

DECLARATION

**AN EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN
FOSTER CUSTODY AT THULAMELA WEST**

by

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STUDENT NUMBER: 11565495

Mini-Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment for the requirements of the Degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

OR TAMBO INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNANCE AND POLICY STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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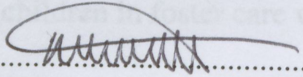
CO-SUPERVISOR: MR. E MAHOLE

2014

DECLARATION

I, **MULAMBILU NKHUMBUDZENI**, hereby declare that the mini dissertation for the degree of Masters of Public Management at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not been previously submitted for a degree at this University, or any other University, that it is my work in design and execution and that all reference materials contained therein have been duly acknowledged.

The researcher used a mixed methodology where quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The qualitative method adequately describes or interprets a situation in relation to the study and quantitative method was used because in this study there was collection of numeric data which was analyzed statistically. The researcher used field study as a research design for this study. The main reason for using field study as a research design was to enable the researcher to gain understanding of the physical experiences and challenges of children in foster care with regard to their academic performance.


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The major findings of the study are:

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DATE

Major findings on the academic performance of children in foster custody:

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- The findings of this study show the academic performance of children in foster custody is not poor.
- The different role players in foster care perform their duties effectively and know their roles and boundaries well.
- It was also found that children in foster custody are emotionally stable and have good self image.

The recommendations of the study:

Recommendations on the academic performance of children in foster custody:

- Children in foster custody must always strive to perform better and proceed to the tertiary level. They should continue to behave well at school so that they may remain controllable and avoid dropping out.
- Social workers must observe the emotional stability of children in foster custody and monitor their academic performance for necessary early intervention. Foster parents should create home environment conducive for studying.

ABSTRACT

The study was based on the evaluation of academic performance of children in foster custody in Thulamela West under Vhembe district municipality, Limpopo province in South Africa. The population of the study was fifty respondents composed of fifteen social workers, fifteen educators, ten foster parents and ten foster children.

The researcher used a mixed methodology where quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The qualitative method adequately describes or interprets a situation in relation to the study and quantitative method was used because in this study there was collection of numeric data which was analyzed statistically. The researcher used field study as a research design for this study. The main reason for using field study as a research design was to enable the researcher to gain understanding of the physical experiences and challenges of children in foster care with regard to their academic performance.

The major findings of the study are:

Major findings on the academic performance of children in foster custody:

- The findings of this study show the academic performance of children in foster custody is not poor.
- The different role players in foster care perform their duties effectively and know their roles and boundaries well.
- It was also found that children in foster custody are emotionally stable and have good self image.

The recommendations of the study:

Recommendations on the academic performance of children in foster custody:

- Children in foster custody must always strive to perform better and proceed to the tertiary level. They should continue to behave well at school so that they may remain controllable and avoid dropping out
- Social workers must observe the emotional stability of children in foster custody and monitor their academic performance for necessary early intervention. Foster parents should create home environment conducive for studying.

DEDICATION

- Foster parents must not misuse foster care grant and social workers should further capacitate them on parenting skills. Educators, social workers and foster parents must form foster care forums to discuss issues affecting children in foster custody

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the orphans and vulnerable children who continue to survive despite the difficult situations they face.

- The Almighty God for blessings and strength.
- My dear parents Mr Albert Ndwaniso and Mrs Anah Mutshinyani Mulambila for encouragements.
- My lovely wife Nengwecha Makhadani for support.
- My precious three daughters Mphahlele, Mphahlele and Mphahlele for inspiration.
- My supervisor Prof. M. J. Khumalo for guidance and patience.
- My co-supervisor Prof. Makhadani for support and guidance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgments are given with honour and gratitude to:

- The Almighty God for blessings and strength.
- My dear parents Mr Albert Nndwamato and Mrs Anah Mutshinyani Mulambilu for encouragements.
- My lovely wife Nemaranzhe Ntambudzeni for support.
- My precious three daughters Munzhedzi, Mpho and Mukona for inspiration.
- My supervisor Prof. M.P Khwashaba guidance and patience.
- My co-supervisor Mr.E Mahole for direction and focus.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AD	After Dearth of Christ
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
BC	Before Birth of Christ
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SOCPEN	Social Pension System
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study will focus on the academic success of children in foster custody at Thulamela West. According to Cocker and Allain (2011:91) foster care should provide a safe, containing stimulating and caring experience of family life for a child. Halton and Jackson (1997:139) indicated that foster care is designed to provide care and protection for children unable to live on their own homes or with other persons authorised to provide care.

This chapter will discuss the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, brief literature review, definitions of major concepts and organisation the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Fostering has been an established resource of caring for children in public care since the 1940s (Cocker and Allain, 2011: 89). Increasing use of foster care since the 1970s, with the move away from the use of residential care for the children, has meant that a position was reached where the majority looked after children are placed in foster cares, (Cocker and Allain, 2011:89). Apparently the practice of looking after the children who couldn't find proper care from the natural families had always been there in the civilised world. However the origin of documented fostering of children could be traced to the western countries like in the US. In US foster care started by of a man named Charles Loring Brace who in the mid 19th century observed that about 30 000 homeless or neglected children lived in New York City streets and slums. He took them off the streets and placed them with Christian farm families (Cocker and Allain, 2011: 92). In South Africa foster care was formalised in 1983 when the Child Care Act 1 of 1983 (Act No. 1 of 1983) was passed. It provided for the declaration of a child to be in need of care and be placed in foster care custody and other alternative care settings like children's home, and place of safety.

However there are many non statutory foster care situations in South Africa and all over the world, where families stay with children in need of care on humanitarian basis. According to Johnson (1994:34) foster care is an umbrella term that focuses on a large variety of situations in which a child is cared for in a family, not the ones which are receiving an allowance or fees. The National Development Plan (2012:338) estimates that approximately 73% of African children are cared for entirely by relatives, highlighting the importance of extended kinship networks in providing family care in a context of high rates of mortality and labour migration. Children in South Africa are vulnerable to poverty, abuse, orphanhood, exploitation and trafficking, which contribute towards an increasing need for children requiring to be placed in alternative forms of care such as foster care. South African Social Security Agency computer information system indicates that there were 555 693 children who received foster child grants in July 2013.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) Section 29 states that everyone has a right to basic education. This section led to the passing of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) which makes it compulsory for every child from the age of seven to attend school. The Bill of Rights, Section 28(b) stipulates that every child has the right to family care or parental care or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment. To give effect to Section 28 of Bill of Rights various child friendly acts were passed and one of them is Children's Act 38 which was passed in 2005. Children Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005), makes provision for foster care placement and in terms of Section 181(a), the purpose of foster care is to protect and nurture children by providing a safe, healthy environment with positive support. To reinforce this purpose, foster care grant is provided to the foster parent in terms of Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act No. 13 of 2004)

Children in foster care were reported to be demonstrating developmental delays that include physical, developmental, emotional, behavioural, educational and mental health problems (Bruhn, Duval and Louderman, 2008:53). This statement indicates that educational and mental problems might affect the academic performance of children in foster care.

Despite the protective nature of legalised foster care in the country, foster children are susceptible to being used as commodities to gain access to the foster child grant for the adults use instead of benefiting their needs. Orphans and Vulnerable Children Conference Report

(2013,29) indicated that there are findings, which shows that even though children are placed in foster care for care and protection, they are still faced with challenges that must be addressed. The impact of orphanhood on children include psychological problems, dysfunctional socialisation, exclusion from the society which may have the long term effects on their development resulting to dropping from school, teenage pregnancy, anti-social behaviour. This study is conducted in order to come with the strategies that can be used to improve academic performance of children in foster care.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to evaluate academic performance of children in foster custody in Thulamela West.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the academic performance of children in foster custody.
- To investigate the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance.
- To explore the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How is the academic performance of the children in foster custody?
- What are the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance?
- What are the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of the children in foster custody?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study will help the foster children to reflect on their behaviours and attitudes that may lead to poor academic performance. Social Workers will gain the insight into the factors that contribute in foster children to poor academic performance. The Department of Social Development will be able to understand problematic foster care placements and develop appropriate policies. The findings of the study will also help the foster parents to understand the link between the foster children's unfavourable experience

and their behaviours. The educators will be able to identify and deal with the negative behaviours of the children in foster care. The Department of Basic Education will gain insight into academic performance of children in foster custody and develop well informed strategies.

1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is based on an evaluation of academic performance of children in foster custody. The study will be conducted in Thulamela West Social Workers areas which are Tshaulu, Tshidimbini, Makwarela, Thohoyandou and Tshilidzini as demarcated by Vhembe Social Development. It will concentrate in the Western part of Thulamela local Municipality area, Vhembe District found in Limpopo province of South Africa.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The sensitivity of the research topic might hinder approval by the government departments of Social Development and Basic Education because children issues are strictly regulated by the statutes and policies. The unavailability of funds for, stationary, transport, telephone, editing and statistics analysis might pose a challenge for this research project

1.10 BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will present the brief literature review on the academic performance of children in foster custody. This section will also present literature on foster care processes and challenges.

1.10.1 Academic performance of children in foster custody

Bruhn et al, (2008:17) indicated that children in foster care face many educational obstacles because of frequent moves which affect their performance educationally. African generally have a history of underperformance at school. According to Slabbert, Malan, Maras, Olivier and Riordan(ed) (1994:311) in 1991 the results showed markedly higher pass and matric exemption rates for Asian and White pupils than for coloured and African pupil and of all African matriculation candidates only 39% obtained a pass and 10% a matric exemption. The out flow rates in black schools was at 17%. Numerous studies have highlighted the link between substance use/abuse and various health and other social problems like absenteeism and school failure, National Drug Master Plan, (2006-2011,36).

1.10.2 Emotional issues affecting learning

Delilah (2008:41) notes that orphaned children may experience numerous feelings that may include confusion, fear, apprehension of the unknown and loss. These findings indicate that children are vulnerable to various psychosocial challenges that may affect their development. These issues need to be addressed as soon as possible to prevent or decrease poor developmental and mental health outcomes that may ultimately affect a child's educational experience and their quality of life in adulthood, as they leave school earlier and unprepared to live independently (Bruhn et al, 2008:19)

1.10.3 Foster care processes

Berns (2007:98) explained that an increasing number of children are being raised by relatives (kins) other than parents, the most common being grandparents raising grandchildren. She further indicated that some of these families have informal arrangements and others are part of the formal foster care system. Berns (2007:98) called these families kin custody. According to Brown (2011:89), fostering has been an established resource for caring for children in public care since the 1940s. Brown (2011:89) further explained that its increasing use since the 1970s, with the move away from the use of residential care. For children, has meant that they had reached a position where the majority of looked after children are placed with foster parents.

Heltan and Jackson (1997:139) stressed that foster care is designed to provide care and protection for children unable to live in their own homes or with other persons authorised to provide care. Collins, Jordan and Coleman (2013:32) explained that in foster family, parents temporarily nurture children born to others and the length of time in which a foster child is in the home can vary from the several days to most of his or her childhood. In South Africa foster care placement court order is valid for two years and after the assessment of the social worker it can be reviewed.

1.10.4 Orphanhood and poverty in foster care

In Thulamela West almost all children in foster care were declared the children in need of care because of orphanhood. According to Barbarin and Richter (2001:22), like the other African countries South Africa is faced with the question of who will raise AIDS orphans and the answer is the extended family. Unfortunately most of those extended families are living in poverty. Poverty can be observed alternatively as chronic hunger, inadequate housing, low

living standard, low income, low consumption, lack of human capital, low accumulated wealth and high debt (Barbarin and Richter, 2001:43). This is the situation that most of foster children live in. Across the continent, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has left many orphans to fend for themselves and assume such adult responsibility as running households and communities (Honwana and De Boeck(ed), 2002:4).

1.10.5 Parenting challenges in fostering

Toemann (2009:33) found that the grandparents deal with numerous challenges, which include personal health, custodial matters, financial constraints, psycho-social and behavioural issues they face with their grandchildren. In a conference paper, which was prepared for the Kenya Conference on Orphans and Vulnerable Children in 2009, it was indicated that there were intergenerational issues, which affected foster care. It was found that the older women do not understand the psycho-social needs of the orphans and vulnerable children under care and consequently could not provide psycho-social support to these children especially during their adolescent ages. They also lack 'sufficient resources to provide the basic needs of orphans and vulnerable children and this lower their quality of life (Minsi and Mwase, 2009:27).

1.11 DEFINITION OF MAJOR CONCEPTS

- **Foster care**

Foster care means placement of a child by means of an order of children's court in the custody of a suitable family or individual willing to act as a foster parent of the child (Department of Welfare, 1998:17)

- **Foster parent**

In terms of Children Act,2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) foster parent means a person who has foster care of a child by order of the children's court and includes an active member of an organisation operating as a cluster foster care scheme and who has been assigned responsibility for the foster care of the child.

- **Foster child**
Foster child means a child who has been declared a child in need of care and placed in foster care custody in terms of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005).
- **Academic performance**
Academic performance is the outcome of education and the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals (Murray-Ward, 1996:2).
- **Orphan**
An orphan is defined as a child under the age of eighteen, who is motherless or who has lost both parents (Mackerow, Smart and Syman 1996:13).
- **Poverty**
According to Lauer and Lauer, (2002:615) poverty is a state in which income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities of food, shelter, clothing and medical care.

1.12 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This is the outline of the study that shows how the study will be structured from the first chapter to the last one.

Chapter One: Introduction and Background of the Study

This chapter will discuss the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, brief literature review, definitions of major concepts and organisation the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will provide brief literature review about issues related to topic, concepts, challenges, interventions and improvements. This chapter will also present the legislative framework of the foster care and educational matters. Literature about foster care dynamics from the early years to the recent years will be presented. This chapter will also include literature about academic performance of children in foster custody. Negative impacts of

foster care and related issues like poverty, on the academic performance of children will be outlined.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This section will discuss the research design and methodology that are going to be used when conducting the study. The section will also present study area, population of the study, sampling method and sampling size, data collection methods; data analysis and ethical considerations as well as organisation of the study.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

In this section data will be analyzed, interpreted and presented. There will be two sections for analyzing data collected through different data collection methods. Data collected through questionnaire will analysed by the statistical package for social science (SPSS Version 22.0). The information will be presented in a tabular form, frequencies and percentages.

Data collected through interview will be analysed thematic analysis and the information will be presented in a narrative form

Chapter Five: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

This section will be the last section of this study and it will provide the findings, conclusion and recommendations of this study to the Department of Social Development, Department of Basic Education and University of Venda.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literature review discusses issues related to the topic, concepts, challenges and strategies to resolve them. According to De Vos and Fouche (1998:83) the prospective researchers should acquaint themselves with previous research so that they may become aware of inconsistency and gaps that may justify further research. This section presents the literature review on the academic performance of children in foster custody. This section also presents literature on foster care processes and challenges.

De Vos and Fouche (1998:83) indicated that a review of literature is aimed at contributing towards a clear understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified. A good literature review places a research project in context and it shows the path of prior research and how the current project is linked to the former (Neuman, 2000:46)

2.2 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CUSTODY

After the new dispensation in 1994 the post apartheid South Africa became a member and an active participant in the United Nation. Therefore South Africa ratified United Nations international conventions like The Convention on the Rights of the Child resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. To give effect to that ratification South Africa included the specific rights of the children in her post apartheid constitution. In The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), Bill of Rights, Section 28(b) stipulates that every child has the right to family care or parental care or to appropriate alternative care when removed from the family environment. To give effect to section 28 of Bill of Rights various child friendly acts were passed. Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) was passed in 2005. It makes provision for foster care placement and other child protection measures.

Section 29 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996) states that everyone has a right to basic education. This section led to the passing of the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996) which makes it compulsory for every child from the age of seven to attend school.

In terms of the Children Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), Section 181(a), the purpose of foster care is to protect and nurture children by providing a safe, healthy environment with positive support. To reinforce this purpose, foster care grant is provided to the foster parent in terms of Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act 13 of 2004)

White Paper for Social Welfare 1997 section 1 focuses on families, children, youth and aging. It outlines strategies to promote family life as well as to strengthen families. However foster families might face challenges in raising the foster children and the usage of foster care grant. Children declared to be in need of care and placed in foster care might face social, behavioural and educational challenges. These challenges could emanate from the harsh circumstances they experience, for instance, orphanhood, poverty, child neglect and abuse. Therefore this study seeks to comprehend how those challenges affect the children's academic performance

2.3 FOSTER CARE DYNAMICS

According to Libal (2004:17) the word foster means to nurture or encourage. Libal (2004:17) further elaborated that when a child's biological parents are unable or unwilling to properly care for their children by providing them with food, shelter and safety, others must do so. People who are not the biological or adoptive parents of the children that they care for are providing foster care. They provide food, shelter, and safety for these children in a nurturing and encouraging environment. Most children enter foster care because of parental abuse or chronic neglect. More than a half million children are in foster care eventually returned to their biological families (Libal 2004:17). Foster care is a term used for a system in which a minor has been placed into a ward, group home or private home of a state certified caregiver referred to as foster parents, (Cocker and Allain 2011:89). The placement of a child is usually arranged through the government or social service agency wherein the institution, group home or foster parent is compensated for expenses.

Berns (2007:98) explained that an increasing number of children are being raised by relatives (kins) other than parents, the most common being grandparents raising grandchildren. She further indicated that some of these families have informal arrangements and others are part of the formal foster care system. Berns (2007:98) called these families kin custody. According to Brown (2011:89), fostering has been an established resource for caring for children in public care since the 1940s.

Brown (2011:89) further explained that its increasing use since the 1970s, with the move away from the use of residential care for children, has meant that they had reached a position where the majority of looked after children are placed with foster parents.

Heltan and Jackson (1997:139) stressed that foster care is designed to provide care and protection for children unable to live in their own homes or with other persons authorised to provide care. Collins, Jordan and Coleman (2013:32) explained that in foster family, parents temporarily nurture children born to others and the length of time in which a foster child is in the home can vary from the several days to most of his or her childhood. In South Africa foster care placement court order is valid for two years and after the assessment of the social worker it can be reviewed.

2.4 THE HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE

After the new dispensation in 1994 the post apartheid South Africa became a member and active participant in the United Nation. Therefore South Africa ratified UN international conventions like The Convention on the Rights of the Child resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989. To give effect to that ratification South Africa included the specific rights of the children in her post apartheid constitution. However foster care has a long history internationally. Libal (2004:18) outlined the early history of foster care timeline as follows:

- **2000 B.C** - Protecting orphans was part of the code in Babylonia, which indicates the formal consideration of those children during those times.
- **A.D 787** - An asylum was established for abandoned infants in Milan, Italy.
- **1300** - The Great Code, that is the first document to define adoption, was written by Alphonso V of Castille. Children could only be adopted between the ages of seven and fifteen and only with permission of the king.
- **1500s-1600s** - Law in England and North America allowed orphans and poor or abandoned Children to be indenture to business people and others .Children often remained in this service until they turned eighteen.
- **1617** - A number of children from Christ's hospital, a home for orphans in London, set sail for North America as apprentices of the Virginia company.
- **1636** - A seven year old boy named Benjamin Eaton become the first foster child in the United States

- **1700s-1800s** - Almshouses were established in New York and other cities. Moral instruction and trades were sometimes taught at these public funded shelters for the homeless. Adults were also housed at almshouses where they were not separated from children, and many abuses took place. Adults wishing to secure children as servants or for other labour could adopt them from these shelters. After such adoptions, no one was certain that the children were adequately cared for because no one checked on them.
- **1741** - The London Founding Home was established.
- **1849** - A minister named Charles Loring Brace established the Children's Aid Society in response to the large number of children, as many as thirty thousand living on the streets of New York City. In 1853, he developed the placing out system, which used orphan trains, sometimes called Mercy Trains or Baby Train To transport children from New York City to other parts of the country. Families selected and adopted children in exchange for the labour they could provide on farms, in businesses, or around the house. This led to the involvement of individual states and sectarian organizations in child placement. By 1929, as many as two hundred thousand children had been adopted through the placing out system.
- **1865** - Massachusetts was among the first states to reimburse families who cared for children that were too young for indentured service.
- **1868** - Almshouses were banished in New York and instead, the establishment of orphanages was recommended. In the 1860s, laws that required children be removed from almshouses were passed in several states. Between 1868 and 1924, philanthropists and organizations in Great Britain sent as many as eight thousand orphans and homeless children known as British Home Children to Canada to be apprenticed to farmers and businesses or to become domestic servants. Most of these children were under the age of fourteen. By 1948, The number of children included in this forced emigration had risen to over one hundred thousand.
- **1869** - The National Children's Home and Orphanage was established in England. Laws were passed regarding the labour and education of children.
- **1885** - Pennsylvania began requiring a license in order to care for two or more unrelated children.

- **1886** - Charles Britwell, a member of the Boston Children Aid Society, established supervised Foster homes where an effort was made to secure placement based on the child's needs. He also promoted the idea of reimbursing foster families for child-care expenses and eventually returning children to the care of their biological parents.
- **1893** - The children's Home Society began receiving subsidies from the states of South Dakota

Libal (2004:35) also outlined a partial history timeline of foster care during the twentieth century as follows:

- **1900s** - Social agencies began keeping more records of individual children's situations, and their specific needs were more often considered when making foster home placement. Foster parents began to come under increasing supervision by social agencies. State began inspecting foster homes and increasing services were provided to biological families to promote reunification of families.
- **1909** - The White House Conference on Dependent children was held.
- **1912** - President Theodore Roosevelt established the United States Children's Bureau which became responsible for child welfare.
- **1930s** - The idea of determining the suitability of foster home and approving them for child care was promoted. Increasing numbers of foster parents were reimbursed for child care expenses. A growing number of agencies began to match children to specific foster homes.
- **1932** - Approximately one third of the social welfare agencies being operated privately in the United States prior to 1929 had discontinued operations by 1932.
- **1935** - The Social Security Act was passed during the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt. Among other things, the act called for federal money to be allocated to states to provide for various aspect of child welfare.
- **1950s** - Peoples began to realize that, rather than being a temporary solution, foster care was becoming permanent for many children.
- **1956** - The department of Health, Education, and Welfare was established by the federal government.
- **1959** - The Child Welfare League of America conducted a study on foster care in the United States. The result of the study suggested that children were sometimes unjustly removed from biological parents.

Furthermore, it found that many children were in unsatisfactory foster homes and those children who were members of minorities and children of economically depressed families were overrepresented in the foster –care system and underrepresented in adoptions. Those conducting the study also felt that not enough emphasis was being placed upon the reunification of families.

- **1960s** - There was a continuous decline in the number of orphanages being operated and a growing number of foster families caring for children, although many children with special needs were placed in group homes rather than foster homes.
- **1662** - Experts in the field of child welfare and reform made an effort to heighten public awareness of child abuse through publication of their findings and views in the battered child.
- **1664** - President Lyndon Johnson declare war on poverty
- **1970s** - The government and child-care agencies began to question the desirability of long-term foster care.
- **1974** - Congress passed the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, which led states to develop and laws mandating the report of child abuse to appropriate agencies .It also provide procedures to be followed when investigating cases of alleged neglect and abuse.
- **1976** - Public knowledge of child neglect and abuse increased, more money was provided to foster families for the care of children in need, and there were over hundred thousand children in foster care in the United States.
- **1980**-There was a growing feeling that, as much as possible, the best situation for children in most instances was to live with their biological parents. Passage of the adoption assistance and child welfare allocated funds for use in programs that aimed to reduce the need for foster care by working toward prevention of family problems and toward the reunification of families.
- **1986-1997**- The number of cases of neglected and abused children rose by 14 percent.
- **1990**-Congress passed the victims of child abuse act
- **1996**- Twenty-seven thousand children were adopted out of foster care.
- **1997**-The adoption and safe families act was passed by congress during president bill Clinton’s administration

2.5 CURRENT VULNERABILITY AND ORPHANHOOD OF CHILDREN

South African Social Security Agency data base of 2014 indicates that in Thulamela West almost all children in foster care were declared the children in need of care because of orphanhood. According to Barbarin and Richter (2001:22), like the other African countries South Africa is faced with the question of who will raise AIDS orphans and the answer is the extended family. Unfortunately most of those extended families are living in poverty. Poverty can be observed alternatively as chronic hunger, inadequate housing, low living standard, low income, low consumption, lack of human capital, low accumulated wealth and high debt Barbarin and Richter (2001:43). This is the situation that most of foster children live in. Across the continent, the HIV/AIDS pandemic has left many orphans to fend for themselves and assume such adult responsibility as running households and communities (Honwana and De Boeck(ed), 2002:4).

Skinner, Tsheko, Mtero-Munyati, Segwabe, Chibatamoto, Mfecane, Chandiwana, Nkomo, Tlou and Chitiyo (2004:1) also attributed the main cause of vulnerability and orphanhood to HIV/AIDS. They indicated the importance of considering the situation of children orphaned by AIDS has been made clear-both by the projections of the number of orphans expected and the lack of adequate caring mechanisms and service structure to support them. However looking at the situation of these orphans does not address the full scale of the problem since the epidemic and surrounding poverty are generating a context where large numbers of children are becoming vulnerable Skinner et al (2004:1).

There are various causes of death which include injury both accidental and non accidental, infectious diseases, lifestyle diseases and HIV and AIDS and this latter cause of death is a leading cause of adult death, (Hosegood, 2007:43). This may contribute to an increasing number of orphans in the country. The maternal orphans study indicates that there are over 1 million recorded maternal orphans (Department of Social Development, 2012:14). The National Development Plan (2012:335) states that the increasing morbidity and mortality rates among adults as a result of social ills, poverty, violence, crime and car accidents has resulted in growing numbers of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.

An orphan is defined by UNAIDS as a child under fifteen years age who has lost the mother or both parent (double orphan) to AIDS (UNICEF/UNAIDS, 1999:42). Some research does increase the age to 18 years, but most appears to use the UNAIDS definition. It is also being more generally accepted that the loss of the father would also classify the child as an orphan.

Nyambedha (2003:5) quoted Bicego's 2003 finding that within the orphan grouping, layers of vulnerability are addressed as one system for understanding the situation. There do appear to be some implicit classification systems for orphans, such as the nature of their carers, the level of additional assistance that is required and between maternal, paternal and double orphans (Nyambedha, 2003:31). Differences are also drawn between orphans cared for by extended families, foster parent, community carers, child-headed households and institutional care (Nyambedha, 2003,5). Skinner et al (2004:2) indicated that vulnerability is much more difficult to define. According to Skinner et al (2004:3) World Vision 2002 listed some identifiers, such as children who live in a household in which one person or more is ill, dying or deceased, children who live in households that receive orphans, children whose caregivers are too ill to continue to look after them, and children living with very old and frail caregivers. The categories focus on factors related to HIV. There is an entire set of variables that needs to be considered that relates to more general aspects of the child's context, such as poverty, access to shelter, education and other basic services, disability, impact of drought or extreme weather conditions, stigma and political repression-all factors that could influence vulnerability

Community definitions of vulnerability are very likely to differ from those of external agencies. Smart (2003:17) looked at definition vulnerability directed because of vulnerability in a number of African countries. Community definitions of orphaned and vulnerable children are also often different from the government definitions. For instance, assistance to children by the government is directed by particular age limits-any child that falls outside those limits may be excluded. Skinner et al (2004:4) further stressed the concern about the creation of terms to name or define a group, especially a group with as many problem as OVC, that group members become objectified or automatically become targets of stigma. Care must therefore be taken in how the term is used in both the academy and popular literature, as well as in care programmes. To get a real of sense of where to introduce interventions or support, a clear understanding of the community's perspectives is required.

Skinner, Tsheko, Mtero-Munyati, Segwabe, Chibatamoto, Mfecane, Chandiwana, Nkomo, Tlou and Chitiyo (2004:5) also expressed the importance of care takers as the person who plays the key caretaking role for the OVC and who provide all aspects of care and responsibility for the child under their care. Some outlines for the role of caretaker were raised are:

- Adults who can provide for the rights of the child as enshrined in the constitution, although this may include an older child who heads a household with outsider support,
- Need to provide psychosocial development and support moral, cultural and religious instruction, as well as basic hygiene and
- Must be responsible –if anything happens to a child he/she must be there to attend to it.

In many debates there is talk of primary caretaker, but this needs further definition. Is the primary caretaker the person who provides emotional care, or the person who brings in the financial support? There need to be a way of separating these roles and talking about each of them explicitly, especially since there is often a gender division between the two (Skinner et al, 2004:7).

A range of potential cares for children were raised in the groups .The generally accepted order of preference was: immediate family, extended family, community members ,foster care, and care in a child –headed house hold ,where the oldest is at least 14 and there is the supervision of an adult member of the community. There was little support for placing children in orphanages or places of care, as it was felt to be counterproductive to the development of the children to remove them from their community and family context, (Skinner et al, 2004:9). Group members pointed out that cares themselves often needs assistance to maintain the work that they are doing, from external resource such as NGO'S and government services. There is also a need for information and training. An explicit challenge was raised as to who was responsible for providing care to a vulnerable child. In some of the group the responsibility was explicit extended to the rest of the community members.

One group felt that churches neighbours, extended family, teachers and the government were all responsible for the child. The government should support families and communities financially, through capacity building, information, and building structures, clinics and recreation centres, all felt that government support is not sufficient at the moment(Skinner et al, 2004:11).Even where there are government policies to provide care, implementation is poor. Some of the difficulties in obtaining access to care and support for OVC include poor implementation of policies, lack of adequate information, poor interaction between the government and the community and in the case of South

Africa, lack of parental and child registration that inhibits access to financial assistance from the government . Other challenges include the distance between the offices of government and the community, lack of outreach work to the communities, ignorant government employees, and accessing social workers (Skinner et al, 2004:10). They indicated that concerns were expressed about abuse of grants by some of the foster parents. These grants are not used for the benefits of the child, and in worst case scenario would be squandered. It was felt that the community should maintain a check on those households that receive grants. However, most households with foster children do not receive grants Skinner et al (2004:14).

2.6 FOSTER CARE PROCESSES

In terms of Section 150 of the Children Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005), in order for the child to be placed in foster custody he or she should be declared a child in need of care. The social worker should assess the situation, screen the prospective foster parent and present the report to the children's court where court order will be issued.

2.6.1 First steps in becoming a foster parent

Libal (2004:51) indicated that the prospective foster parent should make a telephone call or visit to local social service agency, state your interest, and request informational meeting. Application forms might be provided and requirements to become a foster parent would be explained. The social service provider would verify if parents cannot provide adequate shelter, clothing, and food, and whether the child may be placed in a foster home.

2.6.2 The requirements to become a foster parent

According to Libal (2004:50) foster care can be administered by government or by licensed private agencies. Requirements differ somewhat from one agency to the next, but many things are fairly common. The adoption and safe families act requires a criminal background check in most instances.

This is usually also required of prospective adoptive parents. These crimes include: felony child abuse or neglect or other crimes involving children including child pornography; rape, sexual assault, or other violent, including murder; spousal abuse; or felony physical assault, battery, or drug-related offenses occurring within five years of application (Libal, 2004:50)

Libal (2004:54) outlined other things that are usually required of foster parents as following :

- Legal age(twenty-one in some cases and eighteen in others),
- Good health as proven by medical exam,
- Employed or retired,
- References,
- Own or rent a home or apartment with enough space for foster children,
- Willing to allow a home inspection,
- Able to provide a minimum time commitment,
- Attend training provided by the agency or others deemed appropriate by the, agency
- Ability to work with social service providers as part of a team,
- Willingness to work toward a child's reunification with biological parents,
- Ability to maintain confidentiality where necessary and
- Ability to share information when appropriate,

2.6.3. Types of people who can become foster parents

Libal (2004:54) identified the following categories of people who could be eligible to become foster parents.

- Young or old,
- Married or single,
- Heterosexual or homosexual,
- Religious or nonreligious,
- All economic backgrounds as long as there are sufficient funds to properly care for foster children and
- All cultural backgrounds.

2.6.4 Support available to foster parents

According to Libal (2004:55) the social service organisation provides the following support to the foster parents:

- Initial training and annual training provided by the social service agency. the type of training and number of hours spent in training will depend on the children you desire

to be licensed to care for and specific requirements of the agency you are dealing with,

- Monthly financial compensation and sometimes additional compensation for many of the expenses involved in housing and caring for foster children,
- Support from caseworkers and professional social service staff,
- Medicaid or health insurance for foster child,
- In some cases liability coverage might be provided and
- Foster parent organizations or newsletters where foster parents can discuss problems and exchange information with each other may be available locally or can be accessed over the internet

2.6.5 What foster parents should be prepared to offer a foster child

Libal (2004:55) outlined what every foster parents should be prepared to offer a foster child:

- Proper nutrition,
- A safe and nurturing environment,
- Scheduling of and transportation to needed dental, medical ,therapeutic, court, or other appointments,
- Needed help with schoolwork,
- Recreational opportunities,
- Patience and empathy in helping children deal with traumatic experiences and mixed emotions,
- A positive parenting role model,
- Good communication and problem-solving skills and
- Some of these things can be enhanced through training provided by the social agency.

2.7 PARENTING IN FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

Howe (1998:203) stated that once children join their adoptive families, the dynamics of new relationship begin to form. The quality of the parent - child relationship is most important. However it is one most likely to run into difficult, particularly when children have experienced very poor pre-placement care (Howe, 1998:203). Again, all intervention strategies are basically designed to reduce anxiety and increase the security of the attachment. Older placed children arrive with an inner working model of how relationships between the

self and others work. According to Howe (1998:203) the task of adoptive parents and their families is to supply responses that are warm and steady, sensitive and consistent. The positive information contained in these responses is necessary if children are to revise the way they mentally represent themselves and others, (Howe, 1998,203).

The aim is to help children who over-respond to ambivalent attachment experiences to shift their defensive manoeuvres away from an enmeshed, aggressive preoccupation with others, and those who under-respond ,avoidant attachment experience to shift their defensive manoeuvres away from being uninterested in and disconnect from their and other people's feelings and perspectives (Howe,1998:204). He further indicated that in order to achieve this, a variety of techniques are used to alter the quality and character of parent-child relationships. These include psychosocial insight, understanding and support, behaviour modification and skills training for parents and cognitive techniques. The deep purpose of all the techniques is to decrease anxiety in order to help revise inner working models so that children learn to see other peoples as available and the self as loved (Howe, 1998:205)

Howe (1998:250) stated that the extent to which the interventions are successful, children become less defended and parents are helped to understand the psychosocial dynamics set up by children with several deprived histories. They are supposed in their attempts not to feel so overwhelmed by their children or drawn into the negative outlook of their mental representations of themselves and others (Howe, 1998:250). These strategies enable parents to become more skilled, empathic, available and responsive. In turn, such parenting allows children to connect more effectively with their own strong but confused feelings. Emotions can then be accessed, understood and articulated rather let loose, feared and acted out, (Howe, 1998:250).

Children learn to process information about their own feelings and relationships in a more positive, resourceful way. However in the most demanding cases, everything conspires to frustrate the delivery of positive relationship experiences. It might take children with very disturbed behaviours many years to feel less insecure, even though they experience continuous good parenting (Howe, 1998:204).

The prolonged disjuncture between what parents do and what children perceive them to be doing, can lead to the breakdown of effective parenting. The social environment begins to react to the children's behaviour in self-fulfilling way (Howe, 1998:204).When parents feel exhausted, anxious, angry and guilty, they have less emotional strength to resist and

disconfirm the assumptions made by their children's inner working model of relationships (Howe, 1998:204). The children continue to see themselves as unwanted and unloved and other people as unavailable, unreliable, hostile and rejecting in spite of the initial evidence to the contrary. The negative interpretations given to the meaning of being adopted only serve to compound matters. Help for improving parent-child relationships can be pitched at different levels and in various ways. Howe (1998:205) classified them into two broad categories as follows:

- Help designed to change the way parents respond to their children behavioural procedures and skills training, and
- Help designed to change the way parents analyse and understand their children's behaviour, development and manner of relating. Teaching in theories of parent-child relationships and children's development, and changing the way the self, others and interpersonal relationships are semantically modelled.

2.8 CHALLENGES IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

Bruhn (2008:37) found that foster care had been a source of support for children for decades however; it appears to be susceptible to the negative impact of the psycho, socio-economic factors and therefore, render the children vulnerable to these effects.

2.8.1 Administrative challenges

There are administrative challenges in foster care, for instance supervision of foster care placements. The Social Pension System (SOCPEN) (2013:16) report indicated that in 2010 there were 299 310 foster care orders that lapsed. In June 2012 additional 193 997 foster care orders lapsed. The lapsed foster care orders resulted to a lawsuit against the Department for infringement of the children's rights. North Gauteng High Court issued an order instructing the Department to extend the foster care orders administratively (SOCPEN 2013:16).

These cases depict that the foster care business process is cyclical. In addition, children who are in foster care for a long term period. This leads to the children's cases to remain active for a long period requiring consistence social work intervention and constant supply of resources to maintain and manage these cases (SOCPEN 2013:19).

2.8.2 Socio-economic challenges

Toremann (2009:18) found that the grandparents deal with numerous challenges, which include personal health, custodial matters, financial constraints, psycho-social and behavioural issues they face with their grandchildren. In a conference paper, which was prepared for the Kenya conference on orphans and vulnerable children in 2009, it was indicated that there were intergenerational issues, which affected foster care (Toremann, 2009:18). It was found that the older women do not understand the psycho-social needs of the orphans and vulnerable children under care and consequently could not provide psycho-social support to these children especially during their adolescent ages. The grandparents also lack sufficient resources to provide the basic needs of OVC and this lower their quality of life (Minsi and Mwase, 2009:33). As a result, this lack of support contributed to these orphans and vulnerable children developing juvenile delinquency tendencies.

Despite the protective nature of legalised foster care in the country, foster children are susceptible to being used as commodities to gain access to the foster child grant for the adults use instead of benefiting their needs. At the OVC conference (2013:42), there was a report from the children's dialogues that foster children's grant is being abused by their foster parents. According to the findings of OVC conference (2013:44), there is supportive evidence that foster children are vulnerable including those who are orphaned and literature indicates that there is another level of intervention that is required after children are placed in foster care..

2.8.3 Abuses in foster care placements

Libal (2004:25) observed the following abuses that took place in inter-country foster care placements in Britain and Canada:

- Adults were not always properly screened prior to being allowed to adopt children,
- Children were often forced to stand on platforms and endure inspection by those wishing to adopt,
- Though some children knew which families were to receive them before they left on an orphan train, many were shipped into the unknown without any attempt to match their needs to what an individual family had to offer,
- Children often ended up being indentured servants rather than loved and respected family members,

- Some British Home Children were sold to farmers, so profit became a motive for sending children to Canada,
- Many of the children who were sent to Canada were not orphans, and some of these children were sent without parental consent or even parental knowledge,
- Many siblings were separated and never saw each other again, and
- Many children suffered because of loneliness, neglect, difficult labour, discrimination, and abuse.

2.9 PERCEPTION TOWARDS FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:121) stated that children fostered seemed to experience more negative encounters, particularly at school. The different surname from that of the foster family seemed to attract attention. Other factors that stressed the difference of their position included the welfare visit, the perceived failure of the family of origin, the very sporadic appearance of a parent or sibling, and the ambiguous nature of their relationship with the foster parents. Fanshel and Shinn (1978:13) postulated the view that a child who is being less than first rate, or an unwanted human being. According to Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:119), the pioneer work of writers such as Goffman (1933,150) has helped to understand how the way others see us can affect the image we develop about ourselves. The identity depends, at least in part, on our perception of our place in society and on how others view us.

Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:119) stressed that Goffman (1933,152) developed the concept of spoiled identity to signify the impact of stigma and labelling on individuals and minority groups who are seen to depart from or defy the norm. Minority groups such as blacks, the handicapped or those fostered or adopted may be effectively perceived as inferior, bad or second class simply because they are different and do not conform to traditional expectations.

Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:119) explained that Goffman (1933,152) points out that failure or success at maintaining norms has a very direct effect on the psychological integrity of the individual. In contrast, a study conducted by Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:120) discovered that adoptees experienced few exceptions, mainly at school, but the predominant climate was one of acceptance. However, these people were still not keen on telling others that they were adopted and disliked being introduced by their parents as my adopted son or

daughter. Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:119) believed it should be left to them to share such personal information with people who were meaningful to them and trustful.

Brodzinsky and Schechter (1990:119) indicated the traditional perception of fostering as low status in relation to adoption seems to add to feelings of low self-esteem among those in long-term fostering. Of all the three groups, those who grew up in institutions appeared most stigmatized and most trouble about their position. The image of themselves, based on how they thought the community perceived them, was of being bad abnormal inferior and different because people think if you are in a home it is because you are bad, (Brodzinsky and Schechter, 1990:120). What stuck at school was being called a homey child. If anything happened in the village the police would come to the home. What was even sadder was that some individuals came to see themselves as not normal or different (Brodzinsky and Schechter, 1990:122).

2.10 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CUSTODY

Cherry (2014:1) indicated that classical conditioning influenced the school of thought in psychology known as behaviourism. Behaviourism refers to the belief that behaviour can be learned, measured, trained and changed. The researcher believes that academic performance of children in foster custody can be measured and changed.

2.11 FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

In terms of classical conditioning theory learning process occurs through associations between an environmental stimulus and a naturally occurring stimulus (Cherry, 2014:1). This theory confirms that the environment and the conditions in which foster children live can affect how they learn at school.

2.11.1. Race and academic performance.

Bruhn et al, (2008:33) indicated that children in foster care face many educational obstacles because of frequent moves which affect their performance educationally.

African generally have a history of underperformance at school. According to Slabbert, Malan, Maras, Olivier and Riordan(ed) (1994:311) in 1991 the results showed markedly

higher pass and matric exemption rates for Asian and White pupils than for coloured and African pupil and of all African matriculation candidates only 39% obtained a pass and 10% a matric exemption. The out flow rates in black schools was at 17%. Numerous studies have highlighted the link between substance use/abuse and various health and other social problems like absenteeism and school failure (National Drug Master Plan, 2006-2011:19).

2.11.2 Emotional issues that affect learning

Neglected children experience poor attachment, development delay, poor physical development and antisocial behaviour (Pediatrics Report, 2000:28). Delilah (2008:27) notes that orphaned children may experience numerous feelings that may include confusion, fear, apprehension of the unknown and loss. These findings indicate that children are vulnerable to various psychosocial challenges that may affect their development. Delilah (2008:28) indicated that those issues need to be addressed as soon as possible to prevent or decrease poor developmental and mental health outcomes that may ultimately affect a child's educational experience and their quality of life in adulthood, as they leave school earlier and unprepared to live independently.

South Africa is experiencing an increased number of children who are vulnerable due to various reasons. The Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) makes provision for the care and protection of vulnerable children in South Africa through statutory intervention. Foster care is one of the social welfare programmes aimed at providing statutory care and protection to these children. The Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) also requires various government departments to provide this programme and in turn requires a level of service integration through the systematic arrangement to ensure that service delivery is effective. However, the increased demand for the service and shortfalls/gaps within the systematic arrangements to respond to the demand, led to the challenges that are widely experienced within the foster care programme. In South Africa there are strategies aimed at providing a programme of action that will facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Children's Act, 2005 (Act No. 38 of 2005) and to achieve the Act's principles aimed at responding to the needs of the vulnerable children requiring foster care placement.

A study conducted by Hosegood, Floyd, Marston, Hill, McGrath, Isingo, Crampin and Zaba (2007:13) indicated that adults of the age group twenty five to twenty nine had a high level of

mobility due to labour migration which was linked to the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. This raises a question on who looks after the wellbeing of children during this period and what was found by Preyston-Whyte (1972:993) was that the children lived with their grandparents whether or not the parents are alive.

National Development Plan, (2012:338) estimated that approximately 73% of African children are cared for entirely by relatives, highlighting the importance of extended kinship networks in providing family care in a context of high rates of mortality and labour migration. White Paper for Social Welfare 1997 section 1 focuses on families, children, youth and aging. It outlines strategies to promote family life as well as to strengthen families. However foster families might face challenges in raising the foster children and the usage of foster care grant. Children declared to be in need of care and placed in foster care might face social, behavioural and educational challenges. These challenges could emanate from the harsh circumstances they experience, for instance, orphanhood, poverty, child neglect and abuse. Therefore this study seeks to comprehend how those challenges affect the children's academic performance.

The impact of orphanhood on children includes psycho-social issues that relate to bereavement and stress associated with the death of parent, stigma and discrimination. They are also vulnerable to exploitative work including the worst forms of child labour (trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation), neglect, and abuse. They engage in sex in order to meet their needs and that put them at risk of infection, AIDS Foundation South Africa (<http://www.aids.org.za//14/07/2012>).

The following emotional challenges that may be faced by the orphans and vulnerable children were outlined by AIDS Foundation South Africa (<http://www.aids.org.za//14/07/2012>):

- Due to orphanhood, these children have experienced trauma and loss as a result require planned interventions to provide psycho-social support,
- They are susceptible to discrimination within the family possibly due to resentment, as these extended families have to take on the additional responsibility with limited resources,
- Poverty cannot be separated from orphanhood given the social context within which these children are coming from, and

- The impact of orphanhood on children include psychological problems, dysfunctional socialisation, exclusion from the society which may have the long term effects on their development resulting to teenage pregnancy, anti-social behaviour, dropping out of school, lack of skills to participate actively within the dependent on the State social security system.

Children in foster care were reported to be demonstrating developmental delays that include physical, developmental, emotional, behavioural, educational and mental health problems (Bruhn, Duval & Louderman, 2008:72). Bruhn et al, (2008:13) found that foster care had been a source of support for children for decades however, it appears to be susceptible to the negative impact of the psycho, socio-economic factors and therefore, render the children vulnerable to these effects. There are administrative challenges in foster care, for instance supervision of foster care placements.

2.12 SOCIALIZATION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

According to Long, Wood, Littleton, Passenger and Sheehy (2011:173) the underlying processes that determine children progress appear to be largely related to the quality of their home environments, in particular the nature of adult management and interaction. Early interactions also accounted for 61 per cent of the later variance in verbal abilities at ages nine and ten years (Long et al 2011:174). This is very strong effect for long-term prediction at this age and is consistent with the idea that early language –based experiences have a continuing causative impact on general cognitive development. According Long et al (2011:174) measures of socioeconomic status by themselves were able to account for only 30 percent of the variance in general verbal abilities at nine and ten years of age.

Long et al (2011:175) indicated that a large part of this effect was attributable to the fact that the poorest families on welfare almost invariably had the lowest quality of parent-child verbal interaction in the home. It involved an emphasis on negative control, parental rather than child-centred topics and generally reduced level of talk. According to Long et al (2011:176) the pattern of interaction appeared to be part of a culture that was concerned with established customs and where obedience, politeness and conformity were likely to be the keys for survival. Parents seemed to be preparing their children for lives that were similar to the ones they had experienced themselves, where success would come not from knowledge and skills, but from attitudes and actual performance. There are studies that express the significance of

the home learning environment. Important factors in the home learning environment are the amount parents read to their children, the number of books in the home, the degree to which parents support their children's education in and out of schools Sylva et al (2004,35). In the study cited, the home learning environment was only moderately associated with factors such as social class and parental education levels, and what parents did with their children had more important impact than their own background or circumstances Long et al (2011:176). Even more strongly in the primary age range the impact caused by different levels of parental involvement is much bigger than differences associated with variations in the quality of schools. The scale of the impact is evident across all social classes and all ethnic groups (Long et al 2011:176).

Long et al (2011:176) some investigators have concluded that patterns of interaction within the home are relatively stable and that they tend to be reproduced over successive generations. Adults who are the product of such cultural environments may therefore repeat the cycle with their own children, providing limited stimulation and low expectations.

This cycle of deprivation proved resistant to compensatory programme such as largely school-based educational priority area initiatives that were set up in the United Kingdom in the late 1960's (Long et al, 2011:176). Initial analyses of the head start programme in the United States similarly indicated that early programmes of support did not improve children's progress. A key issue, though, is whether such features are characteristics of the culture of a particular class, or whether they are an adjustment to the long-term effects of low social status and poverty (Long et al, 2011:175).

This is important, since if the main problem is that of an impoverished class culture, it should be possible to re-educate children out of this and break the cycle. If, however, the main driving force behind inequalities comes from the social and economic structure of society, it is less likely that this could be affected by any limited educational intervention (Long et al 2011:177). The fact that education cannot compensate for society' encapsulates this last perspective, and moreover it can be argued that attempts to drive up standards by setting targets for the educational system are merely a diversion from the real problems of society Long et al (2011:177). Those beliefs are supported by Mortimer and Whitty (1997:59) whose review of relevant research suggest that educational improvements typically increase stratification since socially advantaged children usually benefit the most, leaving less advantage children even further behind.

The assertion is that if all schools were brought up to the level of the best, the social-class gap in performance would become even starker unless, that is, positive action were to be taken to provide extra support for disadvantage pupils (Mortimor and Whitty, 1997:59). Some research appears to lend some credence to this position as it indicated that, while all pupils performed better academically in 2004 than in 1998, those pupils from higher income families made more progress than those from low-income families. According to Long et al (2011:178) even though schools in deprived areas improved more than those in wealthier neighbourhoods and although parent-child interactions may be the most direct cause of inequalities, it seems likely that family experiences of poverty and low status are important underlying factors. When there are limited and variable financial resources, it becomes pointless to plan ahead, encouraging a reactive approach to life.

The lack of control over key resources and careers also engenders a form of learned helplessness and a sense of apathy (Mortimore and Whitty, 1997:87). It is easy to see how parents in this situation would tend to utilise negative control with their children if they feel that there is little that can be achieved in life. According to Mortimor and Whitty (1997:60) the parent's perceived lack of control is also likely to limit their ability to take account of their children's learning needs. There are also more direct effects on children, in terms of poor –quality housing, heating, clothing and poor nutrition. These lead to an increase in health problems in low-income families which can affect general development, school attendance and learning (Mortimor and Whitty, 1997:60). Kleinman et al (1998:33) found that children from poorer backgrounds who were regularly hungry in school had range of educational problems and were twice as likely to have special educational needs.

Hirsch (2007:6) indicated that poverty also restricts children's wider experiences. Oppenheim (1993:44) described how poverty can affect children socially and emotionally. He indicated that without any money, it is difficult to meet friends and activities such as visits to the cinema or other treats are restricted. Lack of transport means that trips out are limited and many families will rarely go to holidays (Hirsch, 2007:6). Life in the situation can mean often being bored and resorting to low-level entertainment such as watching television or playing video games. Hirsch (2007:6) stated that whilst private-school children's free time involved a diverse range of organised sporting and cultural activities, the free time of children from a deprived estate was characterised by unsupervised street play and socialising with friends and this finding indicates that young people from families in poverty participate in fewer

organised out-of-school activities than their more affluent peers. Hirsch (2007:6) argues that, such activities can be of crucial importance in helping children develop confidence in learning, to become activities and to develop a different kind of relationship with adult instructors or supervisors than in a more formal school setting. When they are out of school settings, they become used to seeing learning as a partnership, rather than as something that is imposed upon them(Hirsch, 2007:6).

2.13 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Hirsch (2007:8) suggested that through their lack of participation in out-of-school activities, many young people in poverty are denied important informal learning experiences with all significant consequences for their engagement in more formal learning in school. Such findings indicate that poverty is a major driving force underlying cultural deprivation and limiting educational policy might be one which tackles social and economic disadvantage (Hirsch, 2007:8). A serious programme to alleviate child poverty might do far more for boosting attainments in literacy and numeracy than any modest interventions in schooling. There is, however, very little in contemporary educational policy that focuses on explanations based on broader social structures or issues of power (Raffo, 2007:175)

Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2001:194) explained that the research shows that children from upper socioeconomic status families earn higher achievement test scores, better grades, and stay in school longer than lower socioeconomic status students. Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2001:194) further indicated that there are positive correlations between low socioeconomic status and lower self-esteem, ability or readiness, and school-oriented resources; and negative correlations between low socioeconomic status and learned helplessness, achievement test scores, the dropout rate, discipline problems.

Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2001:195) observed low socioeconomic status adolescents as members of resistance cultures. They also see many students who are academically able to continue their schooling fail to do so because of low income status of their families. Conryman (1998:59) investigated the discrepancies between lower socioeconomic status and upper families abilities to pay increasing school fees for textbook, sports and other educational needs.

2.14 MECHANISM TO HELP THE IMPROVEMENT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CUSTODY

Parsons, Hinson and Sardo-Brown (2001:194) considered a hard reality that teachers cannot remedy all of society's ills. The conditions that contribute to such disparate levels of socioeconomic status and send so many poor children to school ill-prepared are often beyond the control of teachers inside classrooms and as such coordinated and concerted societal efforts are important. Parsons et al (2001:195) also indicated that more schools are attempting to address the manifestations of poverty, for instance inadequate clothing, hunger, the need for after-school care if not for humanitarian reasons, than because Maslow's hierarchy of needs implies that hungry children, poorly dressed children, abused children, and homeless children cannot learn as planned for them. Parsons et al (2001:195) expressed the significance of addressing developmental needs of poor children by schools, especially from pre-adolescence onwards.

According to Parsons et al (2001:195) those efforts may help children's self-esteem, social adjustment, and long term academic performance. Some recommendations suggest addressing the literacy level of impoverished parents as a factor that can impact student achievement. Inconsistent parenting, inadequate health care, and biased teacher expectations must be addressed (Parsons et al, 2001:195). However, the recommendations offered in the effective teaching literature, in general, can also address socioeconomic diversity. According to Parsons et al (2001:195) educators can hold all students accountable for work, offer a variety of learning experiences. Students can benefit when they are helped to become aware of their own learning processes and cognitive approaches to meaningful learning, for instance, orienting, critiquing and reflecting (Haberman, 1991:95).

2.15 CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed indicates that foster care placement is an unnatural alternative placement of a child who couldn't be looked after by the natural parents due to various challenges. The literature also revealed that orphanhood and other challenges facing the children have a long history of existence. Internationally there is consensus through the UN conventions and treaties that governments should prioritise protecting the children as one of the measures for promotion of the culture of human rights. South Africa has child-friendly welfare systems, policies and legislations. However, the implementation has some challenges that negatively affect the wellbeing of the children. It was also realised that foster care has challenges from

its earliest consideration. The researcher gained an insight that those challenges can affect the way fostered children behave and perform at school.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss the research design and methodology that are going to be used when conducting the study. The chapter will also present study area, population of the study, sampling method and sampling size, data collection methods, data analysis and ethical considerations as well as organisation of the study.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Creswell (2003:39) research design is a plan which data are to be gathered to investigate the research questions in most economic manner. Mouton (2001:55) defined research design as a plan or blue print of how one intend conducting a research. The researcher used field study as a research design for this study. The main reason for using field study as a research design is to enable the researcher to gain understanding of the physical experiences and challenges of children in foster care with regard to their academic performance.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to William (2011:3), methodology is used to give a clear cut idea on what the researcher is carrying out in his or her research. This study will adopt both qualitative and quantitative research methods. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:118) defined research methodology as a section of the proposal that includes a description of the specific techniques to be employed, the specific measuring instruments to be utilized and the specific series of activities to be conducted in making the measurement. The researcher used a mixed methodology where both quantitative and qualitative and research methods were used.

De Vos (1998:15) states that quantitative approach is that approach of research in social sciences which is more highly formalized as well as more explicitly controlled with a range that is exactly defined and which involves study subjects for broader understanding. Creswell (2003:39) argued that quantitative research is linked to positivism whereby reality is seen as stable, observable and measurable. The researcher used quantitative method because in this study collection of numeric data which was analyzed statistically.

CHAPTER 3

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Qualitative research, broadly defined, means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Corbin 1990:17). Qualitative research is a system of inquiry which seeks to build a holistic, largely narrative, description to inform the researcher's understanding of a social or cultural phenomenon (Creswell, 1994:16). Strauss and Corbin (1990:10) claim that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. The researcher used qualitative method to adequately describe or interpret a situation in relation to the study.

3.3 STUDY AREA

The study was conducted in Thulamela West areas of Tshaulu, Tshidimbini, Makwarela, Thohoyandou and Tshisaulu. These are the main social workers offices that cover the whole Thulamela West in terms of Vhembe Social Development demarcation. Social workers offices, schools and foster homes around Thulamela were visited to get respondents. Thulamela municipality is found in Vhembe district situated in far north of Limpopo province of South Africa.

3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

In research, population is defined as the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to do research about (Welman, 1988:52). Babbie (2007:194) also defines population as the aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually sampled. The population for this study was drawn from the children who are in foster care, social workers, educators and foster parents in Thulamela west. The total population of Thulamela West is 252,023 and it has 16 wards.

3.5 SAMPLING

Baumgartner and Hensley (2006:176) believe that sampling is the process whereby a small population or subgroup of a population of interest is selected for a scientific study. Terre Blanche et al, (2006:49) also defined sampling as the selection of participants from a population and involves decision about which people, setting, events, behaviour and or social processes are to be observed.

The sampling group of this study included children in foster care, educators assigned for social issues in schools, social workers focusing in foster care and foster parents in Thulamela West. These were the people with firsthand knowledge about academic performance of children in foster care.

3.5.1 Sampling method

The research used non-probability sampling and its sub-type purposive sampling method to select the respondents. Non-probability sampling as defined by Bless, Higson-Smith, and Kagee (2006:100) is where the probability of including each element of the population is unknown. The purpose of using purposive sampling method was to get the respondents with an understanding of the academic performance of children in foster care. The purposive sampling method was also used so that all five main social workers offices in Thulamela West and their areas are covered by the study.

3.5.2 Sample size

The sample population of the study consisted of fifty (50) respondents. The sample size consisted of 15 children in foster care, that was 3 from each of five social workers offices, 15 foster parents, which were 3 from each of five social workers offices, 10 social workers which were 2 from each of five social workers offices and 10 educators from 2 schools in each of five social workers offices.

Table1:1 Sampling size

Respondents	Population	Sample
Children in foster care	1594	15
Educators/Teachers	20	10
Social Workers	14	10
Foster parents	1294	15
Total	2922	50

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

According to Grinnell and Williams (1990:44) data collection method is a procedure specifying techniques to be employed, measuring instrument to be utilized and activities to be conducted in implementing a research study. Mouton and Marais (1990:110) defined data collection as a collection of various kinds of empirical information or data, for instance, historical, statistical or documentary data. In this study interview and questionnaire were used to collect data.

Mareer (et al) (2009:87) defined interview as a two way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. Interview is method of data collection which gives an opportunity to a researcher to obtain information through direct interchange with individual, expected to possess the knowledge that the researcher seeks (Depoy and Gilson, 2008:108). Open ended interview was used in order to avoid limiting the responses from the participants. The researcher arranged appointments telephonically and drove to interview the respondent per appointment.

De Vos et al (2006:166) extracted the definition of a questionnaire from New dictionary of Social Work (1995:18) as a set of questions a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project.

Questionnaire is a set of questions that are arranged into open and closed ended questions used to clarify gaps and add insight to the information obtained through the interview guide (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999:59). The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents by the researcher.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis can be defined as the process of placing observations in numerical forms and manipulating them according to their thematic properties to derive meaning from them (Monette et al, 2008:486).

Wiersma (1995:217) views data analysis as the classification of data into organized and coded themes. In this study two types of data analysis were used to analyse data.

Data collected through questionnaire was analysed by the statistical package for social science (SPSS Version 22.0). The information was presented in a tabular form, frequencies and percentages. Data collected through interview was analysed by thematic analysis and the information was presented in a narrative form. When doing thematic analysis the researcher used the following steps identified by Braun and Clarke (2006:16-23)

Phase 1: familiarizing yourself with your data

The researcher immersed himself in the data to an extent that he is familiar with the depth and breadth of the content through repeated reading, searching for meanings and observing patterns.

- **Phase 2: generating initial codes**

This phase entails generating an initial list of ideas about what is in the data and what is interesting about them and allocating codes to concepts.

- **Phase 3: searching for themes**

This process begins when all data have been coded and collated to form a long list of codes sets. Codes are sorted into different themes. The main purpose is to analyze codes and consider how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme

- **Phase 4: reviewing themes**

Candidate themes will be refined by ascertaining if there is enough data to support them. Some candidate themes might be eliminated or combined to form one theme.

- **Phase 5: defining and naming themes**

It is based on satisfactory thematic map of the data. Essence of what each theme is about will be identified. At the end of this phase the researcher will be able to clearly define what the themes are and what they are not.

- **Phase 6: producing the report**

This phase involves the final analysis and writing of the report. The main purpose is to tell the complicated story of the data in a way which will convince the reader of the merit and the validity of the analysis.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

De Vos (2009:57) indicated that ethical considerations are a set of moral principles which offer rules and behavioral expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students. Neuman (2000:89) defined ethical considerations as a list of principles and guidelines offered by professional organisations to guide research practices and to clarify behaviours that are ethical. The following are the ethical considerations that were observed during this study.

3.8.1 Permission to conduct the study

Authorisation letters permitting the researcher to conduct the study were obtained from the university, the department of social development and the department of education.

3.8.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is a statement (usually written) that explains aspects of a study of participants and asks their voluntary agreement to participate in the study before it begins (Neuman, 2006:135). In this study participants were informed about the purpose, risk, benefits and the duration the research is going to take. Before the beginning of the exercise or during the exercise participants had the right to decide not to participate or continue to participate when they felt uncomfortable. In addition, all the participants who decided to participate were informed about the nature of the study before the start of the research. This was done to debrief them about expectations that might arise during the course of the study.

3.8.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Bless et al (2006:14) defined confidentiality as a way of maintaining confidence in sensitive and personal information and should be protected and made unavailable to other persons than

for academic reasons. The participants were also informed and assured about confidentiality and anonymity in their participation.

The data of research participants was kept confidential and was not discussed with any other person except for academic purposes. All the information collected for this study was treated as confidential.

3.8.4 Voluntary participation

According to Babbie (2010) voluntary participation refers to a norm that applies to social research whereby the research participant would participate without being forced to participate, but with self-desire, with an option to withdraw participation at any given time. The researcher explained to the participants that they were not forced to participate and they could withdraw anytime they felt uncomfortable to participate in the study.

3.8.5 No harm to participants

The principle of no harm to participants' suggests that the researcher should avoid harming respondents in any way possible including: emotionally physically or psychologically (Goddard and Melville, 2001:49). In this study the subjects were not harmed in any way, either physically or psychologically. The wellness of the respondents was prioritised throughout the study.

Male	25	56%
Female	20	44%
TOTAL	45	100%

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The responses to the questionnaires items are presented in tabular form, frequencies and percentages and the responses to the interview items are presented in narrative form and are followed by a brief synthesis of the findings for the item and the detailed findings are discussed in chapter five.

4.2 ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED THROUGH QUESTIONNAIRE

In this section, the researcher presents the data collected through questionnaire.

4.2.1 Section A: Biographical Details of Respondent

In this sub-section the researcher presents the biographical details of the respondent who took part in this study. The information is presented in graphical tabular form and followed by a synthesis of the findings.

Table 4.1 Gender

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Male	25	56%
2	Female	20	44%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The above table presents the biographical details of the respondent in terms of gender and the total of 45 respondents took part in this study, of the 45 respondents, 25 (56%) were males whereas 20 (44%) were females. All targeted 45 respondents managed to return the questionnaires, and all the questionnaires were analysed. There were more male respondents than female.

Table 4.2 Age

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Less than 20 years	11	24%
2	21to 30 years	07	16%
3	31 to40 years	09	20%
4	41 to50 years	12	27%
5	51 years and above	06	13%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Most of the respondents, 12 (27%) who took part in this study were aged between 41 and 50 years. Nine 09 (20%) of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years, and 06 (13%) were 51 years and above. Seven 07(16%) were youth aged 21 to 30 years and there were eleven 11 (24%) of the respondents who were less than 20 years. It can therefore be concluded that in this study, there has been a relatively better representation of the population in terms of age distribution of respondents.

Table 4.3 Position of the Respondent

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Child in Foster Custody	10	22%
2	Educator	10	22%
3	Social Worker	15	33%
4	Foster Parent	10	22%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The majority of the population at 15 (33%) who took part in this study were social workers. Ten 10 (22%) of the respondents were children in foster custody. Ten 10 (22%) of the respondents who took part in the study were educators, while also 10 (22%) of the respondents in the study were foster parents. Majority of the respondent who took part in the study were social workers.

4.2.2 Section B: The academic performance of children in foster custody

In this sub-section, data is analysed using graphical statistics which is further divided into three themes which arose from the survey questionnaire. The three themes are academic performance of children in foster custody, challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance and the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody.

4.2.2.1 The academic performance of children in foster custody

This sub-section presents data regarding the academic performance of children in foster custody. The data is presented in the form of tables followed by brief interpretation.

Table 4.4 Foster children are controllable at school

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	02	4%
2	Agree	23	51%
3	Not sure	07	16%
4	Disagree	12	27%
5	Strongly disagree	01	2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty-three (51%) of the respondents agreed with the idea that foster children are controllable at school and 12 (27%) of the respondents disagreed. On the other hand, 02 (4%) strongly disagreed and on 01 (2%) strongly agreed that foster children are controllable at school. Seven 07 (16%) of the respondent were not sure whether foster children are controllable at school or not. The statistics above shows that foster children are controllable at school

Table 4.5 School dropout is low amongst foster children

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	04	9%
2	Agree	13	29%
3	Not Sure	11	24%
4	Disagree	14	31%
5	Strongly disagree	03	7%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.5 presents that majority of the respondents at 14 (31%) disagreed with statement that school dropout is low amongst foster children, while 13 (29%) agreed with the idea. Four 04 (9%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea that school dropout is low amongst foster children, whereas 03 (7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Eleven 11 (24%) of the respondents were not sure whether school dropout is low amongst foster children or not. A conclusion can be drawn from the above statistics, that 17 (38%) of the respondents agreed with the idea, while also 17 (38%) of the respondents disagreed that school dropout is low amongst foster children.

Table 4.6 Foster children perform better at school

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	03	7%
2	Agree	25	56%
3	Not Sure	08	18%
4	Disagree	07	16%
5	Strongly disagree	02	4%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The majority of the respondents 25 (56%) agreed that foster children perform better at school and 07 (16%) disagreed with the statement. Three 3 (7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that foster children perform better at school whereas 02 (4%) strongly

disagreed with it. The respondents who were not sure if foster children perform better at school are 08 (18%). The above statistics indicates that the majority of the respondents at who are 28 (63%) agreed with the statement that foster children perform better at school.

Table 4.7 Foster children usually proceed to tertiary level

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	07	16%
2	Agree	14	31%
3	Not Sure	12	27%
4	Disagree	12	27%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Fourteen 14 (31%) which form the majority of the respondents agreed that foster children usually proceed to tertiary level and 12 (27%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Seven 7 (16%) of the respondents strongly agreed that foster children usually proceed to tertiary level whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed. Twelve 12 (27%) of the respondents were not sure whether foster children usually proceed to tertiary level. This statistics concludes that foster children usually proceed to tertiary level.

Table 4.8 Educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	09	20%
2	Agree	27	60%
3	Not Sure	08	18%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	01	2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.8 indicates that 27 (60%) of the respondents agreed that educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children and none of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Nine 9 (20%) of the respondents strongly agreed that educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children whereas 1 (2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. From the table presented it can be concluded that educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children.

4.2.2.2 The challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance

This portion presents the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance. The information in this section are presented in graphical and tabular forms and followed by a discussion of the findings.

Table 4.9 Children in foster custody are emotionally stable

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	0	0%
2	Agree	17	38%
3	Not Sure	15	33%
4	Disagree	11	24%
5	Strongly disagree	02	4%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The responses in table 4.9 indicate that 17 (38%) of the respondents agreed that children in foster custody are emotionally stable and 11 (24%) disagreed with this view. None of the respondents strongly agreed that children in foster custody are emotionally stable and 2 (4%) strongly disagreed with this statement. Fifteen 15 (33%) was not sure if children in foster custody are emotionally stable. The interpretation of the above statistics is that children in foster custody are emotionally stable.

Table 4.10 Foster families can afford educational fees

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	03	7%
2	Agree	13	29%
3	Not Sure	08	18%
4	Disagree	18	40%
5	Strongly disagree	03	7%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.10 presents that majority of the respondents at 18 (40%) disagreed with statement that foster families can afford educational fees, while 13 (29%) agreed with the idea. Three 03 (7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea that foster families can afford educational fees, whereas 03 (7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Eight 08 (18%) of the respondents were not sure whether foster families can afford educational fees or not. A conclusion can be drawn from the above that foster families cannot afford educational fees.

Table 4.11 Environment at foster homes is conducive for studying

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	02	4%
2	Agree	20	44%
3	Not Sure	10	22%
4	Disagree	11	24%
5	Strongly disagree	02	4%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty 20 (44%) of the respondents agreed with the idea that environment at foster homes is conducive for studying and 11 (24%) of the respondents disagreed. On the other hand, 02 (4%) strongly agreed and 02 (4%) strongly disagreed with the statement that environment at foster homes is conducive for studying. Ten 10 (22%) of the respondent were not sure

whether environment at foster homes is conducive for studying or not. The statistics above shows that environment at foster homes is conducive for studying.

Table 4.12 Foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	14	31%
2	Agree	19	42%
3	Not Sure	09	20%
4	Disagree	03	7%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.12 presents that majority of the respondents at 19 (42%) agreed with statement that foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates, while 3 (7%) disagreed with the idea. Three 03 (7%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea that foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates, whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Eight 09 (20%) of the respondents were not sure whether foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates or not. A conclusion can be drawn from the above that foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates.

Table 4.13 Social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	20	44%
2	Agree	16	36
3	Not Sure	06	13%
4	Disagree	02	4%
5	Strongly disagree	01	2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty 20 (44%) which are the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children and 1 (2%) of the respondents

strongly disagreed with the statement. Sixteen 16 (36%) of the respondents agreed that social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children whereas 2 (4%) of the respondents disagreed. Twelve 06 (13%) of the respondents were not sure whether social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children. This statistics concludes that social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children.

Table 4.14 Foster parents encourage foster children to study harder

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21	47%
2	Agree	14	31%
3	Not Sure	09	20%
4	Disagree	01	2%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The responses in table 4.14 indicate that 14 (3%) of the respondents agreed that foster parents encourage foster children to study harder and 1 (2%) disagreed with this view.

Twenty one 21 (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that foster parents encourage foster children to study harder and none of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. Nine 9 (20%) was not sure if foster parents encourage foster children to study harder.

The interpretation of the above statistics is that foster parents encourage foster children to study harder.

4.2.2.3 The strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody

This section provide a description of the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody, and the information in this section are presented in graphical and tabular forms and followed by discussions.

Table 4.15 Self-image of foster children is attended to

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	07	16%
2	Agree	27	60%
3	Not Sure	09	20%
4	Disagree	02	4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.15 indicates that 27 (60%) of the respondents agreed that self-image of foster children is attended to and 02 (4%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Seven 07 (16%) of the respondents strongly agreed that self-image of foster children is attended to whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Nine 9 (20%) was not sure if self-image of foster children is attended to. From the table presented it can be concluded that self-image of foster children is attended to.

Table 4.16 Foster care grant is used for foster children education

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	14	31%
2	Agree	17	38%
3	Not Sure	09	20%
4	Disagree	05	11%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Seventeen 17 (38%) which are the majority of the respondents agreed that foster care grant is used for foster children education and 05 (2%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Fourteen 14 (31%) of the respondents strongly agreed that foster care grant is used for foster children education whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed.

Nine 09 (20%) of the respondents were not sure whether Foster care grant is used for foster children education. This statistics concludes that foster care grant is used for foster children education.

Table 4.17 Foster parents are capacitated on parenting

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	22	49%
2	Agree	13	29%
3	Not Sure	07	16%
4	Disagree	03	7%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty two 22 (49%) which are the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that foster parents are capacitated on parenting and none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Thirteen 13 (29%) of the respondents agreed that foster parents are capacitated on parenting and 3 (7%) of the respondents disagreed. Seven 07 (16%) of the respondents were not sure whether foster parents are capacitated on parenting. This statistics concludes that foster parents are capacitated on parenting.

Table 4.18 Educators observe foster children behaviour

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	17	38%
2	Agree	20	44%
3	Not Sure	05	11%
4	Disagree	03	7%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.18 presents that majority of the respondents at 20 (44%) agreed with statement that educators observe foster children behaviour, while 03 (7%) disagreed with the idea. Seventeen 17 (38%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea that educators observe foster children behaviour, whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Five 5 (11%) of the respondents were not sure whether educators observe foster children behaviour or not. A conclusion can be drawn from the above statistics educators observe foster children behaviour.

Table 4.19 Social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	22	49%
2	Agree	19	42%
3	Not Sure	03	7%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	01	2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty-two 22 (49%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea that social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody and 01 (2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. On the other hand, 02 (4%) strongly disagreed and on 01 (2%) strongly disagreed that social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody. Three 03 (7%) of the respondent were not sure whether social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody or not. The statistics above shows that social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody.

Table 4.20 Children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	20	44%
2	Agree	23	51%
3	Not Sure	02	4%
4	Disagree	0	0%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty three 23 (51%) which are the majority of the respondents agreed that children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image and none of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Twenty 20 (44%) of the respondents strongly agreed that children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image and none of the respondents strongly disagreed. Two 2 (4%) of the respondents were not sure whether children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image. This statistics concludes that children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED THROUGH INTERVIEW

In this section the researcher presents the information gathered by interview from the respondents who were interviewed in this study. The information is presented in narrative form and followed by a synthesis of the findings.

4.3.1 Question 1: how is the academic performance of children in foster custody?

Respondent 1:

In this question the first respondent replied that the children in foster custody perform badly and some are even worse. It was emphasised that the general poor performance was not surprising because foster parents do not treat foster children as their own.

Respondent 2:

The second respondent indicated that the children in foster custody are weak academically because of the bad situation they live in at foster homes

Respondent 3:

The respondent said some children in foster custody do better at school and some don't do better but the general performance is poor.

Respondent 4:

It was indicated that they try very hard to work harder in their academic work. The respondent further explained that some perform better and they even proceed to the tertiary level and achieve their dream careers.

Respondent 5:

The performance of children in foster custody is well and the educational duties are attended properly. The children in foster custody try very hard to behave like any other child and to be recognised like other people.

The general feeling of the respondents is that the academic performance of children in foster custody is not satisfactory. Those respondents that indicated that the academic performance is better also expressed some reservations latter in their statements. The respondents also tend to justify the poor performance of the children which indicate that they accept it. This shows the sympathy that the respondents have towards the children in foster custody.

4.3.2 Question 2: what are the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance?

Respondent 1:

Foster parents are more interested in receiving money than taking care of the children in foster custody. The grant money received is not even use for the benefits of the children because they usually run short of school uniforms and stationary.

Respondent 2;

This respondent said the children in foster custody come to school hungry because their money is misused. The respondent further indicated that the children are forced to take parental responsibilities like washing and ironing clothes.

Respondent 3:

The third respondent replied that children in foster custody perform badly because they do not come to terms with the loss of their parents at a tender age. They do not accept challenges that come with orphanhood.

Respondent 4:

The respondent was not sure about the performance challenges that the children in foster custody experience because they are too complex and not easy to unpack one by one.

Respondent 5:

Foster parents do not buy text books that the school cannot provide and it was surprising because they receive the grant every month. Foster parents abuse the grant and neglect the needs of the children in foster custody.

There is a general blame to the foster parents with regard to the academic performance of the children in foster custody. Poor parenting is mainly indicated as the cause of poor performance. The abuse of foster care grant was commonly mentioned by most of the respondents. The respondents also indicated that the impact of orphanhood and vulnerability affect the academic performance of the children in foster custody. The responses make a suggestion that all the challenges faced by children in foster custody manifest themselves through poor academic performance.

4.3.3 Question 3: What are the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody?

Respondent 1:

There should be a provision for the removal of the abusive foster parent and replacement by the new one who would not mistreat the children because some foster parents cannot change their behaviours.

Respondent 2:

This respondent recommended that social workers should continue to do counselling until the children are emotionally stable so that they may accept their orphanhood.

Respondent 3

Social workers should encourage children in foster custody to accept foster parents and respect them as they would do to their biological parents. This will encourage foster parents to raise them without bad attitudes.

Respondent 4:

Social workers should motivate the children and advice them in career matters and personal responsibilities. They should be encouraged to do goal setting.

Respondent 5:

The fifth respondent said the academic performance can be improved by the provision of academic materials like books, stationary and anything that will be needed to maintain their school performance.

The respondents are indicating that the solution to poor academic performance should come from the social workers. They are giving an impression that foster children are vulnerable even after placement and the social worker should empower them continuously. There is also a belief that orphanhood has a negative impact to the children and foster alone cannot deal with those issues. The expectations of the respondents on what can be done to improve the academic performance do not include children in foster custody, foster parents and educators.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented, analysed and interpreted data found from the respondents. The respondents reflected that foster children, educators, social worker and foster parents play an important role on the academic performance of children in foster custody. The majority of the respondents indicated that all the above mentioned stakeholders are playing their roles effectively. However there were some reservations regarding parenting and the usage of foster foster care grant.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides conclusion about the major findings of the study regarding the academic performance of children in foster custody. It also gives recommendations of the study on academic performance of children in foster custody, strategies to improve academic performance of children in foster custody as well as the recommendations for further studies and the conclusions.

5.2 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study arose from the research objectives which were:

- To examine the academic performance of children in foster custody.
- To investigate the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance.
- To explore the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody.

5.2.1 Major findings on academic performance of children in foster custody

The finding shows that foster children are controllable at school because 55% of the respondents agreed with this statement. The study didn't find a clear position about the issue of school dropout because 38% of the respondents agreed with the idea that school dropout is low amongst foster children and 38% of the respondents disagreed with it. The majority of the respondents at who are 63% agreed with the statement that foster children perform better at school which indicates that the academic performance of children in foster custody is not bad. Foster children usually proceed to tertiary level because 47% of the respondents agreed with the statement whereas none of the respondents strongly disagreed with it. Educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children as this reflected 80% of the respondents who agreed with it

In interview the general feeling of the respondents is that the academic performance of children in foster custody is not satisfactory. Those respondents that indicated that the academic performance is better also expressed some reservations latter in their statements. The respondents also tend to justify the poor performance of the children which indicate that they accept it. This shows the sympathy that the respondents have towards the children in foster custody or that they are not neglected.

5.2.2 Major findings on the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance

According to 38% of the respondents children in foster custody are emotionally stable. This finding cast doubts on the emotional stability of children in foster custody. Foster families cannot afford educational fees as reflected by 47% of the respondents. It was not clear whether the environment at foster homes is conducive for studying because only 47% of the respondents agreed with this statement. There is a finding that foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates as 80% of the respondents agreed with it. The 80 % of the respondents which agreed that social workers monitor the academic performance of foster children show that they are committed. According to 78% of the respondents, foster parents encourage foster children to study harder which indicate that they are playing their role.

There is also a general blame to the foster parents with regard to the academic performance of the children in foster custody. Poor parenting is mainly indicated as the cause of poor performance. The abuse of foster care grant was commonly mentioned by most of the respondents. The respondents also indicated that the impact of orphanhood and vulnerability affect the academic performance of the children in foster custody. The responses make a suggestion that all the challenges faced by children in foster custody manifest themselves through poor academic performance.

5.2.3 Major findings on the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody

This study made a finding that self-image of foster children is attended to because 76% of the respondents agreed with it. 69% of the respondents showed that foster care grant is used for foster children education which indicates that foster children are benefiting from the grant. Foster parents have the capacity on parenting and this was supported by 78% of the respondents. Educators observe foster children behaviour as reflected by 82% of the

respondents is a good sign of their sensitivity to orphans and vulnerable children. A finding was made that social workers and educators are playing their role very well because 91% of the respondents indicated that social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody. The vast majority of the respondents at 95% agreed that children in foster custody are helped to have positive self-image which is a positive indicator that they are not neglected.

The respondents indicated that the solution to poor academic performance should come from the social workers. They are giving an impression that foster children are vulnerable even after placement and the social worker should empower them continuously. There is also a belief that orphanhood has a negative impact to the children and foster alone cannot deal with those issues. The expectations of the respondents on what can be done to improve the academic performance do not include children in foster custody, foster parents and educators

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

This chapter explains recommendations of the study on academic performance of children in foster custody, challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance and the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody.

5.3.1 Recommendation on academic performance of children in foster custody

Children in foster custody should continue to behave well at school so that they may remain controllable. They must always strive to perform better and proceed to the tertiary level. Educators must always be observant in order to detect learning disturbances faced by children in foster custody at early stage. Preferential attention should be given to the children in foster custody by tertiary institutions when allocating financial assistance. Social workers, educators and foster parents should discourage school dropout amongst children in foster custody. Children in foster custody should not be sympathised with when they perform badly at school. They must be confronted to face the reality of their poor performance and its consequences.

5.3.2 Recommendation on the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance

Social workers must observe the emotional stability of children in foster custody, for necessary early intervention. The government must gradually increase foster care grant until

it can afford tertiary education. Foster parents should create home environment conducive for studying. Communities should not stigmatise orphanhood and vulnerability. Social workers and foster parents must monitor academic performance of children in foster custody in order to intervene in time. Foster parents must not mistreat children in foster custody because they are not their biological children. The usage of foster care grant should be monitored by the social workers so that it may be utilised to the benefit of the children in foster custody.

5.3.3 Recommendation on the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody

Social workers must attend to self image issues of children in foster custody in order to provide appropriate counselling. Educators should refer children with emotional problems for counselling. Foster parents must not misuse foster care grant. Social workers should further capacitate foster parents on parenting skills. Educators, social workers and foster parents must form foster care forums to discuss issues affecting children in foster custody. Social workers should continue to monitor the suitability of the foster parent even after placement. Children in foster custody and their challenges should not be viewed as government responsibility alone. The impact of loss of parents on children in foster custody should always be taken into cognisance and controlled.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

This study was covered only the western part of Thulamela municipality, therefore similar study should be conducted at national level. Policy makers and managers of the Department of Social Development and the Department of Basic Education should be involved in further study in order to obtain wider perspective.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This study discussed the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study in chapter one. It provided the introduction and background of the study and that the study will focus on the academic success of children in foster custody at Thulamela West. Historical information about foster care and the recent

developments were outlined and that shed light about what the research is going to be based on.

This chapter also discussed brief literature review, definitions of major concepts, research design and methodology and organisation the study. The background of the study discussed the origin of foster care internationally and its emergence in South Africa. The problem statement discussed various statutes and policies that regulate foster care and the challenges disturb their effective implementation.

The main aim of the study was to evaluate academic performance of children in foster custody in Thulamela West. The objectives of the study to examine the academic performance of children in foster custody, to investigate the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance and to explore the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of children in foster custody. The research questions were based on the academic performance of the children in foster custody, the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance and the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of the children in foster custody?

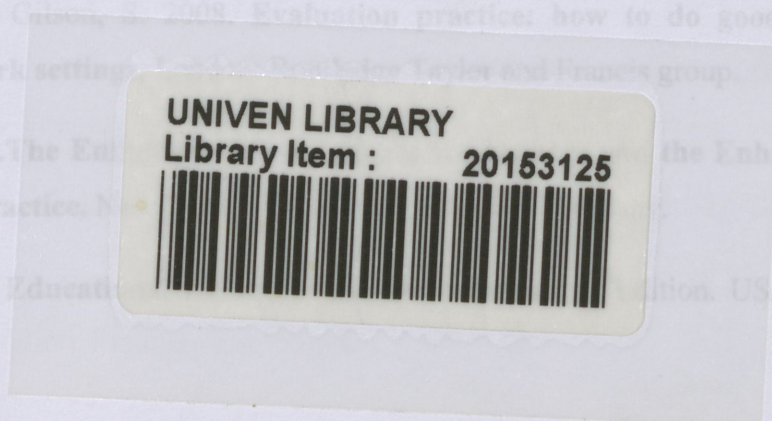
Literature review about foster care was done. This chapter provided literature review about issues related to topic, concepts, challenges, interventions and improvements. Negative impacts of foster care and related issues like poverty, on the academic performance of children were outlined. Issues discussed included the legislative framework on academic performance of children in foster custody and educational matters. The provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), the Children's Act, 2005 (Act 38 of 2005), the South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996) and the Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act 13 of 2004) where highlighted.

The history of foster care from 2000 BC to date and the recent foster care processes were elaborated on. The concepts of parenting and other challenges in foster care were discussed. The challenges included administrative, socio-economic and abuses in foster care. Factors affecting learning in schools like race, emotional issues, socialization, socio-economic status as well as strategies to deal with those issues were extensively discussed. Ethical considerations outlined in chapter one, were adhered to. They included informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, voluntary participation and no harm to participants.

Data collection instruments, which are, a questionnaire and an interview schedule were developed. The questionnaire has section A which included demographics like gender, age and position of the respondent. Section B of the questionnaire included academic performance of children in foster custody, challenges faced by foster children in their academic performance and strategies that can be used to improve academic performance of children in foster custody. The interview schedule has three questions based on the same themes in section B of the questionnaire.

The data was collected, analyzed, interpreted and presented. There were two methods used for analyzing data collected through different data collection methods. Data collected through questionnaire was analysed by the statistical package for social science (SPSS Version 22.0) and the information was presented in a tabular form, frequencies and percentages. Forty five questionnaires were analysed. Data collected through interview was analysed by thematic analysis and the information was presented in a narrative form. Five interview schedules were analysed.

The synthesized finding, recommendations and conclusion were done in chapter five. The researcher concluded the study by drawing deductions about the major findings of the study with regard to the academic performance of children in foster custody, challenges faced by foster children in their academic performance and strategies that can be used to improve academic performance of children in foster custody. Recommendations of the study with regard to challenges on academic performance of children in foster custody were provided by the researcher.



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The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No 108 of 1996)

Children Act, 2005 (Act No 38 of 2005),

South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996)

Social Assistance Act, 2004 (Act No 13 of 2004)

National Development Plan, 2012

APPENDIX A

White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

To: The District Senior Manager (Department of Education)
The District Executive Manager (Department of Social Development)

16.12.2014

REPLYING TO THE REQUEST FOR COLLECTED INFORMATION FOR
RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you on behalf of the School of Management Sciences (No. 11565295), a registered school of Management Sciences. The research of the University of Venda is investigating the impact of social welfare services on the academic performance of children in foster homes in Limpopo. In order for you to complete his studies, we request your assistance in providing the information that he might need for his study project. As a school of Management Sciences, we believe that the research he is undertaking will yield the results that might be useful to your Department. We therefore encourage your Department to assist him with the necessary information that will be collected through questionnaires and interviews. We encourage that the information that will be provided to him will be used only for his studies.

We hope that you will find it to be useful and together, anticipate your assistance. If any further details are required, please contact us at Cell: 013 794 5101 or Email: dean@uovh.ac.za

Yours faithfully,

Prof. M. J. M. M. M.
Dean, School of Management Sciences



PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

LETTER TO RESPONDENT

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

To: The District Senior Manager (Department of Education)
The District Executive Manager (Department of Social Development)

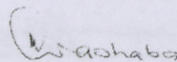
10.12.2014

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT INFORMATION FOR STUDIES OF MR. MULAMBILU N - STUDENT NO: 11565495.

The above matter refers.

We hereby wish to confirm that Mr. Mulambilu N (Student No.: 11565495), a registered Master of Public Management (MPM) student at the University of Venda is researching on the following topic: "An evaluation of academic performance of children in foster custody at Thulamela West". In order for him to complete his studies, we request your Department to provide him with the information that he might need for his study project. As an institution of higher learning, we believe that the research he is undertaking will yield the results that might also assist your Department. We therefore encourage your Department to assist him with the necessary information that will be collected through questionnaires and interviews. We undertake that the information that will be provided to him will be solely used for this studies.

We hope that you find this to be in order and therefore, anticipate your assistance. If any queries, please feel free to contact me at Cell: 073 644 6301 or Email: Ephraim.Mahole@univen.ac.za



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Prof. M.P Khwashaba
Promoter: School of Management Sciences



University of Venda

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LETTER TO RESPONDENT

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11 -12-2014

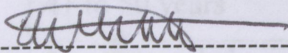
Dear Respondent

I, **Mulambilu Nkhumbudzeni**, am a student at the University of Venda, registered for Masters of Public Management (MPM). I am conducting a study on “**evaluation of academic performance of children in foster custody**”.

I am requesting you to be a participant in this study

Hope you will find this to be in order

Yours faithfully



MULAMBILU NKHUMBUDZENI

STUDENT NUMBER: 11565595

INSTRUMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE

AN EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CUSTODY

This is a study on evaluation of academic performance of children in foster custody. This is an opportunity for you to be part of the study where you can provide your views. Please put a cross (X) on the appropriate answer. There is no wrong or right answer.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Age

Less than 20 years	
21 to 30 years	
31 to 40 years	
41 to 50 years	
51 years and above	

3. Position of Respondent

Child in foster custody	
Educator	
Social worker	
Foster parent	

SECTION B: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN IN FOSTER CUSTODY

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
15	Self image of foster children is attended to					
16	Academic performance of children in foster custody					
4	Foster children are controllable at school					
5	School dropout is low amongst foster children					
6	Foster children perform better at school					
7	Foster children usual proceed to tertiary level					
8	Educators can detect learning disturbances faced by foster children					

		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	Challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance					
9	Children in foster custody are emotionally stable					
10	Foster families can afford educational fees					
11	Environment at foster homes is conducive for studying					
12	Foster children are well accepted by educators and school mates					
13	Social workers monitor academic performance of foster children					
14	Foster parents encourages foster children to study harder					

	Strategies that can be used to improve academic performance of children in foster custody	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
15	Self image of foster children is attended to					
16	Foster care grant is used for foster children education					
17	Foster parents are capacitated on parenting					
18	Educators observe foster children's behaviour					
19	Social workers interact with educators on academic performance of children in foster custody					
20	Children in foster custody are helped to have positive self image					

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION”

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION”

INSTRUMENT

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**AN EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN
IN FOSTER CUSTODY**

1. How is the academic performance of the children in foster custody?

2. What are the challenges faced by children in foster custody in their academic performance?

3. What are the strategies that can be used to improve the academic performance of the children in foster custody?

“THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION”

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