

Experiences of Student Youth Workers During Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) at  
Mavambe Secure Care Centre in the Limpopo Province, South Africa

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## Abstract

Student youth workers are exposed to a variety of challenging situations during work-integrated learning (WIL), especially those placed at centres dealing with young people in conflict with the law. This study aimed to explore the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning (WIL) at Mavambe Secure Care Centre (Mavambe SCC) in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. This study was qualitative in nature. The population of the study was the University of Venda's Bachelor of Arts, Youth in Development (BAYID) fourth-year student youth workers doing work-integrated learning (WIL) at Mavambe Secure Care Centre. The non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for the study. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews to get in-depth information from the participants through open-ended questions and vignette technique to ease the sensitivity of the research topic. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Ethical considerations were taken into account to protect the participants from any form of harm. The study found that inadequate safety and security, lack of support and monitoring of student youth workers during WIL compromise the quality and effectiveness of WIL. The study recommended that safety and security at the hosting agencies as well as support and monitoring of student youth workers during WIL should be improved.

**Keywords:** *Student youth workers, Work-integrated learning, Youth in conflict with the law, Youth Workers and Youth work*

## Declaration

I, Ngadi Pertunia Rankakane (Student no.:14013887), hereby attest that this dissertation, titled *'Experiences of Student Youth Workers During Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): A case of Mavambe Secure Care Centre in the Limpopo Province, South Africa'*, submitted to the Institute for Gender and Youth Studies at the University of Venda, has not been submitted previously at this or any university for any degree. Therefore, this dissertation is my original work in design and execution, and all reference materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature:



Date: **25 May 2021**

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## Dedication

This work is dedicated to the following people:

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- All student youth workers and youth workers at large, your challenges will never go unnoticed, together with the role you are playing in communities to positively impact the lives of young people across the country.

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## List of acronyms

BQCC – Basic Qualification in Child Care

CHE – Council on Higher Education

CYCW – Child and Youth Care Worker

DOE - Department of Education

DSD- Department of Social Development

ELT- Experiential Learning Theory

HEQC- Higher Education Quality Committee

HEQF – Higher Education Qualification Framework

HIV/AIDS – Human immune Virus and Acquired Immune deficiency syndrome

Mavambe SCC – Mavambe Secure Care Centre

NACCW – National Association for Child Care Workers

NYP – National Youth Policy

NYC – National Youth Council

PBL – Problem based Learning

PJBL – Project-based Learning

SA – South Africa

SASCE – Southern African Society for Corporative Education

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNISA – University of South Africa

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

VET – Vocational Educational Training

WIL – Work Integrated Learning

WPL – Workplace Learning

YDC – Youth Development Center

YID – Youth in Development

YW – Youth Work

## CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1. Introduction

Across the field of human service professions, research has shown that work-integrated learning (WIL) is viewed as a key component in education as it serves as induction of future youth workers into the youth work profession. WIL is considered as a platform for students to consolidate knowledge and skills and to be socialized onto the profession (Ainsworth, 2016). In other words, WIL provides students with an opportunity to hone their skills by being expected to apply the knowledge they acquired in class under the supervision of the relevant and seasoned professionals in their respective fields.

Student youth workers operate in the youth work domain which is also part of the social service or human service field. Other sister disciplines found in the social service or human service field include among others, child and youth care (CYC), social work, psychology, nursing, and teaching as well. All these fields of study require that students enrolled for programmes meant to train them to be professional youth workers, child and youth care workers, social workers, psychologists, nurses, and teachers to go for practicums or work-integrated learning. Despite so much research on social services practicum, there is very limited research that focuses on youth work practicum (Keough, 2016). This gap has motivated the researcher to pay attention to this seemingly neglected area of study in youth work.

Therefore, this research intends to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL to assist the academic practicum coordinators and workplace supervisors in fostering learning environments that promote student development and practice

competence in the field setting (Awai, 2011). WIL is also crucial for student youth workers as it contributes to positive learning outcomes, promote student learning and growth, and increase confidence in field settings (Awai, 2011). This highlights that social service graduates require hands-on learning and practice in the service environments in which students intend to pursue their careers. As Freeman (2013) argues that postulates that CYC should continue providing skilled graduates who can render quality services in the field, similarly, graduates who are going to work within the youth work field also have to go for practicals to learn to apply their acquirement knowledge and to gain experience in the field. This means that WIL placement for student youth workers should be made a priority by all stakeholders.

Work-integrated learning (WIL) refers to an educational programme that incorporates a work-based component that is related to classroom learning. Such a programme adds a practical based learning component to knowledge acquired in the classroom (Kramer & Usher, 2011). WIL is in most cases organized by an educational institution to provide students with an opportunity for practical application of the theory they have learned in the classroom. What students do when practicing should be related to what they have learned in the classroom. WIL is geared towards linking classroom learning and on-the-job experience (Kramer & Usher, 2011).

During work-integrated learning, some student youth workers, especially those doing practicals in centres catering for the young people who conflict with the law may be exposed to challenging situations. The study aims at exploring the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe Secure Care Centre (Mavambe SCC) in Limpopo province, South Africa. Mavambe SCC is part of the then Bosasa Youth Development



Centres (Bosasa YDC) which was established in 1995 in partnership with the Gauteng Department of Social Development (DSD). The Centre is now directly under DSD. The government had realized the need for young people in conflict with the law to be placed in safer environments rather than in adult-occupied correctional facilities or police cells. Bosasa Youth Development Centre aims to deliver excellent services and give back to the communities by laying a proper foundation for the youth, developing their skills and education, equipping them with necessary skills that enable them to deal with challenges that they encounter as they grow up and at the same time and integrating them back into the society as responsible members of the community (Bond & Keys, 2020).

It is imperative for student youth workers to be exposed to WIL as it serves as a bridge between their theoretical knowledge and professional future. It is an opportunity for the students to apply the theory they acquired in the classroom in real-world situations (Orrell, 2011). WIL equips students with workplace practical experience. In other words, it serves as a gateway for students to acquire and develop professional skills in preparation for their careers (Martins & Hughes, 2009). Mavambe SCC, the then Bosasa YDC caters for children in conflict with the law due to their anti-social behaviour. Students on WIL face several challenges linked with the nature of their work environments, such as stressful situations and even physical harm or hostility when they interact with youth who have a history of conflicting with the law. Against this background, it may be very dangerous or unsafe for student youth workers to do their practicals in such an environment. Therefore, this study was necessary to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL to highlight the challenges student youth workers face during the WIL program at

Mavambe SCC. This study also examined how student youth workers coped with the various challenges they faced during WIL.

## 1.2. Background of the study

WIL is meant to ensure that university students are employable as they possess the range of skills and knowledge sought after by employers (Orrell, 2011). According to the WIL report of 2017, government and business sectors in the UK call for universities to ensure that graduates possess appropriate knowledge and skills for the career they intend to pursue. Orrell (2011) argues that universities should ensure that what students learn in the classroom is in line with the immediate needs of the business, industry, and the community.

The European Council agreed with the Member States to substantially upsurge the number of apprenticeships and traineeships to exemplify the skills gap while creating employment opportunities that integrate with educational programmes for young people (European Commission, 2014). This form of education is crucial as it increases economic competitiveness while on the other hand improving individuals' chances for employability. Member States and social partners agreed to cooperate in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and work-based learning in all initial VET courses. As mentioned in the Rethinking Education Communication and the Youth Employment Package, the value of VET and dual training systems which includes teaching students the theory and at the same time exposing them to practical experience on the theoretical knowledge, in facilitating youth employment is acknowledged (European Commission, 2014).

The European Council (2014) confirmed that the maximum priority should be on promoting youth employment by equipping young people with skills that increase their

chances for employability which resulted in the Commission establishing a “European Alliance Apprenticeship” and Youth Employment Initiative in the regions with high youth unemployment rates, with the financial support of EUR 6 billion. Despite these commitments of the EU, the apprenticeship and traineeship services continued to be less and under-developed, but this representation differs from country to country. Young people who enrolled in these apprenticeships and traineeships only represent 33% of VET students. Twenty-four (24) EU countries have structures where learners are provided with workplace experience which equals to the theory they learn in the classroom; however, the scope of these structures differs widely.

In Austria, Denmark, and Germany, work-based learning (typically apprenticeships) dominates and reaches more than 30% of students. In Spain and Portugal, work-based learning programmes such as apprenticeship and traineeships are not common, therefore there is a need for more investments to offer these programmes in these countries where WIL opportunities are limited. Lack of relevant work experience, the related skills, and competencies needed in the job market are factors contributing to the "skills gap" in the EU and across other continents today. While 5.6 million young people in the EU are the victims of unemployment, most employers struggle to find a relevant individual with the necessary skills to fill in the skills gaps in their organizations (European Commission, 2014). The practice to identify, adapt and adopt skills gap is needed urgently to tackle this skills gap and it can be achieved through WIL.

In Australia, a survey was conducted on management and educational leaders of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) departments and schools from Australian universities as part of a project funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching

Council (ALTC) project (Ogunbona, 2009). The project was intended to investigate the lack of real-world experience by recent ICT graduates in the workplace as reported in a previous related ALTC project (Koppi & Naghdy, 2009). It was previously found that there is an 88% skills mismatch concerning the abilities that the universities prepared the students for and what is needed by the employers. The purpose of the survey of management and educational leaders was to investigate and understand the theory and practices of Work-Integrated Learning in ICT in Australian universities (Ogunbona, 2009). The findings from the survey complement those of the previous ALTC study which alluded that there is a great skill mismatch between the recent ICT graduates and the required skills in the organizations by providing a comprehensive picture of WIL from other perspectives (Koppi & Naghdy, 2009).

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is not only considered in human services. It started around 1894 by Herman Schneider who was an engineering graduate involved in the construction of bridges (Kramer & Usher, 2011). Schneider's project of building the bridges was established right after it was found that students were struggling to apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned in the classroom. While the debate on WIL rages on among the researchers, practitioners, and scholars, social services professions still insist on theory-driven practice. In other social service professions such as social work, the theories serve to distinguish professional social work from any form of helping since it is grounded on the intentional use of theories (Gentle-Genitty, 2013).

As part of the degree requirement, the student youth workers are required to do practicals by being attached to an organization or department dealing with adolescents and youth issues. WIL allows students to apply the theoretical knowledge and to gain practical

experience on issues affecting adolescents and youth. However, with more studies conducted on WIL, there is a knowledge gap on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL. This leaves a question on what they go through during WIL, how are they coping with the situations that they are exposed to during WIL, and strategies that can be used to curb the challenges that they face during WIL. Therefore, this study intends to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC.

### **1.3. Problem statement**

Practicals provide student youth workers with an opportunity to apply the theory they gained in the classroom and to hone their skills in working with diverse groups of young people. However, while busy with work-integrated learning, student youth workers may experience challenges, particularly when working with children who conflict with the law. These young people, who conflicted with the law, may pose serious challenges to student workers because of their violent behaviour. These behaviours pose threats to the personal safety and security of student youth workers when working with children in conflict with the law, which makes it extremely difficult for youth workers to do their best when working with those young people. Such behaviour may hamper student youth workers' efforts to apply their theoretical knowledge and to hone their skills during the WIL period. This may also threaten student youth workers' chances of practicing as youth workers after graduating because of the fear of working with young people who conflicted with the law or with violent behaviours. In view of this, this study seeks to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. This study further pursues to explore strategies for providing appropriate and effective support, safety, and

security for student youth workers during work-integrated learning so that they can practice without any fear.

#### **1.4. The aim of the study**

The study aims to explore the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning (WIL), particularly at Mavambe Secure Care Centre.

#### **1.5. Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

To explore the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC

To determine the effects of the challenges faced by student youth during WIL at Mavambe SCC

To discover coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL in dealing with the challenges they face at Mavambe SCC

#### **1.6. Research questions**

What are the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

How are student youth workers affected by the challenges they face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

What are the coping mechanisms used by student youth workers to deal with the challenges they face during WIL at the Mavambe SCC?

### **1.7. Delimitation of the study**

The study is delimited to the University of Venda's fourth-year student youth workers who were doing WIL at Mavambe SCC.

### **1.8. Significance of the study**

The study adds new knowledge to the existing body of knowledge on the needs of student youth workers and youth workers at large by highlighting the challenges they face when working with young people in conflict with the law. The study also examines ways that can be used to curb challenges faced by student youth workers when they are working with young offenders who are in conflict with the law. As gender equality is one of the cornerstones of social justice in South Africa, it is imperative to focus on the needs of student youth workers irrespective of their gender, particularly when working with young people who conflicted with the law. The study also helps to identify the kind of support needed by student youth workers for them to be effective and successful in youth work practice. Furthermore, the study raises awareness to the communities and government departments as well as the private sector on the importance of empowerment and the support student youth workers need for them to succeed in youth work practice. Government and centres catering for young people in conflict with the law can also draw insights from the study to improve and develop effective security and safety policies for student youth workers during WIL.

### **1.9. Definition of key terms**

1.9.1. Experience – it is a process of getting knowledge or skills from doing, seeing, and feeling things which include a practical contact and observation of facts or events (Roth & Jornet, 2014).

1.9.2. Child and Youth care work – is a practice that includes assessing client and program needs which advocate for the holistic development of children and (DSD, 2007).

1.9.3. Student – a person who is studying at a college, university, or other institutions of higher education (Oxford dictionary, 2008)

1.9.4. Work-integrated learning (WIL) - WIL is used as an umbrella term to describe curricular, educational, and assessment practices that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns (Council of Higher Education, 2011).

1.9.5. Youth – can be defined as any persons falling within the age group of 14 to 35 years (The Presidency, 2009b). In line with this study, Youth refers to any persons between the age of 15 and 35 years.

1.9.6. Youth work – refers to a field of practice that focuses on the holistic development of young people for them to be responsible members of society (The Presidency, 2009b).

## 1.10. Summary

Chapter 1 has laid a fundamental foundation for this research paper. It provided in detail the introduction and background of the study, problem statement and the significance of the study justified by the literature. The aim and objectives of the study were also outlined, the definition of key concepts, delimitation of the study, research methodology and ethical considerations were presented. The next chapter presents the literature review and the



theories that are used to explain the experiences of student youth workers during WIL and as a lens for this study.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with a literature review from different scholars on the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning. The literature review will help to unpack the understanding of the phenomenon being studied as well as helping the researcher find the existing gaps which address the need for this study. The significance of this is to enable the research to come up with a new body of knowledge and to fill the identified gaps in the existing body of knowledge. The literature will be reviewed under the following subtopics: inception of WIL, the benefits of WIL, the challenges faced by students during WIL, coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL, Social support available for students during WIL, the theoretical framework, and conclusion on the overall chapter.

### 2.2. History of Youth Work

During the apartheid era, South African social services were concentrated on whites. The welfare initiatives took place mostly in urban areas whereby child protection experts intervened after the abuse had taken place (Bekink, 2019). The Children's Act takes accountability for the constitutional rights of the children by protecting them from abuse, maltreatment, and neglect. This happens through aiming at transforming welfare services along with a development model (Bekink, 2019). The Child and Youth Care Worker (CYCW) workforce's initial purpose was to provide children with care from residential facilities. However, apart from working in institutional settings, CYCWs are trained to focus on the holistic development and growth in the living space of children and youth in a different context such as family and community (Bekink, 2019). In South Africa and

other Sub-Saharan countries, there is a rapid increase of vulnerable children due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other risk factors related to it. Due to this growing population of youth at risk, the demand for social service programmes and services is increasing rapidly. This includes finding workers with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement social service programmes to meet diverse complex of social service needs (Bekink, 2019).

In South Africa, the child and youth care worker (CYCW) training was first introduced in the 1980s by the National Association for Child Care Workers (NACCW). In the child and youth care centres where most child and youth care workers (CYCWs) were employed, control and punishment were used as child modeling methods (Allsopp, 2011). During that time, there was no qualification required. This means that CYCWs were only expected to look after children without providing children with therapeutic care and behaviour modeling. The fundamental attitude in detention centres was that caregivers do not do programs with those children but only look after them as they are taken as criminals (Bekink, 2019). However, the NACCW network actively promoted the role of youth care workers to be in line with the children's rights perspective by serving in the living space of children as therapeutic agents than just caregivers. This resulted in NACCW developing the training in the basic qualification in childcare (BQCC) in most metropolitan areas. In 1995, the declaration of the correctional service amendment act 17 of 1994 stated that children awaiting trial should no longer be kept in prison cells., Instead, they should be placed in places of safety operated by the Department of Social Development (DSD) or be left under the care of their parents (USAID, 2013).

This view was further publicized by the media which predominantly portrayed young people in a stereotypical and negative light without addressing issues that affect them directly as a youth (Hlagala, 2012). Around the 1980s, the Manpower Service Commission in the United Kingdom advocated for the focus of youth work on social and life skills than just social education for the holistic development of young people (Jeffs & Smith, 2008). The new workforce is more concerned with micro-managing individuals who are viewed as problematic, which mostly refer to youth at risk while on the other hand, it has no vision of the world beyond the present for the betterment of the lives of those young people who are viewed as problematic or delinquent. While longing for a generation of young people marked with governments' approval on the behaviour, the government then transformed youth work from social education to an agency of behaviour modification. This means that the focus was put on correcting delinquent or bad behaviour of the youth as they were expected to conform to the societal norms. Such an approach to issues facing youth shows that youth work that focused on social education failed to directly address social issues affecting young people. This means that such youth workers fail to use theories and models as a strategy to mold young peoples' behaviour to meet social and societal standards of norms (Jeffs & Smith, 2008).

In view of the above context in which South African young people are cared for, there is a need for WIL for all those who are going to work with these young people. This is necessary because WIL provides student youth workers with an opportunity to apply the knowledge they have acquired in class so that they can hone their skills needed for them to be effective youth workers. However, there is a great gap concerning the student's

learning period and the workplace experience that needs to be acquired since they spend more time in the classroom.

### 2.3. The Inception of WIL

Youth work is neither social care nor formal teaching. It is a sophisticated method of achieving personal and social development among young people which is built on dialogue and relationship building. Youth work originated in the 1850s, with the emergence of the first Flemish movements such as Roman Catholic youth groups in 1850, the social young guards in 1886, and the Flemish student's movement in 1875 (Cahill & Wilkinson, 2017). At the beginning of the 20th century after the First World War, further youth movements emerged and developed. The movements focused on playful outdoor activities taking place during leisure time, this emphasis shifted from countering social and material inequalities to (Van de Walle et al., 2011). For many years, youth work aspired to meet young people on their terms, thus claiming to be on their side, although, lately profound change has taken place. The aim was to nurture a special relationship with young people (Van de Walle et al., 2011).

After discussing the history of youth work, it is important that the inception of WIL is also discussed since the latter is also an important component of the training of youth workers. According to Scheff (2015) the idea of cooperative education began to take place around 1894. Scheff (2015) who was an engineering graduate working on a project of building a bridge discovered two things about the students who were working with him during the bridge-building. Firstly, he observed that students' part-time work was not related to their current study area or future careers. Secondly, the concern was that students experienced difficulties in adapting or applying their classroom theoretical knowledge at

the workplace. Scheff (2015) also discovered that certain elements of engineering could not be discovered in the classroom environment and later came up with a programme that included apprenticeship and schoolwork, and the benefits of the implementation were that students were able to work effectively in their field (Scheff, 2015).

Increasingly, universities are expected to prepare the students to transition into the workplace with generic graduate capabilities and relevant skills. This means that the students should be able to identify and mitigate risks, solve problems effectively, be creative and innovative, and manage diversity and ambiguity in the workplace (Orrell, 2018). Furthermore, the universities are expected to expose students to the opportunities that will provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills that will benefit them after they have graduated. The students should be able to share and review the experiences they gained in the workplace which will enable them to transform the knowledge they have learned in the classroom into practical knowledge. This prevails that the main aim of WIL inception was to contribute to students' employability as they graduate from the university (Orrell, 2018). Just like in the engineering field of study, youth work training also requires student youth workers to be provided with an opportunity to learn to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in class so that they can become effective youth workers.

Experiential learning is a recurrent course of action that includes observation, reflection, and activity. Concrete learning happens as a result of understanding issues and requires thinking and reflection guided by supervisors (Martin et al., 2011). In the context of this study, student youth workers are expected to work effectively, reflecting on the classroom knowledge to solve an existing problem in the Centre as they work with young people

who are in conflict with the law. The aim of student youth workers to work with these young people in conflict with the law is to prepare them to go back to their families and communities as responsible young adults. The integration of these young offenders back to society is dependent on the effectiveness of the service providers (psychologists, youth workers, social workers, and other personnel at the centre). A range of pedagogies provide students with solid knowledge and theory, connected to practical work through the placements/practicum or project which prepares and equips them with concrete experience (Martin et al., 2011). Programmes ought to be applied in a real-life situation, utilizing group work and other pedagogies to cultivate both industry skill development and behavioural soft skills development (Joynes, Rossignoli, & Fenyiwa Amonoo-Kuofi, 2019).

To improve the quality of experiential learning, engaging students is crucial as there is an emerging body of literature that could be useful to fill the existing gap. Jackson (2017) argues that students are in favour of WIL because it provides them with learning and career opportunities. Regardless of these benefits, the same researchers put a blind eye on the fact that there are accounts of a range of concerns experienced by students during WIL (Hlagala, 2012). On the contrary, Emslie (2009: 97) identified a “prevalence of negative emotions such as distress, frustration, bewilderment, disappointment, and fear” among the fieldwork placement journals of 114 Hong Kong social work students. This is evident that the voices of students are very imperative for successful studies on WIL. In their study, Jamshidi, Molazem, Sharif, Torabizadeh, and Kalyani (2019) found disturbing events recorded by students that arose from interactions with clients, staff in the field, and university placement instructors. Similarly, social work students reported that they

experienced physical violence and verbal abuse and were worried about their safety while on placement (Emslie, 2009).

In view of this, this study needs to investigate the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. To tap on their experiences, the researcher intends to explore the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL, how they were influenced by those challenges that they were exposed to, and to discover how they adapted to the effects of those challenges that they faced during WIL. This exercise helps to add to the existing body of information on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL.

As it has been mentioned, there is limited data on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL. This means that their experiences during WIL have received little formal attention. Instead, most studies focused on describing and comparing models of youth work field education while others focused on experiences of students in other disciplines during WIL (Emslie, 2009). According to Keough (2016), in CYC the practicum courses are built into the curriculum to ensure that students in this field also learn to apply the knowledge and theories they have acquired while in the classroom. However, Freeman (2013) reiterates his concern that there has been little research that focuses on CYC practice in field placement settings.

WIL remains crucial and beneficial in social service professions. Thus, WIL explains clients' situations by reflecting on the classroom knowledge, and then they can predict their client's behaviour. WIL provides a starting point for social service professionals. It also helps social service professionals to have an organized plan for their work as well as



ensuring that social service professionals have a clear plan and strategies for the work that they are supposed to do (Royse, 2011). The use of these theories offers the social service professionals a clear framework in a chaotic situation and provides accountability to their work. The theories learned in the classroom give the social service professionals a perspective to conceptualize and address clients' problems with appropriate interventions. Lastly, when social service professionals apply the theories to address their clients' issues, they are able to identify the knowledge gaps about their practice (Royse, 2011). This further helps the social service professionals and researchers to generate new knowledge and theories which can be used in seeking solutions to the challenges facing people being assisted by these social service professionals.

Du Plessis (2015) argues that because students are a key stakeholder, it is important to understand their experiences during WIL. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. In their study, Abery, Drummond, and Bevan (2015) postulated that they struggled to access the views of students when doing Australia's first scoping study on WIL. In most studies on WIL, students are frequently talked about instead of talked with. They are used as objects instead of the dynamic participants within the design of their experiential learning (Abery et al., 2015).

### 2.3.1. Benefits of WIL for the students, university, and the employer

There are specific components that, when melded together, enhance the WIL tripartite partnership of employer, academic staff, and student. The student brings to the WIL placement theoretical knowledge, industry skills, and prior experiences, which helps develop the student into an effectual and skilled professional (Martin et al., 2011). WIL

also endows the student youth workers an opportunity to cultivate both personal and professional attributes. It also helps students enhance their employability upon graduation. It harmonizes the professional dimension to academia and it benefits each stakeholder within the tripartite relationship as it builds networks (Martin et al., 2011). This means that WIL not only benefits the student youth workers doing practical but also the University and the Centre hosting students for WIL.

For the students, the workplace experience provides them with an opportunity to apply the theory acquired in the classroom in a real workspace. It equips them with skills that are relevant to their knowledge and provides them with an understanding of the organizational and operational aspects of the industry. It integrates their theoretical knowledge and understanding from an academic point of view with other life experiences. It also allows them to experience practical application of the classroom theory in a real work situation and under the supervision of professionals in the same field as them. It allows students to discover their newly developed strengths and weaknesses which may need to be improved to acquire relevant skills on the job. This enables the students an opportunity to develop techniques that are common practice in the organization.

The relevant and common skills include communication, marketing, related organizational, and teamwork. The practical experience also allows them to analyze the organization, identify the skills needed in the organization, plan on the best way to apply the theory they have in the organization, implement using methods relevant on the field, and evaluate practices that benefit the organization. They are also able to draft specific and measurable goals and objectives that they need to accomplish during WIL so that they leave the field with relevant skills that will assist them in their career in the near future

after they have graduated from the university. This will expose them to physical, economic, social, and technological factors in the field which will gain them appreciation in the organization (Martins & Hughes, 2009).

For the University staff, the program improves the educational processes and broadens the professional curriculum. It also helps them to workshop students with the theoretical knowledge and how to apply it in the field. Furthermore, WIL establishes the working relationship between the university and the field experts and informs the organizations about the current skills, recent philosophies, research, and developments that are being generated in the field (Martins & Hughes, 2009).

For the employer, the students through WIL enable the host company to establish a cooperative working relationship with universities. This gives the company a platform to evaluate potential employees for the near future and informs them about the current skills produced by the universities which enable them to match the skills produced by the university and the skills needed in the industries (Martins & Hughes, 2009). It also allows the employer to play a role in preparing relevant professionals with relevant knowledge and skills for the industries and to explore innovative ideas and skills that are relevant in the field. It also attracts potential expertise and academics for assistance in the development and creation of new projects to fill the skills gap in the industry (Martins & Hughes, 2009).

#### 2.4. Challenges faced by students during WIL

Based on the existing literature, it is evident that WIL still faces a few critical challenges despite its widespread application and high popularity. In a few disciplines WIL presents

some challenges to students including additional travel costs, costs included in obtaining viable working environment equipment and constrained opportunities to get arrangement within the students' specific study range (Institute of Medicine, 2013). Student youth workers may be exposed to similar challenges as they are expected to go for practicals as part of the necessity in fulfillment of their degree. Therefore, this study should tap on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL as this will enable the researcher to come up with conceivable solutions and strategies to curb the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL. Industry professionals can experience troubles in overseeing students on WIL programmes, giving them feedback and allocating space for students placed within the company, in expansion to the pressure of administering the students in their active proficient schedule (Jamshidi et al., 2019). This creates a gap in the experiences of students since feedback serves as an inspiration and vital aspect for students when practicing. Subsequently, WIL can be challenging for students in aspects such as cross-cultural communications, ethnic and sex contrasts, individual development issues, and values within a diverse work environment.

Thus, despite its long history and the different benefits of WIL, it still faces a few significant challenges. Those challenges are of concern to all stakeholders involved including students, academic institutions and centres hosting student youth workers for WIL, and these challenges are often interlinked (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron & Osher, 2020). The challenge of cross-cultural communication facing students is an important issue that needs to be addressed by the universities. This is evident as student youth workers from the University of Venda are from different parts of the country which

implies that they are from diverse societies. The cultural or language barrier may affect the student youth workers' effectiveness when working with young people at the centre. In other WIL programmes students are required to submit their curriculum vitae, contact employers, get ready for the interviews, be short-listed and arrange contracts with respect to areas of work and compensation and find accommodation often in a distant area. Such abilities and competencies that students show when applying for WIL are not properly recognized as part of the evaluation in WIL despite the limited support, mentoring or guidance for those activities (Du Plessis, 2015). However, for the University of Venda's student youth workers, the university prepares the placement letters which are used to request WIL placements for student youth workers. Moreover, the university pays a stipend to these student youth workers for WIL. This implies that the Centres where student youth workers are placed, are not expected to pay students but only offer them an opportunity to integrate theory and practice.

In addition, student youth workers placed for WIL programmes can suffer due to inadequate monitoring within the workplace where they are placed for WIL. Jackson, Ferns, Rowbottom, and McLaren (2015) note that, as a minimum prerequisite for an appropriate WIL programme, a supervisory visit to the working environment should be undertaken within six weeks of students' placement and beyond that timeframe. Jackson et al., (2017) note that the experience of some academic staff is not always appropriate for WIL programmes. In some cases, such inappropriate experience may impact negatively on students during WIL.

Khmag (2017) found that the foremost negative components of the practicum for a group of designing, nursing and teaching students were poor quality supervision, being given inadequate assignments, and inappropriate and irrelevant academic programmes. In another study, Emslie (2009) talked of a group of students who complained about disappointments while on WIL. The students spoke of unexciting and unchallenging work and lack of professional status within the organization as very disappointing. They also complained about the realities of work with negligible support from colleagues, inadequate feedback on their progress, and not being allowed to get into the field sufficiently (Emslie, 2009). The research on students' involvement in WIL gives a long list of potential issues for the current study on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL.

Student youth workers may be exposed to several challenges during work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. Any young person at the beginning of the professional career will experience the difficulties that come with being a young and new employee. New employees often experience a desperate need to try and prove themselves to break through the glass ceiling and to do it all without getting emotional. It also comes with the eagerness to prove that one can do the job which is performed by any adult person (Ryan, 2016). Adding social services to those strains creates a unique and troublesome problem for student youth workers since the main concern is on the welfare of others. At times, it may be very difficult for student youth workers to support young people who are sexually violent or a victim of sexual or domestic violence or in the context of this study, children in conflict with the law (United Nations Children's' Fund, 2017). Certain client groups

present more risks to young professionals than others. For instance, male delinquents may use violence against females and all young professionals to enhance or boost their egos and the risk should never be underestimated.

Dwesini (2017) asserts that at other institutions students worked overtime consecutively without time off, unlike permanent staff. This may also affect student youth workers as they are placed at a centre catering for young people in conflict with the law, who needs extended hours of care. This is because focusing on the welfare of other people, particularly young people in conflict with the law can be straining and stressful to student youth workers who are just from the classroom. These student youth workers may be caught up in the battle between having to adapt to the work environment and at the same time undertaking their youth work duties, thus taking care of the welfare of young youth at risk.

Sibisi (2015) states that due to different minor offenses already committed by young people in conflict with the law, these young people turn to normalize their aggressive and violent behaviour. They later use that aggression and violence against their caretakers which may include student youth workers who are placed at child and youth care centres for WIL. When students are being stationed at the place of safety which caters to youth in conflict with the law, student youth workers may be subjected to individual risks but also being presented with new individual opportunities, some beneficial and some potentially harmful (Mason & Mennis, 2018; Development Services Group, 2015; Liu,

Lewis & Evans, 2013). This means WIL has both advantages and disadvantages for all individuals involved.

Overlien (2010) corroborates the above argument by stating that the youth in conflict with the law often use violence to express their discontent. This means that when student youth workers are busy with their practicals at Mavambe SCC, those young people who conflicted with the law may place them at high risk of violence, assault or any form of abuse. The above assertion is confirmed by Babane (2019) who notes that in South Africa, the culture of violence is internalized as a result of the violent legacy of apartheid. In this regard, young people seldom think that violence is the only or best way to treat other people because they see it as normal behaviour. For instance, young people often participate in service delivery protests which are often violent. The behaviour of young people does not only put them at risk but also people around them. This means that student youth workers who are placed at Centres catering for young people are also susceptible to risk during WIL due to unacceptable aggressive and violent behaviour of young people in the Centre.

In other disciplines as postulated by Cornelissen (2016) student teachers' battles, inner conflict, discontentment, despair, powerlessness, and disappointments in teaching were raised. The essence of this study is that student youth workers' experiences during WIL should be highlighted and interrogated to address challenges emanating from such experiences. In other studies, student teachers recognized the financial and additional workload burdens going with the situation as the foremost negative viewpoint. The same



group of students also reported their concerns with office supervisors. They complained about not being accepted or acknowledged for their commitment, workplace legislative issues and unprofessional behaviour (Netshitangani, 2014). Similarly, Emslie (2009) stated that some of the clashes between the work environment supervisors and students doing WIL were an essential source of stress for students when doing a practicum.

The student teachers were despondent with their college for not adequately preparing them for an internship, on-campus coursework being disengaged and insignificant to WIL, ineffective on-campus practicum seminars, bad and unprofessional treatment of students by college field teachers (Emslie, 2009). Student youth workers may be exposed to similar experiences faced by student teachers during WIL.

In social work placements, security issues within the field were also raised by the students in many parts of the United States of America. They detailed that they were at risk of having work-related violence directed towards them (Wacek, 2017). The level of threat has increased over time in conjunction with the modern child security laws that ought to be upheld, the inclusion of families in court cases, and expectations that social service providers will solve violent cases (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Students may be undermined and threatened by clients, staff and other experts. Recognizing dangers to physical, emotional and mental safety and taking sensible safety measures (client restrictions, locks, working in groups, standard safety measures against therapeutic dangers, going to workshops to prepare for defense against violence) are vital for effective functioning.

#### 2.4.1. Sexual harassment and gender bias

Sexual harassment is one of the most common challenges faced by men and women at the workplace, schools, homes, etc. Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual behaviour, be it verbal or physical, and has a profound impact mostly on women (Hejase, 2015). Sexual harassment is a broad term that does not necessarily mean touching the private parts of any woman or man. It ranges from offensive comments, showing obscene pictures or videos and threats to sexual assault to an unwanted sexual favor. In return for employment or promotion, some employers take advantage of their female workers by promising to hire or give them promotions in return for sexual favors. In the context of this study, student youth workers may experience sexual harassment in the promise of employment after WIL.

The negative consequences of sexual harassment dominate female workers who are in low-wage jobs. In addition, female workers are also the target of verbal attacks, gestures, remarks about appearance and other insulting comments including whistling and jokes. However, male student youth workers may also experience such problems as this mostly depends on the gender of the perpetrator employer. This type of harassment even sometimes leads to molestation and rape in the workplace (Kalra & Bhugra, 2013). Furthermore, it was revealed that although most victims of sexual harassment are women, men are also experiencing it (Hejase, 2015). This means that student youth workers may be in great danger of being victims of harassment sometimes in return for employment after their practical period.

On the other hand, unlike women, men are usually given an unfair advantage regardless of their qualifications. In this male-dominated society, men are considered more intelligent, efficient and hardworking than women although it sometimes depends on the nature of the work. Women are viewed as weak whose responsibility is to take care of the children and other domestic responsibilities. Most female student youth workers may experience job dissatisfaction and stress due to gender discrimination in the workplace. This may affect female student youth workers during WIL when students have intentionally deprived an opportunity due to their gender.

As a result, women lack motivation and commitment to their job. Whether it is at home or work, women have fewer opportunities than men (Reddy, 2012). Since working with young offenders can be very stressful, female student youth workers may also be stereotyped as incompetent or weak to work with young people with delinquent behaviours with a history of conflicting with the law. In line with the above assertion, male student youth workers may have the advantage of applying their knowledge effectively because of their gender. Therefore, there will be a creation of gender inequality within the Centre hosting student youth workers for WIL which can be viewed as a challenge for female student youth workers during WIL. This means that safer and conducive environments that promote effective application of theory into practice for student youth workers are in demand. This will enable the student youth workers an opportunity to apply their classroom theory and hone their skills effectively, while also enabling Centres hosting student youth workers a chance to identify potential future employees with skills that will enhance their productivity in the Centre.

Gender inequality in organizations is a multifaceted phenomenon that exists as from the organizational structures, processes, and practices. For women, the harmful experiences of gender inequalities are enacted within the Human Resources (HR). This is because HR practices (i.e., policies, decision-making, and their enactment) affect the hiring, training, pay, and promotion of women (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). In the context of this study, female student youth workers may be discriminated against due to their gender and have limited spaces in the workplace to practice effectively. This means that their male counterparts are posed to great advantage to gain workplace experience and to stand high chances for employment after their WIL. In addition, this may predominantly as a threat to female student youth workers' effectiveness during their practice, which limits their chances to hone their skills and prohibit the transformation of the classroom knowledge and skills in a real situation. Another dominant approach to studying persistent gender inequality in the workplace is the focus on work conditions and work experiences (Plickert & Sterling, 2017). This focus taps into the experiences of stigmatization or discrimination at work, which have been found to pose threats to self-identity, confidence, effectiveness and productivity at the workplace.

As Plickert and Sterling (2017) postulate that workplaces have the ability to endanger and alter careers and employment schedules and thus, intensify inequalities among working professionals. This means that as student youth workers are exposed to the discriminatory environment tagged along with gender inequalities, they are likely to be negatively affected by their effectiveness in applying the classroom theory into practice.

One frequently cited explanation for continuing gender disparities in the many professions is the notion that women are less motivated and committed to their careers (Wang & Degol, 2017). As a result, women tend to be exposed to fewer work experiences and tasks than their male counterparts and thus affecting women's career progress and advancement (Plickert & Sterling, 2017). These findings are primarily embedded on the centre argument that centres on gender stereotypes and social roles as a result of a situation where gender spills over into workplaces and causes employers to have different expectations for women and men. This leave either male or female student youth workers at risk during WIL at Mavambe SCC. And in the case of this study, with South Africa's history of patriarchy, gender inequalities and women discrimination, female student youth workers may be negatively affected since they can be viewed as not strong enough to work with young people who conflicted with the law. This means studies on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL are relevant to curb the challenges faced by young men and women working in social services and to identify gender balance in that profession and to pinpoint relevant knowledge skills needed for one to be an effective and professional youth worker.

## 2.5. Coping mechanisms used by students during WIL

As student youth workers are doing their WIL, it is of paramount importance for them to develop some coping mechanisms to the challenging situations they are exposed to during the process. Coping mechanisms are the psychological capacities inherent in individuals that enable them to handle stressors effectively (Coetzee and Esterhuizen, 2010). This will enable them to experience less intense symptoms after the exposure to a stressor and to recover faster from that exposure. Furthermore, the concept of coping

mechanisms was identified as a range of psychological coping capacities such as cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual/ philosophical and physical resources. Moreover, in the eventuality of general career transition experiences, coping mechanisms are related to adaptive career behaviours. When individuals are faced with stressful conditions and situations such as those caused by exposure to new environments, they are able to portray the psychological coping mechanisms that enable them to cope with stimuli that have the potential to intimidate an individual's survival and wellbeing. This means that student youth workers should be able to come up with coping mechanisms that may enable them to adapt well to their new environment.

During WIL, student youth workers should portray strong ethos and values of their work which motivates them to retain high levels of connection, tolerance and commitment to their profession. However, maintaining such levels can place the student youth workers at risk of 'burnout' through self-sacrifice since they will be putting care for others over care for the self (Gorski, 2015). Jackson (2017) asserts that the purpose of WIL is the ability to enhance the skills that cannot be learned in the classroom environment. This means that WIL enables student youth workers a platform to unleash their potential and skills on the work while reflecting on the theory they have learned in the classroom. Jackson (2017) further state that students are only able to develop self-confidence, communication and problem-solving skills when they get proper support from their WIL supervisors. The support serves as a mechanism that helps them to cope with the challenges that they encounter during WIL and it gives them the courage to be resistant and resilient to those daily challenges that they encounter.

## 2.6. Social support

Coetzee and Esterhuizen (2010) contend that social support encompasses the level to which individuals are embedded in social networks that provides support during stressful moments. The presence of a support system provides both deterring and coping functions hence reducing distress and preserving peoples' psychological and social equilibrium. The European Commission (2014) notes that each social bond could be based on the notions of protection and recognition. Protection referred to the body of support that the individual could call on when faced with life challenges whilst recognition referred to the social interaction that stimulates the individual by providing them with proof of their existence and their value in the eyes of others (European Commission, 2014). Nicolaides (2015) alludes that based on South Africa's racial past it is very mandatory to look at the background of diversity and analyse how lecturers and supervisors/mentors are prepared to work with students in a diverse workplace based on their different professions. The work environment is not only for people who work in an organization or for one profession, it involves providing the student doing WIL with the necessary tools and access to resources to do the job efficiently and effectively regardless of their profession (Sibisi, 2015).

Furthermore, Govender (2017) asserts that during students' WIL the university should conduct site visits to the Centre where students are placed. These site visits to monitor and assess the progress of students during placement. This is also necessary for student youth workers as it will enhance their effectiveness when practicing. The university should also ensure that students are constantly supported during WIL (Winberg, Engel-Hills,

Garraway & Jacobs, 2011). Du Plessis (2015) affirms that an academic supervisor plays an important role as the coordinator between the students and the Centre where they are placed for practical. This is critical because during WIL students should have appropriate supervision and support to understand the purpose of WIL and to be able to develop the capabilities necessary to be successful in their fields. This means that student youth workers will be effective youth workers when they graduate if they are provided with the necessary support during WIL. According to Winberg et al., (2011), the university should take prime responsibility for the coordination of the work-integrated learning and monitoring students' WIL activities. This is to ensure that students remain coherent and they do not derail from the intended outcomes of the programme and assessment criteria.

In addition, Gentle-Genitty et al., (2014) note that it is prudent for students to make a reflection on the applicability of theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom into practice. This reflection will also address students' understanding of the meaning and relevance of the experience to the theory and knowledge they have been taught at the university. WIL supervisors need to consider the areas in their organization that reflect this supportive work environment and connects the student youth workers to these opportunities as they are applying their classroom theory into practice (Raven, 2017). Winberg et al., (2011) allude that regular debriefing meetings with students placed for WIL are crucial. Such meetings provide them with an opportunity to discuss and share their experiences. These kinds of meetings are usually organized by the Centre and the University. These meetings are necessary because they will open a platform for student youth workers to address their challenges, engage with the management of the Centre



and contribute to the solutions, innovations and other projects ongoing at the Centre. These will not only benefit student youth workers, but their host Centres as well as it will expose the Centre to new ideas, knowledge and skills that those student youth workers acquired in the classroom. Student youth workers will play a significant role in the workplace if they are fully supported during WIL. Their aim is on being exposed to practical experience while transforming classroom knowledge into practice.

## 2.7. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework plays a vital role in guiding and directing the research process. It serves as a lens through which the researcher sees the variables of the study and be able to explain, predict, master the phenomenon and construct models of reality. The theoretical framework is where the researcher defines, discusses and evaluates the theories relevant to the research problem under study. The researcher develops these theories which enable them to explain the phenomena, draw connections and make predictions based on existing knowledge, observations and ideas. Therefore, this study is guided by the Burnout theory pioneered by Freudenberger in 1975, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) by Kolb in 1984 and Humanistic Theory by Abraham Maslow in 1970. However, the main theory that will guide the study throughout is the Burnout Theory. Below is a discussion of the underlying assumptions of each of these theories.

### 2.7.1. Burnout Theory

This theory is based on the supposition that human service work requires a lot of responsibility and commitment as it focuses on other's welfare. This theory postulates that human service work creates stress for the worker and affects the workers' personality. As a result, it affects the workers' ability to cope with the stress they are

exposed to at work, which predisposes them to burnout (O'Brien, 2010). For many years, burnout has been a phenomenon that gains more attention in research, especially in human service professions. Among others, Freudenberger was also one of the philosophers to explain this phenomenon. This researcher used the term to illustrate a gradual series of changes in attitudes and behaviours of counselors in a drug clinic. According to Freudenberger, the counselors portrayed a lot of excitement and dedication and they were idealistic about providing services to the clients (O'Brien, 2010). The latter further alluded that these counselors appeared exhausted after a while and experiences frequent headaches, gastrointestinal symptoms, insomnia, and fatigue and these negatively affected their behaviour towards clients and co-workers. Consequently, they experienced feelings of guilt, low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence due to work-related stress (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

Similar to Maslach and Leiter, O'Brien (2010) alluded that most professionals working in human services have more concern for the wellbeing of the client than financial compensation and are committed and idealistic. However, they may become cynical, apathetic, and lose interest in their work as time goes by. On this background, this theory will be used as a lens for exploring the experiences of student youth workers during their work-integrated learning (WIL) at Mavambe SCC. As much as student youth workers will be exposed to the new work environment, they may be over-excited about the new experience and when they are exposed to stressful or challenging situations their effectiveness may be hampered and their self-esteem may be negatively affected

resulting in burnout. Burnout is caused by long-term emotionally demanding work which as a result tress the worker (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

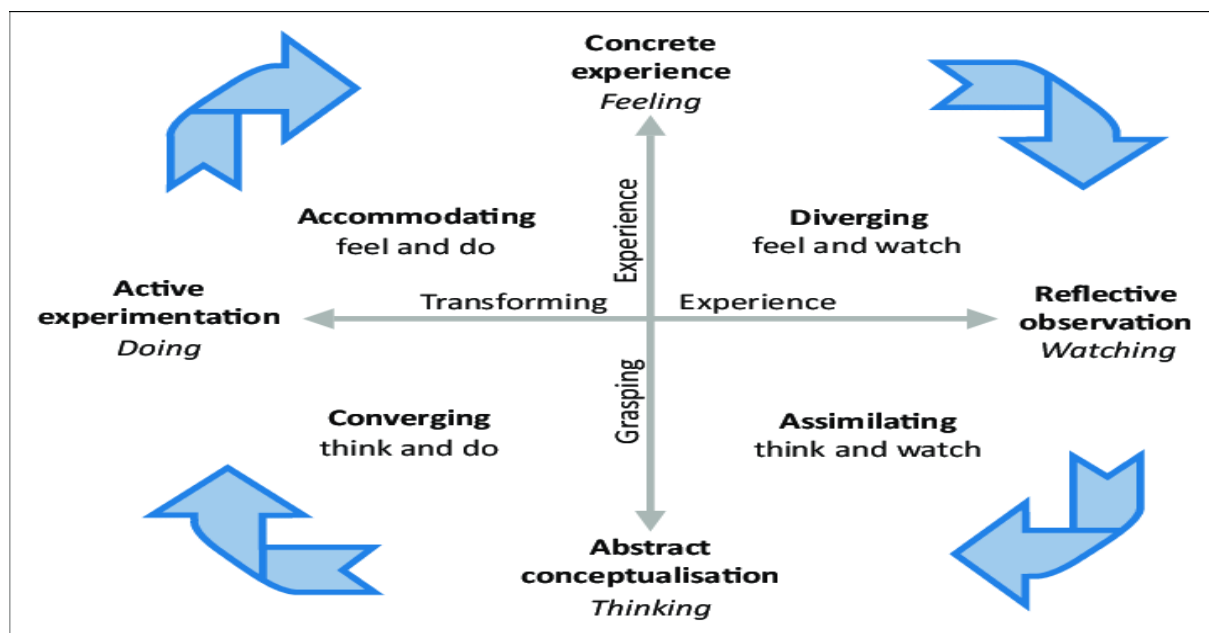
Maslach and Leiter (2016) assert that burnout is the perception of an individual that they are physically and emotionally worn out and stressed because of the relentless responsibility for the welfare of other people in the workplace. In this regard, burnout is caused by highly demanding situations in the workplace that may erode the worker's spirits and cause them stress. The study assumes that committed student youth workers may be exposed to frustrating feeling and doubt in their ability to do their work effectively because of challenges they encounter in the workplace. These student youth workers may develop low self-esteem and make an inference that no matter how hard they work, accomplishing their goals in a meaningful way is unattainable as a result of burnout as it harms the physical health of the individual who is experiencing it (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

### 2.7.2. The Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) was pioneered by Kolb in 1984. It has its foundation in the experiences of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget. In this theory, experience plays a major role which makes it different from the cognitive learning theories which focus on cognition over affect. ELT is intended to be a holistic adaptive process of learning that merges experience, perception, cognition, and behaviour (McCarthy, 2016). It defines learning as the process of creating knowledge as a result of transforming the classroom theoretical knowledge and comprehending new skills and experience in real situations (McCarthy, 2016). Learning styles are influenced by personality type, educational specialization, career choice, current job role and tasks as well as cultural influences (Kolb, 1984;

McCarthy, 2016). In line with this study, the student youth workers may have their learning style when applying the theory gained in the classroom into practice. However, the learning style may differ from individual to individual depending on the personality type, cultural influences and tasks given.

Figure 2.1. Kolb's Experiential Learning styles



Source: McCarthy, 2016

The experiential learning model is a cyclical process of learning experiences. To experience an effective learning process, the student or learner should go through the entire process in the cycle. The four-stage learning model depicts two opposite dimensions of grasping experience, thus the concrete experience (CE) and abstract conceptualization (AC), and two opposite dimensions of transforming experience which is reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE). Experiential learning is a process of constructing knowledge that involves a creative tension among the four

learning abilities (McCarthy, 2016). In this study, student youth workers should constantly choose the appropriate set of learning abilities to use in a specific learning situation during the application of theory into practice.

As mentioned, learning is conceived as a four-stage cycle (see Figure 1) where the learner must go through each stage experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. In the process of acquiring new experience, the student youth workers may be exposed to new situations and information which relate to the knowledge they acquired in the classroom. As this happens during WIL, student youth workers will experience tangible real-life situations when working with young people in conflict with the law. In other words, the practicals will provide student youth workers with an opportunity to immerse themselves in concrete realities by working with the young people who conflicted with the law.

In the transforming experience, the reflective observation ability tends to observe others who are involved in the experience. In this vein, the student youth workers may also be able to learn other skills by observing their WIL supervisors and other employees at the Centre on how they carry themselves when performing their duties while working with young people in conflict with the law. By observing their supervisors during practicals, the student youth workers will be able to reflect on what happens in reality as they work with young people in conflict with the law in conjunction with what they have been taught in the classroom (McCarthy, 2016).

### 2.7.3. Humanistic theory

The Humanistic Theory was pioneered by Abraham Maslow in 1970. This theory is based on the supposition that; people are capable of taking action that will direct the pattern of

their lives and enable them to cope with challenges. It postulates that people have within them an ability to take charge of their lives and foster their development”, thus being responsible for their actions (Burger, 2009:182). Applying this theory helps the researcher to focus on the extent to which student youth workers use their abilities to respond to life’s challenges in meeting their own needs as they are doing WIL (Hlagala, 2012). It also emphasizes the individual’s distinctiveness and ability to foster healthy and positive ways through distinctively human qualities of choice, creativity, valuation and the most development point: self-actualization/ realization (Hlagala, 2012).

Student youth workers are capable of ultimately growing and developing in their field of practice regardless of the challenges that they experience during WIL. They can affect the situation around them as much as those situations affect them. This theory helps the researcher to gain an understanding of the experiences of student youth workers during WIL, the researcher focuses on Abraham Maslow’s work that recognizes the capable intervention of people during their life events as modeling and influencing their beings. Maslow’s theory is based on the idea that experience is the essential phenomenon within the study of human learning and behaviour. He emphasized choice, creativity, values, self-realization, all distinctively human qualities, and believed that significance and subjectivity were more critical than objectivity. He further proposed that human inspiration is based on a hierarchy of needs. The lowest levels of needs are physiological and survival needs such as hunger and thirst. Further levels incorporate belonging and love, self-esteem, and self-actualization (McLeod, 2020).

Abraham Maslow (1970), as cited in Hlagala (2012), identified a hierarchy of needs, which influence people to reach the needs at the high level of the hierarchy which symbolizes full development. On the other hand, Cerasoli, Nicklin, and Ford (2014: 26) define youth development as “an on-going growth process in which all individuals actively seek and they need help to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, be spiritually grounded and to be built skills and competencies that allow them to work and contribute to their daily lives.” Therefore, for the student youth workers to fully develop into efficient and professional youth workers, they need to attain all the needs as outlined by Maslow when doing WIL. Abraham Maslow arranged and ranked these needs from lowest (bottom) to the highest level (top) in a hierarchical order (Burger, 2009; Hlagala, 2012). He further asserted that it is fundamental for the needs at the bottom of the pyramid to be adequately met before going on to meet the needs at the next level. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the hierarchy of needs, with the most survival and basic needs (physiological needs) appearing at the bottom of the pyramid and the growth needs at the top of the pyramid:

Figure 2.2: Pyramid depicting the hierarchy of needs



Source: (Cerasoli, Nicklin, and Ford, 2014)

Each level of identified needs is discussed hereunder:

- Physiological needs – the necessity to satisfy physical needs such as hunger, thirst and sex drive. These are the basic needs that deals with the survival of an individual.
- Safety and security needs – the need to feel safe, secure and out of danger. Attainment of these needs makes an individual have a sense of predictability including the measure of order in their world.
- Social needs – the need to belong, interact with other people, to love, to be loved and cherished. If these needs are met, one will be able to form to create insinuate relations in the future.
- Self-esteem needs – the need to achieve, to be competent, gain approval and recognition as well as to respect others and self. When fulfilled, the self-esteem needs make people feel confident, strong, useful and needed.
- Self-actualization needs – It incorporates the need for beauty, order, simplicity and flawlessness, truth, justice and significance. At this level, a person is empowered to her worth and capabilities. In doing so, he or she gets to be a fully functioning and goal-driven being or become everything he or she is more capable of becoming.

According to this theory, the needs at the bottom of the pyramid (the first two levels) are the most fundamental. The needs on the third and fourth levels are the psychological needs, and finally at the top of the pyramid are the self-actualization needs (Burger, 2009). Of importance is that, even though Maslow said the needs at each level can be partially



satisfied at any given moment, how well lower needs are satisfied determines how much those needs influence behaviour (Burger, 2009:196)". This has been defined as, "a process which prepares people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically and cognitively competent" (Hlagala, 2012: 37; Thompson, Winer & Goodvin, 2010). In the context of this study, the theory prepares the student youth workers for new challenges as they enter the work environment and help them realize their full potential as they practice.

This perspective is a turnaround for the practice since Abraham Maslow did not relate the need to satisfy survival needs to any age level. It, therefore, means that the student youth worker's role would be to involve, motivate and enable young people to participate in the process of meeting their needs as this could be of utmost importance to their individual development (Koca, 2016). As the change agent, the student youth worker should strive to unleash young people's yet to be tapped potential through meeting their basic human needs (Hlagala, 2012) as well as providing them with necessary services as young people who conflict with the law. Therefore, the researcher concludes that the environment ought to provide opportunities and space in which self-actualization can take place. Similarly, an enabling environment must be created for the student youth workers to meet their needs in all these different levels, including attaining the ultimate development in the workplace.

In a nutshell, the Burnout theory explains the outcomes of the commitment of social service providers to the welfare of other people. It postulates that student youth workers may be exposed to stress when working with young people who conflict with the law during WIL. It states that focusing on the wellbeing of others particularly youth at risk in the context of this study, can create stress to the student youth workers. This may be the case because student youth workers may enter the workplace with great excitement to gain real work experience and to apply the theory, they have learned in the classroom in real situations may neglect themselves by focusing more on the wellbeing of young people. As a result, they may be exposed to work-related burn-out.

ELT outlines different ways that student youth workers may use as a way of applying the theory they have learned in class in real situations. It explains four major cycles of learning with no fixed starting point for students. Through these processes, student youth workers will be able to experience a tangible experience while transforming the theoretical knowledge acquired from the classroom into reality. Therefore, it can be inferred that individuals are also able to learn even when they are exposed to challenges. This means that challenges are not only stumbling blocks to ones' success, but they can also serve as a learning curve as they enable one to come up with new strategies to adapt, cope or overcome the challenges at hand. In the end, one is equipped with knowledge and skills to conquer the world regardless of their exposure to challenging situations. This means that there is a lesson even in the challenges that people encounter.

The humanistic theory explains how individuals can reach their full potential and overcome the challenges they are exposed to during their life events. These life events are explained through the hierarchy of needs. The hierarchy outlines different needs that need to be attained for an individual to be fully functional. In line with this study, it can be inferred that student youth workers should satisfy all the needs in the hierarchy, from bottom to the top for them to attain their goals during WIL. These needs enable them to overcome the challenges they may experience on daily basis and to realize their full potential as they come up with ways of overcoming the challenges they are exposed to during WIL at Mavambe SCC.

## 2.8. Summary

The chapter reviewed the literature on the experiences of students during work-integrated learning. The literature review highlighted several challenges experienced by students during WIL. Some of the challenges included, among others, coping mechanisms used by students during WIL, the social support available for students during WIL and the benefits of WIL on students, university and the Centre hosting these students.

The section on the theoretical framework which guided this study focused on the Burnout theory, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) and Humanistic Theory. These theories were used as a lens for the study. However, the Burnout Theory was used as the main theory to guide the researcher throughout the study. This is the case because this theory talks specifically to the effects of people's over-concentration on the welfare of others while neglecting themselves. In the context of this study, this theory helps to outline the student youth workers' danger of focusing on young people at the Centre at the expense of their

wellbeing. As student youth workers are over-committed to providing services to the young people at the Centre, this may have a detrimental effect on them. In the long run, this may cause them stress, fatigue and restlessness. In the end, stress, fatigue and restlessness may expose student youth workers to burnout and which may negatively affect their ability to practice effectively. The next chapter reflects on the methodology used to explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe Secure Care Centre.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides details on the methodology of the research, which are the steps and procedures followed in data collection and analysis (Vosloo, 2014). It discusses the research approach, research design, sampling strategy, data collection instruments i.e. semi-structured interview and data analysis under the following headings: (a) data preparation stage, (b) data exploration and reduction, (c) interpretation and analysis as well as ethical considerations, namely informed consent, avoidance of harm, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity.

### 3.2. Research approach

The qualitative research approach was adopted in this research. According to Bandara, Fernandez, and Rowlands (2012) qualitative research is an umbrella term encompassing a range of interpretive techniques that seek to describe, decode, translate and come to terms with the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. It is aimed at helping the researcher to understand the social world in which people live and why things are the way they are.

In the case of this study, the idea was to explore the experiences of student youth workers during the work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. Student youth workers were the main participants in the study. In line with Clift, Hatchard, Gore & Jordan (2018), the researcher intended to gain a holistic understanding of the experiences of student youth workers, looking at the challenges they face, how they cope with those challenges, how

the Centre helps to alleviate challenges faced by youth workers as well as identifying the skills required by the students to be competent youth workers.

### 3.3. Research design

Research design is defined as the arrangement of conditions for data collection and analysis in a manner that aims to combine the economy in procedure with the relevance to the research purpose. It comprises a blueprint for the data collection, measurement and analysis (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Research design is the pathway that the researcher decides to undertake during the research to find answers to the research questions, this is to check the validity, objectivity, accuracy and economically as possible (Kumar, 2014). In this study, the phenomenological methodology was employed by the researcher. A phenomenological research design is a blueprint of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology. This design allows the researcher to describe and explain peoples' lived experiences about a phenomenon being studied as described by participants. The description concludes in the essence of the experiences for several individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. This design typically involves conducting interviews as it has strong philosophical foundations (Breakwell et al., 2012).

Christensen, Johnson, and Turner (2010) argue that the prime objective of phenomenology is to explicate the meaning, structure and essence of the lived experiences of a person or a group of people on a specific phenomenon. Phenomenologists endeavor to understand human behaviours through the eyes of the participants as they tell their stories in the study (Simon & Goes, 2011). There are two major and very different approaches to conducting phenomenological research. These methods are descriptive and interpretive. In the context of this study, student youth

workers were interviewed to obtain answers to the research questions. The descriptive phenomenological approach which is also known as a transcendental phenomenological approach was adopted. Descriptive or transcendental phenomenology refers to the study of personal experience and needs a description or interpretation of the meanings of phenomena as experienced by participants in the study (Padilla-Diaz, 2015). Within the descriptive phenomenological tradition, the researcher needs to disengage his or her feelings, experiences, and knowledge when interacting with the study participants (called bracketing). This means that the researcher goes to the field with zero knowledge of the phenomenon being studied and this can only be done by taking notes throughout the research and using an audiotape to record the interviews with the research participants. In that way, it helps the researcher to stand out and not impose their judgment, beliefs and experiences on the research data (Dodgson, 2017).

In view of that, that the researcher adopts consciousness that transcends the orientation toward the human mode of being conscious and that is also free from worldly and observed assumptions. Bracketing in descriptive approach means that the researcher openly acknowledges their viewpoint, guards against imposing those viewpoints on the participants during the collection of data and adopts a willingness to become open to the experiences of others (King, 2014). The idea is to illuminate details and seemingly trivial aspects within the experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, intending to create meaning and achieve a sense of understanding of those experiences (Shahbazian, 2015). The present study was aimed at exploring and understanding the experiences of student youth workers during WIL. The study used phenomenological research approach. The prime objective of phenomenology is to elucidate the meaning, structure and essence

of the lived experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. The researcher aimed to understand the experiences of student youth workers, the effects of the challenging situation they were exposed to and how they overcame those situations. The outcome of this study is therefore a careful description of conscious everyday experiences and social actions of subjects or participants of the study (Christensen et al., 2010). The researcher then turned things into meaning by making sense of the data provided by the participants. The researcher was also able to distance themselves from their judgments, opinions and beliefs about the nature and essence of experiences and events in their everyday world (Simon & Goes, 2011).

#### 3.4. Location of the study

A location is a place where something is occurring (Bless, 2015). For this study, the researcher conducted the study at Mavambe SCC in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

#### 3.5. The population of the study

Neuman (2011) defines a population as an abstract idea of a wide range of people from which results from a sample are made. In this study, the population consisted of 2019 fourth-year Bachelor of Arts in Youth in Development (BAYID) students at the University of Venda in South Africa, and those who did their WIL at Mavambe Secure Care Centre between 2017 and 2018.

#### 3.6. Sampling strategy

According to Taherdoost (2016) sampling is a method of choosing a portion of a designated population to represent the entire population. The sample is a subset of the



population selected to participate in a study. It defines the selected groups of elements, that is, individuals, groups, or organizations. A sample is a representation of the group in the sense that each sample element has all characteristics to represent the whole population (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, a non-probability sampling technique was adopted as a sampling method. This method is a convenient way for the researcher to assemble the sample with little or no cost as it does not require representativeness of the population (Brick, 2015). In line with the assertion above, the interest of the researcher was on BAYID fourth-year students at the University of Venda doing their WIL at Mavambe SCC, including those who did their WIL in 2017 and 2018. Non-probability purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used by the researcher to select participants for the study. Purposive sampling is a method that relies on the knowledge of the researcher on the population, its elements and the nature of the aim of the research. The method is useful when the researcher wants to study a small subset of a large population in which many members of the subset are easily identified (Gentles, 2015). BAYID fourth-year students from the University of Venda doing WIL at Mavambe SCC were used as participants of this study. This means that the criterion sampling technique was used. The snowball sampling was also used to select the participants from the 2017 and 2018 cohort. This is the case because it could have been difficult to trace some of the the participants since they were no longer at the university. The sample size of the study depended on the data saturation, this denotes that the interviews continued until the researcher noted there were more emerging issues (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

### 3.7. Data collection instrument

Qualitative studies are carried out by one-on-one interviews through open ended questions or as direct discussions. This means that the researcher had the opportunity to decide on the instrument which met the objectives of the study. The data collection instruments that were used in this study are the vignette technique and semi-structured interviews.

#### 3.7.1. Vignette technique

Due to the sensitivity of this study, the interviews were conducted through the vignette technique. This technique allowed the researcher to create a scenario or story and then ask questions to the participants based on that story thereby helping the participants to think about the phenomenon being studied (Palaiologou, 2017). Thus, the researcher developed a scenario, narrated it to the participants of the study and then asked them questions based on the scenario. The purpose was to minimize the sensitivity of the topic to the participants since the researcher was not aware of their experiences during WIL. The scenario put the participants out of the situation and then they answered the questions as relating to the story narrated.

#### 3.7.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are data collection method which involves open-ended questions on the phenomenon being studied by the researcher which defines the topic being investigated. It gives the researcher and the interviewee the platform to discuss the phenomenon in detail as it allows them to ask follow up questions and to probe where clarity is needed on the original response. If the interviewee is struggling to answer some

questions or they only give a brief answer, the interviewer can use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further. (Kumar, 2014). For the study, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to collect data from the participants. The open-ended questions were drafted by the researcher to be able to interview the participants. The semi-structured interviews were used to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences during WIL. The interview is essentially a person-to-person interaction either face-to-face or otherwise between two or more individuals to accomplish a specific goal (Kumar, 2014). Such interviews were used by the researcher to gain raw or primary data directly from the participants.

### 3.8. Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of breaking data down into smaller elements to reveal their characteristics, components and structure (Gray, 2009). In qualitative research, data collected is non-numerical, and it is usually presented in the form of written words, videotapes, audiotapes, or photographs. Therefore, the data analysis in qualitative research involves a thorough examination of words, either in the form of audiotapes or transcribed data rather than numbers as in quantitative studies (Anderson, 2014). Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the research participants. Since all the interviews were recorded using audiotape and taking notes, audiotaped data was transcribed into written words. Audio-taped transcriptions were first broken down into units of meaning according to the thematic analysis process. Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood (2015) define data analysis as the method wherein the information that was collected is reduced into a controllable and convenient measure and the researcher begins to distinguish the designs or patterns then summarize the

information. Thematic analysis technique was used to place the units of meanings into categories and in this way, themes are automatically identified. These themes provided the researcher with an insight into an issue being studied (Swartz, 2011). According to Braun & Clarke (2006), there are six phases of conducting thematic data analysis as stated below:

Phase one - becoming familiar with the data- Involves the researcher reading the data repeatedly to clearly understand the meaning and patterns that appear in the data. It also includes the transcription of data

Phase two - Generating initial codes - It involves the production of codes from the data collected including grouping information that is similar to one content.

Phase three - Searching for themes - The researcher in this phase has to begin searching for different themes on the data collected. It covers all aspects in a definite way.

Phase four - reviewing themes. The researcher read all themes in this phase to see if they were logical and coherent, and to review themes to see if they were in the form of questions or not and revise them.

Phase five - defining and naming themes. Arranging and naming themes in order and to make sure that they are logical.

Phase six - producing the report. Involves writing up a full report from the final extraction of the themes.

In line with the above-mentioned phases of thematic data analysis, the researcher started by reading the transcribed data to be familiar with it. After being familiar with the patterns

and meaning, the researcher then generated codes by grouping the data with similar or related content. Following that, the researcher then searched and arranged the identified contents into themes. After arranging the data into themes, the researcher had to review the themes to check if they were logical and coherent and revise them if they were not. The researcher then had to define and name the themes as well as arranging them in a logical manner. Finally, the researcher presented the data from the final draft of the identified themes.

### 3.9. Ethical considerations

Ethics are rules and guidelines which are developed by a professional organization to guide research practice and clarify the line between ethical and unethical behaviour (Neuman, 2011). Permission to undertake the study was obtained from student youth workers who were placed at Mavambe SCC for WIL. Ethical issues that were to be considered during the research were clearly explained to the participants by the researcher. For this study, the following guidelines were fully communicated to the participants:

#### 3.9.1. Informed consent

According to Swartz, De la Rey, Duncan and Townsend (2011) participants must be fully informed about the research, how the study will affect them together with the risks and benefits of participating in the study if any. The participant must also be informed about their right to voluntarily participate or to decline to participate in the research project. Participants must be informed about the goal of the study, procedures to be followed during the study and promising potential advantages and disadvantages to which they are likely to be exposed as participants of the study (De Vos, Strydom & Fourche, 2011).

The informed consent was discussed with participants to make them aware of the purpose of the study project concerning how the findings will be used and who will have access to the findings of the study. The purpose of informed consent is to help participants to make informed decisions as to whether they will participate in the study or not, they were also informed that there will be no benefits for participating in the study.

### 3.9.2. Voluntary participation

Voluntary participation means that participation in the study must be voluntary, free from the promise of benefits from participation. In research, participants should always participate in the study voluntarily and they should never be forced to do so (De Vos et al., 2011). According to Neuman (2011), voluntary participation is an ethical principle that sits on the supposition that people should participate in the study if they are free to do so and not otherwise. The participants were informed about voluntary participation so that they know that it is not compulsory for them to be part of the study. The participants informed that they must feel free to withdraw from participation at any time if they wish to do so and that no volunteer will be compensated for participating in the study. To validate that the participation of the participants was voluntary, the participants were provided with the consent form which outlined all ethical issues and which they signed and handed it over to the researcher.

### 3.9.3. Confidentiality

According to UNISA (2013), confidentiality in research indicates that the information that participants provide must be protected and must not be available to anyone other than the researcher. Neuman (2011) defines confidentiality as the ethical protection of people who are participating in the study by ensuring that the research data is held in confidence

or not accessible to anyone else other than the researcher. Researchers may attach names to information, but it must be kept secret from the public. This means that the researcher should ensure that the released information does not link to specific individuals in a way. In line with this study, the researcher made it clear to the participants that the information they provide will not be made available to any other person other than the researcher and the supervisor.

#### 3.9.4. Anonymity

According to Swartz et al., (2011), anonymity designates that information collected from participants must not be linked in any way to their names or any other identities, such as name, address. Pillay (2014) defines anonymity as the protection of participants by not using their real names in the study. The researcher discussed the issue of anonymity with participants and informed them that their real names or identities will not be used as the researcher will only refer to the participants as participants 1, 2, 3, etc.

#### 3.9.5. Avoidance of harm

The researcher has a compulsion to protect participants from harm or from subjects that may bring harm to them. Research participants may be harmed in a physical, emotional and psychological manner study (De Vos et al., 2011). The researcher must protect participants from any form of physical, emotional and psychological discomfort that may emerge from the study De Vos et al., (2011) note that researchers have a responsibility to protect participants from physical and mental harm during the research process. According to Neuman (2011), social researchers can cause harm to participants physically, psychologically, legally and economically. The researcher explained to participants that they will be no harm involved in the study.

### 3.10. Summary

This chapter focused on the methodology that was used in this study. A detailed explanation of research approach and research design was outlined. The location of the study, population, sampling strategy, data collection instruments and ethical considerations were clearly presented. The next chapter entails data presentation, analysis and discussion.



## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents interpretation and discussion of data based on interviews that were held with the selected participants. These will be presented through verbatim quotations and brief explanations of different sub-sections. The process of data analysis is informed by Palinkas et al., (2015) who define data analysis as the process wherein the data that was collected is reduced into a controllable and convenient size and the researcher starts to identify the patterns or trends then summarize the data. This is necessary as it eases data interpretation of findings to answer research questions. The results are presented and discussed below coupled with the use of literature from different scholars and theoretical arguments to support discussions. The data was also unpacked to determine its categorized underlying meaning to find the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. The decoding of the data was done with the help of the thematic analysis method as explained in detail in chapter three (3) of this study.

This research focused on the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning (WIL) at Mavambe SCC. The following research questions which were derived from the research objectives were used to solicit answers from the participants about the phenomenon being studied.

- What are the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

- How are student youth workers affected by the challenges they face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?
- What are the coping mechanisms used by student youth workers to deal with the challenges they face during WIL at the Mavambe SCC?

#### 4.2. Biographical data

The table below portrays the age, gender and year of WIL placement for each student. The researcher did not use real names of the participants; instead, P1, P2, P3, etc. were used, as outlined in chapter three on ethical considerations that all participants in the study will be given pseudo-names to protect their true identities. Data saturation was reached when the researcher interviewed only eleven student youth workers who were doing WIL at Mavambe SCC. Out of the eleven students who were interviewed, four of them did their work-integrated learning in 2017. The other three did their WIL in 2018 and the last four did their WIL in 2019. Out of all these students, seven were former students while four were still studying at the University of Venda Bachelor of Arts, Youth in Development when this study was conducted. Four of these students were females and seven were males, and they were between the age of 21 and 30.

All student youth workers who participated in this study were interviewed on the above-mentioned questions. The questions were based on their experiences during WIL as student youth workers. This was done to help the researcher get in-depth information about their experiences and challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL, how they coped with the challenges as well as proposed possible strategies to curb the challenges they faced as student youth workers.

Table 4.1: Illustration of the age, gender and year of placement for WIL for student

<b>Pseud names of participant</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Home language</b>	<b>Educational Qualifications</b>	<b>Year of WIL placement</b>
P1	26	Male	Single	Tshivenda	Honours Degree	2017
P2	25	Male	Single	Tshivenda	Honours Degree	2017
P3	22	Female	Engaged	Siswati	Honours Degree	2017
P4	22	Female	Single	Sepedi	Honours Degree	2017
P5	24	Male	Single	Tshivenda	Honours Degree	2018
P6	28	Male	Single	Sepedi	Honours Degree	2018
P7	26	Male	Single	Xitsonga	Honours Degree	2018
P8	25	Female	Single	Xitsonga	NSC	2019

P9	27	Male	Single	Sepedi	Certificate	2019
P10	26	Male	single	Xitsonga	Diploma	2019
P11	23	Female	single	Tshivenda	NSC	2019

Themes were developed from interviews with the participants. These themes enabled the researcher to present, analyse, discuss and interpret the different categories of themes (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). The themes discussed include abnormal working hours, lack of support from the university and staff members at the Centre, impunity for violent children at the Centre, exclusion of student youth workers from staff meetings, psychological impacts, and commitment and passion of student youth workers to their work.

#### 4.3. Research findings, analysis and discussions

Below follows a discussion and analysis of the data as well as the findings based on the themes that emerged.

##### 4.3.1. Theme 1: Abnormal working hours or compulsory overtime (12 hours) and unfamiliar environment

In this section, the researcher solicited information from the participants based on their views about their experiences on the research question: “What are the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC?” With this question, the researcher wanted to explore and investigate the experiences of student youth workers

during work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. Below is what the participants had to say:

*P1 “There are different factors that lead to challenges at the Centre. The environment itself was challenging because it is not a normal one that we can expect, or we are familiar with. Secondly, the working shifts including working hours were challenging as we had to work more or abnormal hours which was 12 hours per shift or day including working over weekends.*

*P2 “The other thing was the working hours because it was too abnormal as we had to work for 12 hours even on weekends which we were not made aware of when we started.”*

*P4 “It was a kind of tiring environment where you are dealing with people who have lost hope and conflict always arouse here and there but it was all manageable although it takes one with great courage because it is not a normal environment. You are working with young people who conflicted with the law and have committed any possible crime, it was draining a lot but through strength and courage I managed to finish my practical”*

The participants above outlined various challenges that student youth workers faced during work-integrated learning at Mavambe Secure Centre as student youth workers. Student youth workers stated that they worked overtime during practicals. Instead of working for the normal working time of eight hours per day, these student youth workers

instead worked for 12 hours per day. This was a challenging situation for them as it also included working on weekends. This was extremely frustrating for them as they also had to find time to also work on their research project which is done concurrently with the WIL. This is in line with Dwesini's (2017) assertion that at other institutions students worked abnormal hours or overtime in a row without any time off. In the study conducted by Dwesini (2017), the students further stated that overtime did not apply to the permanent staff, but it only applied to students. However, this case is different in this study because it was stated by student youth workers that all staff members, including permanent staff members, worked overtime as well.

Some of the student youth workers also stated that they were not inducted when they started with their work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. This contradicts with Dwesini's (2017) view that host employers are expected to provide WIL students with induction on the first day at the workplace to familiarize them with the new environment. Induction is extremely important because it makes WIL students aware of what is expected of them in the workplace as well as familiarizing them with their envisaged work environment. In a nutshell, it can be said that student youth workers were neglected by the host employer because they were not inducted for them to be familiar with the environment and to outline to them what is expected from including their working hours, day-offs, etc. Furthermore, student youth workers stated that they were not able to raise their concerns during WIL since they were afraid that such an action was going to leave their supervisors incensed. They thought once this happened, it was going to lead them to have a bad record. Since no student youth worker wanted to have a bad report written

about them by their supervisors, they decided never to talk about the challenges they experienced during WIL.

Also, the humanistic theory postulates that people have in them the ability to deal with life challenges (Burger, 2009). Therefore, from the point of view of the humanistic theory, it can be argued that no matter what students viewed as a challenging situation, they were able to maneuver and reach their set goals. It can also be said that student youth workers were able to cope and finish their daily schedule even when they complained about their abnormal working hours. The workplace schedule and long hours they had to work was unusual for student youth workers since they were just from the classroom and did not expect any situation like that. Regardless of the challenges they complained about concerning the long working hours, student youth workers interviewed for this study were still able to do the work they were expected to do.

#### 4.3.2. Theme 2: Impunity for young people with violent behaviour in the Centre

Some student youth workers elaborated during the interviews that they were experiencing challenges directly from the youth in conflict with the law at the Centre since the young people they worked with were delinquent. So, when the youth in conflict with the law at the Centre fought with the student youth workers, the latter found themselves in a dilemma because the policy of the Centre prohibited them from fighting back in self-defense. After all, they are care workers. A situation of this nature made it difficult for the student youth workers to practice effectively because they were always in constant fear. Below is what some participants had to say:

*P1 “The problem is that those children under our care are in conflict with the law and sometimes they will tell you how they killed their parents, so when they start to fight with you, you are not allowed to fight back or defend yourself. You are expected to record that in the logbook and submit it to the supervisor so that the psychologist monitors the progress of that child’s behaviour. This makes our lives difficult because you don’t know what worse could happen”*

*P4 “Working with children who conflict with the law is a challenge itself. You always fear for your life or just your safety because you never know what they think or what they are capable of”*

*P8 “For student youth workers, it was very tough because those teenagers misbehave way too much. You just have to be flexible when you are working that side because if you lose your temper and fight with them, you will be committing an offense or rather violating your job. Even if they can beat you up, you don’t have to fight back because you can be arrested for that. It was also traumatizing because those children have committed different crimes and sometimes, they will tell you how they killed other people including their parents. Sometimes you will be thinking of the danger your life is in “*

Participants in this study revealed that they experienced challenging situations when dealing with young people who conflicted with the law. They further stated that these



young offenders tended to be violent and often started fighting with the student youth workers who were ironically expected to take care of the youth in conflict with the law. This is supported by Sibisi (2015), who stated that children in conflict with the law have committed petty crimes or such minor offenses as a result of homelessness, absent parents, peer pressure or alcohol use. Also, some children who engage in criminal behaviour have been used or forced by adults which in the end they thought it is normal behaviour, then they adapted it. This is also supported by the Social learning theory by Albert Bandura in Edinyang (2016) which posits that people learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modeling. The advocates of this theory maintain that behaviour is learned through social interaction with other people and it assumes that most human behaviour is learned observationally through modeling from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action.

According to Mason and Mennis (2018), youth nowadays, regardless of gender, social origin or country of residence, are subject to individual risks but are also being presented with new individual opportunities, some beneficial and some potentially harmful. Development Services Group (2015) maintains that risk factors are biological or genetic in origin and that risk factors at an individual level are psychological or behavioural. These factors include early aggressive behaviour, rebelliousness and alienation. A study conducted by Liu, Lewis and Evans (2013) revealed that juveniles in conflict with the law experience behaviour that manifests itself in aggression, attention deficiency and frustration. In this study, it can be concluded that children in conflict with the law became comfortable in their delinquent behaviour to the extent that they think their behaviour is

normal. They tend to be aggressive and violent to people around them because they did not see anything wrong with their behaviour.

Furthermore, from what participants in this study stated, it can be said that these young offenders were trying to fight back. They might have been trying to prove that they could fight for themselves. Unfortunately, they did not realize that their behaviour was not only putting people around them in danger but themselves as well. In this context, children and youth who are exposed to violence tend to learn that violence is an acceptable way to express their discontent. They resort to violence as a way of escaping their social and economic conditions (Overlien, 2010).

In South Africa, the culture of violence is internalized as a result of the violent legacy of apartheid (Babane, 2019). For instance, service delivery protests are violent and young people participate in those protests. These are the difficult conditions in which probation officers and youth workers dealing with youth in conflict with the law at their workplace. The above argument confirms that people working with children and youth in conflict with the law are susceptible to be victims of these young offenders' violent behaviours. This argument was also corroborated by the participants during the interviews which were conducted to gather data about the participants' experiences during WIL at Mavambe SCC.

The advocates of the ELT postulate that experience plays a major role as it merges learning, perception, cognition, and behaviour (McCarthy, 2016). Experiential Learning Theorists argue that learning is the process of creating knowledge through practice. In the case of this study, these young people created knowledge from the observations and

teachings from their elders which they later thought and believed it is a good way of living when violating others and the law itself. (McCarthy, 2016). Therefore, it can be concluded that working with young people who conflict with the law is challenging regardless of one's profession. This means that youth workers, including student youth workers, who work with young people who conflict with the law, should be very ready to deal with young people who may display violent behaviour which may sometimes threaten one's life.

#### 4.3.3. Theme 3: Lack of support from Mavambe SCC and Univen staff members

During the interviews, other participants in this study explained that the challenge that they encounter at the Centre during work-integrated learning is that permanent staff members, especially those from different disciplines such as social workers and psychologists, undermine them. The student youth workers also stated that Univen and the Centre they were placed for WIL did not give them necessary support during WIL.

The following are the verbatim quotations from participants:

*P2 "The other workers (psychologists and social workers) were contributing to the daily challenges we faced because they looked down on us as youth workers in general not only student youth workers".*

*P 6 "We were not taken seriously at that place. We just had to tolerate every challenge to complete the practical without having a bad record from neither supervisor nor management"*

In the above statements, the participants in this study were highlighting their displeasure with the fact that psychologists and social workers undermined instead of giving them

support so that they as student youth workers can also become well-trained professionals. The participants' displeasure with their treatment by psychologists and social workers highlights the disregard of the role youth workers can play in addressing youth issues as well as nurturing and preparing youth for adult life. This also indicates a lack of appreciation of the need for multiple approaches in addressing the needs of young people where professionals can be mobilized from different areas of specialization. The fact that other social service professionals do not welcome and embrace youth workers has a negative impact on the effectiveness of the student youth workers during WIL. The disregard and negative attitude towards student youth workers can make youth workers develop low self-esteem or hate what they do. This may subsequently have a negative impact on their commitment and efficiency in their work.

The above argument is supported by Nicolaides (2015) who argues that based on South Africa's racial past it is very mandatory to look at the background of diversity and analyze how lecturers and supervisors/mentors were prepared to work and appreciate working in a diverse workplace with different professionals from different areas of specialisation. More support for career diversity should be considered and encouraged at Mavambe SCC. It is also essential that Univen should also prepare student youth workers by exposing and training them in the importance of diversity, especially when dealing with young people. This is extremely critical for the holistic development of the young people served by people from different professions. Diversity should one of the most important aspects of the training of social service professionals. A more reflective and critical perspective is required concerning diversity at the workplace (Nicolaides, 2015).

The youth work environment is not only for people who work in a youth organization or for one profession. It involves providing the youth being taken care of and student youth workers with the necessary tools, access to resources and other people from different areas of specialization. This is critical as it provides the youth being serviced and student youth workers with a rich experience and expertise needed for their holistic development and student youth workers to do their job efficiently and effectively during their training. It was further revealed by the participants in this study that student youth workers do not get any support from the university during work-integrated learning. This lack of support puts them in a difficult situation when experiencing challenges (Sibisi, 2015). Hereunder are some of the statements uttered by the participants concerning the above discussion:

Following are the verbatim quotations from the participants:

*P 5 “The other challenge we encounter is that we don’t get any support from the university we don’t have mentors. The university just help us find a placement and then they are out they don’t care how we settle in”*

*P7 “I think the university does not care about us because we never have one who visits us from the university to check out how are we coping especially when they know that we are just fresh from the classroom and not familiar with work environment”*

*P 11 “Actually we are just not cared for by either university or the Centre where we are placed. The Centre or particularly staff members are just glad that we ease their workload it’s not like they appreciate us. And on*

*the other hand, the university does not even bother, all they want is for us to submit the report, they don't even check if one is going for practical daily as expected”*

In this study, some participants further stated that the lack of support needed to enable them to hone their skills as youth work practitioners has affected their training as youth workers. They felt that for the university to only place them for WIL and fail to monitor them compromised their training. Furthermore, the participants also accused Mavambe SCC of only appreciating their presence as student youth workers to ease workload without giving students the necessary support. All this goes against Govender's (2017) view on WIL projects. According to Govender (2017), it is incumbent on the university to conduct site visits to where students are placed for WIL. These site visits are for the monitoring and assessing of the progress of student youth workers during WIL.

According to student youth workers interviewed for this study, the University never sent lecturers to conduct site visits and to provide support to them during WIL. According to Winberg et al., (2011), this should not be the case because the university should have ensured that student youth workers were continually supported throughout the WIL period. This means that student youth workers were supposed to get support from both the university and the Centre where they have been placed for their WIL. The failure to provide support to student youth workers during WIL and lack of planning, as well as facilitation of learning experiences, hinder their training and effectiveness in what they do.

In this context, the academic supervisor plays an important role as a coordinator between the student youth workers and the Centre. This is critical because during the WIL students should have appropriate supervision and support to understand the purpose of WIL and to be able to develop the capabilities necessary to be successful youth workers (Du Plessis, 2015). Rather than leaving the student youth workers unclear about what to learn during WIL, institutions should consistently guide and support student youth workers as they apply what they have learned in the classroom (Du Plessis, 2015). Although the students are placed with dedicated supervisors, a complete work environment is needed to support growth and development. It also helps to develop useful professional networks that in turn support the professional growth and development of student youth workers. This could also take the pressure off the on-site supervisors from time to time, giving the student the space to interact with others in the Centre around other areas of work. WIL supervisors need to consider the areas in their organization that reflect this supportive work environment and connects the student youth workers to these opportunities (Raven, 2017).

In this study, it can be inferred that the university is neglecting its role to support, coordinate and monitor student youth workers' progress during WIL. The university tends to be abdicating its responsibility hoping that the support will be provided by the Centre hosting the student youth workers. Such a situation is problematic because it fails to ensure that student youth workers grow in their profession and become effective and develop into professional youth workers.

Other student youth workers indicated that they were not involved or allowed to participate during the staff meetings. This denied them an opportunity to raise their concern so that

they could be addressed. This also denied student youth workers an opportunity to have the challenges they encountered during WIL being addressed immediately. The following are some more utterances made by the participants:

*P3 “The other thing is that we were excluded from staff meetings which were going to be the best place for us to address our grievances so that they can be attended to immediately, but it as just a wish for us”.*

*P 9 “The fact that we were not allowed to attend the staff meetings was very challenging for us even though we were told that were exclusively for permanent staff members who are obliged to comply with ethics and code of conduct of the Centre”*

*P 10 “The problem was that we were not involved in the meeting which prohibited us an opportunity to engage with the management and all staff members to address the challenges we encountered at the Centre.”*

In this study, the student youth workers stated that the university did not make any contact with the Centre where they were placed for their WIL. Lack of contact with the Centre denied the university an opportunity to check on how students were coping with the work environment and also assessing students' progress in honing their skills and knowledge they acquired in the classroom in real-world situations. This confirms that student youth workers need much support, especially for those who are experiencing difficulties during WIL. Constant communication between the Centre and university would have made it easier for both the university and Centre to be aware of the challenges student youth



workers were facing and address them early. The failure to do that meant that student youth workers had to continue with their WIL without their challenges being addressed.

Engagement between the two institutions would have provided them with an opportunity to address problems faced by the student youth workers before they could become a significant threat to their progress, success or safety. This would have also promoted a closer professional relationship with the workplace in the student youth workers. Both the university and the Centre could also arrange regular debriefing sessions with student youth workers to help them deal with some of their traumatic experiences. Regular site visits by the Univen could also have made Univen aware of the challenges and planned to provide the much-needed support for student youth workers. The only time that the University could learn about challenges faced by student youth workers is when they return to campus and submit their portfolio of evidence in which they have documented their experience as they required to keep reflective journals and progress reports about their training and experiences during practicals (Winberg et al., 2011)

From the sentiments expressed by the participants in this study concerning lack of support from both centre and the University, it can be concluded that the student youth workers' experience during their practicals was traumatic. Such a situation could have had a negative impact on the training of the student youth workers. This is the case because student youth workers could not be able to do their best since they were not provided with support. Subsequently, these student youth workers are likely not going to be effective or the best youth workers. Their unattended issues during WIL could have had a negative impact which may be stressful to them. Thus, making them less effective in their work. This is confirmed by Maslach and Leiter (2016) who contend that individuals

who take care of the welfare of other people may experience burnout due to the stress they may experience during their work. This situation to which student youth workers are exposed may erode the student youth workers' spirit and cause them stress.

According to Winberg et al., (2011), the university should take prime responsibility for the coordination of the work-integrated learning as well as monitoring student youth workers' WIL activities. This is to ensure that students remain focused and that they do not deviate from the intended outcomes of the programme and assessment criteria. It is important to build the assessment tasks around knowledge of the discipline and its transfer to the world of work. The university should ensure there is a critical reflection on the applicability of theoretical knowledge that students acquired in the classroom into practice. Once this happens, student youth workers will be able to understand the meaning and relevance of the theory and knowledge they have been taught in the classroom (Gentle-Genitty et al., 2014).

The university should delegate an academic supervisor to monitor student youth workers' progress during placement. This ensures that there is regular communication with student youth workers and on-site WIL supervisors (Winberg et al., 2011). Such an academic supervisor should also pay a visit to the student youth workers and on-site WIL supervisors during WIL. Meetings with student youth workers and on-site WIL supervisors should also be arranged to monitor the progress of the practicals and also to address any challenges which student youth workers may be experiencing during WIL.

This study highlights the fact that student youth workers had concerns that were not attended to, and also that they did not have an opportunity to raise their concerns as they

were not allowed to attend staff meetings. Such a situation might have had a negative impact on their training and their effectiveness and efficiency in their work during WIL. Therefore, this served as a stumbling block for them to practice what they learned while they were in class. This might have made it difficult for student youth workers to learn by doing or to acquire necessary skills for them to be effective youth work professionals as they were unable to address issues that affect them on daily basis during their practicals.

#### 4.3.4. Theme 4: Psychological effects on student youth workers

Some student youth workers in this study stated that the challenges they encountered during work-integrated learning affected them psychologically. This answers objective two of this study which focused on how student youth workers were affected by the challenges they encountered during WIL. They stated that they experienced a lot of stressful situations on daily basis from the clients, work itself and people who are supposed to serve as their support system. The following are the statements quoted verbatim from some of the student youth workers:

*P3 “Some incidents that happen at the Centre are traumatizing and sometimes you just think it is better to keep it to yourself because some of these employees will sometimes think we are just lazy and come up with excuses while we address what we are experiencing”.*

*P 6 “The challenges that we encounter are very stressful, sometimes you will feel like not going there for some days so that you gain some peace*

*and confidence in you. You will feel like going there but be invisible to all stressing situations that may arise”.*

*P 7 “Honestly that environment itself is stressing before we can even talk about how other staff members treat us and all that and adding that you are a young person who strives to be effective social service professional, working with young people who are in conflict with the law stresses you as well. You always have to think critically of what best can you do when those teenagers act violently to you without having to fight back and harm them”.*

*P 11 “Working overtime whiles you just fresh from class without any work experience is stressful. You really cannot cope for such a long time, but you have to hang in there because you are expected to be there. It’s easy to experience a mental breakdown as you are not used to that and never worked even one-hour overtime in your life.*

The participants in this study revealed that they were exposed to a variety of situations that were overwhelming and stressful to them on daily basis. Student youth workers in this study stated that the work environment was not too conducive for them to practice effectively. They mentioned that the environment somehow denied them an opportunity to hone their skills and to gain experience from the work they were doing. This is supported by Maslach and Leiter (2016) who postulate that as much as a student is exposed to the work environment, they may be overwhelmed by the new experience. However, when they are exposed to stressful or challenging situations their effectiveness

may be hampered and their self-esteem maybe is negatively affected. This may result in burnout.

According to Gomathi et al., (2017), this kind of environment can cause stress to the student youth workers instead of worrying about how best they can apply theory into practice. In their study, Gomathi et al., (2017), referred to stress as a dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment to which they are exposed to. In this interaction, demands, limitations and opportunities related to work may be perceived as threatening. The same can happen to student youth workers. Stress can be any physical or psychological stimulus that disturbs the adaptive state and provoke a coping response. (Gomathi et al., 2017). This means that student youth workers doing practicals at Mavambe SCC were affected differently by stressful situations to which they were exposed during their practicals. This depends on how student youth workers cope with the stress they are exposed to. On the contrary, the level of the impact of the stress student youth workers experienced during practicals depended on how they coped or reacted to the stress as well as how they adapted to the environment. The coping mechanisms differed from individual to individual because of different personalities. Some student youth workers viewed the challenges as an opportunity for them to learn new ways of dealing with different situations while some used resilience as their only way to cope with the challenges.

#### 4.3.6. Theme 6: Other professionals' contempt for youth work profession

Student youth workers worked with other students from professions such as social work and psychology which served as one of the challenges they encountered. The students from other professions undermined youth work as a profession. They projected

themselves as coming from better professions compared to youth work. The negative attitude displayed to student youth workers by students from social work and psychology made student youth workers find it difficult to be proud of their profession. This also affected student youth workers' passion for their profession negatively. This has also had a negative impact on them, thus, making them lose interest in their profession. This could have an impact on their effectiveness in their work in the future. Below are what some of the participants had to say:

*P 4 “working at that place as a student youth worker is not easy, other than tiring and stressful work environment, we are stressed by people who should be supporting and motivating us as we are new in the work environment. Some staff members look down on us as student youth workers”*

*P6 “It is really difficult to hang out and share your practical experiences with our peers in other fields or disciplines like social work and psychology because we are already undermined at work and we are told that we should have chosen better careers than what we enrolled for since it is useless, so they say. So, we are not even proud of what we are because the people who should be supporting us are destroying our self-confidence and love or passion for what we do”.*

*P8 “It is very discouraging to wake up in the morning and prepare to work, just to be told how less of value your work is and that you should have*

*opted for a better career. Those social workers and psychologists don't take us seriously as youth workers because they think we are doing nothing compared to what they do on daily basis.*

*P11 "Those people don't take us seriously; they think they are better than us and that youth work is just a useless career. They always underestimate us as student youth workers, and this is affecting us badly"*

What the student youth workers said above further confirm the negative attitude harboured by professionals in other disciplines towards student youth workers. This shows that the professionals from other disciplines did not recognize and appreciate the role of youth workers in the lives of young people. The above statements prove that student youth workers were made to feel like their career was of less value compared to social work and psychology. Student youth workers also stated that other professionals said that there was no work to do for youth workers. These professionals argued that way because they maintained that they were already doing what was supposed to be done by youth workers as social workers and psychologists.

On the contrary, Garfat, Freeman, Gharabaghi and Fulcher (2018) saw the need for youth workers because the child and youth practitioner spend their time carrying out extremely important activities for the holistic development of young people. Although what youth workers do seems like a walk in the park or what Garfat et al., (2018: 23) termed "Hanging out", what they do with young people has an everlasting positive impact on the lives of the young people. This confirms the following statement made by one of the student youth workers during the interviews:

*'It is really difficult to hang out and share your practical experiences with our peers in other fields or disciplines like social work and psychology because we are already underestimated at work and we are told that we should have chosen better careers than what we enrolled for since it is useless, so they say. So, we can't even take pride in what we are because the people who should be supporting us are demolishing our self-confidence and love or passion for what we do''.*

The above extract shows the extent to which people in other professions undermine youth work as a profession. They assume that youth workers have nothing to do except their preference to hang around with the young people. Little do these detractors know that as youth workers spend more time with young people, they are imparting knowledge to young people and also equipping them with the much-needed skills. People from other professions do not realize that a different approach is needed when working with young people to keep young people interested in what you want to do with them, especially when you are dealing with youth in conflict with the law.

Unlike in other forms of social service such as those performed by social workers, counsellors, or psychologists, youth workers do not conduct scheduled sessions with young people at an arranged time and place, although this sometimes does happen and can be beneficial. However, the sessions which take place between youth workers and young people typically occur through fragmented but connected interactions, trusting that the ability and the skill of the youth worker will continue to connect such moments into a coherent process. Garfat et al., (2018) refer to youth workers' engagements with young people as life-space counseling. The data collected from the participants on this theme



illustrates that people in other professions or even the organizations do not understand the roles and responsibilities of youth workers. It can be surmised that lack of knowledge and understanding makes people in other professions think that they are the only ones who play an important role in the lives of young people at risk than youth workers. In reality, youth work practitioners play an equally important role in young people's lives at the Mavambe SCC.

What the student youth workers claimed is also supported by Cooley in Rahim (2018) that people understand themselves based on their perception of how other people view them. This scholar terms this as "the looking glass self" (Rahim, 2018). The self or "self-idea" is social as it is based on how people imagine they appear to others (Rahim, 2018). In this study, this assertion has helped to explain how student youth workers imagine the way they appear to people in other professions at Mavambe SCC.

In Cooley's analysis (Rahim, 2018) the development of a self involves three elements, namely, "the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of their judgment of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification" (Little, Vyain, Scaramuzzo, Cody-Rydzewski, Griffiths, & Strayer, 2014: 4). Stets and Burke (2014) cited Mead (1931) who argues that the self is developed through social interaction as it is a person's distinct identity. These scholars further note that the capacity for self-reflection serves as a crucial component of the self (Smith, 2017). Stets and Burke (2014) break the self-down into two components, that is, the "I" and the "me". The "me" represents the part of the self in which one identifies as the organized sets of attitudes of others towards the self. It is who we are in other's eyes: our roles, our personalities and our public personas.

This study also highlights how student youth workers recognize the attitudes of other people towards them during their practicals at Mavambe SCC. On the other hand, the I represent the part of the self that acts on its initiative or responds to the organized attitudes of others. It is the novel, spontaneous, unpredictable part of the self, the part of the self that represents the possibility of change or undetermined action (Stets & Burke, 2014). The self is always caught up in a social process in which one flips back and forth between two distinguishable phases. According to Stets and Burke (2014), the I and me as one mediates between one's actions and individual responses to various social situations and the attitudes of the community. In this study, student youth workers were caught between their perceived future and what other professionals at the Centre think of the career or profession of the student youth workers. The negative attitude which other professionals had towards student youth workers generated an extreme sense of self-doubt and discouragement in student youth workers. And this does not auger well for student youth workers training and development as professional youth workers.

#### 4.3.7. Theme 7: Commitment and passion of student youth workers

During the interviews, student youth workers showed commitment to effective work-integrated learning. They also portrayed a great level of passion for their career. They revealed that the challenges cultivated and strengthened their love for the youth work profession. Below are what the student youth workers said concerning the effects of the challenges they experienced as well as with the strategies to curb the challenges they encountered during WIL:

*P2 “I think despite all the challenges that I went through, I’m still eager to be the best youth worker. I want to make those who think youth workers are not important see it differently one day”.*

*P8 “I think that all these stressful situations that we go through, actually build us to be best. Having to apply the theory that we have learned in class into practice gives one purpose in life, you tend to connect with the real-world and realize your full potential as a person as well as a professional.*

*P9 “No challenge can take a passionate person out of their way to achieve their dreams. Wanting to see a better country means you have to go through tough times to be strong enough to prosper. It may be tough, but I believe for so long as I know what I want in life, I can make it no matter what people say or what I go through”.*

While some of the participants in this study earlier stated that they were not supported at Mavambe SCC, the above three participants indicated that they did not despair. Their love for the youth work profession made them resilient. They remained committed and passionate about their career regardless of the challenges they experienced during their work-integrated learning. While Gorski (2015) laments the failure of the organizations to provide sufficient support to student youth workers during practicals, the participants could draw strength from the challenges they faced. That is why they said they saw their challenging situations as an opportunity for them to learn more and to be effective as well as responsible youth workers.

Also, student youth workers complained about not being given an opportunity to talk about their challenges. To them, this showed that they were being undermined, and this had a negative bearing on their confidence. This also alienated them from other people in the organization. This is the case because they felt unable to relate with those who refused to support and listen to them. Unfortunately, a situation of this nature is likely to affect student youth workers' progress and their effectiveness in their profession. However, for most of the student youth workers in this study, the strong ethos and values of their work drove them to retain high levels of connection, tolerance and commitment to their profession. But, maintaining such levels, can place the student youth worker at risk of 'burnout' through self-sacrifice since they will be putting more emphasis on caring for others over taking care of themselves (Gorski, 2015).

Moreover, as stipulated by the proponents of the ELT, learning is conceived as a four-stage cycle (see Figure 1 above). The learner must go through each stage experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. In the process of acquiring new experience, the student youth workers may be exposed to new situations and information which relate to the knowledge they acquired in the classroom. In that way, the experiences that student youth workers are going through may serve as a learning curve for them to reach their WIL goal successfully. This is the case because student youth workers are exposed to a real workplace experience when working with young people in conflict with the law. In other words, these student youth workers can go into the work environment and explore the realities of their practice.

The responses from some of the student youth workers in this study confirmed Martin, Rees and Edwards' (2012) contention that the strength of the WIL experience is the ability

to enhance the skills which could not be learnt in the classroom environment. Student youth workers also expressed concern over the lack of support and site visits for monitoring by their academic institution. Lack of support for student youth workers minimized their chances of learning new skills that cannot be taught in the classroom. The above assertion is against Martin and Fleming's (2010) postulation that student learning is supported through the appropriate workplace and academic supervision. Martin and Fleming (2010) further stated that student youth workers are only able to develop self-confidence and problem-solving skills when they get proper support from their WIL supervisors.

The support for student youth workers serves as a positive reinforcement to student youth workers, especially when they receive feedback from their supervisors. Provision of support and monitoring is vital as it enables the student youth workers to engage and develop and acquire new skills by networking with different people during WIL. The support and exposure to WIL in turn also enhance future career opportunities for the student youth workers (Martin & Fleming, 2010). Despite these odds, student youth workers showed a great deal of commitment, passion and resilience regardless of the challenges they experienced during WIL. Student youth workers were still inspired and they remained resolute and committed to the youth work profession to take part in preparing young people who can be effective and productive citizens in society (Bryson, 2014).

Given the student youth workers' concern about the lack of support and monitoring during WIL, it is vital for academic institutions to properly expose graduates-to-be to the work environment and assess their experiential learning (Govender, 2017). Academics blame

their failure to provide support to their student youth workers and to conduct site visits on inadequate budget and workload. This denies both the academics and student youth workers the benefits which come with proper implementation of WIL (Govender, 2017). This argument is noticeable in student youth workers' utterances during interviews. They complained that the university just placed them at different organizations for WIL and never bothered to do site visits to check their progress as well as monitoring how they cope with challenges they encountered during practicals.

During such moments and experiences of working with the student, youth workers invest in building relationships of trust, safety, connectedness, and professional intimacy with young people at the Centre. In this regard, student youth workers need much support from both their academic institution and their WIL supervisors (Garfat et al., 2018). If student youth workers are properly and adequately supported, they will be encouraged, and they will also become interested, committed and passionate about their work. They will ultimately develop into effective and efficient youth workers when they graduate from the university since they will be having the best interests of young people at heart.

Furthermore, Garfat et al., (2018) state that when a professional reach out to associate with someone with a history of being in conflict with the law, the practitioner should not become baffled while investigating modern or culturally diverse ways of making that association. This grants the student youth workers the opportunity to hone their skills and improve their ability to apply the knowledge they acquired while in class (Freeman, 2014). In the context of this study, it can be concluded that student youth workers are committed to gain experience by undertaking practicals so that they can become effective and successful youth work professionals despite the challenges they experience during WIL.

#### 4.4. Summary

This chapter covered data presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data on the phenomenon of the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. Presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data were done thematically as it was outlined in chapter three (3) of this study and it was guided by selected theories. The participants provided data which, after its analysis and interpretation, highlighted various experiences of student youth workers during WIL. From the empirical data and literature review, several interesting findings emerged. These findings were subsequently used to make recommendations needed to ameliorate the situation experienced by student youth workers during WIL.

## CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW, SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Introduction

This is the chapter that concludes the study concerning the experiences of student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. An overview of the entire study is outlined in this chapter. It provides a summary for each chapter which is followed by a summary of the findings of the study, general conclusion and recommendations which can be used to address the challenges faced by student youth workers during their work-integrated learning.

### 5.2. Overview of the study

There is very limited research focusing on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL in most studies conducted in youth work. This may be because youth work is still a new field and also that it is still not yet recognised and professionalized in most countries. Much research on WIL has been done in fields of studies such as social work, management sciences and engineering students. Although student youth workers are exposed to similar situations and experiences of students as in social work, management sciences and engineering, their experiences and challenges they face during WIL placements have not been extremely researched.

The objectives of the study were, firstly, to explore the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. The second objective was to determine the effects of the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. The third and the last objective was to discover coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL in dealing with the challenges they face at Mavambe SCC.



Burnout theory and Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) were used to explore, explain and interrogate the phenomenon under study. The Burnout theory explains the strain put on social service providers due to their commitment to the welfare of others. Similarly, student youth workers tend to focus more on the welfare of the young people under their care at the Centre, which leads to burnout. This theory helped to explain the first objective of exploring the challenges experienced by student youth workers. It also helped to explain the second objective which was about the determination of the effects of the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC.

To address the third objective which was to discover the coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL in dealing with the challenges they face at Mavambe SCC, the ELT was used. For student youth workers' challenges to be addressed, there is a need for more research on their experiences during WIL. The two theories complemented each other in the sense that the Burnout theory explained how the commitment to the welfare of other people affected the wellbeing of student youth workers. On the other hand, the ELT explained how WIL equipped them with the skills to adapt to challenging work environment. This helped student youth workers to be resilient and bounce back after being exposed to burnout during WIL.

The study adopted a qualitative research approach and phenomenological research design. Non-probability purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select participants from BAYID student youth workers who were placed at Mavambe SCC for WIL. The sample size depended on data saturation. Therefore, data saturation was reached after eleven student youth workers were interviewed. To explore the experiences of student youth workers during WIL, vignette and semi-structured interviews were used

to solicit information to get an in-depth understanding of their experiences and challenges during WIL. Data were presented, analysed and discussed according to the themes that emerged from the study. The data were analysed, interpreted and then supported with literature and linked with the theories which guided the study.

### 5.3. Summary of findings of the study

The findings are summarised based on the objectives and themes of the study as follows.

#### 5.3.1. To explore the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC

Objective 1 of the study was to explore the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. The data indicated that student youth workers went for their WIL without any adequate briefing and proper induction by the University and Centre respectively to familiarize them with the Centre's environment and their scope of work during WIL. Lack of briefing and proper induction left most of the student youth workers frustrated since they were not prepared for what they had to go through during WIL.

Student youth workers experienced burnout since they were also expected to work overtime (twelve (12 hours per day) at the Centre. The long hours of work consequently compromised the wellbeing of the student youth workers. This had a negative impact on their passion for their work and their effectiveness during WIL.

The violent behaviour of young people at the Centre rendered the place unsafe and difficult for the student youth workers to conduct their practical effectively.

Student youth workers found it difficult to deal with the challenges they faced during WIL because of a lack of support from the Centre and the University.

Student youth workers' self-confidence and passion for the profession, as well as their performance, were negatively affected by the undermining of the youth work profession by other professionals (i.e. psychologists and social workers) at the Centre.

Lack of monitoring and support for student youth workers by the University compromised the quality of their training since the University was unable to identify and address student youth workers' challenges.

Inadequate briefing of student youth workers about the scope of their work and the situation they will be exposed to during WIL including what the university expects from them after the completion of their WIL programme.

The cumulative effect of lack of support and monitoring during WIL exposed student youth workers to burnout. This is in line with the Burnout theory which stipulates that people often experience burnout when they are more focused on the welfare of other people, not being briefed inducted properly for WIL and not supported by both the Centre and University to deal with challenges during WIL. The negative environment to which student youth workers were exposed made it difficult for them to practice effectively. This is the case because according to ELT, student youth workers' learning was supposed to be a holistic adaptive process that combines experience, perception, cognition and behaviour. The environment was not conducive for them to apply their theoretical knowledge and to learn and acquire new skills and experiences in real situations which they will need when they become professional youth workers.

### 5.3.2. To determine the effects of the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC

The second objective was to determine the effects of the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL at Mavambe SCC. Student youth workers experienced burnout due to the unsafe environment, undermining of their profession, abnormal working hours and lack of support by the Centre and the University during WIL. This had a huge negative impact on their effectiveness and wellbeing during WIL.

Some student youth workers experienced an inferiority complex due to the negative labelling against their profession by other professionals at the Centre. The negative attitudes towards the youth work profession by other professionals squashed their passion for the profession. Such a situation made it difficult for them to practise, experience, learn and acquire new knowledge and skills they needed to become effective professional youth workers as postulated by the advocates of the ELT (see Figure 1).

### 5.3.3. To discover coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL in dealing with the challenges they faced at Mavambe SCC

Objective 3 was to discover coping mechanisms used by student youth workers during WIL in dealing with the challenges they faced at Mavambe SCC. The resilient spirit, commitment and passion for the youth work profession helped some student youth workers to deal and cope with the challenges they faced during WIL. These student youth workers were able to, in terms of Experiential Learning Theory, practice, experience, learn and acquire new knowledge and skills during WIL. This was possible because student

youth workers were able to react and adapt to the work environment depending on their personality.

#### 5.4. Limitations of the study

The following limitations of the study have been identified:

##### 5.4.1 Limitations on the topic

The topic only focused on the experiences of student youth workers doing work-integrated learning at Mavambe SCC. The topic did not take into consideration other stakeholders who also part of students' WIL at the Centre such as the supervisors and the young people at the Centre who were under the care of student youth workers during WIL. This shows that this study has overlooked the experiences of the supervisors and young people at the Centre.

##### 5.4.2 Limitations on the methodology

The qualitative nature of the study and the sampling procedure served as limitations for the study. The sample size of this study was too small. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to all student youth workers doing practical across the country. The use of one data collection technique was also a limitation. However, the use of two or more techniques enables the researcher to get more information from the participants than when using one technique.

##### 5.4.3 Limitations on the literature

The existence of limited literature on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL was identified as a limitation in this study. This exposed the researcher to limited access to data during the literature review. Therefore, this study was informed by literature from few scholars whose previous studies were in the same area.

## 5.5. Recommendations

The researcher makes the following recommendations for the University, centres catering for young people in conflict with the law, government and other relevant bodies as well as the scholars

### 5.5.1. Recommendation for the university

Appropriate briefing of student youth workers about the scope of work and expectations of the University and the Centre should be made.

Regular site visits by the University are necessary to monitor student youth workers' progress during WIL and to identify and address the challenges which student youth workers may experience.

The university should hire more staff to ensure that all activities are carried out effectively without unnecessary workload due to lack of staffing and ensure that there is a budget for every academic programme students should take on as part of fulfilling minimum requirements for their degrees.

### 5.5.2. Recommendation for the Centre

Proper induction should be done by the Centre hosting student youth workers for WIL to prepare them for the environment and possible challenges they may experience during WIL.

The WIL programme and activities for student youth workers should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they meet the standards of youth work practice and the needs of the youth at the Centre.

Support groups should be formed for student youth workers to share their experiences and challenges during WIL and to explore possible solutions.

Counselling services should be provided for student youth workers and permanent staff members to minimise the psychological and emotional impact of the challenges they experience at the centre when working with young people in conflict with the law.

Improvement of safety and security measures should be made to protect student youth workers from some of the Centre's youth with violent behaviour.

#### 5.5.3. Recommendation for the government and relevant bodies

Professionalization of youth work in South Africa should be speeded up as this will lift the status of this profession.

#### 5.5.4. Recommendation for scholars

Further research is needed on the views and experiences of the Centre's youth and supervisors to explore the challenges experienced by all people involved in WIL.

#### 5.6. General conclusion

This was a qualitative study that explored the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning (WIL) at Mavambe Secure Care Centre. The literature review of this study highlighted the limited existence of data on the experiences of student youth workers during WIL. This was indicative of the gap in the challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL. The study revealed that student youth workers are exposed to a variety of challenges during WIL. These included unfamiliar working environment, working with young people with violent behaviour, lack of support for student youth workers at the Centre and from the University, overtime work, being undermined by other professionals and lack of proper briefing and induction before placement by both the University and the Centre. The study found that student youth workers cope with the challenges they faced during WIL due to their resilience, commitment and passion for

youth work. The study made recommendations affecting all relevant stakeholders to minimize the negative impact of the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL.



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## 7. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX ONE: WORK PLAN FOR THE STUDY

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TARGETED TIME OF COMPLETION
1.Scanning the environment for the research topic and research area	Student	April 2018
2.Research proposal development	Student	May 2018
3. Departmental presentation	Student	October 2018
4.Research proposal presentation to School of Human and Social Sciences Higher Degrees Committee	Student	October 2018
5. Submission of the research proposal to the University Higher Degrees Committee (UHDC)	Student	November 2018
6.Register the research proposal with the research and innovation Directorate	Student	November 2018



7. Apply for ethical clearance to the University Research Ethics Committee	Student	December 2018
8. Detailed Literature Review	Student	December 2018
9. Detailed methodology	Student	January 2019
10. Seek permission to conduct the study from Mavambe Secure Care Centre	Student	January 2019
11. Data collection	Student	February 2019
12. Data analysis and presentation	Student	April 2019
13. Discussion of Findings	Student	May 2019
14. Submission of the first draft thesis	Student	June 2019
15. Submission of the second draft thesis	Student	July 2019
16. Proofreading	Qualified Proofreader	July 2019
17. Submission of the final draft thesis to the examiners	Student	August 2019
18. Oral defense	Student	October 2019
19. Submit the article for publication in DHET	Student	November 2019

accredited peer-reviewed journal		
20. Submit policy brief	Student	November 2019
21. Give feedback to the respondents and stakeholders.	Student	December 2019

## APPENDIX TWO: BUDGET

Item description	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost (R)	Total cost (R)
<b>Research Assistance</b>				
Data collection (1 assistants @R500/day x 12)	12	Day	500	6000.00
Data analysis (1 assistant @ R500/hr x 6)	6	Hrs	500	3300.00
Language editing for proposal @R50/page x35	35	page	50	1750.00
Language editing final document @ R50/page x 200	200	Page	50	10000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>21050.00</b>
<b>Consumables</b>				
Printing of drafts (@R6/page x 200pages x 7copies)	1100	Page	6.00	7700.00

Writing pads: 20 pads@ R25 per pad	20	Number	15	500.00
Pens x20@ R28.00	20	Number	27.00	560.00
Memory stick	2	Number	700	1400.00
Modem	1	Number	2000	2000.00
Voice recorder to record interviews MD-650	1	Number	3000	3000.00
Batteries @R50 per pack by 6packs	6	Number	50	300.00
Telephone costs	25	Number	60	1500.00
Spiral binding (R150per copy x7)	7	Number	150	1050.00
Final binding (R450 per copy x 7)	7	Number	450	3150.00
External hard drive for data storage	1	Number	1500	1500.00
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>22660.00</b>
<b>Travelling expenses</b>				
Pilot study: Thohoyandou to Mavambe Secure Care Centre (x 1trips To and from) (24.6km x 2=49.2K)	49.2	Km	3.61	177.61
	492	Km	3.61	1776.12

Data collection: From Thohoyandou to Mavambe Secure Care Centre (x10 trips) (10 visits x49.2km =492km)				
<b>Catering</b> Catering of research assistant and researcher for 12 days (120 x 3people x12 days =4320)	10	Days	90	4320
<b>Subtotal</b>				<b>6273.73</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>R 49983.73</b>

## APPENDIX THREE: INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Title of the study: Experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning at Mavambe Secure Care Centre.**

As WIL serves as a bridge between students' academic present and their professional future, it is an opportunity for the students to apply the theoretical knowledge gained in class to real-world situations. However, it is also taken into consideration that during the process these student youth workers may be exposed to a variety of situations and experiences. Therefore, this study aims to explore the experiences of student youth workers during work-integrated learning at Mavambe. This includes the challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL, how are they affected by those challenges, how they cope with those challenging situations and what they think can be done to address those challenges they encounter during WIL, particularly at Mavambe SCC. The research ethics will also be taken into consideration which includes informed consent, voluntary participation, avoidance of harm, confidentiality and anonymity.

### SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

#### Instructions

1. Please tick in the appropriate box

2. Gender

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Female	
Other	

3. Age

21-25		26-35	
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4. Marital Status

Single		Married		Divorced		Separated	
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5. Home Language

Tshivenda		Xitsonga		Sepedi		Other(s)		
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6. Educational qualifications

Post matric diploma or certificate	
Baccalaureate degree	
Post-graduate degree	

7. Year of placement

2017	
2018	
2019	

8. Occupation: .....

**SECTION B: RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**Scenario**

*Jacob and Sarah are placed for experiential learning at the nearest rehabilitation Centre based in Cape Town which caters for young people who are in conflict with the law as well as those who are at risk due to substance abuse. During their experiential learning, they are exposed to variety of experiences and challenging situations as they are working with young people with behavioral problems. They then come confide in you as someone they trust and who is in the same profession as them. They want to find out if you are how you deal with challenges you face during WIL.*

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS DERIVED FROM OBJECTIVE 1**

**Main research question**

What made you choose to do your practicals at Mavambe SCC?

Please share your experiences with field placement at Mavambe SCC?



### **Sub-questions**

What factors contribute to challenges that student youth workers face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS DERIVED FROM OBJECTIVE 2**

### **Main research question**

How are student youth workers affected by the challenges they face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS DERIVED FROM OBJECTIVE 3**

### **Main research question**

What are the coping mechanisms used by student youth workers to deal with the challenges they face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

### **Sub-questions**

Are the coping mechanisms effective? Explain.

### **Possible follow-up questions**

What can be done by student youth workers to address the challenges that they face during WIL at Mavambe SCC?

What can be done by the university to address the challenges experienced by the student youth workers during WIL?

What can be done by the Centre to address the challenges faced by students who are doing practical?

Which platforms should both parties use to address those challenges experienced by student youth workers during WIL?

What do you think can be long term solutions to those challenges faced by student youth workers during WIL?

## APPENDIX FOUR: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

**NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:**  
**Ms NP Rankakane**

**STUDENT NO:**  
**14013887**

**PROJECT TITLE: Experiences of student youth workers during Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): A case of Mavambe Child and youth care centre in Limpopo Province, South Africa.**

**PROJECT NO: SHSS/20/MER/01/0704**

**SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS**

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr NR Raselekaane	University of Venda	Supervisor
Ms KG Morwe	University of Venda	Co - Supervisor
Dr S Obodire	University of Venda	Co - Supervisor
Ms NP Rankakane	University of Venda	Investigator - Student

Type: **Masters Research**  
Risk: **Straightforward research without ethical problems**  
Approval Period: **March 2020 – March 2022**

The Research Ethics Social Science Committee (RESSC) hereby approves your project as indicated above.

**General Conditions**  
While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC:
  - Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
  - Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project
  - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the REC. Would there be deviations from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the final date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the REC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the REC retains the right to:
  - Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
  - To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require further reallocation or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
  - Withdraw or postpone approval if:
  - Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
  - It becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
  - The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately.
  - New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary

**ISSUED BY:**  
**UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**  
Date Considered: April 2020

Name of the RESSC Chairperson of the Committee: TAKALANI MASHAU

Signature:  Date: 20/03/2020

Director Research and Innovation

Signature:  Date: 20/02/2020

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE  
"A quality culture (morally, ethically, research-based) professional leadership"

## APPENDIX FIVE: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

P.O BOX 663  
THOLONGWE  
0734  
13 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to certify that a dissertation entitled "Experiences of Student Youth Workers During Work-Integrated Learning (WIL): A Case of Mavambe Secure Care Centre in the Limpopo Province, South Africa" by Rankakane Ngadi Pertunia, student number: 14013887 has been edited and proofread for grammar, spelling, punctuation, overall style and logical flow. The edits were carried out using the "Track changes" feature in MS Word, giving the author final control over whether to accept or reject effected changes prior to submission, provided the changes I recommended are effected to the text, the language is of an acceptable standard.

Please don't hesitate to contact me for any enquiry.

Kind regards



Dr. Hlavisio Motlhaka (BEDSPF-UL, BA Hons-UL, MA-IUP: USA, PhD-WITS, PGDiP-SUN)

Cell number: 079-721-0620/078-196-4459

Email address: hlavisomhlanga@yahoo.com