotional and psychological needs are not met during their developing stages, often make the transition to adulthood with low self-esteem, emotional dependencies, helplessness, and in some instances tend to develop attachment disorders. According to the theorist, John Bowlby, it is very important for a child to form an attachment to a positive role model, and he contends that if children do not have positive attachment figures they are likely to become problematic adults (Watts et al., 2009; Mcleod 2007).

The interplay of factors which contribute to the abandonment of children is complex, but poverty and social exclusion contributes to the phenomenon to a very large extent, as many families in South Africa struggle to care for their children. On one hand, the country has inherited a legacy of violence, extreme inequality and social dislocation from the former apartheid regime, which has inevitably affected the welfare of children at home adversely, and found expression in high levels of domestic violence, substance abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. The South African Police Services report that 50,000 children are victims of crime every year, with sexual offences constituting approximately 40 per cent of these cases, and that many of these abused, neglected and abandoned children are eventually placed in children's homes (Mahery et al., 2011).

2.4.4 Child abuse

The term “child abuse” includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, commercial exploitation and the neglect of children (Katie, 2010). Child abuse is universally condemned, and South Africa has made progressive steps to reduce its incidence by developing and crafting legislation which unequivocally condemns its practice, in all of the forms which it may take, and seeks to punish severely those who perpetrate it. The Children’s Act (2010) and the 1996 Constitution of South Africa are two of the progressive steps which the country has made in terms of legislation, along with various other measures taken to ensure the rights of children (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Children constitute the most vulnerable group in contemporary democratic South African society. According to Katie (2010), there are approximately 173 000 cases relating to child abuse on the rolls of the South African courts. Expert reports confirm that the incidence of child abuse in poor households has particularly dire consequences for the victims, who suffer from the effects of both poverty and abuse. Childline reported that from its experience of dealing with abused children, it had been found that children who were already living with the reality and the consequences of poverty also had to live with a higher level of vulnerability to victimisation (Katie, 2010). The *Sunday Tribune* of October 10, 2004, reported that understanding the factors contributing to the incidence of child abuse in poor households constituted a vital key for proposing appropriate mechanisms promoting interventions for the prevention of child abuse, in an endeavour to support the progressive legislation which has been enacted concerning child abuse.

2.5 Psycho-social challenges faced by Children

2.5.1 Poverty

Poverty can be defined as the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect from others (UNICEF, 2006). While household expenditure is considered an important indicator of poverty, various other variables, concerning both individuals and households, need to be considered. These would include the type of housing, access to clean water and sanitation, and education and employment. Since most communities in South Africa live in debilitatingly squalid conditions, in which they are deprived of the basic services needed to enhance their chances of attaining even the most basic standard of living, their children are confronted with the various detrimental effects of poverty and the grim prospects which it affords them. The lives of these children are defined by poverty and they grow up with such limited resources that the likelihood of a better life is utterly remote. In many cases, these children drop out of school because they have engaged in various casual jobs in order to try to help to provide for their families. Even when they do not drop out of school, they have little chance of obtaining good grades to take them to higher educational levels, in order to make them employable. These hopeless circumstances have been further compounded by the dramatic escalation in the number of orphans, owing to the equally dramatic escalation in the numbers of people becoming infected with HIV and AIDS in South Africa. (Barnett & Whiteside, 2006; Ramphela, 2008). According to Mahery et al. (2011), there are an estimated 3.7 million orphans in South Africa, of whom close to half have lost their parents to AIDS-related diseases, and there are many more children living with sick and bedridden caregivers. Approximately 150,000 children

are believed to be living in child-headed households, which constitutes one of the important factors contributing to poverty in communities (Musekiwa, 2013). Children living without proper care being provided by adults are more likely to be abused and exploited, resulting in many orphans and other vulnerable children slipping further into poverty once the family's main breadwinner stops working, or dies. Losing a parent or caregiver often means losing access to social grants, education and healthcare, thereby compounding the vulnerability of the children (Smart, 2003).

While it remains undisputed that children are best off growing up in their own communities, the increasing burden of HIV and AIDS means that communities need support, in order to look after their orphans and vulnerable children. In addition, migration, urbanisation and the socio-economic challenges which increasingly make their presence felt in South Africa have all contributed to the disintegration of traditional communities and family units, taking with them traditional values such as *Ubuntu*. As a result, the responsiveness of extended families towards the need to care for orphans, and to accept responsibility for them, have dwindled significantly. The dwindling and diminishing of the notion of *Ubuntu* seems to be the inevitable consequence of the disintegration of traditional communities and family units, and to find expression in individualism, a lack of feeling of brotherhood and a lack of respect for one another, and it could also find its greatest expression in the high levels of crime and other problems, such as xenophobia, which plague the communities which have sprung up to replace traditional ones. It is a cultural value whose reinstatement is badly needed if communities and families are to regain their humanity and their true sense of themselves.

2.5.2 Social exclusion

According to Sen (1980), social exclusion continues to constitute a huge problem for poor children in communities. Progressive inroads made by the South African government, through legislation, have attempted to redress various aspects of social exclusion for vulnerable children. Although free education for all children has been achieved, in many cases, children's access to education is limited by requirements such as school uniforms, which has resulted in a dramatic slowing down of the actual implementation of the educational reforms laid down by legislation, and many children are still not going to school, (Wright et al, 2007). Unfortunately, the rate at which social services have been delivered in South Africa has not been sufficient to facilitate the redressing of social exclusion, condemning the victims of the privations, extended to them by the previous regime, to remain excluded from all avenues for personal advancement.

2.5.3 Lack of parental figures

The nature of the parent-child relationship during early childhood is believed to be one of the crucial factors for personality development and interpersonal functioning, and to have implications for psychopathology as well (Watts et al., 2009, McLeod, 2007). The HIV and AIDS pandemic poses a great threat to the psychological development of the children in South Africa, for both the millions who live with parents who have AIDS, and for the huge numbers of those who have been, and who stand to be, orphaned by the disease.

Educators believe that the greater the degree of involvement by a parental figure in the lives of children, the greater will be the children's chances of making academic

progress and also of developing socially. Parents who understand the importance of being involved in their children's education begin the process right from the earliest years of their children's development. They have high aspirations for their children's future, set high standards for achievement and consistently encourage their children in all their educational endeavours and in their overall development. Conversely, the lack of such support from primary caregivers results in children without role models, whose lives are often subsumed and overwhelmed by feelings of negativity.

In a patriarchal society such as South Africa, the absence of a father figure in a family places the mother in the unenviable position of having to play a double role, namely that of being both the mother and the head of the family. In light of this the Department of Social Development (2011b) states that, children need the nurturing provided by father figures in their lives, and most of the children who grow up without fathers, or both parents, are faced with having to negotiate crucial developmental phases in their young lives without the benefit of the guidance, protection, affection and all the other forms of nurturing provided by a parent. Popenoe (1988) maintains that having children grow up with a single mother is the primary cause of most of the acute social problems, including poverty, high levels of dropping out of school and delinquency. It has often been found that a child living in a fatherless home is more likely to develop a careless attitude, a cocky swagger and a mean persona to hide the feelings of loss, pain and confusion that he has, as a result of the loss of his father in his life. The vicious cycle of poverty is likely to start again for these children and they become vulnerable to various social ills such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and so on, all of which constitute factors which greatly limit their ability to succeed in creating good lives for themselves.

2.6 Vulnerabilities to which children in South Africa are exposed

Many abused, neglected and abandoned children are ultimately placed in children's homes. These facilities qualify as child and youth care centres in terms of a provision of the Children's Act, which established a system of specialised alternative childcare programs with proper standards and governance structures (Mahery et al., 2011). Not only are children orphaned by AIDS affected by the virus, but also those who live in orphanage homes, children with little in the way of education and resources and those living in areas with high HIV rates. Children who have been orphaned by AIDS may be forced to leave school, to seek employment or to engage in prostitution, and, as a consequence, they may suffer from depression and anger, or engage in high-risk behaviour which makes them vulnerable to contracting HIV (Salaam, 2004). Children who live in orphanage homes may suffer from a decline in the quantity and quality of food, education, love and nurturing, and they may be stigmatised. Impoverished children living in households with one or more ill parent are also adversely affected, as health care increasingly absorbs household funds, which frequently leads to the depletion of savings and other resources reserved for education, food and other purposes (Clacherty & Associates, 2004).

According to Mahery et al., (2011), growing up in a violent home and being exposed to violence in the household can have a significant effect on a child, which can, in turn, result in the child adopting aggressive and violent behaviour, having grown up in the belief that the behaviour is appropriate, and possibly finding that it is a means of having and exerting power and influence at school. Some researchers have found that children who have been exposed to bad behaviour in their parents, in the forms

of violence, abuse, molestation and denial of their rights and needs, are most likely to emulate behaviour of this sort at school. They are likely to bully others and to exhibit other types of anti-social behaviour (Jaffe, Hurley & Wolf, 1990).

2.6.1 Human rights violations of children in South Africa

According to Dawes and Richter (2008), the consequences meted out to those who abuse children in South Africa are often too lenient, and, as a result, ineffective as a means of curbing and deterring abuse. Their research showed that most African people have been marginalised by the apartheid government to the extent that they live in conditions of mass poverty, which in turn create social conditions which are conducive to every conceivable form of abuse. This is exacerbated by the fact that many black people live in overcrowded areas which suffer, not only from poor policing and security, but also from poor social welfare services (Dawes & Richter, 2008). However, it is not always fair to conclude that those agencies providing social welfare services are as grossly incompetent as this state of affairs might suggest. In many cases, their work load is such that exhaustion and burnout among staff members are extremely prevalent, with poor service delivery being the inevitable result (Kang'ethe 2013b). Another significant phenomenon in South Africa, highlighted by Dawes and Richter (2008), concerns the fact that many cases of rape go unreported, owing to the fact that the perpetrators are often male relatives. In the patriarchal South African society it is common for men to wish to exercise their 'power' through forceful sexual activities, involving both women and children (Kang'ethe 2009). It could therefore be argued that perceptions resulting from the patriarchal nature of South African society need to be corrected with supporting legislation, in order to protect both women and children from abuse. This also

highlights areas in which there are opposing beliefs and values between traditional culture and contemporary law, and underlines the fact that some cultural practices and beliefs oppress women and children. In addition, present legislation continues to permit certain cultural practices which can have dire consequences for those who feel the need to submit to them. As an example, the Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 at present makes it legal for males of 16 years of age and older to be circumcised. This is cause for alarm when the number of deaths of young boys each year as a result of taking part in traditional circumcision ceremonies is taken into account, as this provision in the Act effectively deprives them of their right to life (Kang'ethe 2013c).

2.7 The policy environment for support to children in South Africa

The South African government has signed various regional and international charters supporting the rights and welfare of children. Among them are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1999), which have influenced the formulation of domestic policy to promote and protect the rights of children in South Africa. The new Children's Act and the Child Justice Bill have provisions which have, to a large extent, been adopted from the international and regional policies (Proudlock, 2011).

2.8 Historical developmental of the Children's Act

2.8.1 White paper and child support

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) is the first overall social welfare policy to be formulated under the 1996 constitution. It adopted the developmental approach to

social welfare, in order to promote both economic and social development (The White paper for Social Welfare, 1997). The developmental social welfare system prioritises prevention services to families and children. The White Paper contrasts strongly with the pre-1996 residual social welfare system, which provided services to a small selected sector of the population only (The White paper for Social Welfare 1997). It stresses the importance of increased access to social services for those previously marginalised, and these social services are extended to include the spheres of health, education and employment. The policy attempts to promote the development of children, through special programs which aim to improve the chances of securing good lives for children living in communities which had been marginalised previously (The White Paper for Social Welfare 1997). The White paper places particular emphasis on the need for access to social welfare services. Social welfare refers to an integrated and comprehensive system of social services, facilities, programs and social security to promote social development, social justice and the social functioning of people. Social security, social services and related social development programs are investments which should lead to tangible economic gains and, in turn, lead to economic growth. All of these interventions aim to help to nurture the growth and development of children in deprived communities. Children are particularly emphasised in the general endeavour to uphold and maintain the rights of the once deprived and marginalised (The White Paper for Social Welfare 1997).

2.8.2 The White Paper and support for Not-for-Profit Organisations (NPOs)

The operation of NPOs is supported by the policy articulated in the 1997 White Paper for Social Development (The White Paper for Social Welfare 1997). This policy

commits the Department of Social Development to the transformation of social services by adopting a developmental approach, which emphasises the interdependence between social and economic development. A transformation of this type and magnitude aims to correct imbalances in many areas, including race, class, gender and living space. Developmental social welfare focuses on the maximisation of human potential and fostering self-reliance and participation in decision-making. It also places emphasis on services which are family-oriented, community-based and integrated (UN, 1987). The developmental approach does not replace or give precedence to any single method of practice, but stresses that, regardless of the type of intervention employed, the ultimate aim must be the promotion of social and economic justice. Historically, social welfare services in South Africa have been rendered through both the government and NPOs. The government acknowledges that many formal organisations have the skills, expertise, infrastructure and other resources needed to contribute to reconstruction, development and providing social services. The provisions in the White Paper have largely influenced the manner in which NPOs deliver their services. In order to meet the mandate required by the White Paper and to secure funding, the NPOs have realigned their services with government policies and priorities. In effect, the government and the NPOs have formed a mutually beneficial relationship, which is important to ensure that the NPOs and the NGOs become effective in the complementing and supplementing of the services provided by the government. The role of NGOs is seen to be to take care of the gaps in the services provided by the government which the government is unable to fulfil at present (Kang'ethe 2010a).

2.9 NPOS and international and global perspectives of children's rights

2.9.1 United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (1989) (UNCRC)

That children have rights has been recognised in international law since 1924, when the first international declaration of the rights of the child was adopted by the League of Nations (UNCRC 1989). Subsequently, human rights charters have been brought into effect under the auspices of the United Nations Organisation. These include the Universal Declaration of Human rights, which advocates rights such as the right to be free from all kinds of violence, abuse and exploitation. A further advancement for the cause of human rights came with the birth, in 1989, of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which was adopted by the General Assembly in the same year. It rapidly became the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, enjoying almost international ratification (UNCRC 1989).

Some of the rights inherent in the UNCRC include the right to survival, the right to develop to the fullest potential, the right to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation and the right to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination, devotion to the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child. Every right spelled out in the Convention is essential for the human dignity and harmonious development of every child. The Convention protects children's rights by setting standards in health care, education and legal, civil and social services. These principles and provisions have been adopted by most of the NPOs in the execution of their mandate, and the best interest of the child principle is

enshrined in the provisions of the Children's Act. Charters such as the UNCRC and the ACRWC have helped to shape and influence how NPOs operate to accommodate the perspective of children when supporting them with care and protection (UNCRC 1989).

2.9.2 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1999)

The history of the codified protection of human rights on the African regional level dates back to 1963 and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the predecessor of today's African Union. The year 1979 saw the assembly of heads of states and governments of the OAU recognise the need to take appropriate measures to promote and protect the rights and welfare of the African child, by adopting the Declaration of the Rights and Welfare of the African Child. Two decades later, in 1990, the African Charter of the Rights of the Child was adopted and came into force in 1999 (OAU 1990). The charter aims to supplement the Convention concerning the rights of the child, and to incorporate issues which are of particular importance to children in Africa. The charter was adopted in view of the plight of most African children, in terms of their socio-economic, cultural, and developmental circumstances. South Africa became a signatory and re-cast the provisions contained in the charter in a domestic context, in order to meet and accommodate those issues regarding culture, religion, gender and how the NPOs execute their mandate to provide care and protection to children which are peculiar to the South African context. Policies have been streamlined to make the provisions in the ACRWC meet the national standards for the care and protection of children through various pieces of legislation, such as the Children's Act of 2005 (Proudlock, 2011).

2.10 The role of CYCCS in advancing the rights of children

The Children's Act mandates the CYCCS to provide specific developmental programs for children. It is clearly stated in section 75 (1) that CYCCS should implement programs relating to the developmental, therapeutic and recreational needs of children. There are also other programs which the CYCCS provide to enhance the social functioning of the children in their care, and these will be discussed in the sections which follow.

2.10.1 Developmental programs

Developmental activities are aimed at assisting children to acquire appropriate skills to facilitate the modification of their behaviour in the process of ultimately becoming integrated members of society. When they are adequately operational, the CYCCs present programs such as life skills, independent living for children disengaging from the residential care program, family preservation and income-generating programs.

2.10.2 Life skills

Life skills are essentially those abilities which help to promote mental well-being and competence in young people as they begin to face the realities of life. As children grow and develop, they need to acquire various types of skills, and language, reading, writing are considered to be the most basic of the skills which children need to master. In addition, they need to learn a great variety of practical skills, such as brushing teeth, how to put on a necktie and so on, and also basic skills needed to ensure safety and survival, such as how to interpret a robot, or which side of the

road to walk on. In a CYCC, life skills are used as a tool to empower young people in challenging situations. They also serve as an interactive process of teaching and learning, which enables the children to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes and skills which encourage the adoption of healthy behaviour.

UNICEF (2006) defines life skills as “a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to create a balance of three areas which are knowledge, attitude and skills”. This definition is based on research evidence which suggests that moving away from types of behaviour which place the child at risk is unlikely if the acquisition of knowledge and competency in vital skills are not encouraged and facilitated. Accordingly, it is imperative for a CYCC to conduct an assessment of the ability of life skills programs to produce the desired results before they are implemented, in order to ensure that they adequately assist the young people to acquire the desired knowledge, attitudes and skills.

2.10.3 Income-generating programs

These programs are used largely to complement programs teaching life skills. They encourage children to acquire a sense of responsibility while they allow children to apply what they have acquired from life skills programs in a realistic context. As an example, the Bethany CYCC offers a course in beauty therapy as a life skills program, and, upon completing the course, the children have clients referred to them, which enables them to earn a percentage of the profits. This procedure has proved to be successful at the Bethany CYCC, as it gives children, who might have difficulty obtaining academic qualifications, an alternative means of earning a living once they leave the CYCC.

2.10.4 Recreation

Recreation is an activity undertaken for enjoyment when one is not working. Provisions for the recreation component constitute one of the important mandates of the CYCC. This is a requisite program activity, and includes activities such as educational excursions, sport, art, drama, dancing, singing and board games. Recreational activities are of utmost importance, as they afford children an opportunity to experience positive physical, mental, emotional and social development, all in the same environment. Sport and educational excursions are particularly beneficial as a means of reinforcing positive types of behaviour, apart from the physical benefits which sport brings in terms of physical fitness, strength, endurance, flexibility and the maintaining of a healthy body weight. The Strathtyer Girls' Home, which is run by the Salvation Army, frequently holds camps to encourage studying and as a focus for debriefing exercises, in which the children are able to express themselves, freely, concerning issues which affect them away from their family environments in the home. Sex education is also provided to adolescent children and career assessments are made, in order to prepare them for professions which are appropriate for their competencies and their coping capacities (Department of Social Development, 2011a).

Recreation also has psychological benefits, as it can help to pre-empt various mental health disorders by improving a child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Helping children to assert themselves in a healthy, non-aggressive manner also promotes

the development of advanced motor skills, creativity and self-expression, all of which contribute towards a child's intellectual capacity (UNICEF, 2004).

2.10.5 Therapeutic work

Therapy refers to any form of treatment of mental or psychological disorders, and it is a vital component in an overall strategy to help children to surmount the traumatic experiences from their pasts, which might otherwise debilitate their lives, (Kristin, 2012). Therapy is also important for children in CYCCs because many of them will inevitably suffer from various psychological problems resulting from poor nurturing, abuse, ill-treatment and so on, (Uys and Cameron, 2003). All problems of this sort are best treated by means of therapy. All CYCCs are required to include therapy, among the various types of support given to children, as one of their core mandates. Therapeutic programs which are required from CYCCs include, but are not limited to, psycho-social support, trauma counselling, individual and group counselling, grief counselling and play therapy.

2.11 Psycho-social support

Psycho-social support is the process of meeting a person's emotional, social, mental and spiritual needs (Kristin, 2012). All of the therapeutic components mentioned are essential elements to the promotion of positive human development. Psycho-social support promotes psychological and emotional well-being, and physical and mental development (Uys & Cameron 2003). In a CYCC, psycho-social support is provided as a means of building resilience, to enable the children to meet their physical, economic, educational, social and health requirements. Although many children

often display resilience, the extreme adversity and trauma often encountered before being placed in a CYCC makes additional support necessary.

2.11.1 Counselling

Counselling can play an important role in building resilience in children, and provide vital support as they make the transition to recuperation (Uys & Cameron 2003). Both individual and group counselling are used by social workers in CYCCs to assist children to come out of the cocoons created by traumatic experiences in their pasts, reinforce positive behaviour and ultimately, to help them to overcome pressing challenges (Maguire, 2002). However, the absence of a social worker in a CYCC to provide psycho-social support often has disastrous results for the children, and some relapse into the types of behaviour from which therapy has weaned them, some become uncontrollable and others even abscond from the institutions (Lombard, 2005).

2.11.2 Spiritual empowerment

Spiritual empowerment is regarded as a vital component in the modifying of children's behaviour in order to enhance their psych-social functioning. As a result, most CYCCS make sure that all children's belief systems are accommodated and respected, as sanctioned by the Children's Act (Department of Social Development, 2011). In Gauteng several CYCCs are owned and run by religious organisations. Both the Abraham Kriel and the Maria Kloppers child care centres are owned by the Dutch Reformed Church, while the Bethany CYCC, the Bethesda CYCC and the Ethembeni and Strathyre girls' homes are owned by the Salvation Army (Salvation Army, 2013). These centres try to ascertain the beliefs of every child prior to

admission, in order to determine whether spiritual empowerment is to be used as a component of the therapy given to the child. The Abraham Kriel centre, employing the Steinhoff Extended Family Program, has a spiritual coordinator who is also a minister of religion, who works with the children where religious matters are concerned, enabling the organisation to use spiritual awareness as a means of modifying children's behaviour.

2.11.3 Rehabilitation and other therapeutic services

Children admitted to CYCC programs usually have a great many different types of needs, some of which cannot be met by the CYCC, which makes it essential to refer these children to other organisations which are able to provide the requisite services (Proudlock, 2011). Services such as educational assessments, psychological assessments, trauma debriefing and so on, are sometimes not offered by the CYCC in which a child has been placed, which makes it necessary for the social workers to refer children requiring these services (Department of Social Development, 2011). It is generally accepted that the individual development plan for the child concerned will take these specific needs into account, and schedule the times for the children to be taken to have these specific services provided. The recommendations made by the specialists will then be attended to and monitored by the social worker (Department of Social Development, 2011a).

2.11.4 Peer support education

Peer education plays a pivotal role in nurturing behaviour and also in obtaining vital information concerning children, which might easily be missed by the adults at the CYCC. Some of the CYCCs train children to be peer educators in an effort to

educate, motivate and monitor their peers at the CYCC. As most of the interaction among children tends to take place while they are playing, attending school, living in the hostel together and sharing meals, many of their experiences are shared and particular types of behaviour tend to be generally adopted. As a result, peer educators are often able to notice problems in behaviour earlier than adults might and to refer them to staff members when they are unable to help the children themselves, in order to ensure that these children receive assistance before the problems spiral out of control (UNAIDS, 1999).

2.11.5 Behavioural empowerment

The Children's Act recognises the importance of behaviour management (Section 76 (1) of the Regulations) and places the responsibility to promote approaches to discipline on the management and staff of the CYCCs (The Children's Act No 38/2005). There are several approaches which are not permitted and actively discouraged, as they are perceived to be punitive in nature and not to allow corrective learning to take place, as a consequence. Although Section 76 (2) and (3) spells out the measures that are prohibited in the disciplining of children, in some cases these prohibited methods are used unknowingly by child and youth care workers. Using these methods is a clear violation of the provisions of the Act, which emphasises the importance of reinforcing behaviour through rewards and role models in order to give children the opportunity and motivation to demonstrate and practise positive behaviour. Unfortunately, in many cases, these guidelines are not followed and children sometimes acquire undesirable habits and traits from the child and youth care workers, who are supposed to provide the children with positive examples of behaviour and comportsment. As an example, the example set by those

workers who smoke in front of the children often results in the children, themselves, starting to smoke.

2.12 Institutional and infrastructural challenges faced by CYCCs when dealing with issues pertaining to child welfare

2.12.1 Role of social workers

Most of the work pertaining to child welfare done by NGOs is, to a large extent, directed at the problems of child abuse, abandonment and neglect (Lombard, 2005). Efforts by these agencies focus mainly on investigating individual cases and providing care and protection to children found to be in need of care (Schenck, 2004a). In most instances, few resources remain to be allocated to troubled families who do not fall under the purview of the child protection services. Social workers who specialise in child protection services work closely with the courts, the law enforcement agencies, community-based family interventions and self-help and volunteer programs. Social workers who specialise in foster care work closely with foster families and children placed in the foster care institutions. The primary function of social workers in child welfare is, to a large extent, statutory and the Children's Act and its regulations provides the legal basis for their core function (Department of Social Development, 2007).

2.12.2 Challenges concerning human resources

The shortage of social workers in South Africa is acute. The new Children's Act estimated that approximately 16 000 to 66 000 social workers would be needed for direct welfare services only (Proudlock, 2011). Despite the shortage of the social

workers, the South African Council for Social Service Professions (SACSSP) in 2012 had in its register 16 740 social workers (SACSSP 2009). NPOs have been badly hit by this shortage because they tend to be shunned by social workers, who prefer to work for the government, which is perceived to offer better pay and to provide a better working environment than the NPOs (Proudlock, 2011). This trend, in turn, has negative consequences for the children who are served by the NPOs, as the NPOs are sometimes obliged to operate without securing the services of social workers. The lack or absence of a social worker in a CYCC, especially during the assessment of a child or children prior to admission, may entail the organisation risking taking a child who probably does not meet with the criteria for the programs which are facilitated by the social worker (Proudlock, 2011). In addition, developmental programs cannot be offered or be run by someone who is not qualified to facilitate them, as there will not be a social worker who can manage and maintain a continuous assessment of every child in accordance with his or her individual development plan. As a consequence, the children are placed at risk, as they are not being assessed adequately or regularly, and their therapeutic needs may not be diagnosed or attended to sufficiently early (Proudlock, 2011). Children are placed at risk by the absence of a social worker, despite the fact that they have been placed in alternative care, which is meant to provide them with holistic services to ensure that they receive the care and protection found to be necessary by their placement in care (Mahery et al., 2011).

The shortage of social workers also results in high case loads for the social workers who are trying to meet the needs of those to whom welfare services are given, which in turn results in a slowing down of the system, owing to the time taken to clear the

huge case loads, compromising the quality of their work and negating the aspirations and ambitions of the Children's 2005 Act number 38 as amended (Mahery et al, 2011).

The lack of social workers also has negative consequences for those services focusing on prevention and early intervention, which creates a very difficult situation, as these pre-statutory services are very important for the child protection system. The ripple effect of this shortage will also mean that there will be an upsurge in cases of children in need of statutory services as a result of inadequate primary intervention and early intervention processes (Lombard, 2005). The end result can only be a defined increase in the number of children suffering from abuse, exploitation and abandonment who will be required to go through the statutory process. As a further consequence, there will therefore be an increased demand for expensive statutory interventions and alternative care for these children (Schenck, 2004). In addition, the shortage of social workers will also mean that children in need of care and protection remain in unsafe family environments because social workers are unable to deal with the high demand for statutory care (Brown and Neku 2005). This, in turn, will also result in children needing to stay longer than they should in residential care because social workers do not have the time to provide reunification and reconstruction services (Proudlock, 2011).

Proudlock (2011) also notes that there is a serious need to recognise and develop the other categories of workers, such as child and youth care workers and early childhood development workers, in order to take tasks away from overburdened social workers. However, there is a great shortage of these workers and, in most cases, CYCCs tend to employ people who are not qualified to be child and youth

care workers (Proudlock, 2011). Risky decisions to employ unqualified staff usually have negative consequences for the children, who can be subjected to secondary trauma as a result of being handled by someone who is not acquainted with child and youth care work (Proudlock, 2011).

2.12.3 Management challenges

The management of CYCCs is also sanctioned by the Children's Act No. 38/2005, which states that there should be a board consisting of at least nine members who are responsible for appointing the management of the CYCC. The staff and management are appointed after a post is advertised and interviews are conducted. **Section 83 (3) a-e** of the Regulations of the Act provide the criteria which the board should use when appointing the manager of a CYCC. If this procedure is followed closely, the smooth running of the CYCC, at least, should be guaranteed. However, most CYCCs do not follow these procedures and, often, a person who is not conversant with child and youth care work, or a registered professional in a relevant discipline, is appointed to the helm of a CYCC to steer its development and progress. A case in point is the Salvation Army, which appoints its own officers to the management of the CYCC, and these are people who often have little, or no, experience and knowledge of the management and administration of a large institution. In many cases, these officers tend to clash frequently with professional staff concerning the manner in which duties should be executed, or the welfare of children should be catered for (Brown and Neku, 2005). Problems of this sort always have negative consequences, both for the children and for the morale of the staff, which often results in a high turnover of staff, which, in turn, has yet more negative consequences for the children. In the worst cases, the children could be left

with no professional staff to administer the programs needed to facilitate their recovery. In addition, owing to a lack of staff having appropriate training and a thorough knowledge of child care, children with behavioural problems are often threatened with imminent removal from the child care facility if their behaviour persists, which is a clear violation of Section 76 (2) (b) of the Regulations of the Act and an equally grave violation of their rights. Accordingly, it is essential that CYCCs should employ managers who are professionals in a relevant discipline, who are conversant with the provisions of the Children's Act and who have a comprehensive knowledge of the regulations and stipulations made by these provisions concerning child and youth care work (The Children's Act No. 38/2005).

2.12.4 Funding challenges

The Children's Act places the primary responsibility on the government for ensuring that the services to children, which it makes mandatory, are delivered. The Department of Social Development (DSD) is the organ of government responsible for providing the requisite funding for children's welfare services. The provincial departments of the DSD are responsible for meeting more than 80% of the cost of implementing the Act, with the national Department of Social Development taking responsibility for less than 1% (Proudlock, 2007). Although the provincial departments of the DSD allocate substantial funds for services covered by the Act, these have not been adequate to cover most of the welfare needs of children. In the cases of the NGOs, although they deliver services mandated by the Act, the money paid to them does not cover the full cost of providing these services. Instead, NGOs need to find donors to make up the shortfall, which has not been easy in recent years owing to the economic recession which has hit most of the developed

countries of Europe and America, which had formed the backbone of the donor base. As a result, South Africa's donor base has dwindled rapidly in recent years, but even when the funds from the government and donors are combined, they are not sufficient to fund all the services required by the Act and to reach all the children who need these services. Proudlock (2011) pointed out the discrepancies which exist in the funding patterns of the various provinces, noting that the subsidies provided, per child, in a CYCC differed according to the ownership of a particular CYCC. In her findings in the Free State, for example, she noted that a CYCC owned by the government paid from R6 000.00 to R7 000 per child, while the Department of Social Development paid a subsidy of from R1700.00 to R2500.00 per child for an NPO-run CYCC. Discrepancies of this type and magnitude are not likely to help to fulfil the best interest of the child principle.

2.12.5 Administrative challenges

The ushering in of the new Children's Act in 2010 was met with several administrative challenges which are still prevalent today (Proudlock, 2011). Most social workers did not receive adequate training concerning the new legislation, and in the confusion which ensued several orders lapsed, placements became illegal and funding for children ceased. Confusion was also witnessed in other departments, such as the departments of Justice and Social Development. Special arrangements needed to be made for lapsed foster care placements to be extended under the provisions of the discarded Child Care Act, through the Department of Social Development. However, special arrangements of this sort were not made for children who had been placed in CYCCs.

The Children's Act gives no indications concerning what should be done regarding children who had been inappropriately placed in CYCCs as a result of the provisions of the Child Care Act No. 74/86 (Department of Social Development, 2011). Social workers are stuck with children, for whom they do not have an adequate program, in the centres and they often encounter difficulties when trying to transfer these children, owing to the nature of their personalities. It has been difficult to cater for children with special needs when the CYCC does not have the personnel, or the resources, to deal with the child's special problems, which places an onerous burden on the CYCC and also means that the child's needs may not be adequately met, which may in turn impede his or her development (Department of Social Development, 2011a).

Preparing children to leave CYCCs presents difficulties because there are no meaningful independent living programs available for children when they leave a CYCC, owing to the fact that there is no funding and support for initiatives of this sort. This makes it very difficult for the CYCCs to provide support for children who reach the age of 18 years, having lived their entire lives at the CYCC, without being reunited with their families and reintegrated into society (Department of Social Development, 2011a).

The problems encountered with helping children in the CYCCs has been exacerbated by the reduction of statutory powers, which suggests that there would be a slow movement of children from the CYCCs, owing to the fact that resident social workers are not able to assist the mainly overburdened designated social workers with the family reunification process or reconstruction services.

2.12.6 Infrastructural challenges

The funding constraints discussed in previous sections have an adverse effect on the ability of the CYCCs to provide the services which they have been mandated to provide. In addition, the CYCCs often find themselves with limited and inadequate office space, which offers limited privacy (Naidoo and Kasiran, 2006). In some instances, some social workers are obliged to share offices with social auxiliary workers or other personnel (Brown and Neku, 2005). This presents difficulties when they are providing counselling, as confidentiality stands to be compromised. Often they are obliged to ask their counterparts to leave the office for them to do their work and this inevitably results in frustration and tension between the co-workers sharing an office (Lombard and Kleiju, 2006). In addition, they are also confronted with shortages of resources such as computers and printers, which would otherwise make their duties easier to perform, and co-workers are often obliged to take turns to use a computer in order to write statutory reports (Naidoo and Kasiran, 2006). Often, basic services, such as the internet and a fax facility, are unavailable and they are obliged to make use of public facilities in order to gain access to these facilities. This is not only frustrating for the workers concerned, but it is also time-consuming and hinders the ability to perform the tasks with which they are often overburdened (Naidoo and Kasiran, 2006).

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter has examined literature from various sources pertaining to the role of child and youth care centres as providers of care and protection to children who have been found to be in need. The social ills which continue to ravage communities, and the prevailing level of socio-economic deprivation, always have a negative effect

upon the welfare of children. The state and its functionaries are obliged to assume the role of custodians whenever children are affected by these social ills, which violate their basic human rights. It is therefore imperative that these rights should be restored and maintained whenever they have been compromised, in order to ensure that these children are given the chances to achieve optimal development, a right enshrined in the provisions of the Child Act. Accordingly, the CYCCs work in partnership with the government to ensure that children who have been made vulnerable are cushioned from the adverse effects of the ills which have disrupted their lives, and that their rights are protected. However, it has been found that there are numerous challenges which inhibit this noble gesture by the government from being sufficiently effective. Alternative care initiatives have their fair share of problems, which tend to compromise the intended objectives which they are set to achieve in terms of the provisions of the Children's Act No. 38/2005. The constraints which affect the CYCCs are many and diverse, and they also differ from province to province in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the methodology employed to conduct the study in order to achieve the objective of evaluating the role of CYCCs to provide care and protection to children in need of care. The research question to be answered was “What is the role which CYCCs assume to provide of care and protection to children who have been found to be in need of care and protection?” This chapter presents the research design, the paradigm and the methodology.

3.2 Research Design

In accordance with the qualitative research approach the research design chosen for this study was the case study. Cresswell (1998:61) defines a case study as “an exploration of a bounded system or a case or multiple cases over time, through detailed in-depth data collection methods”. Gray (2004:123) adds that case studies are specific in their focus but can explore many themes and subjects and may be used to examine a variety of issues. Babbie (2001: 265) emphasises that a case study can refer to a process, an event, an activity, a program, an individual or a group of people. This case study referred to certain groups of people, namely children who had been placed in CYCCs, professional staff working in CYCCs and management staff of CYCCs. The collective case study was appropriate for this research (Fouche, 2005:268) owing to the aim of the research, namely to make a comprehensive investigation of the role played by CYCCs and the contribution which they make to provide care and protection to children found to be in need of care.

3.3 Research Approach

The study adopted a qualitative approach. Holosko (2006:11) defines qualitative research as “the systematic, first-hand observation of real world phenomenon”. The purpose of qualitative research is to describe and understand individuals and events in their natural settings (Holosko, 2006), which would be appropriate in the case of this study. Cresswell (1998:17) maintains that the reasons for undertaking qualitative research arise from the need to investigate and to present a detailed study of the topic, and to study people in their natural environments. In this study, in order to evaluate the role of CYCCs as providers of care to children in need, the participants were asked to articulate their experiences and explain their attitudes towards working and living in a CYCC.

3.4 Population

In this study, the population refers to both the children placed in CYCCs and the staff working in CYCCs respectively. Simon (2002) defines a population as a collection of items of interest in research, the population representing a group to which the research is to be generalised. Populations are often defined in terms of demography, occupation, time and care requirements. There are numerous CYCCs in the Soweto township, but for the purposes of this study, three CYCCs were considered. According to Borg (1990), the population, or the target population, is all those members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events, objects to which the investigator wishes to generalise the results of the research.

3.5 Sampling Strategy and Sample Size

The purpose of sampling is to obtain information which is relevant to the larger population from a small set of observations. This is possible because trends and tendencies in the larger population can be discovered from individuals (Royse, 1999:152). As Patton (2002) has pointed out, sampling in qualitative research is less structured, less strictly applied and there are no rules for the sample size. Strydom and Delport (2005:327-328) maintain that the size of the sample depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the study, the available time and resources, and also what is useful and credible. According to Strydom (2005b), sampling is about taking a portion of the universe or population and considering it representative of that universe or population. The sample size determined by the researcher was three CYCCS, five social workers, three administrators and twenty-five children. These were taken to be representative of the larger population as they had approximately the same characteristics as the larger population. Owing to the size of the population and the fact that the members were known to the researcher, purposive sampling was employed. Purposive sampling entails selecting samples in a deliberate and non-random manner to achieve a particular goal. This sampling method was chosen for the study because it enabled the researcher to select “a sample of information-rich participants” (Struwig & Stead, 2001:122).

3.6 Instruments and Methods Used to Collect Data

The researcher used the semi-structured interview and focus group discussions to gather data.

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interview

According to Greeff (2005), this type of interview is used to gather detailed information concerning the beliefs and perceptions of the participants or their accounts of a particular topic. Predetermined questions are used to guide the interviews and the interviewees in order to determine how the interview proceeds.

One of the reasons for choosing semi-structured interviews was that this type of interview makes use of a predetermined format guided by an interview guide or schedule, which enhances the flexibility of the participants when answering questions. Flick (1998:94) asserts that the aim of a semi-structured interview is to allow the interviewee to answer the questions more freely, enabling the researcher to follow up on interesting responses and also to investigate some of the underlying motives for the interviewee's responses. In this case, the researcher was able to conduct an investigation to determine the nature and extent of the role of CYCCs to provide holistic care and protection to children in need of care and protection, in a manner which permitted a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and perceptions of the participants from accounts given in their own words.

3.6.1.1 Preparation for Semi-structured Interviews

It was important for the researcher to prepare before conducting the interviews. This involved reviewing relevant literature, drawing up an interview schedule and consent forms and obtaining a tape recorder. Before conducting the interviews, the researcher made an in-depth study of the available literature concerning the key variables of the topic. It was important for the researcher to have a comprehensive understanding of the topic in order to contextualise it and to develop an interview

schedule to guide the interviews in the manner described by Greeff (2005), with predetermined questions guiding the interviews and allowing the interviewer to determine how the interviews should proceed. Consent forms were handed out to the management staff of the institutions and to the guardians of the children who were going to participate in the study. Written consent from each respondent was deemed vital and the participants were made aware that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time, if they wished to do so.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussion

Greeff (2002:306) defines a focus group as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions concerning a defined area of interest in a non-threatening environment. This procedure was appropriate, as it enabled the social workers working in the CYCCs and the children who had been placed in the CYCCs to discuss and share their experiences among peers.

The focus group discussions were conducted in English because all the participants were able to express themselves in English. The themes for the focus group discussions were well chosen, and questions from the researcher centred on them. The researcher conducted the semi-structured interviews and led the focus group discussions himself, in order to gain a good understanding of the experiences of both sets of participants, and to be able to empathise with their feelings.

3.7 Analysis of Data

Qualitative data analysis is the process which follows the collecting of data, and through it the data is transformed into meaningful findings (De Vos, 2005:334). The

data gathered goes through various stages of analysis and interpretation. The process of analysing data does not follow a linear format, but rather moves back and forth as the data is analysed and interpreted. It is an intensive process, which comprises an analysis and an interpretation of the data gathered by the researcher. The guidelines provided by Cresswell in De Vos (2005:334) were used to analyse the data.

3.7.1 Planning and recording of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions

To record the interviews and the discussions the researcher made use of a digital tape recorder. Before tape recording the interviews and discussions, the researcher asked for permission from each respondent, which was granted in each case. The researcher made sure the tape recorder was in working order and that the batteries were still sufficiently good before each recording was made. The recording level was also checked before each session. Each session was tape recorded and field notes were written. Each recording was transferred to mp3 files on the computer, making it easy to store the data and to transcribe each session, word for word.

The researcher made hard copies of each transcription and created a folder for the transcription, for future reference. Each transcription was labelled alphabetically for easy reference by the researcher. The transcriptions and field notes were read over and over again to become familiar with the data. As the researcher read the transcriptions and field notes, notes were also made in the margins for easy tracking and referencing.

3.7.2 Analysis according to themes

As the researcher read the data, common themes and sub-themes were identified. These usually took the form of words and phrases which were repeated often during the discussions. The researcher used abbreviations of key words in order to identify the themes and sub-themes. The data which emerged was analysed by linking the themes and sub-themes and the various perspectives of the individual participants. Literature was consulted to verify empirical findings and, in some cases, to seek alternative explanations.

3.8 Ethical Issues

Any acceptable research investigation must be conducted with due consideration being given to the relevant ethics. Walsh (2001:70) defines research ethics as standards of behaviour and practical procedures which researchers are expected to follow. In order to maintain the required standards of research ethics, the researcher sought to protect the participants from any type of harm, obtained informed consent, maintained confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity and made sure that he was completely honest with the participants at all times.

3.8.1 Protection from harm

It was the researcher's ethical obligation to protect the participants who participated in the research from any form of harm (Strydom, 2005b). The participants were comprehensively informed concerning the nature of the research and the consequences of participating in the study before the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. The participants were allowed time to make informed decisions concerning their participation. Babbie (2001) maintains that the researcher

needs to look for subtle dangers and guard against them. This can be achieved by respecting the privacy of subjects, maintaining confidentiality and collecting information anonymously (Babbie, 2007). To reduce and minimise any harm that might conceivably have occurred, the participants were debriefed after the interviews and focus group discussions had been conducted. According to Strydom (2005b), debriefing participants offers an opportunity to correct, rectify any problems or misconceptions which might have arisen as a result of participating in the study. It was made clear that no names or any form of identification would be revealed, and that the University of Fort Hare would have access to the findings of the research.

3.8.2 Obtaining Consent

It was necessary to obtain informed consent from each participant. Strydom (2005b) maintains that obtaining informed consent ensures the dissemination of accurate information to the participants to provide them with a comprehensive understanding of the research to enable them to make voluntary and informed decisions concerning their participation in it. The researcher took time to explain to each participant the full details of the research project, its purpose and for whom it was intended. Consent forms from the University of Fort Hare, which explained the details of the research and the right of the participants to choose whether or not to participate, were also handed to participants. Each participant was asked to sign the forms and copies were made available. It was imperative to obtain the consent of the guardians of the children who were living in the CYCCs, which was made easy by the fact that the management of the CYCCs is authorised by the Children's Act No. 38/2005 to give consent on behalf of the children.

3.8.3 Confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity

Privacy is defined as that which is normally not intended for others to observe (Strydom, 2005). Confidentiality entails the handling of information in a confidential manner (Strydom, 2005). For the purposes of this study, anonymity refers to the provision that no-one, including the researcher, should be able to identify any of the subjects after completing the research (Strydom, 2005b: 61-62). The researcher undertook the responsibility to maintain confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. Interviews and focus group discussions with the participants were conducted in places which were private and safe for them to express their views freely. To encourage the participants to speak, it was deemed important to check that the acoustics of the rooms used were optimal. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, the information provided by the participants was confidentially handled and not shared with anyone else, and measures were taken to ensure that no names, or any particulars pertaining to identities which could be linked to individual participants, were used. Participants were allowed to withdraw at any time during the interviews, and not to answer any question which made them feel uncomfortable.

3.8.4 Deception

Deception is said to take place when the participants are intentionally misled or misinformed, relevant facts are misrepresented and relevant information is withheld from them (Strydom, 2005b:60). Although no deception should ever be inflicted on a subject, Babbie (2001) maintains that the appropriate remedy for deception, should it occur, is to debrief the subject after the research.

Any unintentional deceiving of the participants was eliminated by explaining the true nature of the research. The details of the research, such as the goal, the objectives, the research methodology and the implications of the research were explained in detail to the participants.

3.8.5 Honesty and integrity

The obligation and responsibility to ensure his or her competence, and that he or she is sufficiently skilled to undertake the research (Strydom, 2005b) is of utmost importance, and awareness of this is a prerequisite for the researcher. This criterion also applies to the standard of professional behavior and integrity of the person conducting the research (Walsh, 2001). Researchers need to be honest when presenting their findings, and research needs to be carried out in a professional way. The appointments made were always kept. The researcher took care to be on time for each interview and focus group discussion. The participants were treated with respect and dignity and as experts where the subjects under discussion were concerned, which allowed them to relate their experiences without any fears of being interrupted, rebuked or judged.

3.8.6 Trustworthiness and credibility

According to Seale (1999), the term “reliability” in qualitative research is more specific when it is used interchangeably with the term “dependability”. To make the result of the study more dependable, the research was carried out in two phases. The first phase comprised individual interviews and the second phase, focus group discussions. Data collected from both phases was analysed according to the themes identified. Using more than one method to collect data, such as individual interviews

and focus group discussions used in this study, results in a more reliable reconstruction of realities (Cresswell and Miller, 2000).

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research design and the research approach employed in the study were explained in detail, before going on to describe the population of the study, the sample and the sampling technique employed, the analysis of the data and the ethical considerations which were respected in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises, to a large extent, an analysis and interpretation of the data, a presentation of the qualitative findings of this study and a discussion of the findings, and it is, to an equally large extent, structured around the main themes and subsequent sub-themes which emerged from the participants' reports of their experiences and perceptions. The chapter is divided into two sections, the first of which discusses the results of the qualitative analysis of the two sets of interviews, which will be presented according to the themes and sub-themes which emerged. The findings from the interviews and focus group discussions with the social services professionals and their managers will be presented in the first section, and those from the interviews conducted with the children residing in the CYCCs will be presented in the second.

Significantly, the social work professionals used their titles and office portfolios in the study. Naming the portfolios was needed in that they are directly related to the work which each social work professional does and the rank occupied in the service organisations, and they are important in that they have a bearing on the expertise and knowledge of the social work professional, in terms of their knowledge and experience of CYCCs as providers of care and protection to children found to be in need of care and protection. The second part of this chapter, to a large extent, takes the form of a discussion of the findings of the study.

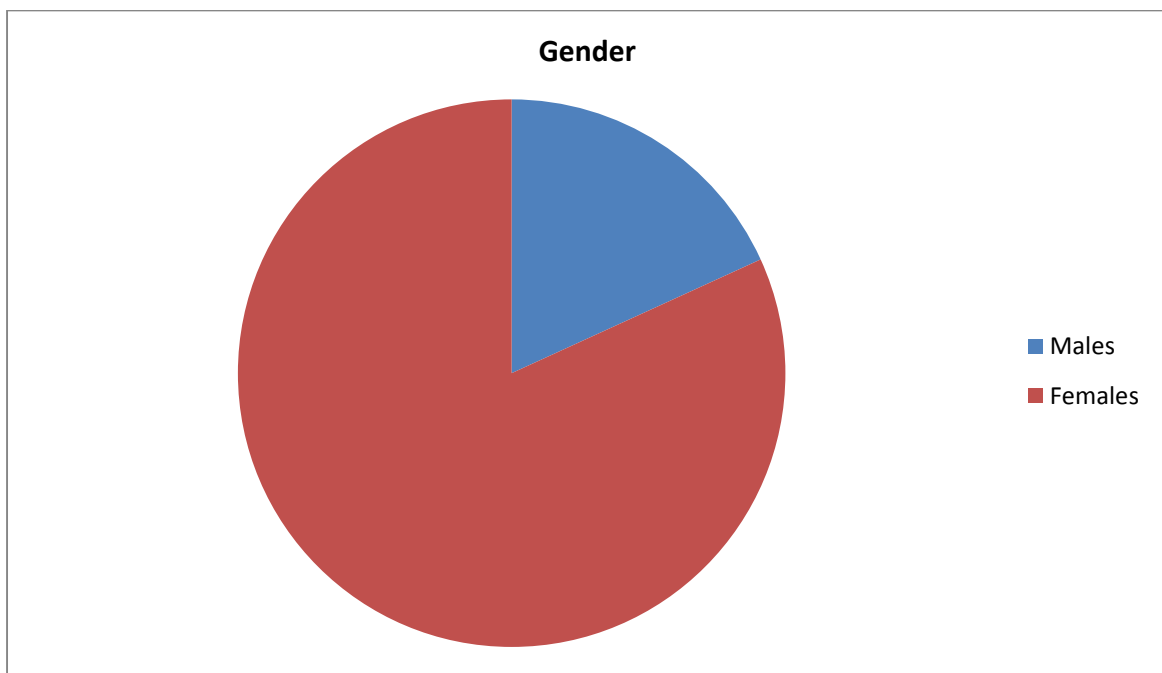
4.2 Profile of the Participants

This section will present the profiles of the participants focusing on their gender, age, race, experience in child protection and also the number of years worked in a CYCC.

4.2.1. Gender

Most of the workers interviewed were females: nine out of the total number of eleven being females, and the remaining two, men. In terms of percentages this translates to 90% of the cohort were females and 10% were male. This might suggest that most women take a greater interest than men do in taking care of and providing for children, and also in protecting children's rights. Owing to their motherly characteristics and instincts, women tend to work well with children, while men are not really known to do so, but this perceived difference could also be owing to the fact that most of the tasks associated with nurturing children in patriarchal societies, such as South Africa, are handled by women.

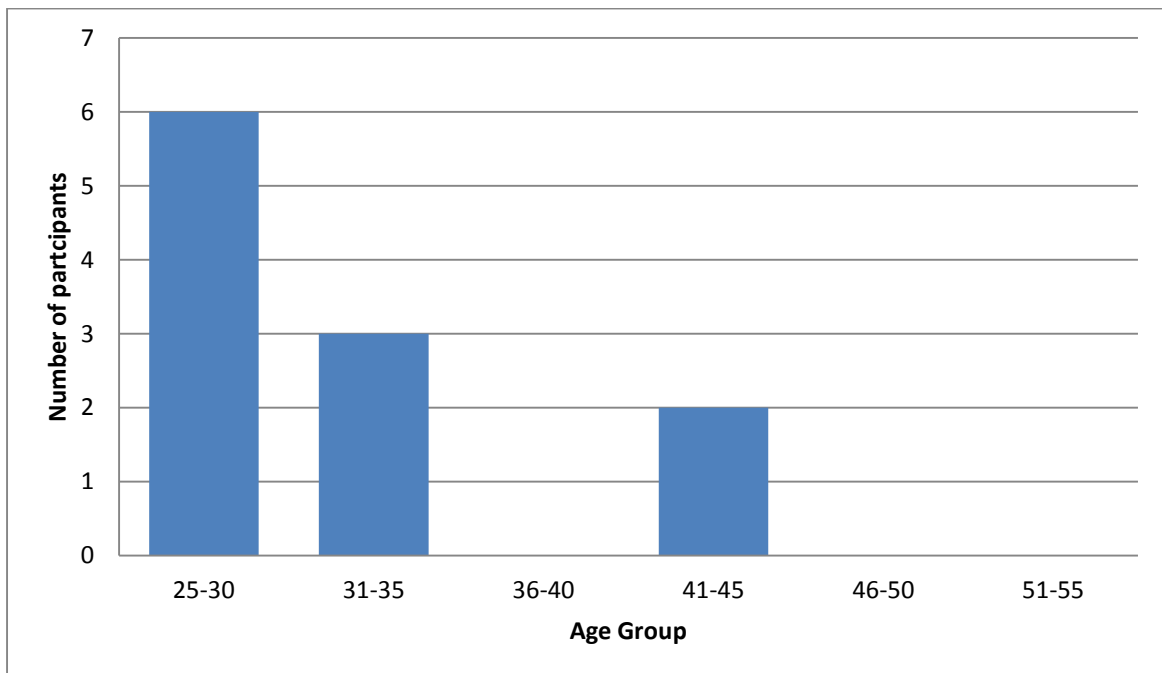
Fig. 4.1 Gender



4.2.2 Age

Fig. 4.2 shows the range of ages of the participants. Of the sample interviewed, 6 participants were between the ages of 25 and 30 years, while 3 were between the ages of 31 and 35 years and only two between the ages of 41 and 45 years. From this sample, it could be cautiously generalised that services providing care to children, and the administration of organisations providing care to children are staffed, to a large extent, by young people who are often women. This could explain, to a large extent, their understanding of the challenges and the terrain pertaining to child care and its administration.

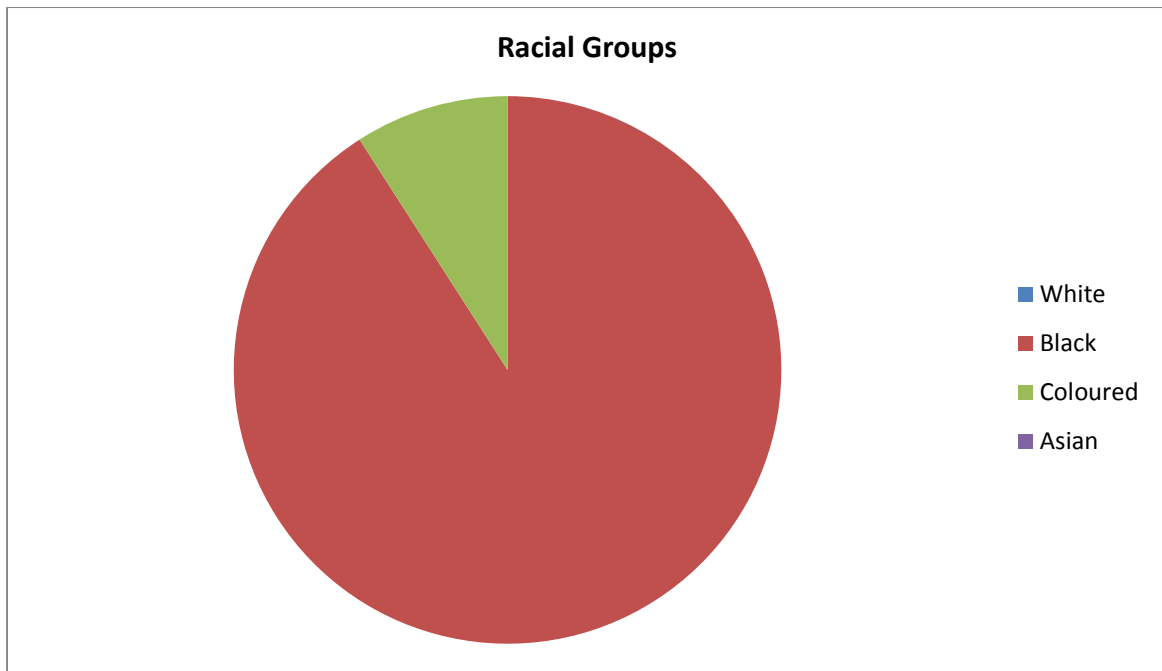
Fig 4.2 Age of the participants



4.2.3 Race

With respect to race, 90% of the participants in the sample were black, while 10% would have been classified as being coloured by the apartheid regime. Fig. 4.3 presents the racial distribution of the participants.

Fig 4.3 Racial distribution



4.2.4 Years Worked

Where working experience was concerned, six participants reported that they had worked in child protection services for three years, while one had worked for one year, another had worked for four years and one had worked for at least five years. This would indicate that the workers, whose perceptions, perspectives and opinions were sought in the interviews and group discussions, had sufficient knowledge, experience and competence pertaining to child care and child care organisations. Fig. 4.4 illustrates the years of experience in child care of the participants.

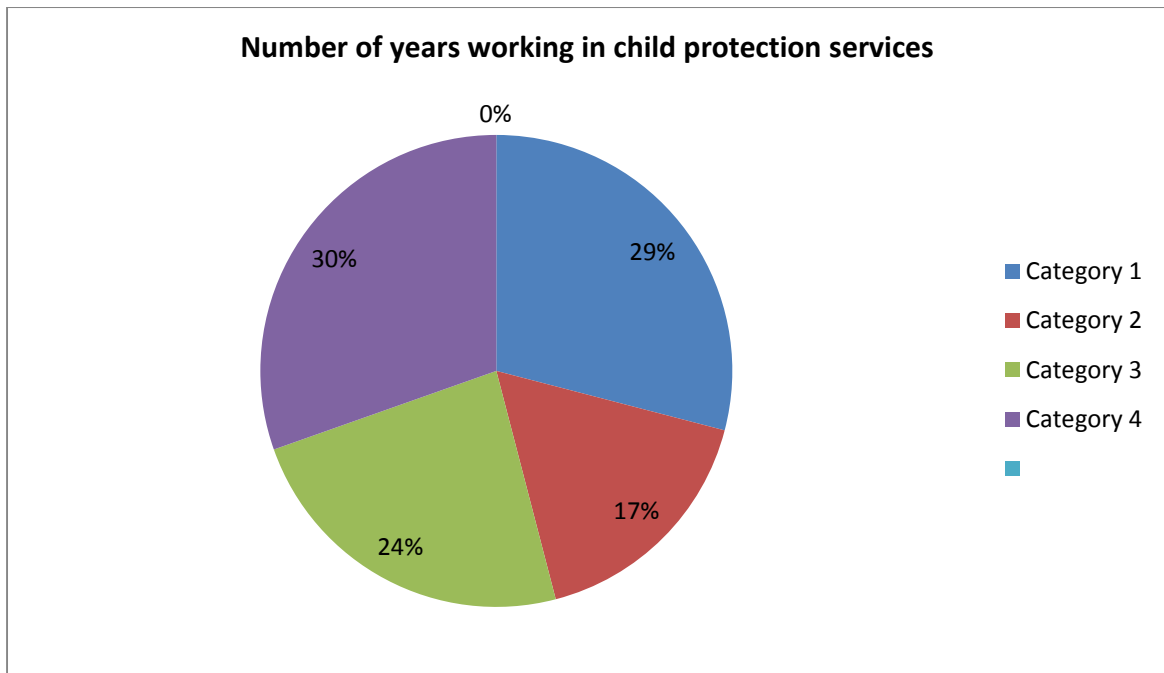


Fig 4.4 Number of years working in child protection services

4.2.5 Years of experience in a CYCC

With respect to working in the CYCCs, three people reported to have worked for five years, three had worked for four years in the same CYCC, while one participant reported to have worked with the CYCC for three years. The remaining four participants revealed that they had worked in the same CYCC for two years. These findings indicate that the interviewees were well grounded with experience, knowledge and competence where working in CYCCs was concerned, and suggests that their thinking, perspectives, opinions and recommendations were likely to be both valid and reliable.

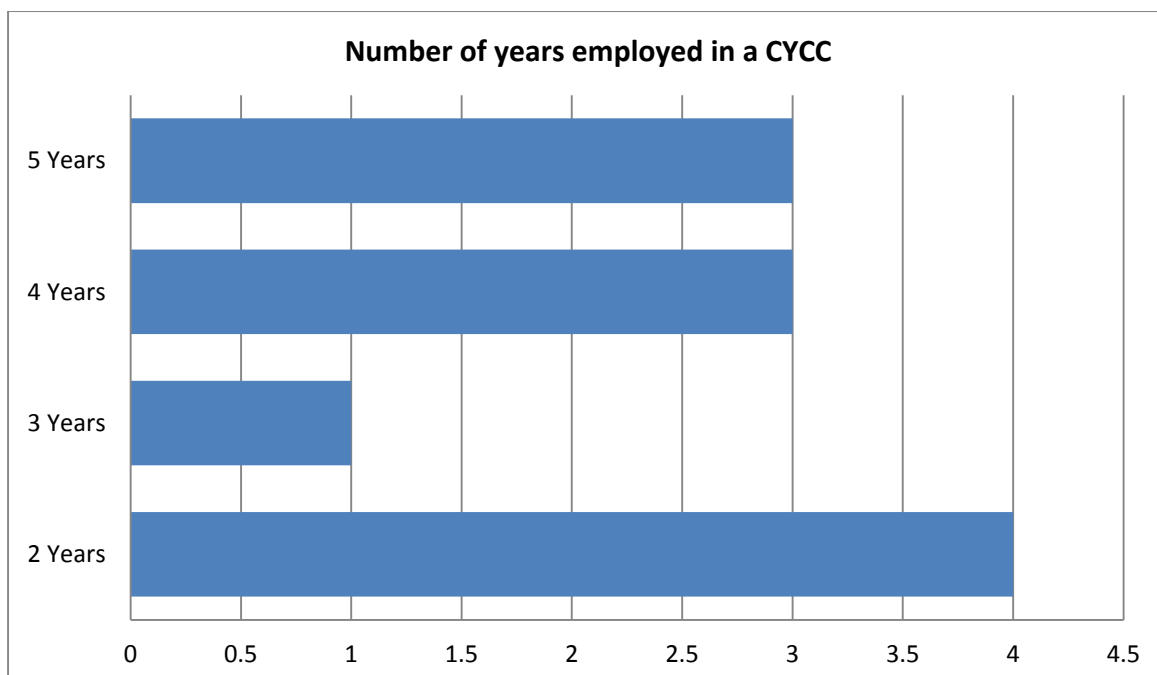


Fig 4.5 Number of years worked in CYCC

Where implementation of the Children’s Act No. 38 of 2005 was concerned, six of the participants reported to have been implementing the Act for more than three years, while four reported that they had been doing so for 2 to 3 years, and one reported to have been implementing the Act for less than a year. This would give credence to the results which would be obtained from these implementers of policy, as they had enough valid experience to be able to give reliable and valid information about the implementation of the Act.

By way of an overview of the qualifications of these participants , six held Bachelor of Social Work degrees and were practising as registered social workers, two were holders of social auxiliary work certificates and were also registered with the SACSSP, and the remaining three were ministers of religion. Two of these participants worked as directors of CYCCs and one as an administrator. These

qualifications indicate that these people, who have been tasked with the implementation of the Act, were both adequately and professionally qualified to do so, and that they also fulfilled the statutory requirements of being *bona fide* social workers. This also has a bearing on the expectation of reliable and valid information from these participants. It does need to be said, though, that the qualifications of the directors and administrators could be crucial for giving the organisations direction and running them efficiently and effectively. For this reason, an assessment of their qualifications and competence is vital.

4.3 Institutional gaps on care and protection to all children in need

An institution can be described as an organisation which has been founded for a specific purpose which transcends individuals, by mediating the rules which govern and co-ordinate living behaviour. This section looks at the constraints which impede the day to day running of CYCCs, by discussing the providing of care and protection, management challenges and administrative issues.

4.3.1 CYCCs as safe haven for children in need of care and protection

The participants were asked if there were any issues, arising from the institution itself, which affected their work to provide care and protection to children who had been placed in the CYCCs. Seven of the participants mentioned that CYCCs had closed the care gap, and were effectively easing the burden created by the numbers of children found to be in need of care and protection. They also maintained that the CYCCs provided a safe haven for the optimal development of children, and an environment which allowed children to be nurtured. One participant said:

“CYCCs to a greater extent are providing care and protection for children found to be in need as they provide shelter, food, clothing, educational opportunities and nurturing opportunities for growth and empowerment (in-depth interview, September, 2013)

Another participant said:

“CYCCs play an important role in the safeguarding and promotion of children’s rights. They offer children a home where a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity are fostered so that they become ‘whole’ again” (social worker, focus group discussion. September, 2013).

The efforts of the CYCCs are in line with the social development approach, which advocates the empowerment of the deprived. In this regard, McKendrick (2001) observes that the social work profession aims to empower people, and that empowerment is achieved through a combination of personal and social development processes which give power to people. In a similar vein, Gathiram (2005) emphasises that empowerment is central to development and should be the ultimate objective for all programs aiming to alleviate poverty, and this includes the work of the CYCCs.

4.3.2 Management challenges associated with CYCCs

Speaking about the management of the CYCC’s, the participants maintained that the CYCCs were facing many challenges, especially those of a managerial nature, which hampers and hinders the objective of providing adequate care and protection to children. Dominant in the narratives of the participants was the lack of managerial

competence, resulting from the organisations failing to employ or recruit people sufficiently competent in child care work, or people with relevant experience and expertise in dealing and working with child care. There was a strong suggestion that some of the managers were not adequately conversant with the provisions of the Children's Act. One social service professional said:

"They just employ someone to the post of administrator or director without any knowledge on child protection or little or no experience at all working with children" (CYCC social worker, September, 2013).

Observably, appointment to high positions, without experience and knowledge of the job, is one of the main constraints undermining South Africa's child care organisations. Nepotism affects the functioning of organisations, particularly when the recruited personnel lack the skills and knowledge needed to perform vital tasks. This is especially problematic if the personnel are in top management positions. In the CYCCs, appointments based on nepotism often have disastrous consequences, especially for the children. In addition, five participants maintained that children are sometimes subjected to subtle abuse and mistreatment, simply because the staff is usually not conversant with the Children's Act and its provisions. One participant said:

"Some children are threatened that they will be chased away by the administrators when they are deemed to have behavioural problems" (child and youth care worker, September, 2013).

Statements and threats of this sort should not be made, as they subject children to stress and anxiety and they violate Section 76 (2) (b) of the Regulations of the Act, which stipulates that no threats should be issued to children. Regrettably, such threats can trigger emotions which can make them vulnerable and expose them to secondary traumas. Behaviour of this sort, by adults, goes against all that the social development approach stands for, in its aim to enhance the development of children in an environment in which they are treated humanely and their security is guaranteed. In this regard, Patel (2005:13) observes that the social development perspective on social welfare has provided the most appropriate way to tackle the dual challenge of addressing past disparities and new needs and, in the light of this assessment, children should feel safe and at home when they are placed in a CYCC.

4.3.3 Inadequate support for CYCCs

Most of the participants maintained that a lack of support was a major impediment to meeting the objective of providing care and protection to children and promoting their development within the social development paradigm. Four participants added that a serious lack of consultation with the social workers was not only frustrating, but also made their aspirations towards change for children, elusive. Most participants indicated that there was no culture of those in top management positions consulting with those who were actually doing the work. For them the situation was very demoralising and counterproductive, as a result of decisions being made unilaterally by those in top management positions. One of the participants had this to say:

“Decisions are taken by senior managers. A top down approach is utilised. There is minimal participation and this frustrates and often leads to resentment” (social worker- September, 2013).

4.3.4 Challenges of funding CYCCs

The other objective of this study was to look at how administration in a CYCC affects the operations of the CYCC in its quest to provide care and protection to children found to be in need of care. Four participants maintained that the subsidies paid by the Department of Social Development were not sufficient to meet the costs incurred in operating a CYCC. One administrator of a CYCC said:

“The subsidies we receive from the government are barely enough to meet the needs of each child on a monthly basis. We have to find additional income to stay afloat” (administrator-CYCC).

In this regard, the findings of this study concur with Proudlock (2011), who noted, in her findings in the Free State, that a CYCC owned by the government paid from R 6 000.00 to R7 000.00 per child, while the Department of Social Development paid from R 1700.00 to R2 500.00 per child in an NPO-run CYCC. It hardly needs to be said that discrepancies of this sort do very little to respect the best interest of the child principle, as NPO-run CYCCs have to struggle to look after the children placed in their care.

4.4 Infrastructural challenges associated with CYCCs

Infrastructural factors are those which either promote, or else hinder, the effective operation of an institution, and these can be aligned to services and facilities which are necessary for effective service delivery. The sub-themes which will be discussed here include programs offered in the CYCC, the extent to which reunification workers work with children placed in CYCCs, the effect of lapsed orders during the transitional period between the two Acts, and organisational policies which tend to conflict with the provisions of the Children's Act.

4.4.1 Role of CYCCs in enhancing the impaired capacities of children

Most of the participants felt that CYCC programs help to direct, nurture and strengthen children in their development. They also enhance and repair the impaired capacities of the children, in accordance with the provisions of the Act. In this regard, one of the participants had this to say:

“The programs that are mandated by the Act are critical for the development of children, especially those that are in need of care and protection. The programs are developmental and they will assist the children a great deal when they leave the institution” (CYCC social worker - September, 2013).

Another social worker added:

“The programs offered at the CYCC assist us to nurture children, identify anomalies, challenges and even strengths. They in turn assist us in coming

up with proactive plans of action in reinforcing and modelling behaviours to achieve the desired outcome suited to the individual child”.

4.4.2 Management not adequately supporting CYCCs programmes

Many of the participants regretted that, despite the fact that most CYCC programs were useful and served developmental and growth purposes, they were not given sufficient support by the top echelons of management. Five participants offered that in most instances, programs which are of immense benefit to the children are often not adequately supported, resulting in the need, which they fulfil, and the value which they have for the children being not properly realised. It was quite apparent that most of the CYCC top brass did not understand the principle of holistic support for children, thinking that all the children needed was to be fed. In support of this allegation, two social workers said:

“Even though programs are mandated by the Act, we usually find ourselves unable to render some of the critical activities that stimulate and capacitate our children because of the management. The top management does not offer adequate support to these programs.”

“I strongly feel that management sometimes fail to comprehend what we really aim to do with these children, apart from feeding them and giving them a place to sleep. We intend to develop responsible children who also have to recover first from their traumatic experiences and for us to do that a plethora of initiatives becomes a pre-requisite”.

The gap of understanding concerning how the children need to be treated, which exists between the CYCC management and the workers, therefore, provides a fertile ground for conflict. A child and youth care worker had this to say:

“Because they (management) do not understand the felt needs of the children and what we aim to achieve with programs, we clash a lot and in most instances we do not get what we want to assist the children” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

A social auxiliary worker said:

“The only program that they seem not to mind a lot is therapy. This is because most of it is rendered by social workers and there is no need to fork out money for it” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

From these sentiments it can be seen that the absence of, or the minimal support for programs tends to have an adverse effect on the children’s progress and growth in the CYCCs. This is largely owing to the fact that the children are rarely stimulated properly. According to the White paper for Social Welfare (1997), the goal of social development is to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual or community and of society at large. Accordingly, the objectives of social development can be realised if the children are assisted to realise their full potential and their impaired capacities are restored through programs which are properly supported at each of the CYCCs.

4.4.3 Some CYCCS incapacitated to facilitate the developmental needs of children

Most of the participants felt that most CYCCs do not have programs which cater adequately for the development of children, although some CYCCs are endeavouring to incorporate the developmental programs in their operations. Four of the participants reported having made strides to incorporate developmental programs, as is borne out in this quote:

“We render programs that reflect the developmental needs of children, although it is on a limited scale....in the CYCCs we are working on the developmental approach. We have life skills programs like beauty therapy for both boys and girls” (social auxiliary worker, September, 2013).

A social worker said:

“We tend to put particular focus on life skills and ignore other developmental programs that are of utmost importance for the children, especially when they leave the CYCC. For instance, we fail to promote the aspects of independent living. It’s maybe because we are not really conversant with the processes, and in most instances it is due to lack of funds.”

Although the White paper for Social Welfare (RSA, Ministry for Social Welfare and Population Development, 1997) clearly spells out the principles of a social development approach and also gives guidelines for the restructuring of social welfare services, it is apparent that social workers do experience certain challenges

in the implementation of programs which have social development paradigms. Three social workers emphasised that the developmental programs tend to stimulate growth and development in children, and to foster in them a sense of autonomy as an individual child. These quotes emphasise the importance of developmental programs:

“There are activities under the developmental program that are extremely beneficial to all children. They emphasise independence and also responsibility. For instance, independent living as an activity that is of utmost importance as it prepares children to be self-reliant and be independent for successful reintegration into the society” (social worker, September, 2013).

“Developmental programs enable all children to participate fully, whether they are slow learners or even have impairment. The life skills they will acquire are important as they are prepared for society. Some will eventually earn a living from such skills like gardening or a hair salon. That’s why we encourage full participation for all children and staff for it to be a success”.

These statements are supported by the social development approach, which advocates empowerment of social welfare recipients to enable them to become self-reliant, in order to improve their quality of life and, ultimately, wean themselves from being dependent upon the state.

4.4.4 Therapeutic role of CYCCs

Seven of the participants maintained that the most common and time-consuming program provided in CYCCs is therapy. Therapy is given because children placed in CYCCs usually have histories of traumatic experiences, with the result that some are unable to trust anyone. Social workers have a mammoth task to restore the impaired capacities of these children. In some instances, therapeutic interventions are prioritised at the expense of other needs, such as those to stimulate the growth and development of a child. One participant said:

“I think social workers in the CYCC assist the deprived, marginalised, abused and traumatised children who really need intensive therapy. We tend to concentrate our activities and approach on the treatment interventions only. Since the activities are very time-consuming, we most of the time fail to get time to address other developmental needs of the child” (social worker, September, 2013).

Another social worker reiterated this sentiment by saying:

“We need to shift our thinking from welfarism only, to the implementation of other developmental needs”.

These sentiments are in line with Green and Nieman (2003:164), who confirm that “the implementation of a developmental approach requires changes in behaviour, procedures and practices to meet the requirements to perform social development functions successfully”. In a similar vein, Patel (2005:155) maintains that the new

direction for welfare services, which place emphasis on the need to attend to developmental issues, requires a shift in paradigm from a social treatment model to a developmental service delivery model”.

4.4.5 Poor Implementation of a children’s exit plan in CYCCs

It also emerged that once children are placed in CYCCs on a long term basis, through a finalised court order, the case managers tend to relax and apply only limited efforts to facilitate reunification. In-depth interviews with the social workers uncovered that there is slow movement of children from the CYCCs and children tend to stay longer than they should in a CYCC. One social worker was quite emphatic by saying:

“The lackadaisical approach that is employed by the case managers once the child is committed to the CYCC is not effective, with the results that children placed in a CYCC take long to be reintegrated into society. The exit plans are also poorly effectuated” (social worker in-depth interview- September 2013).

4.4.6 Poor handling of the developmental needs of children

The evidence collected, using the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, indicates that once a child is committed to a CYCC, the case managers are rarely seen to be following up on the progress and development of the child in the program to which he or she has been committed. This is reflected in one comment made by a social worker:

“It is not surprising that you will get to see the case manager when there is need for an extension order. Otherwise, there is a general laxity and little enthusiasm to follow the developmental terrain of the children” (Focus group discussion, September, 2013).

This explains how some children are lost in the system as the case managers rarely find time to follow the progress of a child. It was also emphasised that, most of the time, the individual development plan (IDP) of the child is implemented by the CYCC social worker and that the input from the case manager is limited, or non-existent. This situation creates delays, and the movement of children from the CYCC is delayed as a result. This is reflected in one comment made by an experienced social worker:

“What really frustrates is the fact that when you are following through your IDP you will be expecting that every party will contribute immensely so that the child benefits. You will call several times and schedule meetings, but the case manager will not present himself or herself, and this is frustrating. The end result is the development of the child is impeded and movement becomes limited and surely this is not in the best interest of the children” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

However, the unavailability of case managers could, in some cases, be attributed to various factors, which include a shortage of case managers, causing those who are working to be overburdened with huge case loads and, in some instances, suffering from burnout. The social workers were critical of how follow-ups are generally handled, saying that some of the other designated child protection organisations

were not proactive, while others followed up their cases meticulously. One experienced social worker said:

“The Jo’burg child welfare case managers are very active, especially in foster care, and show interest in the development of children. They even come for panel discussions just to have an indication of how a child is progressing and they co-operate a great deal” (social worker, September, 2013).

Problems, concerning co-ordinating the contributions of various workers from the various organisations providing services pertaining to care and protection for children, are faced by many organisations. Responsiveness and co-operation are crucial if child protection services are to be provided effectively, as collective effort is needed to provide holistic services to children who are in need of care. Patel (2005) correctly maintains that the transformation of institutions in society is vital for the social development process to be effective. Patel’s assessment is supported by that of Midgeley and Tang (2001), who insist that the social development approach requires purposeful intervention, from both state and non-state actors, for it to be effective.

4.4.7 The challenge and dynamics associated with failure to pay subsidies to the CYCCs

The transitional period between the discarding of the Child Care Act and the implementation of the Children’s Act was characterised by a series of occurrences which had adverse consequences for children, particularly for those in the CYCCs. Court orders lapsed during this period because social workers were not familiar with

the provisions of the new Act, owing to a lack of adequate training. One social worker said:

“I had at least ten cases that lapsed during that period as we were used to submitting extension reports to the Department of Social Development, but with the new Act it called for such reports to be submitted to the Children’s Court” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

The lapsing of these cases had disastrous implications for the CYCCs, as the placement of the children concerned automatically became illegal, resulting in the department ceasing to subsidise those children. One participant said:

“Once an order lapses, the funding from the Department of Social Development stops and that presents pressure on the already financially burdened organisation” (social worker, September, 2013).

4.4.8 Challenges facing the implementation of the new Children’s Act

Seven participants maintained that the discarded Child Care Act did not have provisions for assessments before a child was placed in a CYCC, and that children who were suited to a specific program were, nevertheless, placed in a CYCC which provided that program. Children with special needs were also placed in CYCCs which lacked the specific resources needed to cater for their needs. One social worker said:

“There are children who have been placed in the CYCC for the past ten years, and some have mental impairments and others are physically disabled. The infrastructure at the CYCC is not sensitive to physically disabled people and there is no trained staff that can stimulate and look properly after the needs of such children”.

The Children’s Act attempts to avoid such scenarios by requiring an assessment panel, prior to admitting a child to a program, to ensure that the child is admitted to a program which suits his or her developmental needs. Speaking about the significance of the assessment panel one participant said:

“The assessments are an effective tool to screen children’s suitability to our programs. It is an effective way of avoiding admitting children who will need specialised attention which we cannot offer” (CYCC administrator, September, 2013).

4.4.9 Conflict between CYCC policies and the provisions of the Children’s Act

The results of this study uncovered the fact that conflicts arise between the philosophies of organisations and policies generated by the provisions of the Children’s Act. These conflicts of interest become particularly problematic when they infringe on the rights of children, which places the workers in a precarious position. One social worker said:

“There are certain provisions in the Act that we know that our management find it hard to recognise and implement. For instance, the distribution of contraceptives to children will never be allowed at this religious-owned institution, as they perceive they will be promoting sexual activities”.

This sentiment was shared by the most of the social workers. Children’s rights are compromised and negated owing to church doctrine. Mahery (2011) points out that Section 134 of the Act permits a child over the age of 12 years to have access to contraceptives, in order to avoid pregnancies and STIs. The section also states that anyone who denies access to a child who meets this requirement can face imprisonment or a fine. However, among the fears voiced by people working in the management of the CYCCs is the fear that the distribution of contraceptives might encourage types of behaviour which carry the risk of exposure to diseases such as AIDs and STIs, and which are considered inappropriate for children by those in charge of the CYCCs. This conflict of interests ultimately results in the rights of children, which are laid down by the provisions of the Children’s Act, being usurped. One participant said:

“There are children who are sexually active in the CYCCs, and this can be attributed to adolescent experimentation and also the child’s background, emanating from the fact that some may have been raped or molested” (social auxiliary worker, September 2013).

Another participant added:

“We indeed have children in the CYCCs that are sexually active and we even know that some do indulge in sexual activities. We can only issue advice for them to abstain or practice safe sex, but we cannot do anything further because we are not allowed to distribute contraceptives to them” (social worker, September, 2013).

4.5 Shortages of human resources for CYCCs

A lack of personnel usually has dire consequences for a CYCC and its functioning, and its ability to fulfil its mandates are severely compromised as a result.

4.5.1 The challenge of staff turnover

The participants working in the management of the CYCCs were asked to comment on the effect which subsidies had on their ability to retain staff. It was learned from them that the rate of turnover among professional staff, and particularly among social workers, was alarming. The consequences for CYCCs are inevitably negative, as they frequently are obliged to endure long periods without the services of a social worker to facilitate programs. The effect of the absence of a social worker is immediately felt by the children, as therapy and other programs are temporarily suspended. One director of a CYCC had this to say:

“We sometimes go to up to three months without securing the services of a social worker, and it’s then we realise the gap that exists and the important role they play in the lives of the children” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

Accordingly, the lack of trained staff is one of the significant factors hindering the implementation and realisation of the social development approach. These findings concur with the assertion made by Lombard (2008:164), who maintained that “the skills shortage seriously undermines social work’s capacity to respond to its social change and development function and to deliver on socio-economic goals”.

The focus group discussions revealed that the rate for turnover is incredibly high for social workers. Nine participants maintained that the reasons for the high turnover centred on the lack of attractive financial rewards to motivate their performance. Two others felt that poor conditions of service also contributed to the high turnover of social workers. One social worker said:

“Our packages do not match those of the government, and the social workers tend to prefer working in the government than in a NPO”.

Another participant in a managerial position added:

“Even if we employ the social workers, they do not stay for long as they will always look for greener pastures. This is because we cannot offer competitive salaries and better conditions of service” (director, focus group discussion, September 2013).

Most of the management staff of the CYCCs maintained that that the social work posts are subsidised by the Department of Social Development and that they were funded in an entry level bracket, making it necessary for the CYCCs to secure

additional funds to make the offer reasonably lucrative for the social workers, who, in most instances, shun working for them. An administrator of a CYCC said:

“ We only manage to add a little extra on what the department subsidises, but this often is not as competitive, and whenever the social workers get some experience they leave for better paying jobs” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

4.5.2 Subsidisation on the funding of other social service professions

It was acknowledged that the present levels of subsidisation affect not only the social work profession, but also others, such as the providing of child and youth care services. The participants, who worked in the management of the CYCCs, were asked if this effect was limited to social workers only, and three of them replied that they are not subsidised for child and youth care workers. The CYCCs have to obtain funds from donors or the corporate sector in order to pay the salaries of child and youth care workers. One participant said:

“There is also an acute shortage of child and youth care workers. And it is very difficult to operate without child and youth care workers, and we have to go an extra mile to make sure that their salaries are paid, even though we strongly feel these posts should be subsidised by the Department of Social Development” (director, focus group discussion, September, 2013).

Consequently, the effect of the constraints imposed by funding leads to their being unable to attract qualified, skilled and experienced staff, which in turn leads to the

employment of unqualified personnel. One director of a CYCC emphasised the link between qualification and remuneration by saying:

“Very few qualified child and youth care workers can accept to work for R 2 500 a month, without benefits. Given the rising living standards in Johannesburg and entire South Africa, it is very difficult for a qualified person to work for very little salary [R2500]...NO! NO! NO! They do not accept.. ”
(focus group interview, September, 2013).

Four of these participants said that they had qualified child and youth care workers who had undergone the course while already working at the CYCC, and three said that they employed workers who came to the position already qualified. One of the child and youth care workers said:

“Inasmuch as the salary is little, I cannot decline an offer because there are not many jobs for child and youth care workers and it is increasingly difficult to secure a job in a government-owned CYCC. I have to make do with what is available: we have families and expenses to meet” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

4.5.3 Professional domains afflicting CYCCs

Ideally, a CYCC should have, in its team of employees, several professionals working in tandem with the social workers and handling several professional domains which contribute to the welfare of the children. This state of affairs is, to a large extent, unattainable, as CYCCs are incapable of attracting personnel of this

calibre, let alone remunerating them with salaries which are in line with current professional salary scales. Professionals such as psychologists, physiotherapists, medical doctors, professional nurses and youth mentors are needed to strengthen the system which provides holistic care to children. On this subject, a director of a CYCC said:

“Ideally we need to have resident counsellors, a psychologist, a life skills mentor, remedial teachers, a nurse or a doctor, but because of funding we cannot attract or afford to pay these professionals at all. We have to do without and refer when appropriate for these specialised services” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

A social worker added:

“In most instances, we refer for specialised services and therapy, which is often very expensive because these professionals are in private practice and with the financial quagmire that often besets CYCCs it becomes very tricky”.

Another social worker added:

“Because of the exorbitant costs to access specialised services, we often resort to public facilities, which are usually full at any given time. The notion of bureaucracy and red tape at public facilities frustrates and wastes our time” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

4.5.4 The lack of formal education among child and youth care workers in CYCCs

Findings from the social workers and management staff in CYCCs indicated that the child and youth care work profession is fairly new, and that there are very few workers who are available. They added that their posts are not subsidised by the Department of Social Development, and that the CYCCs have to solicit funds from donors such as the National Lottery (Lotto) to pay their salaries. In addition, they also fail to attract qualified child and youth care workers because they cannot offer remuneration which compares favourably with that offered by government-owned CYCCs, which offer good pay with benefits. The consequences are often disastrous, as unqualified people, who have no prior training or knowledge of children's rights, are employed in their place. One administrator said:

“We end up employing people without child and youth care work qualifications because we simply cannot get the ones that are qualified, because we cannot pay them well” (focus group discussion; September, 2013).

The social workers also voiced frustrations about working with workers of this sort, as there were often misplaced estimations of their abilities and unrealistic expectations from them, and in some instances, violations committed against children had been witnessed, which often exposes the children who are subjected to treatment of this sort to secondary traumas. In the words of one social worker:

“It is frustrating to work with child and youth care workers who do not have a background of the profession, as you have to overly explain everything to

them and, if left unsupervised, children are often abused in a subtle way, and this places enormous pressure on our jobs” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

It is always going to be problematic when children with special needs are placed in the hands of unqualified child and youth care workers. It was learned that some of these workers had never looked after children in their lives before, and that there were often disastrous consequences when a child with special needs was entrusted to their care. On this subject, another social worker had this to say:

“It is chaotic in such a scenario, as someone is not conversant on how to look after that child appropriately, let alone do programs that can stimulate that child for self-development. Some children have physical disabilities, mental impairment and some are slow learners” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

4.6 Responses from the children

The study also gathered data from the responses of children who had been placed in a CYCC, in order to gain an understanding of their attitudes and their perceptions of being placed in a CYCC. Responses were obtained through in-depth interviews from twenty-five children, between the ages of six to eighteen years.

4.6.1 Children’s perception of CYCC programs

When asked which of the programs offered at the CYCCs were of most interest and benefit to them, the participants replied that therapy with the social workers was of

great help and that they had learned a lot from the sessions in which they had participated. One 12 year-old child said:

” The discussions with the social worker have helped me accept my situation and I have adapted well here. I am always happy to know that there is someone who is willing to listen to me and help me with my problems” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

Another of the children said:

“When I arrived at the CYCC, I was a bad boy and did not want to listen to anyone. But when I started to have sessions with the social worker I began to open up, and I realised that I was always angry because of the fact that our mother had abandoned me and my little brother, and I had to look out for him and provide for him until we were taken by social workers” (in-depth interview, 2013).

4.6.2 The Role of recreation in child development

Other children felt that therapy was not their favourite program, and they preferred it when there were opportunities for sport and trips out of the CYCC. One child confided:

“I always look forward to events that are organised at the CYCC, like sport and also trips, rather than talking a lot about my past with Sisi at the hostels. I

feel so lively and energetic when we mingle with other children at the grounds or visiting new places”.

Another child said:

“I like soccer a lot and I would love to play as a professional one day. I am not so good with schooling but I am very good in games. I always look forward to the days when we are given tickets to go and watch Kaizer Chiefs at the stadiums. Those experiences are my best here”.

The children expressed a great deal of enthusiasm about the recreational programs, as they afford them the opportunity to interact and to get away from the CYCC and to see other places. In addition, they also motivate them to focus on their competences and to work hard to reach their goals.

4.6.3 Visiting of children to family members and host parents

Eight of the children mentioned that other children were allowed to visit their relatives or host parents on weekends and school holidays, but that they were not allowed to go anywhere else. They found these arrangements quite disheartening and frustrating. One child had this to say:

“We are always here at the centre every time, and we never go anywhere unless it is to a clinic or a school and it is very boring here. It gets quiet over the holidays”.

In the CYCCs it is imperative that children should maintain contact with their parents, family members and friends during school holidays and 'out' weekends. Some CYCCs have a host parenting program in which they involve members of the community who express interest in hosting children during weekends and holidays. However, this program can bring its own problems, and the host parents need to be screened and to choose the children they would like to host.

The children find it difficult and hurtful when they are left at the centre and others are out enjoying their time with their families. The feelings of loneliness and boredom affect them emotionally and temperamentally, and constitute a drawback for their development. Another child said:

"We feel so empty and the feelings of being unloved appear again when we are told we cannot visit or go out. We don't understand when the social worker says we cannot go out when others are going. It makes me so angry and I feel like running away" (in-depth interview; September, 2013).

Reiterating these feelings of frustration and anger, another child said:

"What bothers me is that is some other children go to visit host parents and we do not go at all. What really bothers me is some children who came after me go and visit host parents whilst I am stuck here every school holiday. In my instance I used to visit on weekends but I was just told that I cannot go to my host parent anymore" (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

4.6.4 Behavioural problems discouraging host parents from hosting children

It was learned from social workers managing CYCCs that the host parents sometimes decline to take children again, after experiencing the behaviour exhibited by the children while they are in their care. One social worker said:

“Our host parents assist us a great deal with weekend and holiday placements because it is our desire that all children will be out enjoying family life in the community. However, some host parents complain that the behaviour of the children sometimes deters them from taking them again. For instance, a girl child will return to the host parent around 9 p.m. and offer no real explanation for her late coming”.

Another social worker added:

“These children spoil things for themselves when they go out. They quickly forget who they are and why they have visited. Many times we see host parents coming to the CYCC complaining that the child stole from them whilst they were visiting. Cell phones, clothes, money, among others have been recovered from the children once they come back. And when something like that happens, the host parent loses interest in that child”.

4.6.5 Inappropriate behaviour exhibited by children who are not allowed to visit

Many children in CYCCs have behavioural problems which have been influenced by many factors, which can be psychological, sociological or environmental, but not being allowed to visit is also a factor which causes problem behaviour. Twelve of the

children maintained that their feelings of frustration and sadness were the result of being denied the chance to visit, and that it was among the reasons which had led them to abscond from the CYCC in order to interact with the outside world. One interviewee said:

“I will climb the wall and run away so that I get to play with my young brother who stays with my aunt. It’s boring when I see the social worker coming to take me back to the CYCC. I also want to go away for those weekends like my friends here at the CYCC, and come back with goodies or new clothes”.

The children who do not go away often find it hurtful when others exchange experiences of their weekends and holidays, when they have nothing exciting to share with their friends. The pain of watching others leave and come back with goodies is also detrimental to their emotional development, as they are often lonely and they tend to regress when they are alone. Thirteen participants maintained that the reason for absconding was to have fun and to get away from the CYCC. They did not mention one of the real underlying reasons, which is that the routine at the CYCC sometimes bores them, and absconding becomes an adventure which gives them a thrill. One participant said:

“It is fun going to Maponya mall or Jabulani mall with friends when we run away from the Centre, waking up knowing that I am not going to school. We get to see the latest fashion and window shopping and the bright lights” (in-depth interview).

Six children provided another reason for their inappropriate behaviour, suggesting that behaving improperly was a way for them to get noticed at the CYCC, as they felt the need for attention and to have it acknowledge that matters pertaining to them were important. Three of the participants emphasised that, when they behaved badly, their external social worker was called in, which provided an opportunity to express their feelings of frustration about not being allowed to visit, which this quotation illustrates:

“I have noticed over time that it is easy to get the attention of my social workers, especially the outside (external) one. I just behave badly and they will ask what’s wrong. That is when I tell them I want to visit. From there I know they will make a plan for me sooner”.

4.6.6 Limited contact with the external social worker

The interviewees were asked how often they received visits from their case managers, who are the social workers who had arranged for them to be placed in the CYCC. Sixteen of the children gave a variety of responses, with those who had been placed for reasons of needing a place of safety having more frequent visits, particularly visits which pertained to attending court sessions. One child said:

“I see my social worker at least once in two months when I am going to court or hospital. Sometimes the social worker does not come to pick me up, but I always meet him or her there” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

The reasons for making contact with external social workers varied. Some children met social workers to discuss their misconduct or bad behaviour. In this context one child said:

“I only see my social worker when I have not been behaving well and they are discussing about my behaviour in the boardroom”.

In the interviews it was revealed that contact with external social workers is minimal and that the children always wanted regular contact to enable them to follow up concerning the prospects of reunification or reintegration into society. The children also confided that they get a sense of pride and that they are happy whenever they get visits from their social workers, which is illustrated in these quotes from the children:

“It gives pleasure and good feeling when one knows that your social worker has visited you. It is a demonstration of love”.

“Whenever the social worker visits me and tells me about my family I feel so happy and I feel encouraged that one day I will go back home to be with them when things are better” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

The external social worker usually makes contact with a child to clarify issues pertaining to the child’s long term plans regarding reunification and other alternative care arrangements, and serves to remind the child that he or she has not been

forgotten or dumped at the CYCC, which was emphasised by one of the children who said:

“My social worker (external) was the one who brought me here after taking me from my step-mother who abused me. She showed me love and care until the day she brought me here at the centre. Whenever she visits me I feel so special and make sure all my friends meet her because I want to be like her when I finish my studies. She is someone I treasure and admire”.

Thus it can be seen that this contact has a bearing on modelling behaviour, and that its consistency needs to be maintained to ensure that the bond created by it is not destroyed, which would be extremely detrimental to the self-esteem of the child.

4.7 Accomplishments made by CYCCs

The participants also maintained that, although there were problems and challenges to be encountered in the CYCCs, there were also success stories concerning the protection of children, which they had witnessed. They also maintained that the role which the CYCCs play, and the gap which they fill, was of the utmost importance, and that these considerations could outweigh the challenges they face in their operations.

4.7.1 CYCCs are vehicles for offering holistic care and protection to children

The study found, on the basis of what had been learned from all of the participants, that CYCCs play an immense role in providing care and protection to children in need. Most CYCCs use the strength-based approach to identify strengths, and build

on these to lift the self-esteem of the child. In this regard, one of the social workers maintained:

“We usually meet as a multi-disciplinary team which consists of the social worker, a social auxiliary worker, teachers, child and youth care workers and sometimes, the management. The aim is to identify the strengths of a particular child and reinforce them with appropriate resources so that his or her self-esteem is restored or enhanced” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

Various participants noted that, in the CYCCs, the children have access to basic care in the form of food, clothing and shelter, medical care, education, emotional and spiritual counselling, opportunities to build their skills and talents, and sport and cultural activities which assist in their development. One child mentioned that his world and perception of life had changed positively since his placement in the CYCC. He said:

“My past is dark and has so many bad memories, and I had lost a reason for living because of what I went through. However, my way of thinking and doing has changed since I have been here (CYCC). There are so many things to do that keep us busy and that show us that we are loved, we are also valued and we have a right to become better citizens” (in-depth interview, September, 2013).

4.7.2 Role of CYCCs in nurturing vulnerable children

A consensus emerged from the children regarding the role of the CYCC. Eighteen maintained that the CYCC offered a much better place for them to grow and reach their potential than where they had been before entering the CYCC. They added that they were comfortable, loved, and that there were people who were always willing to listen to them and to offer a shoulder, whenever they needed to have someone on whom to lean for comfort, which was echoed by the social service professionals, who emphasised the all-important role which the CYCCs play to safeguard the rights of the children. One of the children said:

“My life is a lot better now; I now have friends at the centre and at school and I look forward every day to be with them”.

This statement shows that a sense of belonging has been fostered in this child, as she now possesses the ability to form and maintain relationships with other people who are significant to her. Another child said:

“I do not have to worry about clothes, food or where I will sleep because I know I am well looked after. Also, the skills I have learned by working in the kitchen and in the dormitories to clean, make my bed, iron, cooking are important as I used to hate them, but now I understand the importance of good hygiene”.

The fact that many of the children came from impoverished or vulnerable family circumstances may not have allowed them to develop skills such as practicing good

hygiene, or to have, and to maintain, good relationships with their peers, but the CYCC has provided them with an opportunity to go back and to reclaim this lost ground in their lives. The importance to these children and their psychological well-being, provided by the knowledge that they no longer needed to worry how they were going to obtain food and clothing, cannot be overestimated. In addition, the institution gave them a new home with secondary mother and father figures to provide guidance, mentorship, coaching and love. One of the children had this to say:

“I have someone to talk to who listens, directs, supports and guides me on all issues that affect me. I am so happy here”.

4.7.3 CYCC social workers are discriminated in favour of other designated social workers

Findings from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews revealed that the reduction of statutory powers had been well received. Six of the participants saw it as an opportunity to focus completely on the growth and development of the children placed in the CYCC. One social worker had this to say:

“At least our primary focus now is on rendering supervision and making assessments of children, following all facets of life regularly. In addition, we can fully concentrate on programs that aim to nurture and develop the children as we prepare them for reintegration into the society” (focus group discussion, September, 2013).

Thus, limiting the statutory powers of the social workers in the CYCCs can be seen as beneficial, as it allows these social workers to spend more time on programs which are of benefit to the lives of children placed in the CYCC. This contention is supported by Makhapela (2007), who maintains that social welfare systems tend to hinder some social workers from implementing the social development approach in the CYCCs. As a result of the limiting of statutory powers, though, the social workers in the CYCCs can now give their full attention to working with children and applying the social development approach, and be relieved of the burden of statutory work.

The provisions of the Children's Act specify, explicitly, that designated child protection organisations have full statutory powers and, as a result, their social workers are designated. This is not the case with the workers in the CYCCs, who are limited to acting as supervising social workers. Previously, social workers in the CYCCs had statutory powers under the discarded Child Care Act, and they could initiate and finalise Children's Court enquiries among the other statutory obligations which they carried out. However, this development places an increased burden on the designated social workers. One of the social workers in the CYCC said:

"It is frustrating to witness the slow movement of cases for children who ultimately spend more time in a CYCC because the case manager cannot render reunification services due to a very demanding caseload, whilst I could have assisted, but the Act does not allow me to render statutory obligations".

4.7.4 The need to expedite children's exit plans and their reintegration into the communities

The study found that the participants who were social workers felt that the process of integrating children into families and communities was moving at a snail's pace. A social worker said:

"It's imperative that we have to secure host parents for these children, because we see it as a powerful program that can assist those children who have minimal chances to be reunited with their biological parents and also those who are no longer adoptable as sanctioned by the Act".

Another social worker said:

"We assist the external social worker with continuous supervision of weekend placements to see how things are going. If the child is happy and we feel that the placement is in the best interests of the child, we then recommend to the designated NPO to render screening services and appropriate services".

The social workers working in the CYCCs expressed concern about children staying longer in a CYCC than they should, as the movement of children back into family environments always remains a part of the long-term plans for the children. In order to facilitate this process, there need to be plans which aim to ensure that this happens. Inasmuch as they do not control where children are placed, as the external social worker leads this process, they can influence the process itself. Most of the social workers maintained that they secure host parents for the children and

supervise the placements over time, and if these placements are seen to be successful, they eventually make a recommendation to the external social worker, who will complete the statutory obligations to motivate the movement. The social workers maintained that many host parents had become successful foster parents, and others successful adoptive parents, and that, through their recommendations, many children had been transferred. One social worker said:

“The host parenting program might be slow but it definitely has positive stories. Most children end up in foster care and, in some instances, adoption through this program. This is the ultimate goal: we desire to see our children in family environments divorced from institutionalisation”.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings of the research presented insights into the extent to which CYCCs provide care and protection to children in need. The responses of the participants were based on their own experiences and the attitudes which they had acquired as a result of these experiences. The qualitative analysis of the study shows that there are numerous challenges affecting CYCC operations and that these tend to impede the attainment of the objective of providing care and protection to children. The chapter focused on the presentation of several themes, and sub-themes, which emerged from the interviews and the focus group discussions, which detailed these challenges. There are both infrastructural and institutional factors affecting CYCC operations, and the personnel and the children all cast light on these issues. However, the CYCCs have also achieved a great deal in terms of attaining the objective of providing adequate care and support to children who are in need.

The CYCCs offer a safe haven for children, where they are allowed to grow and develop their potential before being reintegrated into the community, or reunited with their families.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the findings of the research, draws conclusions from the study, makes recommendations and also details the implications of the findings for social work practice. The chapter also presents the limitations of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The goal of the study was to determine and explore the extent to which CYCCs provide care and protection to children in need. Data was collected using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. There were thirty-six participants interviewed and eleven focus group participants. The qualitative analysis of the study proved that CYCCs play an all-important role in the providing of care and protection to children in need.

5.2.1 The role of care and support to children in need of care

The findings of the study were that, to a great extent, the CYCCs are assuming a very important role by providing care and support to children in need of care. The gap which the CYCCs fill, by promoting the rights of children in South Africa, is duly acknowledged by and emphasised in the findings, which revealed that the nurturing component facilitated by the CYCCs assists in the growth and development of children. The study also found that the new Children's Act had improved the effectiveness of the CYCCs significantly, and that the social workers working in the

CYCCs attempt to provide programs, which are sanctioned by the Children's Act, in an effort to assist the children to recover from the traumatic experiences which they would have had prior to being admitted to a CYCC. The programs which are facilitated help to build resilience in the children and ultimately to realise their potential, in preparation for being reintegrated into the community. The children concurred that their lives had changed dramatically after they had been placed in the CYCC, and they were aware of the changes which they were undergoing. The Act requires an assessment panel to assess the case of each child, prior to admission, in order to commit the child to a program which will assist in and enhance his or her development in a nurturing environment.

However, inasmuch as the CYCCs try to provide protection and support to children in need of care, they face various challenges which compromise their ability to provide holistic care to children. The lack of support in the execution of their professional duties was cited as a source of frustration by the workers. It was learned that, although the social workers would suggest initiatives which would guide and stimulate the growth and development of the children, they often encountered hurdles in terms of receiving endorsement from management, which frustrated the social workers, who were often obliged to resort to a residual welfare approach as a result, which meant that the children would not benefit much in the long run, thereby compromising their objective to provide care and protection.

The competence of senior managerial staff was also cited as an impediment towards attaining this objective. Some management staff had been found not to be sufficiently conversant with the requirements of working with children, which could

have grave consequences for the aims and aspirations of the CYCCs. It was found that, in such situations, social workers were frustrated, owing to both lack of support and the behaviour and the attitudes of senior management staff, which were, in many cases, in direct conflict with the stipulations of the provisions of the Children's Act concerning child protection.

The laxity of external social workers in expediting reunification processes was seen as an impediment, as children would have to stay for longer periods in a CYCC as a direct result, and a family environment is always regarded as the best for a child's development, as opposed to institutional care. Accordingly, keeping children in CYCCs for longer than they should be kept is not in their best interests, and the slowing down of movement from the CYCCs compromises the care which they provide.

5.2.2 Accomplishments of the CYCCs in the care and protection of children

The findings of the qualitative research have shown that, despite the burgeoning challenges which CYCCs face in their operations, they have many accomplishments, and that they have done exceedingly well to provide care and support to children in need. They offer a safe haven in a nurturing environment, in which children receive therapy in order to assist them to recuperate from the traumatic experiences to which they had been subjected, prior to their being admitted to a program in a CYCC. Children who are placed in CYCCs require assistance to overcome toxic stress, trauma and problems affecting their cognitive and physical health development. The findings of the study show, quite clearly, that social workers play an important role in restoring their impaired capacities and stimulating their development.

In addition, the children are given shelter, food, clothing, access to education and support in all facets of life. The staff complement at the CYCCs is committed to the development and progress of these children, and their efforts are most certainly made in the best interests of the child. The children were found to be loved and completely supported to reach their potential by people who want to see them succeed and become independent in the future. It was also found that the staff is willing to listen and to provide emotional support to these children in their time of self-discovery and adaptation away from the traumatic backgrounds which had caused them to be placed in CYCCs, and that this assisted them to adapt quickly.

The CYCCs offer programs which have developmental paradigms which offer great benefits to the children as they prepare to be reintegrated into society. The ultimate aim of CYCCs is to ensure that children are reunited with their families, successfully placed in foster care or adopted, to allow them to continue their growth and development in family environments. In addition, the host parenting program facilitated by the CYCCs offers an opportunity for the children to develop a sense of belonging, through interactions with other children in the community and also with parental figures. Successful relationships developed through this program are then recommended to the external social worker, who will fulfil the statutory obligations necessary for the transfer. The study found that this is a very useful program which has resulted in several children being successfully transferred from institutions to family environments.

The introduction of the Children's Act was particularly welcomed by social workers in the CYCCs, who view it as developmental and helpful to them in the execution of their tasks, as it reduced their statutory obligations, enabling them to focus

completely on their supervisory tasks in their work to promote the development of the children. This state of affairs is in direct contrast with the provisions of the discarded Child Care Act, which expected social workers in a CYCC to attend to the bulk of the statutory work in addition to their supervisory tasks, which, in turn, had resulted in insufficient attention being given to programs and supervision owing to the social workers being overburdened with statutory work.

5.2.3 Resources and challenges facing CYCCs providing holistic services to children

As has already been noted, CYCCs face numerous challenges and shortages of resources in their quest to provide holistic care and protection to children in need. The study found that funding constituted a severe challenge which affects the ability of the CYCCs to provide their services and programs. The CYCCs are funded by the Department of Social Development, through subsidies. The Department of Social Development makes use of the per child subsidy to allocate funds to a CYCC. The funding from the Department of Social Development is not adequate to provide the holistic services to the children, obliging the CYCCs to secure alternative sources of funding from an ever-dwindling donor base, and this seems to be becoming increasingly difficult. The problems concerning funding extend to the difficulty which CYCCs have attracting and retaining the skilled personnel who are needed to facilitate the optimal development of the children. There was found to be a high rate of staff turnover in the CYCCs owing to their inability to offer attractive financial rewards and also owing to poor working conditions. Problems of funding were also seen as an impediment towards facilitating programs which are stipulated in the Act and which are deemed necessary by the CYCCs. It was found that programs such

as recreation, which included educational excursions, trips and games, were limited because they required a certain amount of expenditure for them to be a success. Both the children and the professional workers maintained and lamented that the most commonly provided program is therapy, which is often given by the social workers. Other programs such as recreation and life skills are implemented to an extent, but they are not supported enthusiastically by the management because they rely on funds to be effective. However, the recreational program was popular among the children, who saw it as fun and exciting, as they went on educational excursions, engaged in cultural activities and played games. Other programs which are crucial for development were not being completely implemented either, owing to funding constraints, despite the value that they have for children before they are reintegrated into the community.

During the course of the study, it was found that the staff of the CYCCs often experienced problems with the senior management staff of their institutions, and that in some CYCCs, the management personnel did not have the necessary qualifications, or a background in child and youth care work, which often led to disastrous omissions concerning the most crucial aspects of child welfare. This situation was seen as both retrogressive and frustrating by the social workers, who aim to restore the impaired capacities of the children and work towards the best interests of the child principle.

By contrast, it was found that senior management staff members tended to perceive that children in a CYCC simply need to be provided with clothes and to be fed, and consequently, gave scant attention or consideration to the principle of holistic

support for children, which often led to clashes between social workers and management, frustrating the efforts of the social workers. In addition, the lack of support given to programs by management was also raised as a serious obstacle to achieving the objectives of the developmental plans for children, as they were often seen as not being important.

5.3 Conclusions

From the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be offered:

The CYCCs are playing a crucial role in promoting the rights of children and providing children in need with a new lease of life, in a world which is filled with opportunities. Children found in need of care and support are provided with love, care and basic necessities in a nurturing environment. The CYCCs provide a premise whereby the children's chances of achieving a satisfactory life are increased and their impaired capacities are completely restored. The CYCCs render therapeutic services, which are aimed at treating the toxic stress and vulnerabilities to which the children would have been exposed in their former lives, and the ultimate aim is always successful reintegration into family life for these children.

However, children placed in child and youth care centres are being robbed of their rights to holistic care and protection, as stated in the Children's Act. The government, through the Department of Social Development, is responsible for the funding of the NPOs, which includes the CYCCs, but the government has failed dismally to provide sufficient support to the CYCCs to enable them to conduct their work in a manner which prioritises developmental considerations, which in turn results in the proper care and services needed to stabilise children and develop their

cognitive abilities and independence being, to a large extent, replaced by the type of care provided by the Child Care Act promulgated by the apartheid government, which is in sharp contrast to the provisions and stipulations of the Children's Act.

The inability or unwillingness of the government to allocate adequate funding to the CYCCs, with its adverse consequences for their management and operation, serves to pressurise them to provide the type of care advocated by the previous regime, rather than the holistic care called for by the Children's Act. It would seem that the government is funding a certain percentage of the cost of implementing the Children's Act, and leaving the NPOs to their own devices to secure funding for the full implementation. It is a grave indictment that the government is unable to supply full funding for the implementation of the Children's Act, three years after it has been in effect. The problems resulting from this failure include ad hoc services to children, a high turnover of professional staff and the inability to attract professional staff, which can only, ultimately, lead to the failure to provide holistic care and protection to children.

The South African Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 clearly mandates a provincial responsibility to provide basic care and protection, among other services. However, it seems as if there is a disjuncture between what is written as law, and what is actually practised. There is a serious lack of commitment by the government to bridge this gap, to allow the CYCCs to function, in accordance with the provisions of the children's Act, to provide the services stipulated by them to the children in their care.

Maladministration has proved to be a disastrous obstacle mitigating against achieving the objective of providing care and protection to children. The lack of support given to the social workers who come up with developmental programs for children is detrimental to the development of these children. In addition, the failure of the CYCCs to employ qualified and experienced personnel in management positions, as sanctioned by the Children's Act, is careless and reckless, and can only impede the ideals embodied in the aim of meeting the fundamental objective of providing care and protection to children. A background or experience in child and youth care work is a prerequisite for anyone to be employed in a CYCC, and this needs to be enforced.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of this study and its conclusions, the following recommendations are put forward:

1) The policy concerning financial awards needs to be spread and adhered to, and the government needs to match the subsidies which it provides to the NPOs with the funding which it gives to its own institutions, as is stipulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) and which the social development approach echoes. A review of the National Policy on Financial Rewards, to make the funding patterns uniform, is both vital and essential and needs to attend to the following considerations:

- An increase in the budgets of provincial governments. This needs to be done through the equitable share formula, which determines how the total national revenue is divided among the three spheres of government – national, provincial and local - and then among the provinces. The increases in

budgets for provincial governments would mean that they would be able to subsidise the NPOs sufficiently to run their operations. In addition, allocations should not be based on historical allocations and expenditures, but rather on the specific needs of the institution.

- Secondly, concerning the increase of budgets to provincial governments, it is also recommended that child protection and care should be considered a national strategic priority, both for government and political parties, and accordingly, funding to CYCCs should be increased, to allow them to fulfil their programs to provide holistic care and protection to children in need.
- In addition, the National Policy on Financial Rewards needs to spell out and emphasise an increased share of the department's budget to be allocated to services promoting the implementation of the Children's Act, and particularly in the case of the CYCC programs.
- It is also imperative that the government should legislate for uniform norms and standards to be applied in all provinces for services required under the Children's Act. If the services implementing the provisions of the Children's Act are to receive full funding, the challenges which the CYCCs face at present will diminish, and the quality of the services provided by the CYCCs could be ensured. At present, the government funds the CYCCs using the per child subsidy, in that the subsidies given to the CYCCs by the department are based on the number of children under the care of the particular CYCC. At present, the amount which each CYCC receives per child varies, as these amounts are set by each province. The per child subsidy needs to be made uniform across the provinces, and there should not be disparities between the subsidies given to NPO-owned CYCCs and government-owned CYCCs, as all

the institutions are performing the same role, namely, providing care and protection to children in accordance with the provisions of the Children's Act.

2. There is need for a revision of the service level agreements or SLAs signed between the department and the CYCCs. Proudlock (2011) echoed the same sentiment by maintaining that a proper contracting service between the DSD and the NPOs is crucial as it has many benefits for all the parties concerned. In addition, Proudlock (2011) maintained that proper contracting:

- Enables the government to direct and monitor services.
- Ensures that the NPOs are sufficiently well funded to enable them to provide high quality services.
- Will enable the NPOs to deliver high quality services, if all their costs are covered.
- Will enable NPOs to expand and increase their intake, providing care and protection to more children.

3) There needs to be increased support and collaboration to ensure that the CYCCs are able to facilitate all the programs needed to ensure the holistic development of children in their care.

4) To remedy the shortage of staff and the high rate of staff turnover, it is recommended that the social workers be relieved of some of the duties which can be performed by members of the social workers' support staff. Promoting a multi-disciplinary team approach to service delivery will cushion the social worker from the tedious tasks which at present hinder their work, and allow them to focus on programs which benefit the children. In this regard, the following considerations should be noted:

- Spreading the load of work across the various categories of social service practitioners, currently working to provide services which implement the provisions of the Children's Act, would reduce the enormous workloads which, at present, hinder the implementation of the Children's Act.
- A single focus on social workers only is not cost effective and will not yield results quickly enough.
- These steps could effectively reduce anxiety, stress and burnout among the social workers, enabling them to do their work methodically, rather than needing to take time off to deal with the emotional stress that comes with an overwhelming case load and results in high staff turnover.

5) Where the subsidisation of child and youth care worker posts is concerned, the government needs, also, to subsidise the child and youth care workers in the CYCCs. Doing so would help the CYCCs to retain and attract qualified personnel to work with children and young people, who need to be stimulated and helped to recover from their traumatic experiences.

6) People appointed to management positions in CYCCs should have a background of child and youth care work. The Department of Social Development needs to enforce the provision in the Act which requires that those working in the management of a CYCC should have a background in child and youth care work. This is imperative, as it would prevent the appointment of people to management, who have no knowledge of the welfare needs and the developmental needs of children. Continuous training and development of these staff members should also be encouraged, to ensure that they become knowledgeable with the present tenets and provisions concerning working with vulnerable children and young people.

7) The Department of Social Development needs to monitor and supervise programs which promote independent living, for young people between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years, who are still living in CYCCs. These programs assist children to adapt quickly when reintegrated into the community, and also to progress independently, to take on the challenges and opportunities offered by the real world. A multi-disciplinary approach is crucial for the success of programs of this sort. The department would need to assume the role of funder and also play a role in monitoring and evaluation, while the external social worker and the social workers in the CYCC planned tailor-made programs, according to the strengths and competences of each child, and implemented the plan, in tandem with the individual development plan of the child concerned.

5.5 Implications of the findings to social work practice

It is pertinent to introduce developmental perspectives into social work practice classes and policy courses. The developmental dimension of social work education needs, also, to be strengthened if social workers are to become effective and efficient in rendering the developmental programs sanctioned in the Children's Act. Patel (2008:192-211) maintains that developmental welfare is essentially a pro-poor approach, which promotes people-centred development, social investments in human capabilities and building social capital. Accordingly, sound knowledge of developmental paradigms is essential for the proper execution of programs which require them.

There is a great need for intensive training to develop progressive and effective developmental exit strategies for children who are placed in CYCCs. Even those

children who have disabilities or mental impairments need to have a well-defined exit strategy, which is made a standard requirement. It would be particularly valuable to disseminate reports on the methods that can be used to provide these exit strategies and independent living programs, which prepare young people to be self-sufficient and self-supporting after they have been reintegrated into society, among external social workers, social workers in the CYCCs, researchers and students.

The profession of social work, together with the needs of the children in CYCCs, need to be elevated, prioritised and have their best interests given active consideration. There is a need to investigate the theoretical, practical and policy contexts which have given rise to the challenges facing CYCCs at present, whose effects and results are detrimental to the development of the children. In addition, it is crucial to determine how positive changes can be made to facilitate the implementation of a developmental approach. It is a combination of these changes that will, it is to be hoped, bring about a transformation in the manner in which social workers seek, listen to and act upon the rebuilding of the lives of children, ensuring their optimal development while also promoting their senses of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity before they are reintegrated into the community.

The social work profession assumes various roles in relation to society. These roles reflect various models of society and corresponding social work activities. The exact nature of social problems, and the way in which society defines social welfare arrangements, influences the role of social work. The values of the social work profession support an empowerment base for practice. Social work adopts the conception of human beings as “striving, active organisms who are capable of

organising their lives and developing their potentialities, as long as they have appropriate environmental supports” (Malucco, 1983:136). This view emphasises the human capacity for adaptation and opportunities for growth, throughout the life of the individual, and it is linked to the purpose of social work as a way of releasing human and social potential to promote personal, interpersonal and structural competence. The role of social work, from the perspective of social workers in the CYCCs, is to secure maximum support from both state, in the form of the Department of Social Development and non-state actors, in the form of management, to ensure that the objective of providing care and support to children is completely realised and met, in a holistic manner.

5.6 Suggestions for further studies

This study does not sufficiently provide deep insights into the critical evaluation of the role of CYCCs to provide care and protection to children in need, in the whole of South Africa. However, it should provide the spark for further discourse and sufficient inspiration for further investigation. The following areas are recommended for further studies:

- 1) A study which is conducted on a larger scale, by involving CYCCs in the nine provinces of South Africa, and all the factors, which either promote or hinder progress towards meeting the objective of providing care and protection to children in need, could validate the findings of this study.
- 2) The variations, patterns and trends in each province could provide a premise, by means of which, a conclusive and overall picture of the extent of care and support for children in need of care, is being delivered by CYCCS in South Africa.

5.7 Limitations of the Study

Inevitably, there were some challenges encountered during the field work process.

These included:

- Some people were not willing to take part in the study, particularly people working in the management of CYCCs, who feared that their institutions would be exposed. However, after clear explanations of the aims and objectives of the research had been provided, they co-operated.
- The interviews and discussions took longer than anticipated and exceeded the time periods scheduled for them.
- Poor attendance in the focus group discussions, which were attributed to the hectic schedules of the social workers in the CYCCs, but after numerous attempts, a significant quorum was obtained.

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APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM

I..... hereby confirm that:

- I have understood the information provided on the study
- I am aware that a tape recorder will be used to capture data during the study
- I understand that participation in this study is voluntary
- I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time
- I understand that no payment or financial incentive will be received for participating in this study
- I have a right to access the study results if I so wish

I hereby confirm that I fully understand the conditions of this study and what my rights and responsibilities are as a participant.

I am therefore willing to participate in this study.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

APPENDIX 2: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Social Workers

FOR SOCIAL WORKERS/ ADMINISTRATORS AND MANAGERS

Goal of the study

The goal of this study is to evaluate the role of child and youth care centres in providing care and protection for children in need of care and protection

Biographical details:

Please provide the following details:

1. Gender:

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

2. Age group:

25-30		31-35		36-40		41-45		46-50		51-55		56+	
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3. Racial group:

White		Black		Coloured		Asian	
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4. How many years of social work experience do you have in child protection services?

5. How many years have you been employed in Child and Youth Care Centre as a social worker?

6. How long have you been implementing the Children's Act 38 of 2005, as a social worker?

7. To what extent do you render pre-statutory, statutory and post-statutory services? Please explain

8. How do you see the CYCCS meeting the objective of providing care and protection to children found to be in need of care and protection?_____

9. What is your experience and view of working in a CYCC?

10. What have been the infrastructural barriers experienced in implementing the Children's Act No 38/2005_____

11. What institutional obstacles do you encounter working in a CYCC with regards implementing the Children's Act

38/2005 _____

12. What human resource challenges have you encountered in implementing the Children's Act 38/2005

13. What in your view are the successes in implementing the Children's Act 38/2005

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX 3: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE II



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Semi-structured interview schedule
For children placed in CYCCs

Goal of the study

The goal of the study is to evaluate the role of child and youth care centers in providing care and support for children found to be in need of care and protection

Question 1

Please tell me about your experience of being in a CYCC?

Question 2

Do you think programs or social services offered meet your specific needs? Please give reasons for your answer..

Question 3

Explain your feelings on the programs that are offered by the CYCC

Question 4

Do you think that social service professionals work to the best of their ability to meet your needs? Please explain your answer

Question 5

What most do you like being in a CYCC?

Question 6

Do you feel safe, loved and cared for in a CYCC?

Question 7

Has your life/circumstances changed since you have been in the CYCC? Please give reasons

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

For social workers and CYCC management

1. How do you contextualize child protection within the Children's Act No. 38/2005 from a developmental perspective
2. What institutional obstacles do social workers working in child protection services face in implementing the Children's Act 38/2005
3. What in your view are the infrastructural barriers that social workers working in CYCC face in implementing the Children's Act 38 of 2005
4. What human resource challenges have you witnessed on the implementation of the Children's Act 38 of 2005

5. What effects of human resource challenges have you witnessed on the implementation of the Children's Act 38 of 2005
6. What if any, are the shortcomings of the pre-statutory, statutory and post-statutory processes provided in the Children's Act 38 of 2005, with regard to child protection
7. What in your view can be done to address the challenges that you experience in implementing the Children's Act 38 of 2005
8. What are the accomplishments of CYCCs in implementing the Children's Act 38 of 2005