AN EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WORK AND COUNSELLING SERVICES OFFERED TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Malepe Lesley Mogale declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo for the degree, Master of Social Work is my work in design and execution. I also declare that this work has not been previously submitted by me or someone else for a degree at this or any other University and that all material contained herein have been duly acknowledged using complete references.

Signature: _____

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Date: 19/01/2023

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on an evaluation of Social Work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The study aimed to evaluate both social work and counselling services offered to undergraduate students at the University of Limpopo by ascertaining the effectiveness, utilisation rate, describing the collaboration that exists between the centres from which the services are offered, and determining the mode in which students are made aware of the services under evaluation as well as the challenges faced by the practitioners when they render their respective services. The study employed a qualitative research approach and an evaluative design. The General Systems Theory and Evaluation Theory were employed. The General Systems Theory was used to explain the relatedness of all the sub-systems in making the whole system functional. In this case the sub-systems are the centres that exist and work together within the university in order for the university to reach its purpose for existence. The theory shows that if one or more sub-systems are dysfunctional, the functionality of the whole will be negatively impacted. The Evaluation Theory was employed to guide the researcher on what evaluation is, how and by whom it should be carried out. A convenience sampling method was used because all the people in the population of the study stood a chance to participate in the study and no preference was given to anyone. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Limpopo's Turfloop Research Ethics Committee and gatekeeping permissions were given by the Centre for Student Counselling and Development and Student Health and Wellness Centre. No one was coerced to participate in the study, that is, the participants participated voluntarily.

The findings of the study indicated that students were aware of counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development but not aware of the existence of Social Work services for students within the university. The study also revealed that the effectiveness of the services under evaluation high amongst those who had utilised the services and perceived to be highly effective by those who had not yet utilised the services. The study also established that there were proper referral channels for referring students to various service provider including the ones that the study seeks to evaluate. As such, the practitioners also indicated some of the challenges they face when rendering their services to be lack of awareness of Social

Work services by the student populace, lack of commitment from students and being under-staffed since their target population is huge compared to the number of professionals employed to service them. Through recommendations yielded by the study, students are encouraged to play their role in making the services effective by committing and attending to the prescribed sessions, the social worker needs to strengthen the awareness efforts in place to market the services and the management of the university is advised to re-assess the professional-student ratio and work on balancing it.

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction and background of the study

Students in higher learning institutions at times find the setting challenging in their lives as they face social, psychological, academic and financial problems. They develop stress and find it difficult to cope and manage every aspect of their lives (Mwangi & Otanga, 2015). This leads to undesirable acts such as dropping out of their studies, poor academic performance and substance abuse, including suicide and suicide attempts (Nkwanyana, 2013). Makola and Mogale (2017) identified several influences of students' underutilisation of psychosocial services from institutions of higher learning, especially universities. These include cultural beliefs, low expectations of benefiting from services, lack of knowledge about services rendered, and perceived lack of confidentiality.

In 2016, the Council on Higher Education indicated that South African colleges and universities are aware of the need to balance students' academic development and their general wellbeing (Council on Higher Education, 2016). This consciousness is demonstrated by the availability of student support structures in most colleges and universities across South Africa. Such institutions include counselling, social work services, health, and writing centres, to name but a few.

This study focused on the evaluation of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and also counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD) operating from D- Block at the University of Limpopo. The researcher obtained views from practitioners (social worker and counseling psychologists) and undergraduate students in order to evaluate the services (Social Work and counselling services) rendred to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The services were evaluated by a way of gauging the students' level of awareness of the services available to them from these centres, their rate utilising the services from the centres, the effectiveness of the services and the referral system of students to and from the services.

This research focused on Social Work services rendered to undergraduate students by the social worker based at the Student Health and Wellness Centre, as well as counselling services rendered by student counsellors based at the Centre for Student Counselling and Development Centre at the University of Limpopo.

1.2. Research problem

In 2008, Moeketsi and Maile compiled a report which revealed that the Department of Education stated that 120 000 students were enrolled in colleges and universities in the year 2000. Moeketsi and Maile (2008) further stated that 36 000 (30%) students dropped out of their studies in the first year of their studies, and 24 000 (20%) dropped out while in second level of their studies. Furthermore, Moeketsi and Maile (2008) stated that out of the remaining 60 000 students, only 22% of them completed their studies at the recommended time-frame for a three-year standard bachelor's degree.

In the year 2000, the Department of Education conducted a cohort study which presented an even more alarming picture. The cohort study indicated that by the end of 2004, a 30% of the total first-year students' intake into universities would have had completed their studies (Moodley and Singh, 2015). According to Scott, Yeld and Hendry (2007), a fifty-six percent (56%) of the admitted students had left their initial institutions without completing their initial programmes, and 14% would still be in the system (Moodley and Singh, 2015). The comparison of students' drop-out rates relative to the requirements in the Department of Higher Education, appealed for the overall university admission to increase from 900,000 in 2011 to 1.5 million by 2030 (DHET, 2012), build-up the issue of student drop-out rates because it goes contrary to the appeal that has been made (Moodley and singh, 2015). The National Development Plan supports the DHET (2012) with a target of 1.62 million college and university admissions by 2030. This means that a minimum of 400,000 graduates per year is required in order to meet the target by that date (Scott, Yeld and Henry, 2007).

Moodley and Singh (2015) compiled a report in 2010 which thoroughly indicated drop-out rates published by the Council on Higher Education (2004) of the three universities in South Africa. Amongst those, some of the institutions that took part in the study stated that "out of the students that started in 2000, only 6.8% had dropped-out by the end of the year. It increased to 11.8% by the second year and 17.3% by the third" as reported by the Council on Higher Education in 2004. That university also reported a

20% drop-out rate of undergraduate students from their studies.

The Council for Higher Education in 2013 released a report in which it was reported that one out of four students were able to complete their studies from a contact-based institution within the recommended timeframe aside for a specific degree (Council for Higher Education, 2013). A sum of 58% of the students attending a contact-based institution needed an extra 2 years to complete a 3-year bachelor's degree; the percentage increased to an alarming 91% for non-contact based institutions (Council for Higher Education, 2013).

Moodley and Singh (2015) are of the view that students drop out of their studies due to domestic or financial problems. Based on the researcher's observation, there have been reports of suicide and suicide attempts committed by students at the University of Limpopo. This is an extreme way of dropping out of school. In 2017, Nomahlubi wrote a newspaper article about a student from Witwatersrand University who committed suicide, and on the 11th May 2018, Magadla also wrote a newspaper article reporting about a Witwatersrand University student who committed suicide. The events- serve as evidence which shows that students in institutions of higher learning do face challenges which overwhelms their coping mechanisms. These suicides and attempts of suicides, dropping out of their studies, substance abuse suggests that students do not utilise the Social Work and counselling services available to them within their universities or the services are ineffective. As such, evaluating the services is crucial in order to increase utilisation and/or the effectiveness of the services.

Rousseau (2015) maintains that students' undesirable behaviour may be traced back to the ineffectiveness of a support or counselling service within an institution. Students also have a role to play in the underutilisation of both the counselling and social work centres. They may be influenced by the type of problems they deem to qualify for professional help, the uncertainty of confidentiality from the service providers, seeking social acceptance and cultural backgrounds, to name but a few (Nkwanyana, 2013).

Mwangi and Otanga (2015) believe that students are reluctant to seek help regardless of the availability of Social Work and counselling services. The problem under investigation was conceptualised by students as perceived underutilisation of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development at the University of Limpopo.

Furthermore, this perceived underutilisation of social work and counselling services by undergraduate students leads to poor academic performance, high rate of drop-outs, substance abuse, suicide and suicide attempts (Mwangi and Otanga, 2015). In response to these problems, the researcher evaluated the University of Limpopo's Social Work and counselling services in the aforementioned centres rendered to undergraduate students, determined the level of utilisation of services from both centres, learnt the reasons for the underutilisation of the services and suggested recommendations to improve the utilisation of the services.

1.3. Aim and objectives of the study

1.3.1. Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to evaluate social work services in the Student Health and Wellness Centre and also student counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development operating from D- Block at the University of Limpopo.

1.3.2. Objectives of the study

The study pursued the following objectives:

- To determine how undergraduate students are made aware of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.
- To ascertain the rate of the utilisation of social work services and counselling services.
- To determine the level of effectiveness of both social work services and counselling services.
- To describe referral channels for those social work services in Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services available in the same institution.
- To identify challenges faced when rendering both social work services and counselling services to undergraduate students.

1.4. Significance of the study

The researcher evaluated Social Work services at the Student Health and Wellness Centre and also counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development to determine the level of service utilisation by undergraduate students, the services' effectiveness in addressing challenges faced by undergraduate students,

efficiency, and students' awareness of social work and counselling services available to them. This was done to identify areas for improvement or maintenance in order to eradicate or lower students' undesirable behaviours such as dropping-out of their studies, the use and abuse of substances, and the attempting and committing of suicide, to name only a few. The study also helps to bring insights on reasons that make students to succumb to their challenges, which lead them to drop out of their studies, have poor academic performance, attempt and commit suicide instead of seeking social work and counselling services available to them within the university.

The study is also significant to the researcher's career development. The study enriches the knowledge of the Social Work profession by assisting social workers and counsellors to know when and how to evaluate their services. Last but not least, the study will help the management of the centres from which the services being evaluated stem and the university at large to implement strategies that will increase service utilisation level, effectiveness, efficiency, and students' awareness of the services.

1.5. Outline of the study

1.5.1. Chapter one: Introduction and background of the study

1.5.2. Chapter two: Theoretical framework of the study

1.5.3. Chapter three: Literature review

1.5.4. Chapter four: Research methodology

1.5.5. Chapter five: Presentation, analysis and interpretation of data

1.5.6. Chapter six: Summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher introduces theoretic structure that was employed to evaluate social work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The study employed the General Systems Theory (GST) and Evaluation Theory. These theories guided the researcher in a non-linear way to first understand Student Health and Wellness Centre and the Centre for Student Counselling and Development as centres from which the services being evaluated are offered and accessed through the General Systems Theory. The Evaluation Theory will help the researcher to comprehend the procedure of evaluation, that is, how it should be carried out, by whom it should be carried out and the purpose of evaluation (Miller, 2010).

2.2. The General Systems Theory

The proponent of the General Systems Theory, Von Bertalanffy initially shared the perspective of the General Systems Theory at a philosophy conference at the University of Chicago in 1937 (Laszlo & Krippner, 1998). After the Second World War, his first publication appeared on this subject (Laszlo & Krippner, 1998). Rousseau (2015) is of the view that the General Systems Theory began to be recognised as a theory of scientific integration and inter-disciplinary level in the 1960s. Von Bertalabffy (1972) said that the General Systems Theory would be established and used to support inter-disciplinary communication and co-operation, and promote the unity of knowledge and efforts towards a common goal (Laszlo, 1974). This is beneficial to the study on the notion that the University of Limpopo has inter-related centres which function to ensure that the university serves its purpose. This means that the functionality of the university may be impacted by the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a centre. Therefore, for a]centre to be deemed effective, it must go through evaluation.

Kast and Rosenzweig (1972) hold the notion that theory provides the pattern for organisation and management theorists to incorporate into their systems model, all of the different knowledge from relevant essential disciplines operating altogether towards a common goal. This simply means that systems have sub-systems that operate and resonate well with one another in order to ensure the overall functionality of the whole system. Since this study sought to evaluate services which stem from components or centres that add to the accomplishment of the university's mission, it is imperative that the centres providing the services under evaluation be understood.

2.3. Relevance of the General Systems Theory in this study

This theory is relevant to this study on two premises: the first is the perspective that a human being, in this case, a student is a system; and the second perspective is that colleges and universities are also systems. The first premise is that a student is a human being, which means he or she is a system, and like any system, there are several subsystems or spheres that work interdependently to maintain the overall functionality of the whole system, in this case, the student. Some of those spheres are the political, physiological, financial, psychological and cultural spheres, to mention but a few (Hutchinson & Oltedal, 2014). This means that if one sphere malfunctions, the individual's wellbeing will be affected. This explains the reasons for the said suicide thinking and behaviour displayed by students in distress. It also explains students' poor academic performance and the reason for dropping out of their studies, that if one area of the student's life is negatively affected, then the student will not function adequately.

The second premise is that the University of Limpopo is a system with subsystems that are interrelated. The financial aid structure, the student health structure, the housing structure, the sport and recreational structure and the counselling structure are among other students' support structures available at the University of Limpopo. They all function towards the one main goal, which is the aim of the University and that is found on the motto of the university "finding solutions for Africa". Therefore, if one of the subsystems is ineffective, it can impede the goal of the university, in a sense fewer students will graduate. If the university does not produce enough professionals, it will be regarded as dysfunctional. Given the understanding that these sub-systems are interrelated and function together for the functionality of the system as a whole,

the relationship needs to be analysed and understood as well. This allows the researcher to also look at the structure of the referral systems within and without the university in an attempt to deal with issues relating to their clients in a holistic approach. Furthermore, one student may need services from more than one centre. How the centre brings other role players in the intervention process is key. Thus, it needs to be analysed.

2.4. Evaluation Theory

Scriven (1991) defined Evaluation Theory as "a set of guidelines for determining the merit, worth and value of things". Shadish, Cook and Leviton (2007) noted that Evaluation Theory is about why evaluation should be carried out, for whom and how. According to Smith, Mitton, Cornelissen, Gibson and Peacock (2012), evaluation theory refers to "a means by which evaluators reflect upon what it is they do when they evaluate". Furthermore, the theory helps to organise and bring logical thinking, provide transparent grounds for specific implementation choices as well as help to resolve problematic issues which may arise when conducting an evaluation project (Smith et al., 2012). Given the above statements, Evaluation Theory enhances the study given its aim, which is to evaluate social work and counselling services offered to undergraduate students respectfully from Student Health and Wellness Centre and also the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.

Patton (1990) discussed intervention-orientated evaluation, participatory evaluation and empowerment evaluation as some of the different approaches to evaluation. Furthermore, Utilisation-Focused type of Evaluation Research was established during the 1970s centered on an investigation to see the original use of the results from the evaluation (Patton, 1978). Patton (1978) supported the use of less rigid models of evaluation with and alteration to the methods that were comprehensive, and offered an overall framework to be applied by evaluators.

2.5. Relevance of Evaluation Theory

Based on the nature of the study, Evaluation Theory is a relevant choice for the benefit of the study. On account of the nature of the study and the phenomena being evaluated, utilisation-focused evaluation is a relevant approach to evaluation since the

study aims to evaluate social work services from Student health and Wellness Centre as well as counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. The utilisation, effectiveness as well as awareness of the said services by undergraduate student populace are being evaluated. The study benefited from Evaluation Theory because the researcher will be informed by the theory on the reasons for the evaluation to take place, which will then provide guidance as to how to carry out the evaluation of the aforementioned services.

According to Gargani, Miller and Spiegelman (2016), evaluation theory entails among others, reasons for carrying out evaluation, when and how. They further stated that evaluation may serve many purposes such as programme improvement, accountability, worth, significance and ultimately promote social welfare. Miller (2016) also stated that Evaluation Theory provides researchers with viewpoints and direction on issues such as the role of the evaluator and the connection between the evaluator and those taking part in the evaluation and the community at large. Moreover, selecting evaluation questions and matching them with suitable methods, as well as participant selection are other nitty-gritties that Evaluation Theory will provide clarity about. The researcher is of the view that using Evaluation Theory, Patton's utilisation-focused evaluation will be highly beneficial to the study because the researcher will be guided by the principles outlined by the theory for a successful and meaningful achievement of the aim of the study.

2.6. Summary of the chapter

In this chapter the researcher discussed theoretical frameworks which guide the study. The chapter highlighted the background of the General Systems Theory and Evaluation Theory, followed by their respective merits which qualified them to be employed in this study. The next chapter will deal with literature review on the evaluation of Social Work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students within institutions of higher learning.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WORK AND COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS WITHIN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

3.1. Introduction

This chapter covers literature aspects such as undergraduate students' awareness of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. It further outlines the rate of utilization and the level of effectiveness of those services rendered by the said centers to undergraduate students. The chapter also covers referral channels as well as challenges faced when rendering students for social work and counselling services conducted in those respective centers. Evaluation, types of evaluations, benefits of evaluation and reasons for evaluation are also discussed in the chapter.

3.2. Social work and counselling services in institutions of higher learning: an overview

Moodley and Singh (2015) are of the opinion that institutions of higher learning are comprised of private and public institutions. It is also the view of Moodley and Singh (2015) that "most students who enroll in private institutions are mostly responsible for funding their own studies and students in public institutions of higher learning are government-funded." There are still concerns with students' pass rate because of the impediments they come across in their respective learning environments. This was also supported by Brock (2010) who stated that "access to higher education by individuals has increased significantly over the last few years, but students' completion of their studies is still a concern". It was further stated by Brock (2010) that institutions that are funded by the government admit more students than institutions that are not funded by the government.

According to Tamuliene (2014), the diversity of the student populace that enroll in public institutions of higher learning is faced with different predicaments that require serious efforts from different stakeholders to intervene in endorsing a comprehensive Student Support Services (SSS). Furthermore, Tamuliene (2014) stated that "student

support services should increase and support academic achievement through the provision of a support system that counters students' challenges." The view in line with Young (2009), who worked tirelessly to identify and eradiate the difficulties that students face in tertiary institutions when they work towards achieving their academic goals and further stressed the "need for government and other key stakeholders to establish comprehensive Student Support Services that should cater for psychological and emotional needs of the students". For the purpose of this study, the researcher will use the term Student Psychosocial Support Services (SPSS) interchangeably with social work and counselling services.

The Council on Higher Eduction (2016) indicated that students who enroll in institutions of higher learning are of different circumstances and differ in age and socio-economic status. The variances in their demographic dynamics have a major impact on their academic success (Nkwanyana, 2013), because a significantly high number of students in TVET colleges come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds (Dlamini, 2019). Therefore, Tamuliene (2014) reiterated the necessity for comprehensive Student Psychosocial Support Services in order to combat the students' diverse challenges. The researcher deduced from the above claims that there is a need to establish Student Psychosocial Support structures for services that will guarantee that institutions successfully produce graduates.

Tamuliene (2014) defined a Student Support Structure as a "system that is made available by institutions of higher learning, which caters for students' academic and emotional needs and which is regarded as a requirement for enhancing the students' academic success". The National Education Policy Act No. 27 (Ministry of Education, 1996) highlighted the importance of Student Support Services as a measure that will add great value to students' development. It is essential for public colleges and universities to establish an all-inclusive Student Support Services that combats both social/personal and academic/career related difficulties faced by students.

Miller, Smith and Nichols (2011) indicated the difference between educational counselling and non-educational counselling by pointing out that educational counselling consists of services that are based on aiding students to attain their academic goals through the utilisation of the resources made available to them by their respective institutions. Miller et al. (2011) also mention that "academic success is

measured through persistence on the part of the student". On the other hand, non-academic counselling includes social work and counselling services that focus on improving their study skills and alleviate the problems that may interfere with the students' performance (Brock (2010 & Miller *et al.* 2011). According to Miller *et al.* (2011) non-educational counselling includes the application psychological techniques that covers the emotional, mental and personal growth of students to make certain that the produce positive academic results. Brock (2010) also mentions that Student Support Services include but no limited to the provision of services that are financial in nature in order to foster students' comprehension of basic skill instruction, psychological services, career guidance, social work services and mentoring the students. This shows that that the services are of paramount importance because they play a vital role in the health and wellness of the students.

According to Miller et al. (2011), students who utilise Student Support Services are likely to produce better academic results than students who do not utilise the services. The Council on Higher Education (2016) advices that it is vital for institutions to be mindful of the needs of their students before they can establish student support programmes and services. The needs of the students may differ from one student to another depending on their background, history, financial positions and cultural beliefs. Mwangi and Otanga (2015) hold the view that "most students enrolled at public institutions, particularly in TVET colleges come from low socio-economic backgrounds and their background determines the nature of support they require." An emphasise by Miller et al. (2011), is based on the necessity to approach student support services as a customer service to allow them to market the services to the student populace. A study conducted by Mochineripi (2017) at De Vry University indicated that the best performing institutions of higher learning are those that attribute their success to the idea of low-income and first generation students' educational experience and improve from there.

3.3. The purpose for establishing social work and counselling services in institutions of higher learning

Section 27 (3) of the Higher Education Act No. 107 of 1997 as amended requires institutions of higher learning to establish students' support services in order to help them balance their social life as an attempt to maximise academic performance.

Michubu, Nyerere, Kyalo, Epiu, Wabule, Kambugu, Mayanja-Kizza, Tindimwebwa, Dubowitz, Muchiri and Jagongo (2017) define student support services as services that are meant to make students' academic life more effective and comfortable. Furthermore, students' support services differ across institutions of higher learning depending on the needs and requirements of the institution, the number of students enrolled, the location and even institutional mission statements. Chapter 2 of the Department of Education's White Paper (1997) identifies career guidance, counselling and financial aid services as essential requirements for student support services. However, this study focuses on counselling services provided to undergraduate students.

Gibelman (2005) as cited by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) stated that Social Work services play a critical role in higher education settings. He further stated that colleges and universities across South Africa include social work services in their counselling centres or within their faculties to provide students with the support they need. Social work services in institutions of higher learning focus mostly on the psychosocial functioning of individual students. According to Beiter, Nash, McCrady, Rhoades, Linscomb, Clarahan and Sammut (2015), there is a correlation between stressors to students' wellbeing and academic performance. This means that the prevalence of stress in students' lives can result in poor academic performance. Thus, social work services play an important role in ensuring students' academic success by reducing or eliminating situations that may be stressful to students.

3.4. Students' social work and counselling service awareness

Social marketing as a model of community work holds the school of thought says that people fail to develop and enhance their lives because they do not know, or are not aware of the services available to them (Weyers, 2013). Eyo, Joshua and Esuong (2010) stated that one of the factors that can increase the utilisation of counselling services among students is to expose students to media information on counselling services. Eyo et al. (2010) concur with Wayers (2013) on the premise that people who know services they are surrounded with tend to use them for the betterment of their lives. Dhavaleshwar (2016) concurs with views by Eyo et at. (20210) and Wayers (2013), that "social services and social work have an important role in helping the

people to improve the quality of life by creating awareness".

The promotion of services is crucial to their utilisation. Brennan and Beidel (2006) agree that the advertising of a service is vital to the success and utilisation of the service being marketed. Brennan and Beidel (2006) add that communicating counselling messages frequently, and conducting seminars, road shows and information sessions may influence awareness and the utilisation of the services being marketed. Mundalamo (2015) further agrees that effective communication of and about the services is essential and that without awareness of the programme, it is highly difficult for the intended populace to use the services (Antonellis, 2012). Therefore, it is of paramount importance for practitioners to make the public aware of the services they render for them to be successfully utilised.

Similarly, Wayers (2013) is of the notion that the Community Education model affirms that people fall in trouble due to lack of information, knowledge and services surrounding them. The Community Education model aims to facilitate a collective problem-solving by equipping community members with the knowledge to facilitate action, and by promoting community participation and shared decision-making (McGuinness, Arney, Chessell & Salvaron, 2013). Therefore, evaluating the level of awareness that supports centres at the University of Limpopo offered to students is important in determining both their utilisation and effectiveness in addressing student challenges. Mundalamo (2015) maintained that awareness of counselling or social work services includes but not limited to helping prospective clients to understand the services, their availability, ensuring that the prospective service users are familiar with the procedures to follow in order to utilise or access the services and address concerns about confidentiality of the services.

Marketing contributes positively to increasing knowledge of services to the public and intended target, and increasing familiarity and comfort of the services in order to create acceptance and enhance utilisation (Antonellis, 2012) of the services by the public, and to maintain the visibility of the services and its presence as a vital contributor to the organisation/community or the public at large. Antonellis (2012) also stressed that the foundation of counselling services is rooted in education and awareness. Poorly informed opinions concerning the activities and capabilities of the counsellor and a passive role in creating awareness about the need for counselling among the active

population hinders students' development as it impacts negatively to the utilisation of the services which becomes detrimental to their wellbeing.

According to Oluremi (2014), Student Psychosocial Support Services enable students to improve academically, achieve and also boost their personal growth as well as resolve issues with regards to occupational, personal-social problems and develop student's decision-making processes (Salami, 1998). Dean and Meadows (1995) define student counselling as a way of providing counselling services to students within a specified environmental setting such as a campus. Nevertheless, whether students use counselling facilities or not is another question (Salami, 1998). Salami (1998) is supported by Nkwanyana (2013) and Oluremi (2014), who are of the view that students may know of the availability, importance and benefit of utilising counselling services and still choose not to utilise the services. Olumeri (2014) is of the notion that students prefer talking to their friends or family members about their problems than talking to a professional.

Dlamini (2019) noted that "one of the reasons students underutilise University psychological services is due to a lack of knowledge and awareness about such services". This shows that there is correlation between awareness and utilisation of a service. In a study conducted by Russell, Thomson, and Rosenthal (2008) at an Australian Metropolitan University about the utilisation of health and counselling services by international students, uncovered that students' unwillingness to seek help from psychological services stems from the insufficient seriousness of their problems, that is, a thought about their problems being less important to address; inadequate information on the available services; and uncertainties and uneasiness about the services (Russell *et al.,* 2008). This suggests to the researcher that students' underutilisation of counselling services may be attributed to lack of detailed information regarding the services.

Students' awareness level may be associated with the type of career that the students are pursuing (Leahy, Peterson, Wilson, Newbury, Tonkin and Turnbull (2010). For instance, non-health disciplines are reported as more distressed than health-related disciplines (Leahy et al., 2010). The researcher interpreted this to mean that students in the health disciplines like medicine, nursing, social work and psychology are not likely to be in distress because they are mindful of the stress-relieving services that

are available to them from their institutions because they are familiar with such services compared to students from other disciplines who may not be aware of the existence and relevance of PSS. However, a study by Dlamini (2019) disproved this idea, as it was not the case at UKZN, PMB Campus. Furthermore, the study conducted by Dlamini (2019) showed that students from the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science used psychological services on campus the most matched with students in the College of Humanities. However, the researcher is aware of the research limitations in the sense that campuses are not the same, and so are students. The results of the current study may yield results that are contrary to the ones by Dlamini (2019).

A study conducted by Burns, Davenport, Durkin, Luscombe & Hickie (2010) in Australia explored patterns of internet use by young people to assess the usefulness of online resources for mental health problems. The results of the study showed that "young people used the internet to interact one with one another and to acquire knowledge about a mental health issue, even in cases when the mental health issue is not theirs." According to Dlamini (2019), in the last five years, twenty percent of young people had experienced a mental health problem and dealt with it on their own with their sources of information being the internet (Burns et al., 2010). The researcher deduced from the above statements that the internet plays a crucial role in promoting mental health among the youth and is progressive in doing so.

3.5. The students' utilisation of social work and counselling services

In 2017, the researcher and his allocated research partner conducted an unpublished research project as part of the fulfilment of a Bachelor of Social Work degree. The researchers discovered that the utilisation of counselling services at the University of Limpopo by the student population was low. The conclusion was based on a relatively small population of participants, and the researchers may have overgeneralised. Therefore, it is imperative that this factor be looked at from the service centre's point of view. Yorke, Voisin and Baptiste (2016) identified low expectations of benefitting from counselling services by the student population within institutions of higher learning.

Nkwanyana (2013) mentioned that a lack of service awareness could affect utilisation because students did not know the types of services offered, the nature of problems tackled by the centres and the effectiveness of the intervention. This implies that there is a correlation between the knowledge that students have about the services and the utilisation as well as the effectiveness of the services. Dlamini (2019) stated some of the reasons for students' underutilisation of university-provided psychological services as the lack of understanding, lack of awareness of the services, availability of infrastructure where the services would be provided, and their attitudes towards psychological services.

Schreiber (2007) indicated that "more undergraduate students, more females than males, and more English second language speakers made use of student counselling services in South Africa." This view was supported by a study conducted by Dlamini (2019) which revealed that the students' usage rate psychosocial services was similar to that reported in the literature with regards to gender, race and level of study. This was in contrast with views by Leahy et al. (2010), which suggested that the level of psychological awareness and utilisation was associated with the kind of profession that students were enrolled in. This created view that students from colleges that are engineering-based would have the lowest utilisation rate of psychological services. However, the study by Dlamini (2019) proved that this was not the case at UKZN, PMB Campus. Furthermore, the study projected that the students from the College of Agriculture, Engineering and Science used psychological services on campus the most compared to students in the College of Humanities. Moreover, students seek help from student university-based psychological services mostly for vocational-academic assistance (Van Schoor & Whittaker, 1988), and not often regarding their personal and social lives (Oluremi, 2014). The researcher is of the view that Social Work and counselling services are important and relevant in any institution of higher education, regardless of the industry that the institution focuses on.

3.6. The effectiveness of social work and counselling services

The effectiveness of a service can be determined by checking if they are meeting their goals, and if not, evaluating aspects that hinder progress to develop corrective measures for development. Specific goals of a programme are identified and the degree of the accomplishment of those goals gets documented (Wall and Solutions,

2014). The roles that the service providers/personnel are supposed to play and whether they practice within the legal parameters of their service delivery can also be used to assess the effectiveness of the services. The results of a summative evaluation might pin-point and indicate changes that should be made in order to improve it in its subsequent implementation (Wall and Solutions, 2014), whereas a formative evaluation, also known as process or implementation evaluation, is performed to examine various aspects of an ongoing programme in order to make changes/improvements as the services are being implemented (Wall and Solutions, 2014). Process evaluation is good as it focuses on improving services as they are being rendered in order to benefit the client who is currently accessing the services as opposed to summative evaluation, which aims at improving the services for the next client.

3.6.1. Goals, objectives and components of the services under evaluation

Evaluators cannot evaluate services without knowing and understanding their goals and objectives because evaluation research is about assessing service process, efficiency or effectiveness. In order for the evaluation of the services to be successful, goals and objectives of the services need to be clearly stated and mutually understood between organisers and service providers. In addition, they must be operationalised in measurable terms (Mahlatjie, 2016). It is crucial to make sure that the goals and objectives selected reflect personnel's version of the task, statement and their efforts to implement service. Oluremi (2014) stated the following as some of the goals that counselling services in institutions of learning might have.

- Students Guidance and Counselling Centre provides services to assist students to maximise their overall growth, academic and personal-social problems, and challenges for all-round development (Oluremi, 2014). This is to ensure that all students who enroll in colleges and universities exit as healthy professionals.

- Assisting the students to identify and recognise their interests, values, abilities, capabilities, skills and positive personality traits and to match these with their chosen career fields. According to Erik Erikson's stages of development and cited by Berzoff (2011), human beings leave the identity versus role confusion between the ages of 13 years to 21 years old. This suggests that institutions of higher learning are populated with people who are somewhat in the same stage of identity and role confusion.

Therefore, the social work and counselling service practitioners help students to find themselves and be able to identify their personality, strengths and weaknesses, values and interests, to name but a few.

•   Equipping students with knowledge, values, experience and to facilitate preparation for the world of employment.

•   Presenting workshops on Study Skills, Life Skills and Career Development to the student populace as well as to individuals;

•   Providing psychotherapy which aims to improve an individual's holistic well-being, resolve or alleviate troublesome behaviours, thoughts and emotions in order to enable them to improve relationships with others as well as social skills.

•   To provide social work services with regard to protection, care, support and development of vulnerable groups, individuals, families and campus community.

•   Attend to any matters that could result in, or stem from, social instability in any form in and around the campus.

•   Participate in outreach activities, educational campaigns and other community engagement activities.

• Contibute to the operational research, monitoring and evaluation components of the campus social services by keeping records of work done and the achieved results, and collect additional data as required.

3.6.2. Roles played by social work services in institutions of higher learning.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 1955) identified some of the roles played by social worker in an educational setting as "developing assignments that promote critical thinking, practice and creativity among students, facilitating discussions and debates about current events among students, incorporating information about vulnerable populations and cultural diversity into course materials; identifying appropriate resources, including literature and technology for student instruction; analysing students' learning challenges and recommending appropriate actions; building effective relationships within the local community where students may

reside in order to get support and protection from community members; collaborating with staff from other disciplines and departments for the benefit of the students; assessing students' emotional and psychosocial issues, such as substance abuse, eating disorders, support systems and/or physical well-being; educating students about the wide range of issues they might be facing, their causes, ramifications and remedies; participating in service planning and identifying and referring students to community resources (Hebenstreit, 2017)." This shows that social work services play a vital role in the health and wellness of students.

3.6.3. Roles played by counselling services in institutions of higher learning.

Oluremi (2014) indicated that counselling services in schools are provided in three critical areas, that is, the personal/social, academic, and career development. The services help students to resolve their emotional, social and behavioural problems, as well as help them to develop a clearer focus and sense of direction.

3.6.3.1. Social

In this area, counselling services are expected to deal with personal problems such as dropping out, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, irresponsible sexual behaviour, eating disorders and pregnancy (Oluremi, 2014). Fook and Sidhu (2015) are in agreement with challenges listed by Oluremi (2013). However, they added time management, not coping with too much reading/studying and becoming active students. Counselling services rendered at this level will help students to overcome these challenges. Nkwanyana (2013) is of the view that students have social relationships at home and at their institutions. Furthermore, the social aspect includes romantic relationships and friendships as they may also be stressors to students.

3.6.3.2. Educational

It is the vbiew of Nkwanyana (2013) that there is a need for skills development to assist students as they learn. The counselling services, to be embedded within classroom activities as a form of guidance to students, application of effective group study skills aiming towards setting goals for learning to improve test-taking skills (Fook and Sidhu, 2015). The counselling services for this area may focus on notes-taking, time

management, memory techniques, relaxation techniques, overcoming test anxiety and the development of concentration and listening skills (Litoiu, and Oproiu, 2012).

3.6.3.3. Career

Career guidance and career guidance counselling are regarded as some of the priority need in this twenty-first century (Hughes, Law and Meijers, 2017). According to Nkechi, Ewomaoghene, and Egenti (2016) "planning for the future, combating career stereotyping, analysing skills and interests" are some of the career goals that students must develop while they are still in school to avoid career burnout. It is important to share information on the available careers with students and inviting presentations from various work industries (Litoiu and Oproiu, 2012). This falls with in social work and counselling services, career counselling to be specific and it is necessary in preparing students for the world of work (Litoiu and Oproiu, 2012). Choosing a career is as important as planning for the future because they involve making life-long-future-altering decisions and as such, Social Work and counselling are required to help the students in taking such decisions.

3.6.4. Ethical principles of social work services as outlined by the SACSSP

The South African Council for Social Work has, in terms of section 27(1)(c) of the Social Work Act No. 110 (1978) with the approval of the Minister of National Health, made the following rules:

3.6.4.1. Commitment to clients

Social work services' main function is to promote the well-being of their clients. Basically, the interests of the clients are key. However, social workers' responsibility spread to cover larger society and since they deliver services in accordance to certain prescribed legal obligations their loyalty is owed to clients served (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney and Strom-Gottfried, 2013).

3.6.4.2. Self-determination

Social workers are expected to always respect and promote the clients' right to self-determination as well as to assist people in their efforts to identify and clarify their

goals (Hepworth, *et al.,* 2013). Social workers may limit clients' right to self-determination in instances where they are obliged to enforce a professional judgment, especially in cases where the clients' actions or potential actions poses threats to themselves or others (SACSSP, 1978).

3.6.4.3.   Informed consent

Social workers should provide services to clients only in the context of an appropriate professional relationship based on a valid informed consent. According to Hepworth *et al.* (2013) social workers should use "clear and understandable language to inform clients of the purpose of the services, risks related to the services, limits to services, the requirements of a third-party payer, relevant costs, reasonable alternatives, clients' right to refuse or withdraw consent, and the time frame covered by the consent." They should provide clients with an opportunity to ask questions (SACSSP, 1978).

3.6.4.4.   Competence

Social workers received training which acquired them certification and license to practice. Therefore, their obligation is to provide services with competency since their training exposed them to professional expertise (NASW, 1955). On that note, the SACSSP (1978) declared social workers to be relevant professionals with abilities to provide services in applicable areas and their intervention based on techniques as well as approaches which reveals competency in service delivery.

3.6.4.5.   Cultural Awareness and Social Diversity

Social workers should understand culture and its function in human behaviour and society, recognising the strengths that exist in all cultures (Wayers, 2013), that is, they should recognise and acknowledge their client's cultural practices. This knowledge base will enable them to demonstrate competence in the provision of the services that are sensitive to the clients' cultures and differentiate between cultural groups (SACSSP, 1978).

3.6.4.6. Privacy and confidentiality

Social workers must respect their clients' right to privacy (NASW, 1955). Their professional conduct prohibits them to gather the client's private information except only for compelling professional reasons. An important Once private information is shared, standards of confidentiality apply (SACSSP, 1978). Social workers may disclose confidential information when appropriate with valid consent from a client or a person legally authorised to consent on behalf of a client. It is required of social workers to protect all confidential information obtained in the course of professional service and the bridging of such can be done only when compelled for professional reasons (Hepworth et al., 2013). This implies disclosure of confidential information on the basis of a legal requirement or in cases where consent is obtained from a client.

3.6.5. Ethical principles of counsellors as outlined by the Health Professions' Council of South Africa (HPCSA)

According to the HPCSA (1974), psychologists are considered to be health practitioners. As such, they are governed by the HPCSA's code of ethics in order to ensure an effective service provision. The following are some of the ethical guidelines that guide health practitioners' practice as outlined by the HPCSA (1974) for a legal, effective and efficient service provision, and in this case, counselling services.

3.6.5.1. A practitioner's role includes having concern towards the delivery of services that focuses on best interest as well as safeguarding the well-being patients as their primary professional obligation (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.2. Even when encountering constraints due to the demand of their duties, practitioners should always be accessible to clients in times of need, and further arrange for possible means of becoming accessible when they are not on duty (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.3. Ensure that their personal beliefs are not imposed onto their patients in order to manipulate their views about individual's healthcare. It has to be noted that individual's health care may be influenced by his/her cultural practices, religion or spirituality, ethnicity, social status, lifestyle, economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation and any condition of vulnerability (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.4. If a practitioner is of the view that his/her beliefs might affect the provision of the client's treatment, that should be explained to the service user, and recommend referral to another health care practitioner (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.5. The patient's actions and believes as well as fear of one's exposure to health risk must not be used as a reason to refuse or delay treatment of a patient by any healthcare practitioners (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.6. The provision of healthcare during emergency situations should be conducted within the limits of one's practice which is determined by their training, experience and competency (HPCSA, 1974). In circumstances where one's expertise are limited, patient's immediate referral to those will intensive knowledge and advanced skills should be considered as a matter of urgency.

3.6.5.7. There is a need to respect privacy of individual patients and also preserve their worth as well as dignity at all times (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.8. Inappropriate relationship with patients should be avoided without limits and those whose responsibilities includes patient's escort, must refrain from any form of sexual involvement and financial arrangements with patients since this actions are exploitative and unethical (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.9. The human rights of each individual should not be violated violations of patients, and not allow, participate in or condone any actions that lead to violations of the rights of patients (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.10. Provide information to parents about their child's condition, treatment and prognosis when it is required (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.11. The information shared with patients should be delivered to the best of their understanding, in a language that they are conversant with considering and taking into account the patient's literacy level, values and belief systems (HPCSA, 1974).

3.6.5.12. The HPCSA (1974) indicates that the practitioner shall refrain from any information from their patients.

3.6.5.13. An application of an ongoing process to deliver the principle on informed

consent (HPCSA, 1974).

3.7. Referral for Services

According to Hepworth *et al.* (2013) Social workers should refer clients to other professionals the clients need services from those other professionals. When considering referral of a client to other professionals, it is important to discuss the decision first with the client in order to obtain consent so that all pertinent information can be disclosed to the new service provider (SACSSP, 1978). Social workers are prohibited to receive payment only for a referring a client in the absence of delivering a professional service (SACSSP, 1978). The principles discussed above govern social workers' intervention and interaction with their clients. This means that social workers need to observe the code of ethics in order for their services to be effective.

According to UNESCO (2000), referring clients is a sign of professionalism on the part of counsellors in understanding the limits of their skills and professional boundaries (Conner, 2005; Wango, 2006). Other situations that can warrant referral of students to another counsellor may include when the student needs the kind of services that the counsellors are not able to provide. When counsellors' work-relation with the client tempers with his/her work efficiency and progress of an effective service delivery to students, such as issues around transference or counter-transference, this will suggest referral to another counsellor (Commonwealth of Learning, 2007).

This shows that educational guidance counsellors need to be a fountain of knowledge about other organisations, the effectiveness of those organisations and their referral procedures in order to refer a client to other organisations or professionals for further assistance (Dogan, 2012; IACS, 2005; Nyaga, 2011; Mawire, 2011). Lawton, Bradley, Collins, Holt and Kelly (2010) hold the view that effective needs assessment is important before rendering a service and this is a manner of ensuring that clients are referred to relevant specialists. Social workers in this kind of a situation become case managers to ensure that the client's needs are attended to holistically. Studies conducted in the United Kingdom (Beks et al., 2018), Australia (Forbes-Mewett, 2019), Canada (Commonwealth of Learning (2007), Turkey (Dogan, 2012), Paris (UNESCO, 2000), New Zealand (Rethfeldt, 2011) and Alexandria (IACS, 2005) show that students referrals to clinics and hospitals for further management of their challenges. were

effectively done by counsellors.

When he was an undergraduate student at the University of Limpopo, the researcher observed that the university had 'students at risk programme', which was about all the systems within the university working together to assist students who may be at risk of dropping out, failing their modules, at risk of mental breakdown due to stress, etc. The housing team, lecturers, finance team and the health team were all encouraged to refer students to the relevant structure or services for help. Lecturers were asked to identify students who are performing poorly in their studies and to refer them for counselling and/ or social work services. Chireshe (2006) noted that in Zimbabwe, it was recommended that schools should have a team of female and male teachers equipped with basic counselling skills and referral information to assist students in distress. There may be over burdening of teachers/lecturers who have roles of counsellors added to the same teaching load as their colleagues who are not actively involved (Mikaye, 2012; Katzensteiner et al., 2007). Thus, lack of relevant reference materials and lack of funds can be seen as some of the challenges facing social workers and counsellors.

According to Chireshe (2006), peer counsellors assist in identifying students with problems and making referrals to the school counsellor. The same goes for housing, finance and the health team; they are equipped with the capabilities to identify students in distress and make proper referrals. Muchineripi (2017) identified "poor referral system" as one of the challenges faced by students when accessing comprehensive psychological support services from various stakeholders. This shows that the referral system is an important cog in the utilisation of the SPSS.

3.8. Challenges facing institutions of higher learning in implementing guidance and Counselling services

There is inadequate guidance and counselling services personnel or human resources in most institutions (Mikaye, 2012). Most institutions of higher learning enroll tens of thousand of students yearly. Mikaye (2012) is noted that most universities in South Africa have from five (5) to fifteen (15) social workers and counsellors combined to service the student populace. This means there is a significantly high clientele per social worker and/or counsellor. As such, the quality of the services rendered may be

questionable because of the high number of clients they have to serve, and some clients may remain unserved for days (Muchineripi, 2017). It is Mikaye's (2012) view that resources and inadequacy of funds are challenges that seem to derail the innovative and effectiveness of counsellors.

Students are not encouraged by their parents or guardians to easily seek for guidance and counselling services when necessary because they believe that guidance and counselling is an invasion of their children's and family's privacy (Mikaye, 2012). Oluremi (2014) submits that when students face challenges, they open up to their family members such as parents and guardians and not to counsellors. Although their family members are far away and counsellors are close-by, they still choose not to utilise neither social work nor counselling services. Nkwanyana (2013) observed that African culture plays a huge role in students not seeking counselling, especially male students. This means that there is low utilisation of the services due to external forces like families and culture. Therefore, a centre may seem to be dysfunctional when there is low utilisation.

According to Dlamini (2019), colleges and universities are faced with a number of difficulties when they offer students with Psychosocial Support. Roberts, Boldly and Dunsworth (2015) are of the view that the challenges faced by the personnel hired to provide students with psychosocial support services include "the context in which the services are being administered, the legislation and policies in place, institutional structure" and the role of key stakeholders. Nkwanyana (2013) is of the notion that challenges to successful utilisation of the services include the perceived level of assistance by the management of the respective institution, the culture and context from which the services are rendered. The effective use of PSS requires concerted efforts from the institutions to make the services available timeously (Oluremi, 2014). Young (2009) referred to a study corried-out at Rhodes University, and highlighted that one of the issues that students face when utilising psychological support is that the "majority of counselling practitioners were of the white population group, yet mental health issues were prevalent among students of the black population." This suggests that, an institution were white practitioners are a dominant staff discourages african/black students from accessing and utilising the services as they may not be comfortable and they may not articulate their challenges as best as they would using

their native languages. Young (2009) alluded that most African students believe that the act of seeking and utilising Social Work and counselling services is a western practice and that it does not exist in the African culture. This view is also supported by Oluremi (2014) who is also of the view that the African culture does not support the help-seeking behavior especially among the male gender. The claims made above strongly suggest that Social Work and counselling services must be structured from an African context for them to fit African students and their culture because culture plays an important role in seeking psychological help and the professional need to be aware of such cultural beliefs. For instance, in the African culture, men are seen as strong people who do not 'cry' or seek social work or counselling help (Nkwanyana, 2013). As such, social workers and counsellors dealing with African males need to affirm their decision to seek social work or counselling services.

Collaborations among relevant stakeholders are critical in establishing and administering PSS (Hepworth *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, Hepworth *et al.*, (2013) are of the notion that social workers are to have the necessary knowledge and expertise, that is, they must possess certain skills and knowledge to enable to render quality and effective services. Means of measuring the effectiveness of PSS should be established. Burkard *et al.* (2012), commented on a study conducted in the USA and said "no evaluation efforts have emerged to ascertain the effectiveness of PSS or to determine if any correlation exists between students and the intended student performance." However, colleges and universities should take into consideration the significant role played by psychological support practitioners which are detailed in their job descriptions.

Another obstacle that inhibit students from utilising social work and counselling services was pointed out by Nkwanyana (2013) as having low self-esteem. According to Nkwanyana (2013) "low self-esteem students' lack the confidence to seek PSS and they suffer academically as they are faced with so many challenges that include family responsibility, weak study behaviours and demands emanating from the study environment". Oluremi (2014) noted that students with low self-esteem may be reluctant to seek Social Work and counselling help. Nkwanyana (2013) further suggested the reason for such, is that they may not have the confidence to discuss them, therefore not seek help to avoid having to talk about their sensitive challenges.

Nkwanyana (2013) and Oluremi (2014) also highlighted "confidentiality, limited access to the services, location, myths with regard to the purpose and stereotypes on the use of counselling" as some of the major obstacles in the seeking and provision of psychosocial services. Based on a study conducted in the USA, Erguner-Tekinalp, Leuwerke and Terzi (2009) mentioned "lack of comprehensive programmes, non-supportive colleagues and administrators, inappropriate counsellor duties, insufficient attention to cultural concerns, scarce effective research, lack of developmental theory, little focus on prevention efforts, lack of coordinated efforts, poorly defined roles in legislation and mandates that create confusion".

Lack of personneli is another obstacle that obscures the delivery of PSS to students (Dlamini, 2019). According to the Student Support Services Framework document (DoE, 2009), most student support services in institutions of higher learning suffer from insufficient funds and work force in their pursuit of delivering support services to students. It is also the view of Russo- Glercher (2013) that workload is among one of the obstacles that negatively impact the process of providing students with the psychosocial support they need because the number of personnel available to provide social work and couselling services to students is significantly low compared to the number of students enrolled in most institutions of higher learning. This is supported by Brock (2010), who asserts that "there is a major concern in public institutions on the counsellor student ratio." This means that the ratio in unfavorable with the labor force because the practitioner will end-up having to attend to a huge number of students, which may compromise the quality of the services being rendered (Brock, 2010).

Dlamini (2019) is convinced that counselling services should be accessed easily by the students, and institutions of higher learning must have a clearly defined mapping of the services and how the can be accessed. According to Russo-Glercher (2013), students in institutions of higher learning are uninformed of the availability and accessibility of the PSS. Golardi (2013) also stated that "although a number of support services are available to all students, they may not be accessible at the time and place convenient for students." A study conducted by the researcher in partial fulfilment of his junior social work degree in 2017 revealed that the Centre for Student Counselling and Development as well as social work offices on campus do not operate after office

hours, that is, they close at 16H00. As such, some students have classes during the day and this makes accessibility of the services difficult for them. Furthermore, the facilities from which students should access the services under evaluation (Social Work and counselling services) are based on-campus and this means extra efforts must be made by student residing off-campus to access the services. Research conducted by Gewer (2010) indicated that the availability of counselling services does not translate into the utilisation of services, since only a few students utilise them.

3.8.1. Alternatives to the challenges identified

The discussion above points out challenges that negatively impact on the utitilisation of the PSS by the student populace. Universities and colleges should do more to market this crucial services to the students (Weyers, 2013). It is the view of Oluremi (2014) that Social Work and counselling services do not deal only with the emotional well-being of the students, but also to assist in assessing their skills, their interests and choosing their careers. It would behoove both the student populace and the management of the institutions to communicate with the students on ways that will encourage the students to feel free and confident enough to access and utilise the support services they need for their academic success and individual development (Oluremi, 2014).

Universities and colleges are expected to provide resources that support the job description of their employees. According to Dhavaleshwar (2016), overloading the student counsellor with tasks that are not within their professional responsibilities serves as a demotivation but impacts on the individual's area of expertise and the need for fulfilment. Mc-Donough (2005) stresses that counsellors' careers become compromised when they are given tasks that are not in-line with their job descriptions.

In response to the restrictions to face-to-face practice due to COVID-19, governments, regulatory bodies and licensing boards in the United States and Canada temporarily relaxed restrictions around ICT use and even encouraged mental health professionals to use new technologies with their clients (Wallace, Wladkowski, Gibson and White, 2020). The Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers (OCSWSSW, 2020) recommended the provision of services by therapists to be done virtually through any forms of electronic devices. In line with the onset of COVID-19

and its restrictions, social workers and other social services professionals were required to transition to using Information and Communication Technologies to replace face-to-face services and all communication with clients through the use of some technologies that are more easily accessible to clients such as FaceTime, WhatsApp, Short Messaging System (SMS), Google Hangouts and Facebook video chat (Barsky, 2020; Wright and Caudill, 2020). Without proper training or support in the provision of this treatment (Doorn *et al.,* 2020), social service providers are left with many questions about how they can appropriately use technology to bridge the gap caused by COVID-19 (Wright and Caudill, 2020).

Banks, Cai, De Jonge, Shears, Shum, Sobočan, Strom, Truell, Úriz and Weinberg (2020) are of the view that one of the most common problems raised worldwide reflected on the difficulties caused by physical distancing requirements of the COVID-19, particularly tele-working which is through phone as well as the use of internet and lack of privacy caused by the presence of family members. Furthermore, some service users lacked   access and skills to utilise technology. Moreover, some social workers experienced difficulties with video calls and the inability to evaluate the home conditions and detect potentially abuse which was caused by not being able to physically be amongst them in their living space (Banks *et al.,* 2020). The paradigm shift from face-to-face ICT means of intervention is another challenge that social workers face when they have to render services to their clients, in this case, students during COVID-19 restrictions.

3.9.   Service evaluation

Mamburu (2004) and Maithya (2014) believe that service evaluation research refers to "the use of social research procedures to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programmes that is adapted to their political and organisational environments and designed to inform social action in ways that improve social conditions." Delport and Fouché (2011) are of the same view with Mamburu (2004) and Maithya (2014), they define evaluation research as "the systematic review of research methods to make judgements about the effectiveness and the overall merit, worth or value of some form of practice."

Tape and Rhyno (2017) further define service evaluation research as means of

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providing valid and reliable evidence regarding the operation of social programmes, how well they are planned, how well they operate, and how effective they are in achieving their goals. Furthermore, service evaluation research must be conducted in an ethical manner so that its process is accordingly specified to ensure replication by future researchers (Mamburu, 2004). The researcher identified the common theme in the definitions of evaluation as evaluation being a process of collecting data to determine the effectiveness of a certain service and to make decisions using sound methodology in order to improve the effectiveness of the services, goods or products (Tape and Rhyno, 2017 & Mamburu, 2004).

In light of the above definitions, evaluation research is an investigation conducted on social services in order to identify whether they are successful to achieve their goal of improving the conditions of communities. In this regard, service evaluation type of research aims to inform those who formulated and implemented the services about their effectiveness or weakness. This is relevant to the aim of this study which seeks to evaluate PSS rendered to undergraduate students in the University of Limpopo.

3.10. Benefits of evaluation

Conroy (2016) indicated that there are benefits of conducting evaluation to both service providers and to outside stakeholders such as administrators, accreditation boards and grant funders, to name but a few. The service providers can benefit by gaining self-understanding and self-accountability and a way to show accomplishments of the services, in this case, social work and counselling services (Conroy, 2016).

Metz (2007) is of the view that evaluation of services can answer questions like "what works" and "what does not work." According to Metz (2007), knowing "what works" will help the manager to focus their scarce resources on the most essential components of their programme which will benefit the clients. Furthermore, knowing things that do not work and things that work in the programme allows managers to improve and strengthen their service delivery models. Not knowing what is working may waste valuable time and resources (Metz, 2007).

Haji, Morin and Parker (2013) held the same view as Metz (2007) that evaluation can

be used to establish the effectiveness of a service to the community and funders, and demonstrate to the community and to funders that the services are serving their intended purpose. Sharing findings within the community can serve as a good outreach tool of attracting collaborative partners, recruiting participants and volunteers, and building trust with families and community members (Conroy, 2016).

Metz (2007) is of the view that services evaluation can also provide staff with opportunities to discuss the challenges they face and offer potential solutions by answering questions such as: whether the practitioners have the nessessary skills to work effectively with the participants, What additional training would benefit the practitioners? Are the practitioners receiving necessary ongoing coaching and mentoring necessary to do their work effectively? The institution will benefit from this study because the implementers of the service will be assessed on the effectiveness of services that they render, and the student populace will benefit by receiving improved services should there be a need for improvements.

3.11. Reasons for the social work and counselling services evaluation

There are several reasons for evaluating social work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students, such as increasing counselling provision and scrutiny, effectiveness and efficacy, and measuring the extent of awareness of the service by the target audience, to name but a few (Mellor-Clark and Barkham, 1997). Regardless of the reasons for conducting the evaluation, the university structures rendering PSS must agree to being evaluated, which, in turn, directly influences the when and how the evaluation must take place.

Programme evaluation may be comprehensive or directed at specific aspects of a programme. There are many different types of evaluations and reasons to conduct programme evaluation, such as effectiveness, accreditation, outcomes, impact, needs assessment and research to provide empirical support (Haji et al., 2013). In addition, programme evaluation can be used to demonstrate programme effectiveness, to request for funding or additional funding if the programme was funded. It is a valuable way to record the programme's accomplishments (Metz, 2007). Furthermore, the most important reason is that programme evaluation offers an opportunity to honestly consider ways to improve the implementation (process) and the effectiveness

(outcome) of the programme.

The results of the evaluation can help staff members to recognise the need to improve their frontline practice with participants (Golden, Bardwell, Fantuzzo, Stein, English, Gray, Rossi, Yuan, Bell, DiLeonardi and Flint, 2003). Furthermore, getting feedback from evaluation will improve how the service providers render their services and that will contribute positively to the effectiveness of the services. This was corroborated by Metz (2007), who said that evaluating services rendered through a programme or structure allows the management to systematically assess their employees' performance and their need for training and provide them with the necessary resources to enable them to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively. The motive behind this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the PSS rendered to undergraduate students by the social worker and student counsellors at the University of Limpopo. Therefore, the reasons for evaluation as discussed above also apply to this study.

3.12. Preconditions for conducting evaluation

There are certain prerequisites that must be put in place before conducting the evaluation. All factors must be addressed at the beginning of the evaluation so that the evaluation process becomes a success (Blom and Morén, 2012). They are regarded as essential ingredients for successful evaluation which must be addressed at the beginning of the evaluation process. That is, if these prerequisites are not addressed, the subsequent evaluative efforts could be seriously undermined. The pre-requites include but not limited to the following.

3.12.1. Organisational and service commitment

It is important that before embarking on evaluating the PSS, there should be support from managers of structures that provide such services in the respective structures. There is a need to first gain entry from the gatekeeping personnel of the respective structures. It will also be beneficial for the researcher to access administrative support from both the host organisation's administrator and the coordinators of the service provision team, because it is key to influencing and obtaining other levels of support in the organisation or service (Mahlatjie, 2016). This first level of support will re-affirm

the purpose of the evaluation, and shape its consequent assumptions, design, conduct and ultimate dissemination.

3.12.2. Answering the why, when and how of evaluation

The researcher must answer the three questions to satisfaction. Should the researcher fail to do so prior to conducting the evaluation, a problem such as refusal of the structures to co-operate and participate in the study may arise (Mahlatjie, 2016). The "why?" must be answered before considering to answer the "when?" and "how?" because the administrators and service coordinators of the respective structures must agree in a formal way to grant the researcher approval and to allow their sub-ordinates to participate in the study (Mellor-Clark and Barkham, 1997). However, the participants will still hold the final say because participation in the study is voluntary.

The "When?" question is also of paramount importance and should be critically agreed to by the organisers, the social work and counselling service providers. The preference is that the earlier the better in order to avoid certain obstacles, such as staff turnover and missing, lost, misplaced or forgotten information when evaluation is conducted after the service has become operational. According to Mahlatjie (2016), this situation is called "post hoc evaluation". However, the situation can be resolved by scheduling appointments with the social work and counselling providers who have volunteered to participate in the study. This will allow them more time to find all the information they believe to be necessary for evaluation.

3.13. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The following is a summary of the findings from the literature review:

- There are support services offered to students in institutions of higher learning through a social worker and the centre for student counselling. The services include counselling, career guidance and development and study tips to maximise academic performance, to name a few.

- Awareness of the services rendered by the social worker and counsellors influences the utilisation rate of the respective services rendered to students.

- The utilisation of Social work and counselling services is beneficial to students because they enable them to manage and cope with their academic and social issues related to stress.

- Most universities in South Africa have five (5) to fifteen (15) social workers and counsellors combined to service both the student and staff populace. Therefore, there is a significantly high clientele per social worker and/or counsellor.

- Evaluation determines the worth or value of a service, assesses whether the service was and/or is effective, and identifies the need for service modification for the purpose of improvement. Service evaluation further considers that there should be support by managers. Furthermore, service evaluation can take place before, during and after the implementation of a particular service.

- There are two major types of evaluation, namely, summative and formative evaluation. Furthermore, there are several forms of evaluation, such as process evaluation, outcome evaluation and impact evaluation.

- There are four stages of programme evaluation that a researcher must go through, namely, planning, collecting data, analysing the data and reporting the findings.

- There are aspects that are considered to be reasons for service evaluation which include service vindication, marketing, verification, improvement, understanding and accountability. In addition, another benefit attached to the evaluation of a service is that it provides reliable information to improve the service and services for its users.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the framework that guided the proceedings of this study. The research methodology, research design, population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria and ethical considerations are discussed in depth and their justifications for them to be employed in this study are also given. According to De Vos *et al.* (2011) a research methodology is an operational framework within which facts are collected, placed and studied so that their meaning may come out clear. Furthermore, Pandey and Pandey (2015) termed methodology as a method of procedure, that is, the way in which processes of the research unfolds. The importance of a research methodology is that it maps out the route for the researcher to practically embark on in order to study a phenomena that can be known (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006 as cited by Rapholo, 2018). This means that how a researcher studies a problem is as important as the results they get from the study, that is, if a wrong methodology is employed when studying a certain phenomenon, the entire study can be discredited and the results may be invalid and unreliable (Mahlatjie, 2016).

4.2. Research approach

The study adopted the qualitative approach, which emanates from the belief that human phenomena and variables in human behaviour can be studied subjectively (Kabeer, 2009; Poonam, 2015). However, the demographical information of the participants was studied quantitatively. The study was supposed to have a portion of a desktop study to ascertain the rate of utilisation, the gender, level of study, problem type of those who accessed the services as well as how the students were referred to the respective services. However, records from the centres that indicate the number of students who have accessed the respective services from 2016 to 2020 could not be attained. The practitioners said they left the records in their offices, and the researcher tried to reach out to the director of the structure with no luck.

4.2.1. Research design

Pandey and Pandey (2015) are of the view that a research design is a framework or

plan for a study that is used as a guide in collecting and analysing data. Furthermore, they regard it as an outline that must be followed when conducting a study. A research design is a blueprint for collection, measurement and analysis of data (De Vos *et al.,* 2011). In actual sense, it is a map developed to regulate research protocols and processes.

The study took an evaluative design, which helped the researcher to evaluate social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development at the University of Limpopo. This is in line with Babbie's (2011) view that Evaluation Research is a systematic use of research methods to make judgements about the usefulness and awareness of a practice.

4.2.2. Population

Gillman (2005) states that the target population is referred to as a set of elements that the researcher focuses on and from which data will be obtained and used to generalise the outcomes. In some cases, the target population can be non-living things, such as literature and legislation. In other cases, they may be living things such as animals and human beings. In this case, the target population was human beings, that is, eight (8) staff members, a social worker (1) from Student Health and Wellness Centre, seven (7) student counsellors from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development, and 21565 undergraduate students of the University of Limpopo who were enrolled for the 2020 academic year.

4.2.3. Sampling

Kabeer (2009) and Mahlatjie (2016) share the view that sampling refers to the process of choosing objects or individuals from a statistical universe or population for detailed research. The best way of acquiring information from the target audience is by interviewing each and every member in order to get their opinion. However, this can be time-consuming and impractical, especially with a large target audience.

The number of staff members employed at both centres is eight (8). The researcher intended to have all of them as participants in the study, considering that the number is fairly limited. However, due to the unavailability of some of the staff members, only five (5) staff members participated. The number for undergraduate was 21565. The

researcher was unable to include all of them in the study. Therefore, sampling was necessary and as such, the researcher used convenience sampling method. The sampling method was selected because all undergraduate students had the potential to form part of the study, and they could all respond to the research question. As such, they were selected on the grounds of availability, that is, the researcher selected them because they were within the campus at the time of the interviews.

According to Green and Thorogood (2018), the experience of most qualitative researchers conducting an interview-based study is that little to new information is generated after interviewing 20 people. Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003) suggest that studies employing individual interviews should conduct no more than 50 interviews for the researcher to manage the complexity of the analytic task. Kindsiko and Poltimäe (2019) supported views by Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2003) by stating that the median number in the research papers they evaluated ranged between 30 to 50 interviewees. Therefore, for the benefit of this study, the sample included a social worker (1), four (4) student counsellors and forty (40) undergraduate students of the University of Limpopo who were enrolled for the 2020 academic year. The total sample size was forty-five (45) participants.

The convenience sampling method was used by walking around the campus premises and interviewing any student that the researcher comes across. Since the merit of convenience sampling is that the researcher selects prospective participants from a pool of people who are believed to have the needed answers. These participants were selected based on their availability and easiness to be recruited. Therefore, the researcher walked around the campus, introduced himself to any student he met and asked whether they were an undergraduate or postgraduate student, and if they were an undergraduate, the researcher then explained the purpose and the motivation of the study and asked if they were interested in taking part in the study. If they agree to participate in the study, the researcher asked them to move to the next place where they could conduct the interview without being disturbed. Seminar rooms, lecture halls and seating benches with shade were used to conduct the interviews as long as they were empty. The researcher then gave the participants consent forms for them to sign. The consent forms indicated the rights that the participants had, the aim of the study, issues of confidentiality and the participants signed the consent forms. From there,

then the interviews began.

4.2.4. Data collection method

According to Babbie (2011), data collection is an on-going activity which does not only answer the researcher's questions, but also gives the researcher directions for future data collection. The study used semi-structured interviews to collect data. This means that the researcher asked the same questions to all the participants, but the sequence of the questions was different based on the participant's responses. Furthermore, some questions were different because the target population consisted of a Social Worker from Student Health and Wellness Centre, counsellors within the Centre for Student Counselling and Development and undergraduate students of the University of Limpopo. Participants' views and experiences created a platform for follow-up questions. This made semi-structured interviews relevant for the study. The researcher drafted two interview guides to suit the target audience. The interviews were formal for the professionals, with interviews scheduled in advance per date and time. This allowed the participants to prepare for the interviews. For students, the interviews were informal due to the selected sampling method.

4.2.5. Data analysis

According to De Vos et al. (2011), data analysis is perceived as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to an enormous collected data. Furthermore, they also hold the view that data analysis involves data reduction, presentation and interpretation. Babbie (2011) adds to this by explaining that data analysis involves all procedures of analysis of data gathered using practices regardless of their paradigms used to carry-out the research, that is, non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, or verbal cues such as sudden change in voice pitch when participants respond to the research questions.

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse the results, and deductive analysis to prove or disprove previous studies. However, the demographic data of the participants was presented and analysed quantitatively using tables, bar-graphs and pie-charts. The researcher adopted themes from the interview guide since the guide was drafted from the objectives of the study and other studies. However, the

researcher was open to new themes and views emerging from the collected data, using Clarke and Braun's (2014) six-phase framework of thematic analysis:

4.2.5.1.   Phase 1

After data collection, the researcher went through participants' responses to be familiar with the data, noting down the responses since the data was gathered through interviews. The responses were verbal and the researcher registered each interview per participant. This was to preserve collected information for analysis.   The researcher also noted down the participants' involuntary verbal queues such as changes in the tone of voice when answering some questions during the interview process.

4.2.5.2.   Phase 2

The researcher generated initial codes from participants' responses that were relevant to the research objectives. Codes identify a feature of the data (semantic content or latent) that appears interesting to the analyst and refer to the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon (De Vos *et al.,* 2011). Coding allows the researcher to simplify long and complicated data. This helped the researcher to determine short, yet meaningful segments of the participants' responses.

4.2.5.3.   Phase 3

The researcher identified themes extracted from the objectives and the interview guides of the study. Furthermore, the researcher searched for themes emerging from participants' interviews. After different codes have been identified across the collected data set, the researcher sorted and grouped them. This phase focused on the analysis process at the broader level of themes rather than codes. It involved sorting the different codes and aligning them with the themes, and putting all the relevant coded data extracts within the relevant themes. The themes helped the researcher to group the participants' responses to make them easier for analysis.

4.2.5.4.   Phase 4

The researcher reviewed themes and sub-themes for correspondence with the research aim and objectives of the study. The data within themes was coherent, and

were meaningfully grouped together, and there was a clear and identifiable distinction between the themes. At this phase, the researcher refined the themes and sub-themes because some needed to be combined to form one theme to avoid unnecessary repetition of themes that focus on a similar idea. This phase helped the researcher to check whether the data corresponded with the pre-determined themes or new themes emerging from the data.

4.2.5.5.　　Phase 5

The researcher defined and named the themes. The essence of what each theme was about was defined, and a determination of what aspect of the data each theme captured was outlined. The researcher analysed and identified the stories that each of the themes were telling. It was also critical that the researcher should consider the fitting of the themes into the overall story that the researcher intended to portray from the data, and in relation to the objectives of the research.

4.2.5.6.　　Phase 6

The researcher interpreted the findings to generate a report, which tells the complicated story of the data to convince the reader about the quality and validity of the analysis. Also, based on the findings, the researcher interpreted the data and recommended what needs to be done in future.

4.3. Quality criteria

Bryman (2015) refers to quality control as the extent to which the research process and findings of the study can be trusted. According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013), quality criteria seek to address the validity and reliability of research. The study was qualitative in nature. Therefore, the researcher observed the factors discussed below and produced a valid and reliable study.

4.3.1.　Credibility

De Vos *et al.* (2011) indicated that credibility seeks to demonstrate that the investigation was conducted in a manner that ensures that the subject was accurately studied. This means that the research must be conducted within the parameters of the setting, population and theoretical framework of the study for the research findings to be valid (Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole, 2013). Therefore, an appropriate

population, the setting of the study and the methodological framework have been selected. Thus, the study is credible.

4.3.2. Transferability

Transferability is referred to as the extent to which findings of the study can be transferred to other similar situations (De Vos, 2011; Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013). The transferability of a study can only work if a detailed description of factors such as the context in which data was collected, the relationship between the researcher and the participants, to name but a few, was provided to allow other researchers to compare the situations to which the findings are to be generalised (Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole, 2013). The population and the context from which the data was collected has been defined. Thus, the study can be transferred to other similar situations.

4.3.3. Dependability

Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013) are of the understanding that dependability requires the researcher to describe and carefully follow the strategy of the research. This means that the researcher had to abide by the appropriate methodological framework selected for the study. The researcher also had to explain that the unchanging social world does not apply to qualitative methods (De Vos, 2011). Therefore, the researcher explained social factors that may differ as per environment, such as the ethnicity of the target population, because one's ethnicity may determine their help-seeking behaviour.

4.3.4. Confirmability

De Vos (2011) hold the view that confirmability addresses the objectivity of the study. As such the researcher's characteristics did not affect the findings of the study and the research findings can be reproduced by another researcher if he/she conducts the same study using the same research process in a similar context (Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole, 2013). The researcher ensured that the research process was followed to allow other researchers to audit and trace the steps taken by the researcher to conduct the study.

4.4. Ethical considerations

The researcher observed research ethical standards as defined by the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC). The researcher explained the purpose and the motivation of the study to the participants prior to their agreement to participate. The researcher promised confidentiality and anonymity to the participants in order for them to feel free to answer the research questions.

4.4.1. Permission

The researcher requested permission to conduct the study from the management of both centres - Student Counselling and Development, and Health and Wellness Centre. A letter requesting permission and the intentions of the study is included in both requests. Furthermore, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the university's ethics committee, that is, Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC). The researcher did not engage the proposed participants until both approvals were granted.

4.4.2. Informed Consent

In this study, the researcher complied with the principles of research by informing prospective participants about the purpose of the study prior to asking them to participate in the research. The researcher also informed the then prospective participants about principles like confidentiality, so that they could make an informed decision about participating in the study or not (May, 2011). The participants were asked to sign consent forms to indicate that they agree to take part in the study. In light of the COVID-19 regulations and restrictions, the researcher sent the consent forms to participants electronically, which they signed and returned. The information regarding informed consent was also written on the consent forms which the participants were asked to sign.

4.4.3. Voluntary participation

According to Babbie (2011), voluntary participation refers to participants' willingness to take part in the research without being forced to do so. The researcher informed the participants that they have every right not to participate and may withdraw their consent to participate in the study at any time without any punishment or threat. This

was practiced as one of the participants decided to revoke the consent to participate in the study and did not incur any threat or punishment.

4.4.4. Confidentiality and anonymity

Bryman (2015) refers to confidentiality as the state of keeping private information as a secret. Anonymity refers to a way of making participants' identity unknown. The researcher maintained confidentiality and still maintains it by not showing and/or sharing with anyone the answers provided by participants. The researcher assigned numbers to the participants instead of using their real names, thereby ensuring their anonymity. The researcher also made sure that only the interpretation of the collected data and not participants' direct answers, was published. However, segments of their answers were quoted.

4.4.5. Avoidance of harm

The researcher did not anticipate any physical harm. The study did not pose any physical harm to the participants or the researcher. However, the researcher was ready to call campus security and/or Emergency Medical Service if a situation that required their expertise prevailed. There was no participant who was overwhelmed with emotions and therefore, needed debriefing. The practitioners may be worried that their participation in the study may be a risk to their employment. Therefore, the researcher consulted the Legal Aid Clinic at the university to get a clear explanation and understanding of how the Labour Relations Act protects them from losing their employment due to the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA ON THE EVALUATION OF SOCIAL WORK AND COUNSELLING SERVICES OFFERED TO UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents results on the Evaluation of Social Work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The study was evaluative in design and used the qualitative approach. The sample comprised a social worker from Student Health and Wellness Centre and seven student counsellors from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development within the University of Limpopo. The social worker and student counsellors were contacted, asked to participate, but only five agreed to take part in the study. Data was collected from the social worker and four student counsellors through telephonic interviews.

The researcher could not include analysis of the intake registers from the practitioners in order to measure the utilisation of the services by undergraduate students. This was due to the nature of the interview. Since the practitioners were working from home, they did not have their intake registers with them.

Part 1: The presentation, analysis and interpretation of data acquired through interviews from a social worker working at Student Health and Wellness Centre and from four student counsellors from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development

5.2. Description of the sample

5.2.1. Practitioners positions

Table 1: Practitioner's positions

Positions	Number
Student counsellor	4
Social worker	1

The above table shows that the first sample is made up of practitioners employed by

the University of Limpopo to serve students. Furthermore, the sample is made up of four (4) counselling psychologists hired as student counsellors. The fact that the social worker and student counsellors are part of the sample of the study serves as an advantage to the study because this means that relevant people were consulted for the evaluation of the services. Conroy (2016) is of the view that one of the factors to successful evaluation is finding the right people to interview. As such, since the study aims to evaluate social work and counselling service, the researcher found the right people to interview because the services under evaluation are represented by the respective service providers.

5.2.2. Practitioners' duration in their respective positions

Bar graph 1: The duration of practitioners in their respective positions
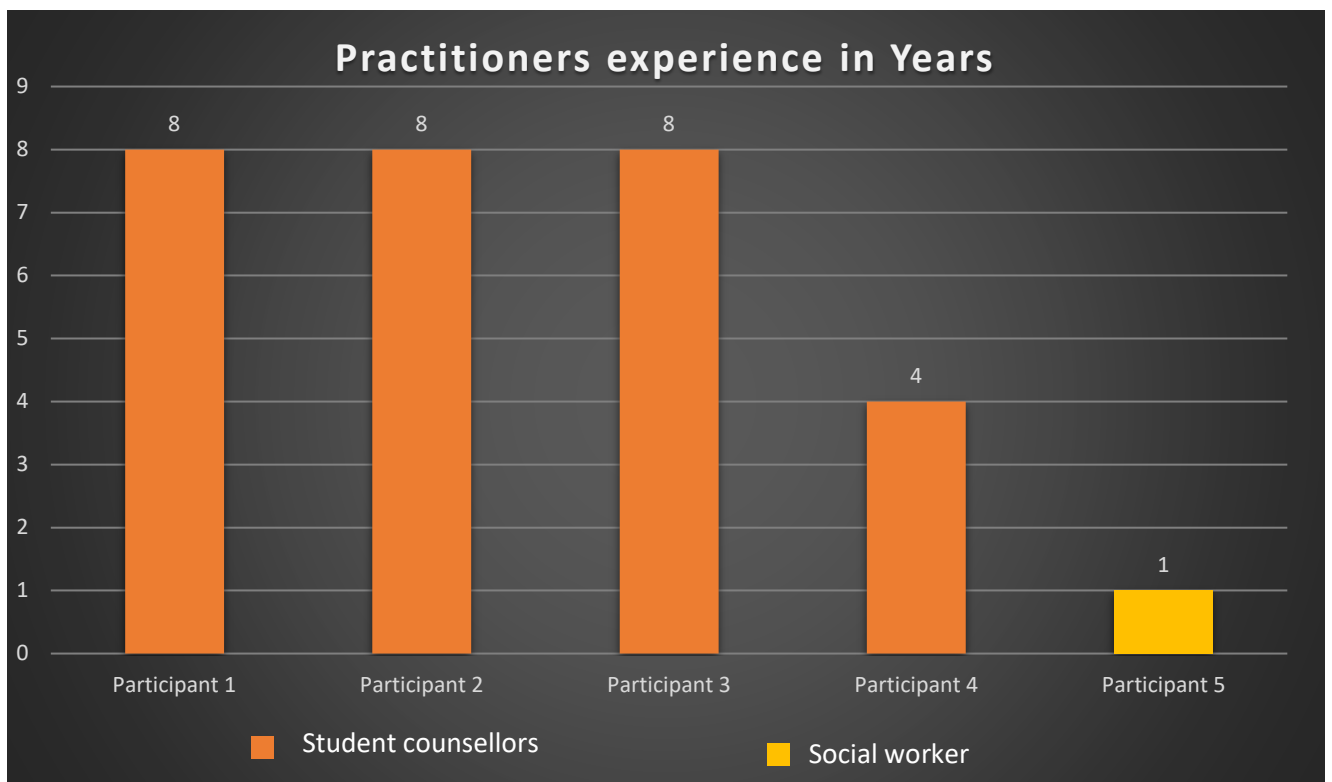
The above bar graph indicates that the minimum number of years of experience working with undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo held by the practitioners is one (1) year and the maximum is eight (8) years. This means that the absolute majority of the practitioners have extensive experience working with students. They have worked long enough with students within the University of Limpopo to a

point that they are aware of students' behaviour towards the services they render and how they have dealt or are dealing with the negative behaviours and reinforcing positive ones. This benefits the credibility and reliability of the study because relevant people who will be answering from their previous encounters with the student populace were consulted. Furthermore, the study seeks to address the underutilisation of the Student Psychosocial Support Services by the student population. It would therefore be a good idea to talk to people who can attest to or deny the notion that students underutilise the services.

5.3.   Formulation of themes and sub-themes

Objectives of the study	Themes	Sub-themes
• To determine how undergraduate students are made aware of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.	• Social worker and student counsellors create awareness of their services to undergraduate students.	• Awareness campaigns. • Advertisements. • First-year student orientations. • Compulsory assessment. • Faculty and departmental meetings. • Peer counsellor and peer educator programmes.
• To ascertain the rate of the utilisation of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development	• The social worker and student counsellors' perceptions of undergraduate students' rate of Student Psychosocial Support Services utilisation.	• Utilisation rate

by undergraduate students.		
	• Factors that impede undergraduate students' utilisation of Student Psychosocial Support Services.	• Discrete accessibility of the services. • Accessibility
• To determine the level of effectiveness of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development rendered to undergraduate students.	• The social worker and student counsellors' views on the effectiveness of the services they render to undergraduate students.	• Post intervention. • Multi-disciplinary collaboration.
• To describe referral channels for and from social work services in Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services in the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.	• The referral channels of students for and from Student Psychosocial Support Services.	• Self- referral. • Peer referral. • University personnel. • Peer Counsellors and peer educators.

• To identify challenges faced when rendering social work services at Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services at the Centre for Student Counselling and Development to undergraduate students.	• Challenges faced by the social worker and student counsellors when rendering Student Psychosocial Support Services to undergraduate students.	• Ineffective referral system.

5.4. Discussions

5.4.1. Theme 1: Social worker and student counsellors create awareness of their services to undergraduate students

All practitioners indicated that they schedule and conduct interviews with Radio Turf, conduct awareness campaigns, advertise their services, market their services to students during first-year student orientations, attend departmental meetings to introduce their services, and they create awareness through peer counsellor and peer educator programmes. They also give first entering students a compulsory assessment at the beginning of every year to assess their risk and study strategies.

5.4.1.1. Sub-theme 1: Awareness campaigns

When asked how they create awareness of their services, the practitioners stated that they conduct awareness campaigns to introduce their services to the student population. It was also mentioned that the awareness campaigns are also used to correct wrong conceptions about Social Work and counselling services. To affirm this, some of the segments of the responses are as follows:

"We do a lot of awareness campaigns"

"I conduct know about us campaigns every other month."

Practitioners' views regarding awareness campaigns are in line with those by Saltmarsh (2016), who is of the view that mental health awareness campaigns are held at many universities around the world, and are increasingly seen as a means of reaching out to vulnerable populations in campus communities, and of reducing social stigmas and taboos pertaining to mental health issues. Ocansey (2018) suggested that progressively educating students on the benefits of counselling services in particular would, however, be beneficial in addressing misconceptions regarding Student Psychosocial Support Services. However, two of the practitioners were of the opinions that there are no wrong conceptions regarding their services.

The finding of the study is that the practitioners do create awareness of their services. This rules out the assumption that students do not utilise the services due to lack of awareness of these services. While awareness campaigns are seen positively by Saltmarsh (2016), Mbuthia, Wanzala, Nugi, and Nyamogoba (2017) stated that it is worth noting that the effect of awareness campaigns on behaviour change are minimal since information seems to have a more impact on knowledge and beliefs than on actual behaviour. This explains undergraduate students' underutilisation of the services while they are aware of these services.

5.4.1.2.   Sub-theme 2: Advertisements

The data yielded by the study indicated that the practitioners advertise their services to create awareness. They do this by doing radio talks on the university radio station. When there is a pressing issue such as bullying, they address it through radio interviews. They also stated that they advertise their services in the university magazine which gets distributed for free to students on a monthly schedule. They further stated that they hand out brochures, flyers and pamphlets on a weekly basis and during awareness campaigns and roadshows.

"We go door to door at campus residences handing out brochures, magazines, flyers and pamphlets".

"We give them flyers during campaigns".

"I do radio talks at Radio Turf".

Practitioners' views about handing out brochures, flyers and pamphlets during awareness campaigns and conducting radio talks and roadshows concur with views by Htet, Saw, Saw, Htun, Lay Mon, Cho, Thike, Khine, Kariya, Yamamoto and Hamajima (2020), who are of the view that awareness campaigns that rely on the media and peer education should be developed to facilitate positive behavioural changes among university students. According to Ocansey (2018), the aggressive advertising by Student Psychosocial Support Services on campus is therefore vital and the adoption of attractive billboards directional signs among other proactive measures on campus efficiently create awareness of the services. The finding of the study is that the Student Psychosocial Support Services are proactively advertised. However, knowledge of the services is not equal to utilisation of the service. This means that students may be aware of the Student Psychosocial Support Services and choose not to utilise the services.

5.4.1.3. Sub-theme 3: First-year student orientations

The practitioners also mentioned attending first-entering student orientations to create awareness and advertise their services through presentations. Furthermore, the practitioners mentioned that part of their presentations include handing out brochures, branded stationery, mugs as well as bag-packs and explaining the process of getting access to Student Psychosocial Support Services during first-entering student orientations. To affirm this, some of the practitioners said the following:

"We advertise our services during orientations by presenting to them."

"During orientations we introduce our services and give them brochures."

According to Owusu, Tawiah, Sena-Kpeglo and Onyame (2014), the university administration expects that during orientation programmes, new students would be provided with the necessary information and assistance that helps them to succeed academically and develop their personality. Pickard, Brunton, McKenna and Utley (2020) are of the view that orientation programmes are used to provide new students with experiences which aid them to transition to the university. Moreover, the experiences include exposing new students to a wide range of issues that would face them as students of the institution, including safety and health matters, as well as

providing them with solutions and alternatives. Senyametor, Asare, Ako and Kwame (2021) added that orientations are organised to purposively introduce new students to the variety of services available on and off campus so that they are able to navigate the university and its environment on their own. The finding of the study is that the practitioners use orientations as a platform to market their services and to create awareness. However, one of the practitioners said the following statement in an attempt to explain why the services need continuous marketing:

"We advertise our services throughout the year because during orientations the students are still excited about being admitted to the institution and they do not focus when we present, which makes them forget about our services."

It is worth noting that the practitioners are aware that new students may learn about the existence of the Student Psychosocial Support Services and forget about the services because they were passively engaged during orientations. This means that orientation serves a good foundation but needs follow-up events to serve as reminders of the services to the students.

5.4.1.4. Sub-theme 4: Compulsory first-year modules and compulsory assessment

The practitioners mentioned that there are compulsory modules for first-year level students designed to create awareness and orientate the students on things they will need to succeed at the university. Shel and Student Success were mentioned as examples of the compulsory modules. To affirm this, some of the practitioners said the following:

"Shel and Student Success are introduced to help orientate students of the services they need to utilise to cope with their workload".

"We sometimes go to Student Success classes to let students know about our services".

The practitioners also stated that they create awareness of the Student Psychosocial Support Services by giving students an assessment to determine students' study techniques, likelihood of failing or passing their modules and how they transition to the university environment. Furthermore, they stated that the assessments are given to all

first-year students of the university. The following are some of the responses from the practitioners:

"We give first-entering students an assessment to assess their level of awareness of the support structures available to them".

"We have an assessment which we give to them to see if they know their university".

"They start to know about us when we give them the compulsory assessment to see how they are coping with the university environment".

The researcher could not find any previous study that talks about compulsory assessment as a way of creating awareness of the Student Psychosocial Support Services. This is beneficial to this study because the provision of compulsory assessment is groundbreaking in terms of creating awareness. This also shows that the practitioners have various ways of creating awareness of Student Psychosocial Support Services.

5.4.1.5.   Sub-theme 5: Faculty and departmental meetings

The practitioners indicated that they create awareness of their services through faculty and departmental meetings within the university. They further explained that if they make lecturers aware of the Student Psychosocial Support Services, the lecturer will be able to identify students from their classes who may benefit from the services. Lecturers are able to share the Student Psychosocial Support Services with the students, which will make them aware of the services. To affirm this, some practitioners said:

"We attend departmental meetings and tell lecturers about our services so that they can refer students at risk".

"Every faculty is supplied with a supplied with a student counsellor to deal directly with the management during meetings and students of that particular faculty and departments".

This adds value to the study because it shows how lecturers get to know about the services and procedures of referring students. Furthermore, it supports the general systems theory, which suggests that all systems and sub-systems work together to

accomplish a common goal, mission or aim. Therefore, lecturers and other employees within departments are made aware of the services in order to enable them to play their roles in the functionality of the institution and the well-being of each student.

5.4.1.6.   Sub-theme 6: Peer counsellor and peer educator programmes

The practitioners also mentioned peer educator and peer counsellor programmes as other ways of creating awareness of the Student Psychosocial Support Services. Furthermore, they explained that the programmes aim at empowering students, creating awareness of the respective services, creating a platform for student involvement in the Student Psychosocial Support Services and as an alternative for students who may listen better when taught by their fellow students during awareness campaigns.

"We create awareness through peer counsellors, when we mobilise for awareness campaigns."

"Some students listen better to their peers, that's why we have peer educators."

Peer counsellors are students who serve as important sources of support and information to their fellow students (Pickard, Brunton, McKenna and Utley, 2020).

5.4.2. Theme 2: The social worker and student counsellors' perceptions of undergraduate students' rate of Student Psychosocial Support Services utilisation

The researcher asked the practitioners to share their views regarding the utilisation of their services by undergraduate students. The practitioners' answers shows that they were of the view that their services were utilised maximally. However, there was one practitioner whose view was that students do not utilise their services maximally.

5.4.2.1.   Sub-Theme 1: Utilisation rate of the Student Psychosocial Support Services

When asked if they thought students utilise their services maximally, one practitioner said *"no, I don't think they do"* and four (4) of the practitioners said that students utilise their services maximally. The finding of the study is that the majority of the practitioners believe that students are utilising counselling services maximally. To affirm this, here

are some responses from the practitioners:

"*Yes, I think so, although sometimes they only come once and do not return for other sessions.*"

"*Yes, they do*"

The practitioner who said that students do not utilise counselling services maximally indicated that it might be due to stigma associated with counselling services or African culture that discourages the student not to seek counselling on that basis that it is a western practice. Her response was as follows:

"*No, because majority of students do not consult, maybe due to stigma or the African culture*".

The following statement was the practitioner's response on the recommendation for them to increase student participation in counselling: "*we are already doing campaigns, we do talks at radio stations, we write articles in the Keyaka magazines to engage with students and to challenge the African culture, because blacks in general, not only students, do not use counselling services. We are doing our best.*"

The researcher is under the impression that students were aware of the SPSS but they choose not to utilise the said services due to the type of problem which one may be going through and/or ignorance.

The view given by the participant regarding social stigma as a factor that affects the utilisation of social work and/or counselling services supports the view by Kane (2014), who is of the view that people have negative perceptions of the individual who has a history of having sought mental health services. Kane (2014) further argued that this includes being labelled more awkward, defensive, dependent, insecure, cold, sad and unsociable. Furthermore, social stigma may also involve viewing those who seek professional help as less in control of their emotions. Even for those people with depression who are viewed as emotionally unstable, those who seek out psychological services are viewed as even more unstable (Ben-Porath, 2002; Makola and Mogale, 2017). The findings of this study oppose the views by Kane (2014), Ben-Porath (2002) and Makola and Mogale (2017), because the practitioners do not think there is stigma attached to their services.

The practitioner who said students do not utilise the Student Psychosocial Support Services maximally also suggested that African culture is a fueling factor in the underutilisation of the social work and counselling services. Nkwanyana (2013) is of the view that beliefs, norms and cultural values can form part of the perceived barriers to seeking professional help. Sometimes there is a conflict between some cultural values and the values that are inherent in counselling. For instance, Africans believe that a man is supposed to be a strong person, and therefore he cannot seek professional help, especially counselling because it is emasculating. Phrases like *"Indoda ayi Khali"* (A man does not cry) or *"monna ke nku o llela teng"* (A man is like a sheep, he stomachs/internalises his cries) are popular among Africans (Makola & Mogale, 2017), which implies that men should not seek help, let alone counselling during difficult times. Therefore, the view of the participant cannot be overlooked although it is a minority view because literature also outlines African culture as a barrier to seeking help among African men.

5.4.3. Theme 3: The social worker and student counsellors' views on the effectiveness of services rendered to undergraduate students

The researcher asked the practitioners to share the effectiveness of their services in addressing students' challenges. All the practitioners said that their services are effective in addressing the challenges faced by students. Therefore, the absolute majority of the practitioners is that the services they render to the student populace are somewhat effective. However, the practitioners further mentioned that it is difficult to mention the extent to which this is the case because they do not have a viable way to evaluate their services after intervention. To affirm this, the following are some of the responses from the practitioners:

"We can't really tell because we do not have a feedback or evaluation form, but some of the students who have used our services return to thank us, some call us to let us how things are going".

"Our services are effective, but I am not sure to what level because it's not only counselling services that are rendered to students, I can't say it for sure that my services solely solve challenges faced by students."

Furthermore, there was one practitioner who said that the services they render are

very effective. He backed this statement with the following remarks:

"Since 2012, I have seen our services change students' lives, which also reflects on their academic performance, other graduates refer their siblings even after they have graduated. Other students refer their fellow students".

Nkwanyana (2013) stated that counselling is thought to be helpful during tough times. Makola and Mogale (2017) uncovered that students in institutions of higher learning are aware that social work and counselling services are helpful during difficult times. This means that there is no question regarding the effectiveness of counselling services. The finding of this study concurs with a study conducted by Makola and Mogale (2017). This means that the effectiveness of the services is not a contributing factor in the underutilisation of the Student Psychosocial Support Services by the student population.

5.4.3.1. Sub-theme 1: Post intervention feedback from students

The practitioners' responses had some commonalities regarding the effectiveness of their services. One of the common points is that it was difficult to objectively tell the level of the effectiveness of their services since they did not have a feedback form for students to rate the services they received and whether the services were effective in solving their challenges. Despite the lack of a feedback form, the researcher asked the practitioners to share insights on how they receive feedback about their services from students who have received them. Two (2) practitioners said that they see feedback when the same students who have utilised the services refer other students. Three (3) of the practitioners said that they only get feedback when the students return to thank them, which some students do and others do not. The finding of the study is that the practitioners do not have a formal way to get feedback from students who have accessed the services. To affirm the finding, here are some of the responses:

"They come back to thank us and share with us their progress."

"Some graduates refer their siblings even after they have graduated. Other students refer their fellow students".

In light of the above information, the researcher is of the view that the lack of a formal way to get feedback about their services may leave them in the dark as to how their

services were received. This will also help improve the services to suit students from time to time. However, it is worth noting that lack of a formal feedback tool does not equal ineffective services. This simply means that the practitioners render their services to the best of their capabilities with the belief that their intervention is effective. Be that as it may, evaluation is a necessary process that seeks to measure effectiveness, improve the services and is used for accountability (Haji et al., 2013). This adds value to this study because it was able to highlight the importance of post intervention evaluation and feedback.

5.4.3.2. Sub-theme 2: Social Work and counselling service practitioners' collaboration with internal and external stakeholders

According to Hepworth et al. (2013), one of the roles of social workers is to be case managers in the sense that they initiate a multi-discipline collaboration to help their clients holistically. This is done to ensure that their clients receive all the services required to effectively address the client's challenges and enhance their way of living. As such, the researcher asked the practitioners to describe their relationship with other stakeholders within and outside the university. The overall majority of the practitioners indicated that they have good and working relationships with stakeholders that are both on-campus and off-campus. The researcher further asked what the practitioners do when they are assisting a student who also needs services from other stakeholders. The practitioners said that they sometimes refer the student if they are done with their intervention, but they involve the other stakeholders if they are still assisting the student. Furthermore, they said that they refer or involve other stakeholders with the consent of the student, and they follow up on the progress after referring or involving the stakeholder. Some of the responses are presented below:

"We take a multidisciplinary approach to allow the intervention from other stakeholders to be featured."

"We refer to the relevant centre and follow up later".

"Involve them and then make follow up".

The practitioners were further asked to share some of the changes that should happen to improve their collaborations with other stakeholders if there is any. The responses pointed to the fact that there was no need to change anything because their inter-

stakeholder relationship is good. To affirm this, the following are some of their responses:

"For now we are working very well with other stakeholders on campus, but when it comes to referring students to public hospital sometimes they miss classes, so we should have a psychiatrist who comes to the university on a given day in a week."

"For now we are working very well with other stakeholders both on campus and outside the campus".

"The relationship is okay".

"No, it is viable".

One of the practitioners further indicated that it would help students if a psychiatrist can operate from the university once a week on a given day to save students' time. The researcher is convinced that the relationship between stakeholders that are found on-campus or off-campus is healthy. The suggestion made by the practitioner to save students' time is about giving students first priority as opposed to them queuing like the public in public settings. This supports the view that the Student Psychosocial Support Services works well with other stakeholders to ensure that students' wellbeing is ensured and the institution works like a well-oiled machine just as the General Systems Theory suggests.

5.4.4. Theme 4: The referral channels of students for and from Student Psychosocial Support Services

The researcher asked the practitioners to share information on who refers students for their services. All the practitioners acknowledged that they do get referrals from lecturers, housing (residence managers), peer counsellors, Centre for Academic Excellence (CAE), friends and even students do self-referrals. The ultimate majority of the practitioners get referrals from people or structures outside their respective units. To verify this, the following are some of the responses:

"Anyone who sees a student in need, lecturers, residents all the units in the campus, peer counsellors, even the students do self-referral".

"Any person, lecturers, everyone, self-referral".

This shows that there are referral channels put in place to identify and refer students who need Student Psychosocial Support Services. This shows that students know of the existence of the services and know the benefits of utilising them since "self-referral" was mentioned as another form of referral that students like to use.

5.4.4.1.   Sub-theme 1: Self- referrals

The practitioners indicated that most students go for the Student Psychosocial Support Services on their own, that is, without any referral from anyone. To affirm this, some of the practitioners said the following statements:

"In most cases, students come voluntarily, which shows that they are aware of our services."

"Sometimes students just come on their own."

This indicates that students are aware of the services and they know where to find help. It also shows that they are capable of initiating their own help-seeking process. Hepworth et al. (2013) suggest that clients who refer themselves tend to commit to the intervention than those who were referred by others, especially involuntary clients.

5.4.4.2.   Sub-theme 2: Peer referrals

The practitioners also indicated that their former clients (students) refer their friends for the services, and this serves as an indication that the practitioner's intervention was successful. It was also indicated that students who may have heard about counselling also refer their friends when they think that they may benefit from the Student Psychosocial Support Services. Some practitioners said:

"Lecturers, residents, all the units in the campus, peer counsellors, CAE, friends."

"…Other students refer their fellow students."

This adds to the study because it shows that students have all the support they need when they are going through challenges. This concurs with the view by Oluremi (2014), who indicated that students may open up more about their challenges to

their friends. It is worth noting that friends may not know how to help their struggling friends, and as such, it is good that they refer them to those that can, such as social workers and student counsellors.

5.4.4.3. Sub-theme 3: University personnel

The practitioners also indicated that they receive referrals of students from other employees of the university. Some of the practitioners said:

"We get referrals from lecturers".

"Any person within the campus who sees a struggling student do refer to us."

The researcher was unable to obtain literature about the university personnel that refers students for Student Psychosocial Support Services. This indicates that this is a ground-breaking discovery of one of the referral channels that sends students to get help from the Students Psychosocial Support Services. However, the General Systems Theory indicates that for the whole system to be functional, all components must play their roles. This shows that other employees of the university do play their role in students' psychosocial support.

5.4.4.4. Sub-theme 4: Peer Counsellors and peer educators

Peer educators linked to the social worker and peer counsellors linked to student counsellors were listed as some of the channels used to refer students for Student Psychosocial Support Services. This is another ground-breaking discovery because there is no literature that talks about peer counsellors and peer educators as referral channels for the Student Psychosocial Support Services. Some of the responses from the practitioners were as follows:

"The peer counsellors' programme helps in bringing referrals because some students are able to open-up to their fellow student who then refer them to us."

"Peer educators refer students to us, especially during awareness campaigns."

Therefore, the finding of the study is that students in the peer educators' and peer counsellors programmes contribute toward referral channels for referring students to Student Psychosocial Support Services.

5.4.5. Theme 5: Challenges faced by the social worker and student counsellors when rendering Student Psychosocial Support Services to undergraduate students

5.4.5.1.   Sub-theme 1: Ineffective referral system

The researcher asked the practitioners whether they face challenges that may hinder their service delivery to the student populace. One (1) practitioner said "yes", four (4) of the practitioners said that they did not face any challenge. To the practitioner who said they are facing some challenges, follow up questions were asked which needed the practitioner to indicate their challenges and what they are doing to address them. The practitioner stated that the challenge they have is that sometimes those that are supposed to refer students are unable to identify those at-risk, so they end up not assisting them because they do not know them. However, we attend departmental meetings to alert lecturers about our services so that they can refer students who may benefit from our services.

Part 2: The presentation, analysis and interpretation of data acquired from undergraduate students of the University of Limpopo who were registered for the 2020 academic year.

5.5. Description of the students

This section is about the characteristics of participants, which will be categorised in terms of the faculty to which they belong, level of enrolment, gender and age. It is important to understand the dynamics of the participants because it demonstrates that relevant people were interviewed, and this increases the credibility of the study.

Table 1: Description of the sample

Pseudonym	Faculty	Level of study	Gender	Age
P1	Health	4th	Male	22
P2	Health	3rd	Female	21
P3	Humanities	1st	Female	19
P4	Health	3rd	Female	24
P5	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	19
P6	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	20
P7	Humanities	1st	Male	18
P8	Management & Law	4th	Male	23
P9	Management & Law	3rd	Male	22
P10	Humanities	1st	Male	19
P11	Management & Law	3rd	Male	21
P12	Humanities	1st	Male	18
P13	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	19
P14	Humanities	1st	Female	19
P15	Humanities	1st	Male	18
P16	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	18
P17	Science & Agriculture	3rd	Male	20
P18	Science & Agriculture	1st	Female	20
P19	Science & Agriculture	1st	Female	18
P20	Humanities	3rd	Female	21
P21	Management & Law	1st	Female	18

P22	Management & Law	1st	Female	18
P23	Science & Agriculture	3rd	Male	24
P24	Science & Agriculture	3rd	Female	23
P25	Health	3rd	Male	21
P26	Management & Law	1st	Male	18
P27	Science & Agriculture	2nd	Female	19
P28	Science & Agriculture	3rd	Female	20
P29	Humanities	1st	Male	19
P30	Humanities	1st	Female	19
P31	Science & Agriculture	1st	Female	19
P32	Science & Agriculture	1st	Female	18
P33	Management & Law	1st	Male	19
P34	Management & Law	1st	Male	19
P35	Management & Law	1st	Male	18
P36	Health	2nd	Female	19
P37	Humanities	4th	Male	23
P38	Science & Agriculture	2nd	Male	20
P39	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	18
P40	Science & Agriculture	1st	Male	19

5.5.1. Participants' respective faculties

The table below indicates the participants' respective faculties at the University of Limpopo.

Table 2: Participants' faculties

Name of faculty	Number of participants	Percentage
Faculty of health	5	12.5%
Faculty of humanities	10	25%

Faculty of science and agriculture	16	40%
Faculty of management and law	9	22.5%
Total	**40**	**100%**

The above table shows that the students interviewed come from four (4) faculties namely: Faculty of Health, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Science and Agriculture and Faculty of Management and Law. 12.5% of the participants were from the Faculty of Health, 25% from the Faculty of Humanities, 40% from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture and 22.5% from the Faculty of Management & Law. Therefore, the study highlights that the majority of the participants were from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture with 40%.

The services being evaluated are offered as disciplines within the University of Limpopo and both fall under the Faculty Humanities. Therefore, it is a good thing that the majority of the participants were from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture because they are not directly related or studying to become one of the practitioners who offer the same services under evaluation. Furthermore, it adds to the credibility of the study because all faculties at the University of Limpopo were represented, although it was a coincident. However, given the sampling method used to get the participants, the researcher did not plan to have the majority of the participants to be from a particular faculty.

5.5.2. Participants' level of enrolment

The table below indicates the participants' level of study at the institution of higher learning.

Table 3: Participants' level of enrolment

Level of study	Number of participants	Percentage
1st Level	24	60%
2nd Level	3	7.5%
3rd Level	10	25%

4th Level	3	7.5%
Total	**40**	**100%**

The table above shows that 60% of the participants were in their first level of their respective studies, 7.5% in their second level, 25% in their third level and 7.5% in the fourth level of their studies. Therefore, the study highlights that majority (60%) of the participants were in the first level of their studies.

The study found that majority (60%) of the participants have been in the institution for less than a year and are likely to have attended orientations. The fact that the majority of participants have been in the university the least and just started with the transition between staying at home with their families and being independent or staying alone and do everything for themselves. However, this was a coincidence due to the fact that the researcher did not plan for the outcome to be that of first level students dominating in the study. Moreover, it is advantageous to the study that all undergraduate levels, namely: first, second, third and fourth levels were represented in the study and the dynamics will positively enhance the study.

Beiter, Nash, McCrady, Rhoades, Linscomb, Clarahan and Sammut (2015) are of the view that students who are stressed perform poorly in their academia. Makola and Makola and Mogale (2017) stated difficulty coping with the transition between staying at home while studying and staying far from home while studying as some of the stressors that students may face. This shows that undergraduate students, especially first level students need the services under evaluation the most since they have a long stay in school compared to students in other levels.

5.5.3. Gender of participants

The following table presents the genders of the participants that took part in the study.

Table 4: Gender of the participants

Gender	Number of participants	Percentage
Males	25	62.5%

Females	15	37.5%
Total	**40**	**100%**

The table above shows that the study had 62.5% male participants and 37.5% female participants. The study shows that the majority (62.5%) of the participants were males. The reason for the prevalence of male participants in the study is that they (males) felt more comfortable talking to the researcher because he is also male. Although this was not planned, the study will not perpetuate traits of stereotypes, discriminate behaviour and isolate another gender. In terms of the responses, the researcher took the gender of the participants into cognisance in data analysis of the study. Mackenzie, Erickson and Wright (2014) mentioned that gender plays a crucial role in the help-seeking process. They believe that men are more reluctant to seek professional help compared to women. This may help in explaining the underutilisation of the Student Psychosocial Support Services, especially by the male student population.

5.5.4. Age of the participants

The table below indicates the age groups in years of the participants

Table 5: Age of the participants

Age ranges (In years)	Number of participants	Percentage
18 to 21	27	67,50%
22 to 25	13	32,50%
Total	**40**	**100%**

The table above shows that the majority of the participants (67,50%) are between the ages of 18 to 21 years. Only 32.50% of the participants are in the age group of 22 to 25 years. The finding is that majority of the participants are in the late teens and early twenties (22 to 25 years). This finding is an advantage to the study since the majority of participants are in the early stages of their studies because they are the ones who have recently attended university orientations, where they were made aware of all the support structures and services available to them. Furthermore, should the study recommend changes to occur to service providers (practitioners or their centres),

these changes will also benefit the majority of the participants since their stay may be longer within the university.

It also advantageous to the study that some of the participants are those that are in the final stages of their studies, which means that they have been through campus life, and their experiences will shape their answers. However, the researcher did not plan to have this type of an outcome, even though it benefits the study. The participants' age ranges were coincidental.

5.6. Formulation of themes and sub-themes

Objectives of the study	Themes	Sub-themes
• To determine how undergraduate students are made aware of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.	• Undergraduate students' awareness of the Student Psychosocial Support Services	• Undergraduate students' awareness of the existence of counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. • Undergraduate students' awareness of the existence of Social Work services from the Student Health and Wellness Centre.
• To ascertain therate of the utilisation of social work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development by undergraduate students.	• The utilisation rate of the Student Psychosocial Support Services utilisation by undergraduate students.	• Undergraduate students' utilisation of Social Work services. • Undergraduate students' utilisation of counselling services.
• To determine the level of effectiveness of social work services from	• Undergraduate students' views on the effectiveness of	• Multi-disciplinary collaboration.

Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development rendered to undergraduate students.	Student Psychosocial Support Services	
• To describe referral channels for and from social work services in Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services in the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.	• The referral channels of students for and from Student Psychosocial Support Services.	• Undergraduate students' referral and perceived referral system to Social Work and counselling services.

5.7. Discussions

5.7.1. Theme 1: Undergraduate students' awareness of the existence of counselling and Social work services

5.7.1.1. Sub-theme 1: Undergraduate students' awareness of the existence of counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development

The researcher asked the participants whether they knew about the existence of Counselling services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. Five (5) participants stated that they did not know about the existence of counselling services from the said structure, whilst thirty-five (35) said they know that the counselling services from the said structure exist. With 87.50 %, the majority of the participants are aware of the existence of services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.

The participants were asked to further explain how they came to know of the existence

of the services for the said structure. Some mentioned more than one way or event that brought them to the awareness of the services: "I leant about the existence of counselling services during orientations". This statement was stated ten (10) times. "I heard from my friend who told me to go for counselling when I was stressed", said one of the participants. Seven (7) more participants gave answers that showed that they heard about the existence of the service through friends, and three (3) more mentioned that they heard from their lecturer. This means that eleven (11) participants learnt of the existence of the services through word of mouth: "I saw the name Centre for Student Counselling and Development on a building and I think that is where students get counselling", said another student.

Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik (2010) are under the impression that marketing activities can also trigger word of mouth, and that the most common word of mouth marketing strategy is called consequential word of mouth, which occurs when consumers directly exposed to traditional marketing campaigns pass on messages about them, services or brands that they publicise.

During orientations, each and every structure within the university gets an opportunity to market their services to the student populace through presentations. It can also be referred to as word of mouth marketing. According to Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik (2010), the impact of word of mouth messages on consumers is often stronger than the direct effect of advertisements, because marketing campaigns that trigger positive word of mouth have comparatively higher campaign reach and influence, especially if marketers consider both the direct and the pass-on effects of word of mouth.

### 5.7.1.2.	Sub-theme 2: Undergraduate students' awareness of the existence of Social Work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre

The researcher asked the participants whether they were aware of the existence of Social Work services from the Student Health and Wellness Centre. Thirteen (13) participants stated that they knew about the existence of these services from the said structure whilst twenty-seven (27) participants said they did not know. With 67.50%, the majority of the participants were not aware of the existence of the services from the Student Health and Wellness Centre. "Social Work services? For students? On campus? No!", one participant asked these rhetoric questions and answered "No!", out of shock.

The participants were asked a follow-up question which required them to state how they got to know of the existence of the Social Work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre. Out of the thirteen participants who responded that they knew about the existence of Social Work services from Student Health and Wellness Centre, five (5) said they heard about the existence of the said services from their friends. "My friend told me that there is a social worker helping students to get food parcels from the Student Representative Council (SRC)", said one participant.

Three (3) participants said they learnt about the existence of the said services when they attended first year student orientations. "They told us during orientations that there is a social worker for students on campus", said one of the participants. Two (2) participants said they became aware of the Social Work services for students because representatives from Student Health and Wellness Centre visited their class and distributed questionnaires for the students to fill in. Another two (2) participants said they saw pamphlets advertising Social Work services for students. One of the participants said she became aware of the existence of the services because she was a peer educator and they were working closely with the social worker.

Looking at the data collected, eight (8) participants became aware of the existence of Social Work services through word of mouth, that is, they heard from friends and presentations during orientation. This means that the majority (61.50 %) of those who are aware of the existence of the said services from the said centre heard from someone else.

5.7.2. Theme 2: The effectiveness of Social Work and counselling services to undergraduate students based on the utilisation of the services

5.7.2.1. Sub-theme 1: Undergraduate students' utilisation of Social Work services

The researcher asked the participants if they have ever utilised Social Work services. One (1) participant had used social work services within the campus and thirty-nine have not used them. Therefore, the overwhelming majority of the participants have not used social work services. The participant who had used the services of a social worker before indicated that they consulted with the social worker a minimum of three (3) times and a maximum of five (5) times in a month. The participant further indicated

that their problem was resolved through the help of the social worker.

The participants who had not used the services were asked to provide reasons for not utilising the services of the social worker. Twenty-seven (27) participants consistently stated that they could have not used the services they did not know existed in the first place. Seven (7) participants stated that they never experienced challenges that required professional help, four (4) said that they simply do not need the help of a social worker, one (1) indicated that he never had time to consult, and another one (1) said that they did not think the social worker will understand his problems. Below are some of the responses:

"I did not know there was a social worker on campus"

"No! I have never been there!"

"They will not understand my problems"

"I talk to my friends when I have problems, so I don't need a social worker"

The findings of the study are in line with those of Makola and Mogale (2017), which indicated that the underutilisation of services may be due to lack of awareness of the existence of the service and low expectation to benefit from the particular service as some participants indicated that their challenges do not require professional help.

5.7.3. Theme 3: Undergraduate students' utilisation of counselling services

The participants were asked if they have ever accessed counselling services within the university. Five (5) participants indicated that they have utilised the services and thirty-five (35) said they have never utilised the services. The study finds that the majority of the participants have not accessed counselling services within the university. Out of the five (5) participants who have utilised the services, only one (1) said their problem was not resolved and the other four (4) said their problems were resolved through the help of counselling services. The frequency in which they accessed the services was a minimum of once a month to a maximum of five (5) times a month.

The thirty-five (35) participants who have never utilised counselling services within the

university stated reasons such as:

> *"I have never experienced any challenge that required professional help"*
> *"I deal with my problems on my own, I'm not used to consulting professionals"*
> *"I did not know they existed".*

The researcher observed that the reasons for the participant not to have used the services ranged from personality types "*I deal with my problems on my own*" low expectation to benefit from counselling services. Demographical factors such as beliefs, culture and age can influence a person's help-seeking behaviour and attitude (Nkwanyana, 2013). This means that the responses of those who use spiritual leaders for counselling and those who believe they can solve their own problems are in line with studies by Nkwanyana (2013) and O'Kane (2014). There are those who would use their own and others' previous experiences through encounters with professionals to justify their lack of interest in utilising services.

Makola and Mogale (2017) are also under the impression that sometimes people's bad experience during counselling can negatively shape their attitude towards counselling. This suggests that if an individual has been in contact with a counsellor and never got any help, they might perceive counselling to be useless to them, thus they will end up having low expectations in problems they may have in future. Therefore, the reasons provided by the participants who had not utilised the services confirm that there was underutilisation of the Student Psychosocial Support Services by the student populace. This is beneficial to the study because the study will recommend things that will counter the reasons stated by the participants in order to the increase the utilisation of the services.

The researcher can also conclude that the effectiveness of the Student Psychosocial Support Services in addressing challenges faced by the student population. Given the responses of students who had utilised the services, they all indicated that their challenges were resolved through the utilisation of the services. As such, the finding of the study is that the utilisation of the services equals to effectiveness, that is, the services are effective in resolving students' issues. All they have to do is to utilise the services.

5.7.4. Theme 4: Multi-disciplinary collaboration

The researcher asked participants who had used either Social Work or counselling services whether or not their situation required help from another stakeholder. Four (4) of the participants said that their challenges only required services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development, that is, they did not need collaboration with service providers. One (1) participant utilised counselling services and help from an external social worker to reach out to the student's family. The participant who had utilised Social Work services stated that the challenge they had required additional help from the Student Representative Council (SRC) and that the social worker assisted them to also get help from the SRC. The majority of those who had utilised either of the services did not require collaboration between stakeholders.

In light of the above information, the researcher is of the view that stakeholders within and without the university collaborate well one with another for the best interest of the students. The findings of this study supports views by Hepworth *et al.* (2013) that social workers play a role of case managers and have to coordinate services from other stakeholders for the best interest of the client when providing a holistic approach intervention. This depicts the works of the General Systems Theory in a sense that stakeholders within and outside the campus work together for the realisation of a common goal, that is, students' wellbeing.

5.7.5. Theme 5: Undergraduate students' referral and perceived referral system to Social Work and counselling services

The researcher asked participants who utilised either Social Work or counselling services to state the method of their referral. Those who have never utilised either of the services were asked to state in their opinion the method they thought were being used to refer students to either of the services. There were five (5) participants who used counselling services. Three (3) of the participants indicated that they went on their own and the other two (2) stated that they were referred by their lecturers. There was only one (1) participant who had used Social Work services within the university, who indicated that he was referred to by the then Student Representative Council (SRC). There was another participant who stated that their friends referred them for counselling but they did not go due to some of the reasons stated above.

Out of the six (6) participants who had utilised either Social Work or counselling services, four (4) stated that they were referred to the right source for help, and two (2) said that they were not referred to the right source. The majority of the participants who have utilised either Social Work or counselling services indicated that they did self-referral. Twenty-five (25) participants who had not utilised either of the services thought self-referral is the most practiced mode of referral practiced by students. The finding of the study is that the majority of the participants think self-referral is the most practiced way of accessing either Social Work or counselling services. The participants who had not used either Social Work or counselling services stated the following:

"I think some students go on their own".

"Their lecturers must be referring them".

"I think peer counsellors and peer educators refer them".

The researcher is of the view that the participants know that seeking help is a responsibility of the individual in a difficult situation and they must act on their own. This concurs with the study carried-out by Mahlatjie (2016), which found that people seeking professional help amid their challenges do so on their own and voluntarily so. This means that the referral system is not strong enough because the views of the participants are that they do not think there are stakeholders or other role players who can refer them to utilise either of the services. This may be beneficial to professionals because voluntary and involuntary clientele behave differently during intervention. This is supported by a popular saying in the English language, *"you can lead a horse to the river but you cannot force the horse to drink the water"* which reiterates that help cannot be forced on a person. Furthermore, self-determination is one of the principles guiding the intervention of social workers, that is, the client has the right to decide the type of intervention they want unless a human being's life is at stake (Hepworth et al., 2013). This may also be the cause of the underutilisation of the Student Psychosocial Support Services by students.

5.8.   Summary

- The practitioners' sample was made up of four student counsellors and a social worker.

- The practitioners had a minimum number of four (4) years and a maximum of eight (8) years of experience working as student counsellors at the University of Limpopo.

- The majority of the practitioners are of the view that students are aware of the services they render.

- Awareness campaigns are largely used by practitioners to create awareness and to correct wrong conceptions held by students relating to their services to the student population.

- The practitioners do not have a solid and formal way of measuring the impact of their awareness campaigns.

- The majority of the practitioners are of the view that students utilise counselling services maximally.

- The majority of practitioners are of the view that counselling services that they render to students are effective.

- The majority of the practitioners have put measures in place to ensure the effectiveness of their services.

- All the practitioners said that the numbers do not affect their services because they schedule appointments and allow enough consultation time between appointments.

- The finding of the study is that the unquestionable majority of the practitioners do not have a formal way to get feedback from students who have accessed the services.

- The ultimate majority of the practitioners get referrals from people or structures outside their respective units.

- The absolute majority of the practitioners are of the view that students who are referred to them by other stakeholders within the university present challenges that are relevant to the services that they render.

- The practitioners only have one (1) challenge which was lack of referrals from other units within the University of Limpopo, which hinders service delivery to the students.

- The overall majority of the practitioners have a good and working relationship with stakeholders both on-campus and off-campus.

- The complete majority of the practitioners observe the ethics of confidentiality.

- The majority of the practitioners think their offices are located in the right area (the academic area).

- The overall majority of the practitioners think their services are accessible.

- The majority of the practitioners stated categories of problems faced by students as social, family, academic and financial problems.

- The practitioners said that their services do not need improvements.

- The majority of the practitioners are of the view that evaluating the services they render to undergraduate students is necessary.

- The majority of the practitioners are of the view that their services do improve students' lives.

- All (3) the practitioners said that their services do contribute to the overall functionality of the university.

- Part 2 of the data was collected from forty (40) undergraduate students at the University of Limpopo.

- The majority of the students were males.

- The age group of the students was from 19 to 24 years old.

- The majority of the undergraduate students are in their late teens and early twenties (22 to 25 years).

- The statistical breakdown of the students interviewed included five (5) students from the Faculty of Health, ten (10) students from the Faculty of Humanities, sixteen (16) students from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, and nine (9) students from the Faculty of Management and Law.

- The majority of undergraduate students were from the Faculty of Science and Agriculture.

- The study highlights that majority (60%) of undergraduate students were in their first level of their studies.

- The majority of undergraduate students are aware of the existence of the services from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development.

- The majority of undergraduate students were not aware of the existence of the services from the Student Health and Wellness Centre.

- The overwhelming majority of undergraduate students have not used Social Work services within the University of Limpopo.

- The majority of undergraduate students have not accessed counselling services within the University of Limpopo.

- The majority of the undergraduate students who have utilised either Social Work or counselling services indicated that they did self-referral.

- Undergraduate students who had not utilised either of the services thought self-referral is the most practiced mode of referral practiced by students.

- The majority of those who had utilised either Social Work or counselling services did not require collaboration between stakeholders.

- The absolute majority of those who had utilised either of the services had their challenges handled with confidentiality.

- The majority of undergraduate students indicated that they will utilise the services on a need basis in the future.

- The majority of undergraduate students indicated that they thought it was not easy to access social work services within the university.

- The majority of undergraduate students do not think it is easy to access counselling services within the university.

- The absolute majority of undergraduate students are of the opinion that there are challenges that qualify for professional help.

- The overwhelming majority of undergraduate students think the services need improvements to increase utilisation by the student populace.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The study focused on the Evaluation of Social Work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students at the University of Limpopo. The study adopted an evaluative design as its methodological approach with the incorporation of the General Systems Theory. The population was made up of all undergraduate students registered for the academic year 2020, all student counsellors within the Centre for Student Counselling and Development and the social worker from the Student Health and Wellness Centre. A total of 40 undergraduate students, 4 out of 7 student counsellors and 1 social worker at the University of Limpopo were interviewed. Institutional records with information on the number of undergraduate students who had accessed either Social Work and/or counselling services, their gender and frequency. Clarke and Braun's (2014) six-phase framework of thematic analysis was used to analyse the data generated from the research process.

6.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The evaluation of the Social Work and counselling services rendered to undergraduate students provides valuable input for use in the modification of programme activities for the purpose of improvement, promotion and increase utilisation of the services. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the services rendered to undergraduate students by the social worker working at Student Health and Wellness Centre at the Student Health and Wellness Centre and counsellors working at the Centre for Student Counselling and Development within the University of Limpopo. The study investigated aspects of undergraduate students' awareness and utilisation, perceived effectiveness and the referral system regarding Social Work and counselling services within the University of Limpopo. It also focused on what the practitioners are doing to ensure the effectiveness of the services they render to students, and the challenges they experienced when rendering their services to the undergraduate student population.

The target population comprised all undergraduate students, the social worker and counsellors of the University of Limpopo. The aim and objectives of the study were achieved to some level, since it was able to determine undergraduate students' level of awareness of Social Work and counselling services available to them, the utilisation rate, their effectiveness in addressing their academic as well as personal challenges and the referral system used to refer students for the services. The study included recommendations to be considered when improvements towards the services are to be implemented. Areas which may be considered for future research and related themes are also presented in the study.

6.3.   ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

6.3.1. Awareness

The assumption of the study regarding awareness was that students were not aware of the services rendered by the social worker based at Student Health and Wellness Centre and counsellors attached to the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. Furthermore, it was also assumed that the practitioners whose services are being evaluated were not marketing their services enough. These assumptions were brought through observations that students in institutions of higher learning succumb to challenges that make them perform poorly in their academic activities, drop out of their studies, attempt and commit suicide. The researcher assumed that students were not aware of professional services available to them to help them solve their challenges.

However, the assumptions were disproved and somewhat proved. It was disproved because the research yielded results that indicated that students were aware of counselling services and the practitioners were doing their utmost best to market their services to the student populace. Moreover, it was proved because the results of the study indicated that students were not aware of Social Work services available to them.

6.3.2. Utilisation

The assumption of the study towards utilisation of the services under evaluation was that students do not utilise the services maximally which then leads to their poor

academic performance, substance abuse, dropping out of their studies, attempting and committing suicide. The results of the study proved this assumption to be right because a very significantly low number of the participants had utilised Social Work and/or counselling services within the university. The practitioners were also of the opinion that students do not utilise the Social Work and counselling services maximally. However, student intake records from the Social Work office and counsellors' offices could not be attained in order to ascertain the level of utilisation.

6.3.3. effectiveness

At times people do not utilise or access social work and/or counselling services because the services are not effective in addressing the challenges that the people are facing. Therefore, given the malicious behaviours displayed by students, such as substance abuse, dropping out of their studies, suffering from depression, to name but a few, the researcher was of the opinion that services were not effective in addressing challenges faced by students on a daily basis. However, this assumption was proved to be wrong because the participants who had utilised the services attested of the effectiveness of the services they had utilised. The participants who had not utilised either of the service shared that they perceived the services to be very effective. The practitioners also shared of measures they take to ensure the effectiveness of their services.

6.3.4. Referral

Institutions of higher learning have different structures which cater for students' needs, such as financial, housing, health and wellness, etc. Therefore, the research assumed that since the rate of utilisation was low, the reason may be that there was no active inter-structural referral of students. However, the practitioners indicated that there was a working referral system put in place to refer the "At-Risk Students" identified by lecturers, housing personnel, finance personnel, the Student Representative Council, health and wellness, religious bodies, etc.

6.4.   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study had the following objectives:

- To determine how students are made aware of the services offered by a social

worker from the Student Health and Wellness Centre and counselling services the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. This was achieved because most students showed that they were aware of counselling services and not Social Work services. The practitioners also indicated their efforts in making their services known to the student populace.

- To ascertain the rate of the utilisation of the Centre for Student Counselling and Development and Social Work services by undergraduate students. This objective was not met because the records of both centres respectfully could not be attained due to the fact that the centre appointed a new social worker, and records from the previous social worker could not be located. Counsellors were working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions and regulations, and they did not have the records with them.

- To determine the level of effectiveness of the Social Work services and the Centre for Student Counselling and Development rendered to undergraduate students. The objective was met because students who had utilised the services said the services were effective and the practitioners also shared their views on the effectiveness of the services they render respectfully.

- To describe the referral channels to both the social worker from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counsellors from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development. This objective was achieved because the practitioners identified and described students' referral channels to their respective services, and the students also shared their views on how they thought students were referred to the services.

- To identify challenges faced by the social worker from Student Health and Wellness Centre and counsellors from the Centre for Student Counselling and Development when rendering services to undergraduate students. This objective was met because the practitioners stated whether they faced challenges or not when rendering services to the student populace.

6.5. CONCLUSIONS

6.5.1. Awareness

The practitioners are doing their part in informing students of the services they render. They do so through awareness campaigns throughout the year, presentations during orientations of first-year students, distributing flyers, hosting and participating in radio talks, advertising their services in student magazines and through the peer-

counsellor/peer educators. Students are aware of counselling services available to them within the campus. However, they are not aware of Social work services available to them within the campus.

6.5.2. Utilisation

Out of forty (40) students, only six (6) students had utilised either Social Work or counselling prior to the interview. This shows that there is underutilisation of Social Work and counselling services by the students. The practitioners also confirmed that they do not think students utilise Social Work and counselling services maximally.

6.5.3. Effectiveness

The six (06) students who had utilised the Social Work and counselling services indicated that the services were effective in addressing the challenges that they had. The practitioners were also of the opinion that the services they render were effective. Students who had not utilised the services share their opinions on whether they thought the services were effective or not; and they all said that it is their opinion that the services were effective. Therefore, it is deduced that the services are effective in addressing the challenges faced by students.

6.5.4. Referral system

The practitioners are of the view that most students prefer the self-referral method. The students also believe that most students check themselves in the services. However, the practitioners and students added that lecturers in various schools and departments, the Student Representative Council, student housing committee and nurses within Student Health and Wellness Centre do refer students to Social Work and/or counselling services when they come across students who can benefit from the respective services.

6.6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, a number of recommendations can be made. These recommendations may be considered and implemented as follows:

6.6.1. Social Work Management within Student Health and Wellness Centre

• Organise for external professionals such as SASSA personnel to operate within the university to save students' time.

• Ensure a 24-hour service through an online interactive site.

• Appreciation of good thoughts about the utilisation of counselling services can be valued in the form of promotional material such as pens, rulers, water bottles, coffee mugs, hats, scarfs, t-shirts, etc.

6.6.2. Management within the Centre for Student Counselling and Development

• Organise for external professionals such as psychiatrists to operate within the university to save students' time.

• Have a sign or billboard indicating the availability of social work services within the Student Health and Wellness facility.

• Ensure a 24-hour service through an online interactive site.

• Appreciation of good thoughts about the utilisation of counselling services can be valued in the form of promotional material, such as pens, rulers, water bottles, coffee mugs, hats, scarfs, t-shirts, etc.

• Ensure availability of enough technological devices to enable the practitioners to render their services smoothly.

• Employ more social workers in order adjust the practitioner-to-client ratio as that will build a strong Social Work team to render quality services.

6.6.3. The social worker and student counsellors

• Thoroughly market the Social Work services to the student population.

• Develop a post-intervention feedback tool to be filled by their clients.

• Have an online platform were students can access Social Work and counselling services to increase utilisation.

6.6.4. Students

• To commit to the services by consulting as frequently as the practitioner recommends and not fall out during the helping process.

6.7.   AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The evaluation of social work and counselling services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo was limited to one institution for feasibility considerations. A similar study could be conducted at another institution since different areas may yield different results.

The following research areas can also be considered:

•   Challenges faced by social work and counselling practitioners when dealing with issues of involuntary clients within institutions of higher learning.

•   Thoroughly study the referral system to refer students to social work and counselling services.

•   Effective strategies for Student Psychosocial Support Services implementation by social workers and counsellors within institutions of higher learning.

•   Ways of improving best practices that will yield an effective EAP programme.

•   Ways of de-stigmatising the use of social work and counselling services.

•   Factors affecting students' utilisation of social work and counselling services.

6.8.   CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The evaluation of any service provides valuable inputs for use in the modification of service activities for the purposes of improvement. The purpose of this study was to evaluate social work and counselling services with reference to the University of Limpopo. The study focused mainly on the awareness, utilisation, effectiveness of the services, and referral system of students to the services.

The aim and objectives of the study were achieved since it was able to determine the students' level of awareness, the utilisation rate as well as its effectiveness in addressing their work and personal challenges, and the channels in which students were referred to social work and counselling services. The study included recommendations to be considered when improvements towards the services are to

be implemented. Areas which may be considered for future research and related themes are also presented in the study.

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ANNEXURE A: INFORMED CONSENT (For Social Work service practitioner and counselling service practitioners)

Thank you so much for volunteering to participate in the study. I planned this session to enable us to share your awareness, utilisation and effectiveness pertaining to your services. Your participation is important because it will help me get information regarding the services you offer to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The information shared will assist other service providers gain more information and knowledge about your services, determine whether or not students are aware of the services, determine whether they utilise the services and whether the services are effective in addressing students' problems. It will also assist the researcher to suggest useful directions regarding the modification of the services if there is a need for such.

Participation will remain completely confidential.

ANNEXURE B: INFORMED CONSENT (For undergraduate student's participants)

Thank you so much for volunteering to participate in the study. I planned this session to enable us to share your views on your awareness, utilisation and effectiveness pertaining to Social Work and counselling services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. Your participation is important because it will help me get information regarding the services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo. The information shared will assist the service providers to gain more information and knowledge about their services, determine whether or not students are aware of the services, determine whether students utilise the services and if the services are effective in addressing students' problems. It will also assist the researcher to suggest useful directions regarding the modification of the services if there is a need for such.

Participation will remain completely confidential.

ANNEXURE C: CONSENT BY PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this interview and the nature of the questions have been explained to me. I consent to responding the questions about the awareness, utilisation and effectiveness of my services to students within the University of Limpopo. My participation is voluntary. I have the right to withdraw at any given time during the discussion, and my participation and the decision I take will not affect my work.

I agree to participate in the study ☐

I do not agree to participate in the study ☐

Name and Surname_____

Signature _____

Date _____

_____   _____

Witness signature   Date

ANNEXURE D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Topic of the research: An evaluation of Social Work and counseling services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo

Section A: Demographic information

What is your position?

How long have you been working in that position?

Section B: Interview questions (For Social Work service practitioner and counselling service practitioners)

1. **Awareness**

   1.1. Are students aware of the services you render within the university?

   1.2. Please elaborate

   1.3. How do you make your services known to students?

      1.3.1. How often do you do that?

   1.4. How do you correct wrong conceptions held by students about your services?

   1.5. How do you measure the success of your awareness campaigns?

2. **Utilisation**

   2.1. Are students utilising your services maximally?

   2.2. If no, briefly describe nature of the challenge.

2.3. What can be done to maximise utilisation of your services?

3. **Effectiveness**

3.1. To what extent do you think your services are effective to address students' challenges?

3.2. What measure do you take to ensure the effectiveness of your services?

3.3. Do you think the number of students that seek your intervention make it easier for you to provide your services to your satisfaction?

3.4. How do you receive feedback about your services from students who have received your services?

4. **Referral system**

4.1. Who refers students to your services?

4.2. What kind of referral method is used?

4.3. Do you have a common tool for referrals and who designs it?

4.4. Do you think the challenges that are presented through referrals make relevance to the scope of the services you render?

4.5. In cases where challenges that are referred to you are beyond your scope, what do you usually do?

5. **Challenges**

5.1. Do you face challenges that may hinder your service delivery to the student populace?

5.2. If yes, what are those challenges?

5.3. If any, how do you address such challenges?

6. **Collaboration**

6.1. Do you have a working relationship with other stakeholders within the university?

6.2. Do you have a working relationship with other stakeholders outside the university?

6.3. What do you do when your client needs services from other professionals?

6.4. Do you think there should be improvements on collaboration that will enable the smooth operation towards dealing with students' challenges?

7. **Confidentiality**

7.1. How do you ensure confidentiality?

7.2. Do you think your office is conducive for confidentiality?

7.3. Do you think the location of your office is conducive for students to discreetly access your services?

8. **Accessibility**

8.1. Do you think it is easy for students to access your services at any time?

8.2. If no, what can be done to ensure accessibility of your services at any time?

9. What kind of problems do students usually present in relation to your services?

10. Do you think there is a need to improve your services for the purpose of utilisation?

11. If yes, what kind of improvement would you suggest?

12. **Theoretical framework**

12.1.   In your opinion, do you think an evaluation of the services you render to undergraduate students is necessary?

12.2.   Support your answer in 12.1

12.3.   Do you think the services you render to undergraduate students contribute to the overall wellbeing of students?

12.4.   Support your answer in 12.3

12.5.   Do you think the services you render to undergraduate students contribute to the overall functionality of the institution?

12.6.   Support your answer in 12.5.

Section C: Interview questions (For undergraduate students)

Section A: Demographic information

What Faculty are you from?

What level of study are you in?

Are you male or female?

How old are you?

13. **Awareness**

    13.1.   Are you aware that there are counselling services rendered to students within the university?

    13.2.   Are you aware that there are social work services offered to students within the university?

    13.3.   How did you know about the existence of the Social Work services?

    13.4.   How did you know about the existence of the counselling services?

14. **Effectiveness**

    14.1.   Have you ever accessed Social Work services within the university?

        14.1.1.   If yes, was your situation resolved?

        14.1.2.   If the answer in 2.1 was yes, how often do you access the services?

        14.1.3.   If the answer in 2.1 was no, why have you not used the services?

    14.2.   Have you ever accessed counselling services within the university?

        14.2.1.   If yes, was your situation resolved?

        14.2.2.   If the answer in 14.1 or 14.2 was yes, how often do you access the services?

        14.2.3.   If the answer in 14.1 or 14.2 was no, why have you not used the services?

15. **Referral system**

    15.1.   If you have accessed the services from the social worker or counsellors, who referred you?

    15.2.   Do you think you were referred to the relevant service provider?

    15.3.   If you have never accessed the services, do you think students go to the service providers on their own?

    15.4.   If the answer in 15.3 is no, who do you think refers them?

16. **Collaboration**

    16.1.   Did your situation require services from other service providers?

    16.2.   If yes, were the other service providers included?

17. **Confidentiality**

    17.1.   Do you think your situation was handled with confidentiality?

    17.2.   If no, what happened?

18. **Utilisation**

    18.1.   If the answer in either 14.1 or 14.2 was no, what is your reason for not utilising the services?

    18.2.   If the answer in either 14.1 or 14.2 was no, do you think you will ever access the services?

19. **Accessibility**

    19.1.   Do you think it is easy for students to access Social Work services at any time?

    19.2.   Do you think it is easy for students to access counselling services at any time?

    19.3.   If no, what can be done to ensure accessibility of the services at any time?

20. What kind of problems do you think warrant students to seek professional services?

21. Do you think there is a need to improve the services for the purpose of utilisation?

22. If yes, what kind of improvement would you suggest?

The end.

ANNNEXURE E: CLEARANCE LETTER FROM TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3766, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email:makoetja.ramusi@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 18 November 2020

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/366/2020: PG

PROJECT:

Title: An evaluation of Social Work and counselling services offered to undergraduate students in the University of Limpopo

Researcher: ML Mogale

Supervisor: Mrs TMA Mahlatjie

Co-Supervisor/s: Mrs DT Seloana
                     Prof SL Sithole

School: Social Sciences

Degree: Master of Social Work

PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:
i)   This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
ii)   Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
iii)   PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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ANNEXTURE F: LETTER TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENTS HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE (The social worker's centre) AND CENTRE FOR STUDENT COUNSELLING AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE.

Mogale M.L

P O Box 1093

Lenyenye

0857

21 January 2020

The Director

University of Limpopo

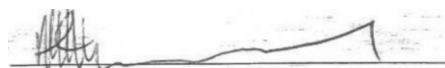**Private Bag 4299**

Sovenga

0727

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH STAFF MEMBERS RENDERING SOCIAL WORK AND COUNSELLING SERVICES AS PARTICIPANTS

I, Malepe Lesley Mogale, hereby ask permission to conduct research staff members rendering Social Work and counselling services as participants. Staff members who are willing and available from the university will be asked to answer questions in interviews. I am currently registered with the University of Limpopo doing a Master's degree in Social Work. One of the requirements for the qualification is a complete dissertation where I am expected to conduct research. My research topic is "An evaluation of Social Work and counseling services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo".

Thanking you in advance in anticipation of your consideration of this matter.

Yours faithfully

Mogale M.L

ANNEXTURE G: APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF STUDENTS HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE (The social worker's Centre).

University of Limpopo
Student Health and Wellness Centre
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3726, Fax: 0865145967, Email:norman.letebele@ul.ac.za

24 August 2018

RESEARCHER: Mr. Mogale ML
SUPERVISOR: Ms Mahlatjie TMA
CO-SUPERVISOR: N/A
INSTITUTION: University of Limpopo

GATEKEEPER PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Kindly be informed that Gatekeeper permission is granted to you to conduct research at the University of Limpopo Student Health & Wellness Centre, entitled: **"An evaluation of Social Work and Counselling Services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo".**

Kindly note that the data and information you collect is solely for the purpose of your studies and not for consumption of the public without prior permission from the Student Health Centre.
It is expected for the researcher to share the findings and recommendations of the study that can be used to improve our services.

We wish you good luck with your studies.

Yours in Health & Wellness.

ON LETEBELE
DIRECTOR: CAMPUS HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTRE

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ANNEXTURE H: EDITORIAL LETTER

09 July 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

SUBJECT: EDITING OF DISSERTATION

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled 'An evaluation of social work and counseling services offered to undergraduate students within the University of Limpopo by Malepe Lesley Mogale has been copy-edited, and that unless further tampered with, I am content with the quality of the dissertation in terms of its adherence to editorial principles of consistency, cohesion, clarity of thought and precision.

Kind regards

Prof. SJ Kubayi (DLitt et Phil)