
EDITORIAL

The recent inhumane acts of terrorism perpetrated by Al-Shabaab against 148 innocent people at Garissa University College in Kenya defy all logic and understanding. One hundred and forty two students, three soldiers and three police officers were shot and killed on 2 April 2015. These acts of violence were done in the name of religion. Leaders and clerics of Muslim faith in South Africa have denounced these senseless acts, calling them a perversion of the Islamic faith. Our hearts and prayers go out to the families and friends of the victims of this act of terrorism. Many of the social work fraternity, both in South Africa and abroad, have sent condolences to our colleagues in Kenya.

South Africa's Minister of Social Development called for a Social Work Indaba in Durban on 24-26 March 2015 with the purpose of hearing the voices of social workers and revitalising the social work profession. Social work practitioners came from all nine provinces. Minister Dlamini spoke about grappling with poverty, inequality and unemployment. She also questioned whether we have been able to strengthen NGOs and whether we pay social workers sufficient salaries. Many recommendations were proposed by social workers who attended the Indaba; I will mention two.

The first recommendation is that social workers should be empowered to work in a multidisciplinary environment. This links with a social development perspective. The next recommendation is that the research agenda on social work needs to be included in the strategic imperatives and planning of the national Department of Social Development. These recommendations touch on the core of what we intend to achieve in this journal, that is, a social development perspective informed by evidence-based research from a cross-disciplinary field. The articles below encompass research from the micro to the macro levels of society.

Frankel, Solarsh and Ross's article highlights the value of group work intervention as a cost-effective way of assisting older people to deal with life transitions. The article describes the life-cycle of this group for older persons which lasted 18 years. A documentary analysis of the facilitator's process notes and participants' reflections was conducted to understand the reasons for the group's longevity. The findings have implications for the practise of social group work with older persons.

The aim of the study by **Woolf, Bantjes and Kagee** is to explore the experiences of mental health professionals in schools and document their insights, attitudes and beliefs regarding youth suicidal behaviour. In-depth

semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven mental health professionals and data were analysed utilising Thematic Analysis. The findings revealed the need for a proactive approach to suicide prevention among mental health professionals, teachers and parents in South African schools, as well as improved training and supervision.

The purpose of **Basson's** article is to evaluate and explore the subjective experiences of parents who participated in the "Helping Divorced Parents to Benefit Adolescent Children" enrichment programme. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological design was employed. A convenience sample was selected of twelve divorced custodial parents of adolescents who attended the four-week programme. A conclusion of the article is that a group intervention programme for parents can contribute to positive change in parenting adolescents after parental divorce.

The article by **Gutura and Tanga** provides a reflective analysis, twenty years after democracy, of social assistance grants in achieving their primary objective of closing the poverty gap and reducing inequality. The literature reviewed showed that, in the absence of any other safety net, access to social grants reduced destitution for many poor people and their households. There are various indicators which suggest that even though poverty has declined of late, there are millions of people still vulnerable and at risk.

Boshoff and Strydom's article questions the efficacy of trauma intervention programmes for police personnel because, in spite of the implementation of these trauma programmes, police still present with high levels of acute and behavioural problems. The purpose of this article is to critically appraise existing trauma intervention programmes, compare and extrapolate key elements of these approaches, and reconfigure these into a comprehensive, holistic, psycho-social therapeutic trauma intervention programme for use among police in South Africa.

Muchacha and Mthetwa's article raises concerns around the escalation of child abuse in Zimbabwe, and the role of social workers in intervention efforts to curb it. Evidence from the literature is utilised in analysing the extent of child abuse and the role of the social worker in addressing the problem. The authors observe that the role of social workers is remedial or curative, rather than sustainable or proactive, based on a socio-ecological framework as an analytical and intervention tool and model. Recommendations include a more sustainable approach for social workers.

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