

PRESENT PROBLEMS OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKERS AND ABOUT THEIR AWARENESS IN KARACHI

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Abstract

The current study was designed to know the hurdles and difficulties which professional social workers are facing due to unawareness in society. The aim of social work is to enhance well-being by promoting social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people of society. In preventing dysfunction and developing full potential, social work plays an important role. The purpose of this research paper is to examine the socio-economic status, job satisfaction, problems faced, difficulties, the behavior of people, and the importance of professional Social Worker in society. This study is exploratory research based on both qualitative and quantitative research; the sample was selected through the simple random sampling method, which consisted of 200 professional social workers having a master's degree. Data was collected by using a tailor-made questionnaire containing 144 questions. After assembling data, we found that the majority of professional social workers can play a positive role in preventing malfeasance in society. The findings also suggested that professional social workers face many problems in different fields, which ultimately affects their performance. Additionally, because of unawareness about social work discipline in our society, people are not considerate towards social workers.

Keywords: *Professional Social Workers, Job Satisfaction, Discipline, Lack of Awareness, Performance, Malfeasance.*

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INTRODUCTION

Social work as a career is almost special in that, even in an economic environment of self-interest, it remains committed to the values of compassion, social justice, and care. In present times, social work is one of the very rare professions which openly recognizes, reflects on, and struggles with these ethical issues. Social work as a constitutive ethical good itself is of distinct importance. At the very heart of social work lies the “practice of value” Webb, (2006)

It refers to all persons who do not have the means or the expertise to meet their needs and to work properly in society. The manner of social work establishes practices as a liberal career in public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and also in private settings. Hare, (2009)

Eventually, professional social work aims at improving human well-being at various levels. Research on social work seeks to enhance the appropriateness and efficacy of action in social work with people, families, associations, neighborhoods, organizations, etc. Sarathy et al, (2013)

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) decided in July 2014 on the following global concept of the profession of social work. It is a practicum and theory-based profession which stimulates change, growth, stability, empowerment, and liberation of society’s people. Social work is focused on the values of social justice, human rights, mutual responsibility, and respect for diversity. Social work includes individuals and systems, underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous expertise, to solve life problems and promote well-being. At national and/or regional levels, the definition above may be amplified.

The profession was initially formed to deal with issues of society’s people. But it works with the cooperation of professional psychologist and psychiatrist that deals with people in trouble. The distinction is

that social work is observed in people with socio-emotional cognitive and behavioral perspectives. Khalid, M. (2011).

The U.S. Department of Labor (2004b) explains social workers' roles as follows: For someone with a deep desire to help better the lives of others, social work is a career. Social workers support individuals to give the best they can with their community and help to cope with environmental and personal stressors. Social workers often see people facing a life-threatening illness or a social issue. These concerns can include insufficient accommodation, redundancy, severe sickness, injury, or drug abuse. Social workers often support families with severe family disputes, especially those involving neglect of children or partners. Glicker, (2011). Social work provides learning, collective action, role modelling, relationship building, inspiration, and improvement opportunities. Brown, (2002).

Krysk and Finn (2007) state that research is intended to be used by social workers to improve the scientific status of the profession and improving social conditions. Social work is globalizing day by day, people are learning about it through different contexts, and its programs are being used by various organizations and individuals around the world. The services offered for social work include psychology, medicine, marriage, and family counselling; school; rehabilitation; corrections; public welfare; workplace; drug abuse; and child welfare". Farley et al, (2006).

Social work is focused on safe principles that form the "Philosophy of Social Work" when structured. Social work is based on trust in the individual's intrinsic worth and integrity. Man is not because he is rich or wealthy, but because he has become a human being, a material of respect. Human nature gives worth and integrity to the person, which any other human being must respect. Nayak, (n.d). The social work perspective is rapidly shifting. Social work is highly skilled because its fundamental aspect focuses on human's complex issues and mystifying areas. Hepworth et al, (2006).

In social work, the methodology is understood to be the organized and planned method of helping people. The following are its methods: Case Work, Group Work, Community Organization, Social Research, Social welfare administration, and Social action. Nayak, (n.d). Social work often borrows expertise from various fields (sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy, humanities, genetics, medicine, law, etc.) so that he/she can offer more possibilities or alternatives for the interest of his / her client. This multidisciplinary approach is also used to explain complex social issues due to the fact that social problems also become more complex as populations become larger. Significant areas of social work practice are correctional institutions, behavioral wellbeing, medical climate, stress, mental health, addiction, violence, disability, death, physical disease, as well as discrimination. Social workers serve as caseworkers, care workers, probation officers, and juvenile cadres' supervisors.

Each society's vital aim of ensuring happy and peaceful living for all its members is severely hampered. Social work is therefore a cautious and coordinated struggle designed by society to defend itself from the assault of destructive forces that threaten its law and order and thus hinder its socio-economic growth. In the core of such human tragedies, there are those who look at the importance and significance of current ideas and skills of social work. Cronin et al, (2007) propose that social workers and those whose work is informed by social work values (for them the key values are servicing people in need, affirming individuality, and building on network relationships) are particularly suited to frontline disaster responses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In IFSW, 2000 it was stated that to facilitate people in various environments where they live, knowledge, skills, interfaces and the environment are the basic foundation of social work. Sorescu, (n.d). Effects of globalization on the social work profession and the

responses on social work on these are discussed in many studies (Barner & Okech, (2012); Dominelli, (2010), Giarchi & Lankshear, (1998), Healey, (2008), Khan & Dominelli, (2000), Midgley, (2001), Ng & Sim, (2006), Pugh & Gould, (2000), Taylor, (1999), Trevillion, (1997), Webb, (2003).

Webb, (2003); Pugh and Gould, (2000) said that at a hypothetical level there isn't any agreement about the connection between social work and globalization. Some of them are non-believers or sarcastic.

Social work is more effective all over the world but unfortunately less visible due to a shortage of social workers. "Any idea of a worldwide social work is minimal in excess of a vanity", says Webb, and attempts to show that social work is finest done by focusing on people to resolve their problems in specific conditions. Webb, (2003).

One of the major issues is keeping the identity of the social work profession; people are unaware of it, there is misbehavior of society's people and negative thinking about this profession. Gray and Webb, (2007) stated that some are not concurring with worldwide strategies in the profession of social work. This move by IASSW and IFSW isn't about morals, viability, or increasing expectations for social work; laid out simply, it is about force. Moreover, it is necessary to increase the sense of pride and uniqueness among social workers about their profession, because if they built a negative perspective, this would cause low self-esteem and other personality issues. Cialdini et al, (1976). (National Research Council. (1994) and as compare to other countries, in our country, professional social workers don't have identity and license provided by Government. Sorescu, (n. d) in his research observing two tendencies, to shift the role of the social worker towards behavior control, regulation, to develop and promote the anti-discriminatory practice and the concept of empowerment, as responses to the social exclusion and insecurity generated by globalization.

Borland, (1981) explores that social workers are well-suited to experience strife "as they keep on keeping up strong connections dependent on social work esteems" even as managers stress proficiency and "throughput" (cited in Lloyd, King, and Chenoweth, (2002). We can clearly see the lack of awareness of social workers in society because peoples are uneducated and due to less work of social organizations.

Teater, (2014) highlighted that theory and methods are the basic techniques in which social workers show their expertise and provide healthier life to people in a society. Professional social workers have a versatile personality; they know how to deal in certain situations with their client. Social services is a sector extremely at risk of public scrutiny, with the general public constituting a significant partner within the social work sector. As such, their opinions and perceptions are likely to possess a pernicious impact on those working inside it. Healy et al. (2009); Searle and Patent, (2013). Despite these connections, scant attention has been paid directly to public attitudes towards social workers- Reid and Misener, (2001).

As main programmers for clients' social workers offer, frontline staff that deals with clients on daily basis. LeCroy and Stinson, (2004). The social workers stand with staff for the public every day to provide confidence and save them from negative thoughts about their profession which come to mind while providing their services in society; they get many public perceptions regarding the social work profession.

Social work aims at using limited resources and providing basic needs to people, specifically providing social services to the old, young, poor, abused, mistreated, handicapped, jobless, the sick, and the homeless. But the authorities should provide basic facilities to professional social workers as well and provide good services. Guez, & Allen, (n.d). Social workers must be always prepared to handle any tough situation. For example, Social workers should leave

everything in an emergency because clients have limited resources to prevent the hurdle.

The New Social Work will probably be more effective and less visible at the same time. Because degree holders don't get jobs easily in Social Work fields, they are working in schools and other private sectors. Self-reflection and utilizing this awareness for the benefit of clients are major components of the professional self; 'continuing professional reflection ... [is] the fundamental developmental process in professional life'. Skovholt, (1992).

Social workers are very competitive and their work is very challenging due to heavy workload, low pay, and shortage of social workers, causing frustration and heavy job-related fatigues. Legood, et al, (2016). The above literature provides wide ways for future studies on this topic. Central to our work is to know the role and importance of a social worker in society, what problems they are facing, and how they cope with them. Here are some objectives as follows:

OBJECTIVES

- To find out the socio-economic status of a professional social worker.
- To find out the problems faced by professional social workers.
- To find out the performance of professional social workers regarding penurious people.
- To investigate the role of professional social workers in society.
- To find out the self-satisfaction of professional social workers in their fields.
- To find out to what extent professional social work can bring change in our society.

- To find out how much the people of our society are aware of social work discipline.

HYPOTHESES

- A professional social worker faces many problems in the fields which influence their performance.
- Because of the lack of awareness about social work discipline in our society, people are not considerate towards social workers.

METHODOLOGY

Multiple research methodologies were used in this study, which are: descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative method. A descriptive method is essentially a fact-finding approach, the data was collected from Karachi which was used to study the deep-rooted variables of existing performance and problems of social workers. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect extensive, focus and outcome data. The simple random techniques of probability sampling method were used for getting a list of professional social workers from the Alumni Directory of Social Workers, University of Karachi; and then snowball techniques of non-probability were used because social workers whose addresses were taken from the alumni directory recommended more fresh social workers to collect data, applied on the basis of availability of 200 respondents (Male 92, Female 108). Data was administered by descriptive survey method through an interview schedule consisting of 144 questions in which socioeconomic status, problems faced by social workers, salary, job satisfaction, views about social work were highlighted. After completing the tabulation through the simple statistical method, the researcher used chi-square to test the hypotheses and final association between the independent and dependent variables, data were cross-tabulated by making

contingency tables. As it is necessary to test the reliability and smoothness of the questionnaire, pre-testing was conducted before going for actual data collection. In the light of pretesting, the research questionnaire was finalized.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To fit the local, economic, social, and cultural realities, social work practicum and theory must be applied, because as Malcolm Payne argued, it is a socially constructed profession. Payne, (2005) and Taylor, (1999) in their research highlighted the aspects, identity, and core of the social work profession. The results found that increasingly more need is felt to identify the appropriate social work values, teaching methods, and communication skills and to make it clear that which method is most effective.

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Ages	Frequency	Percentage
25-30 years	115	57.5%
31-35 years	34	17%
36-40 years	17	8.5%
41-45 years	7	3.5%
46-50 years	13	6.5%
Above 50 years	14	7%
Total	200	100%

This study addressed the issues and challenges which are affecting the performance of Professional Social Worker, and by present research, as shown in Table: 1, it has been found that (57.5%) respondents were ranging in age 25 to 30 years. The second-highest number of the respondents falls within the age group 36 to 40 years, which is (8.5%). This means that mostly young social workers are working in the profession in question because they are passionate about working for society and also because of poverty and unemployment. (7%) of respondents are above 50 years, and those are

engaged in a Government sector. The least number of respondents are of the age group of 41 to 50 years, which the (3.5%) of the total population.

Table 2: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Medical social worker	37	18.5%
Soldier	1	0.5%
Lawyer	1	0.5%
Assistant director	6	3%
Teacher	66	33%
Coordinator	6	3%
Social organizer	40	20%
Other	43	21.5%
Total	200	100%

A social worker has to confirm the organization's either public/private rules and objectives that affect social work. Lucy & Malawi (2006). Table: 2 shows the most (33%) participants are engaging in the teaching profession as in social work fields, they don't acquire a job easily due to lack of organizations, less job experience, and low salary but also do part-time social work. The second-highest percentage (21.5%) of respondents are engaged in different occupations like directors, social mobilizers, shopkeepers, etc. The third-highest percentage (20%) of respondents said that their occupation is social organizer whereas (18.5%) of respondents said their occupation is a medical social worker. (3%) of respondents said their occupations are assistant director and coordinators. The lowest ratio (0.5%) of respondents told themselves to be soldiers and the same ratio (0.5%) of respondents said lawyer. In community agencies, social workers are approaching social hurdles around the US. As compared to other occupations, it is predicted that the job opening of social workers would increase (16%) between 2016 and 2026. Dowd, (2018)

Table 3: Respondent institute's objectives

Objectives	Frequency	Percentage
For women welfare	22	11%
For children welfare	40	20%
For youth welfare	21	10.5%
For mentally retarded people	23	11.5%
For social evils	20	10%
Do work for education	66	33%
Other	8	4%
Total	200	100%

The main focus of this present research is towards studying the basic role, performance, and reputation of a professional social worker in society, and how society's people treat them. Social workers make efforts analytically and from a strong value-base. Furthermore, they are experts in planning and implementation. In Table: 3, the researcher has found that (33%) of respondents' institute's main objective is to work for education, and the rest (4%) of the respondents stated that they work for physically ill people, etc.

Table 4: Nature of Respondent's institute

Nature of Respondent's institute	Frequency	Percentage
International	2	1%
Private	102	51%
Government	52	26%
NGO's	22	11%
Trusty	11	5.5%
Welfare	9	4.5%
Other	2	1%
Total	200	100%

The social work profession's one of the main welfare mechanisms is social work. It is addressed towards those people that don't have sufficient resources or skills to meet their needs and to function

adequately in society. The social work practice develops activity in public institutions, non-governmental organizations, and in private settings, as a liberal profession. Hare, (2009). According to present research, it has been shown that most of the respondents (51%) are working in private sectors like in schools, in hospitals as receptionists, in stationery shops as workers, as polio health workers, as sales workers, etc., while the (26%) respondents are working in the Government sector as social welfare officers, professors, assistant professors, police officers, advocates, etc. Only (1%) respondents said their institute nature is International.

Table 5: Requesting answers to respondents as follows

S. No:	Answers to Respondents	Yes (percentage)	No (percentage)	Percentage
1	Satisfied with their income	151(75.5%)	49(24.5%)	200(100%)
2	Satisfied from their job	163(81.5%)	37(18.5%)	200(100%)
3	Face problems in institutes	75 (25%)	125(75%)	200(100%)
4	Issues Effect on respondent performance	80(40%)	120(60%)	200(100%)
5	Institute work under the social work's code of ethics	185 (92.5%)	15(7.5%)	200(100%)
6	Lack of awareness about social work discipline in our society	108(54%)	92(46%)	200(100%)
7	People of society attentive towards social workers	77(38.5%)	123(61.5%)	200(100%)

8	People do know about the social services of social workers	154(77%)	46(23%)	200(100%)
9	Can professional social workers kill/eliminate different social evils	174(87%)	26(13%)	200(100%)
10	Social system affected by malfeasance	188(94%)	12(6%)	200(100%)
11	Professional social work plays a positive role in society	170(85%)	30(15%)	200(100%)

Research conducted by Lloyd, King, and Chenoweth (2002) summarized that role, status, function, and background skills are the main outcomes of social work because it is an extremely stressful occupation. According to the present research in Table: 5 it is shown that (81.5%) respondents are satisfied with their present job because of good working hours and salary packages. As is also shown in Table: 5, it is a fortunate fact that (75.5%) of respondents are satisfied with their income. For global and social issues, the social work profession acts as an agent to resolve them. Sorescu, (n.d). Table: 5 also shows that (25%) of respondents face problems in institute-less corporations of administration. The first focus of social work is the person in his environment, with his problems and needs, with his view on his own life and situation. Sorescu, (n.d)

Due to its unique services, social work is being constantly recognized and asked to perform new and varying roles. In the present research, the researcher has observed that respondents face problems in institutes which is (25%) because of workload, less cooperation of colleagues, load shedding, and inadequate facilities provided by the

institution. Another research conducted in Malawi shows that due to multiple tasks and responsibilities and lack of resources, the social worker cannot provide proper time to clients. Lucy & Malawi (2006)

In the present research, the researcher has also observed that people lack awareness of social work discipline in our society because they are uneducated, have little interest, and there is less work of social organizations that are formed (54%).

Social work solves problems in limited time and resources. Rushton, (1987), cited in Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, (2002). As we can see in Table: 5, due to unawareness of social work discipline in society, people are not considerate towards social workers. The social system is affected by malfeasance (94%) due to lack of education in people and their diligence in increasing income resources. In this scenario, the professional social workers play a positive role in society which is formed (85%).

**Table 6: What elements are which increases
the problems of society**

Elements	Frequency	Percentage
Illiteracy	107	53.5%
Unemployment	50	25%
Poverty	21	10.5%
Lack of professional social workers	7	3.5%
Less interest of Government to solve society's problems	11	5.5%
No implementation on laws	4	2%
Other	Nil	00%
Total	200	100%

From a theoretical perspective, every social worker does their job perfectly. Coulshed and Orme, (2012). In social work practice, the social worker must have information regarding researches and their work should be based on values, ethics, and principles. Teater, (2014). In the light of a professional social worker's opinion, as shown in

Table: 6, illiteracy increases the problem of society which is (53.5%) and unemployment (25%) of the total population, because in society youth have degrees yet are jobless, the ratio of unemployment gets higher day by day. In the light of the above discussion, by using the Chi-Square Test, researchers checked the hypotheses, which are as follows:

HYPOTHESIS-1

Problem Analysis:

H1 = A professional social worker can play a positive role in preventing society from malfeasance.

H0 = A professional social worker can not play a positive role in preventing society from malfeasance.

Statistical Test

$$\text{Chi-Square Formula: } \chi^2 = \sum \frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$$

Step-1: The Contingency Table

Play a positive role	Society from malfeasance		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	164	6	170
No	24	6	30
Total	188	12	200

Step-2: Listing *fe* in Contingency Table

Play a positive role	Society from malfeasance		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	164(160)	6(10)	170
No	24(28)	6(2)	30
Total	188	12	200

Step-3: Find $(fo - fe)^2$ Of Each Cell Of The Contingency Table*fe*

$$x^2 = \frac{(164 - 160)^2}{160} + \frac{(24 - 28)^2}{28} + \frac{(6 - 10)^2}{10} + \frac{(6 - 2)^2}{2}$$

$$x^2 = \frac{(4)^2}{160} + \frac{(4)^2}{28} + \frac{(4)^2}{10} + \frac{(4)^2}{2}$$

$$x^2 = \frac{16}{160} + \frac{16}{28} + \frac{16}{10} + \frac{16}{2}$$

$$x^2 = 0.1 + 0.57 + 1.6 + 8$$

$$x^2 = 10.27$$

Step-4: Find the Degree of Freedom (df)

$$x^2 = (c - 1) (r - 1) \text{ (Degree of freedom with 0.05 significance value)}$$

$$x^2 = (2 - 1) (2 - 1)$$

$$x^2 = 1 \times 1$$

$$x^2 = \text{Degree of freedom with 0.05 significance value.}$$

$$\text{Value} = 3.841$$

Step-5: Result

As the calculated value is bigger than the tabulated value, the **H₁** is accepted and the **H₀** is rejected.

HYPOTHESIS-2**Problem Analysis:**

H₁ = Because of lack of awareness about social work discipline in our society, people considerate towards social workers.

H₀ = Because of lack of awareness about social work discipline in our society, people do not considerate towards social workers.

Statistical Test

Chi-Square Formula: $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$

Step-1: The Contingency Table

Lack of awareness	Do not attentive towards social workers		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	40	68	108
No	37	55	92
Total	77	123	200

Step-2: Listing fe in Contingency Table

Lack of awareness	Do not attentive towards social workers		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	40(42)	68(66)	108
No	37(35)	55(57)	92
Total	77	123	200

Step-3: Find $\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$ of each cell of the contingency table

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(40 - 42)^2}{42} + \frac{(37 - 35)^2}{35} + \frac{(68 - 66)^2}{66} + \frac{(55 - 57)^2}{57}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(-2)^2}{42} + \frac{(2)^2}{35} + \frac{(2)^2}{66} + \frac{(-2)^2}{57}$$

$$\chi^2 = \frac{4}{42} + \frac{4}{35} + \frac{4}{66} + \frac{4}{57}$$

$$\chi^2 = 0.09 + 0.11 + 0.06 + 0.07$$

$$\chi^2 = 0.33$$

Step-4: Find the degree of freedom (df)

$\chi^2 = (c-1)(r-1)$ (Degree of freedom with 0.05 significance value)

$$\chi^2 = (2-1)(2-1)$$

$$\chi^2 = 1 \times 1$$

$\chi^2 =$ Degree of freedom with 0.05 significance value.

Value = 3.841

Step-5: Result

As the calculated value is smaller than the tabulated value, the **H₁** is rejected and the **H₀** is accepted.

CONCLUSION

According to my point of view, all persons serving their time in the helping professions are heroes. However, I think social workers are especially admirable because they are at the frontline of all the social issues in our country that arise, they encourage people to cope with their problems and live peacefully, healthily, and wealthily in society. The research covered the existence and awareness of a professional social worker's problems. It has been proved that professional social workers can play a positive role in preventing society from malfeasance and unawareness about social work discipline in our society. Social Work will probably be more effective yet less visible. Therefore, more study is required to develop effective strategies and intervention tools to address the prevalence of the profession of social work, especially in the city of Karachi.

LIMITATIONS

Apart from strengths, some problems and limitations of the study should also be addressed. This study was conducted for the very first time at the University of Karachi, so researchers faced certain problems. For example, the participants were not cooperative with

researchers due to their official responsibility because researchers took their interviews in their official timings. Researchers also faced problems in approaching social workers because mostly social workers are associated with the private sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Professional social workers face many problems in their fields, the institution must resolve their problems for a healthy society.
- Government should provide national identity/ license to them.
- Government should announce more job vacancies for the professional social workers because many workers are working in different fields.
- The responsibility of social workers is to spread the social work profession in society through seminars and with the help of media advertisements.
- Government should conduct awareness programs for people, about how to deal and cooperate with professional social workers, because researchers found that people are less attentive towards social work.

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