

Social work research as a practice of transparency

Specialist courses Doctoral School of Social and Behavioural Sciences

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Griet Roets

Abstract

Prak & Priemus (1986) revisited: the organization of social housing between stones and people

Social housing companies in Belgium and Flanders face a difficult task. Structurally underfunded and directed by 'residual' policies within a state model of preferred private ownership, social housing companies have acquired historically grown conflicting tasks. Therefore, their employees are asked to make the almost impossible distinction between 'housing' and 'living'. This paper is about the position social housing companies, and social workers affiliated with these companies, find themselves in. The study is based on semi-structured interviews with professionals from macro to micro level - against the background of a broader long-term auto-ethnographic fieldwork of the researcher within the inside world of a social housing high-rise ensemble (Ghent, Flanders).

Firstly, we turn to the diagram being developed by the Dutch researchers Prak & Priemus (1986) which describes the reasons and principles behind the all too rapid decline and demolishing of post-war social housing. Although Prak & Priemus' analysis is very relevant in its historical meaning, it requires a revision in the face of contemporary social housing realities and local knowledge of professionals, social workers and residents of social housing. Secondly, after detecting some problematic assumptions underlying this framework, we concentrate on the central actor in this scheme: the social housing company itself.

We find that both housing company officials, as well as rank and file employees, appear not to be merely rational actors who are part of one homogeneous organization. They thereby proceed with, what is described by the professionals themselves as 'stomach feeling'. Therefore, the motives they act upon and their mutual solidarity relationships appear to be much more complex in reality - as a result of conflicting tasks (Sennett, 2004; Sahlin, 1996) against the limits of their discretionary space (Lipsky, 1980) within the organization, or from their own social class perspective.

Participants recurrently frame this divide in the mission of social housing as the opposition between 'stones' and 'people': between the technical materialist task of building *houses*, and the social problems professionals are confronted with in offering *homes*. Therefore, the motives these professionals act upon, and their mutual relationships, in reality turn out to be much more complex than the seemingly rationalist policies that have been developed in Flandres' social housing since the 1990ties. This research wants to advocate for a new modus operandi concerning social housing, that radically questions the reproduction of poverty and social inequality, stemming from a co-creation of knowledge between in the inside and the outside world of these homes, based upon the perhaps difficult but necessary alliances between social housing, social work and outside world organizations.

Auner Caroline

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Abstract

Integrating research and practice is a challenge for helping professions (cf. Gambrell, 2013) as there is consensus that this is a crucial element to navigate sensitive work environments with people in challenging life situations. Social work is characterized by highly dynamic and complex situations which is often overwhelming also for professionals but is especially demanding for social work students (cf. Sommerfeld & Hollenstein, 2011). Universities have adapted different methods in their curricula to equip students with skills relevant for professional practice. Connecting the knowledge gained in theory to the social work's diverse practice scenarios remains a challenge for many social work students nonetheless (cf. Ghanem et al., 2017). Knowledge application in realistic scenarios is critical for the development of complex skills. But opportunities to foster skills relevant for practice with scenarios close to real life are rare (cf. Grossman et al., 2009). Simulation and case-based learning has been found to be effective in bridging this theory-practice gap (f.e. Chernikova et al., 2020; Kolb, 2015; Kolodner, 1992). In simulation-based learning an opportunity for meaningful application of knowledge to professional problems is ensured (f.e. Grossman, 2010). How can comprehensive learning opportunities for social work students be provided? Before this question can be answered, it is crucial to better understand how social work students utilize their knowledge into the dynamic and diverse scenarios of Social Work. My Ph.D. thesis targets to getting insights about the impact of such attempts in social work education. I am raising the following main research questions:

1. What problem-solving strategies do social work students pursue with standardized clients in a simulation-based learning environment?
2. Which types and which quality of knowledge do they apply?
3. What other factors influence the process of problem solving?

Research Design & Methodology

The research-design, samples, data sources, processes used, and data-analysis follow the Grounded-Theory-Methodology (f.e. Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 2010). Information about the research design:

- Sample: n=25 Social-Work-Students (B.A.)
- Learning Environment: live- or video-Simulation with a scripted trained actress.
- Case Vignette: District Social Work, initial consultation of the client, one-to-one counseling
- Questionnaire on prior experiences, recorded Live- or Video-Simulation, focused interviews, recorded stimulated-recall-interviews / think-aloud respectively-remember-aloud-interviews with selected participants.

Current Status of my Ph.D. Research

Cumulative doctorates at the Doctoral School REASON are usually achieved by running 2 or 3 individual studies. In context of my Ph.D. thesis, I'm currently executing my first study. Due to the current pandemic of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, certain modifications in research design, mainly affecting practical execution, were required. Still to date, I was able to conduct my first research project with students from four Bavarian universities of social work (n=25). The core part of the data collection has been successfully completed in 2020. In the coming few months my focus will be on data analysis using Grounded-Theory-Methodology data evaluation – and the first steps towards publication of my empirical findings.

Preliminary or expected findings

Based on my preliminary findings and on research, I have observed that students largely have difficulties in dealing with clients' emotions during the counselling sessions. Furthermore, problem solving strategies, knowledge construction and use as well as professional attitudes differ amongst participants. For example: objectives, approaches, strategies and especially the contextualization of the clients' specific problem situation during the assessment process are diverse. It appears that the constant balance between psychosocial and professional aspects, the appropriate level of emotion and empathy, the search for possible offers of support and the students' own insecurity are challenging the systematization of the consultation situation.

Banerjee Soumi

Abstract

Approaches to Shifting Spaces: examining Indian Service-delivery NGO sectors strategy and response to sustain government crackdown

The fluidity of state and civil society interface is extremely overarching and diversely conceptualized across a vast socio-political spectrum that continuously shapes, evolves, and re-evaluates the meanings and forms of civic space. This opens up multiple dimensions for civil society engagements and poses differential challenges and possibilities for the civil society to operate within and engage with the regime. Using the case of postcolonial India, this study argues that the civil society organizational model, structure, and operations have undergone immense shifts over the past two decades that have allowed a steady expansion of civil society under pressure. Pursuing the line of evidence-based on existing literature, the civil society developments in India has been two-ways: selective repression and delegitimization of NGOs upholding a critical claim-making position also labelled as 'anti-national' NGOs and, appropriation of those engaged in service-driven agendas, also perceived as 'apolitical' or 'developmental' NGOs – a part of the government's alternative civil society building project. While the current study rightly stresses the presence of a complex domestic condition inimical to contextual or systemic political activism, however, there isn't much (any) body of literature or systematic research on what has caused the NGO sector to amplify, despite massive silencing (if not closing) of their freedom to express, judicious-legal restrictions on receiving foreign funds, right to dissent and association, alongside the steady backsliding of democratic institutions in India. The aim of this paper is a three-fold investigation. Firstly, to what extent does the Service Providing NGOs need to manifest legitimacy while operating within a regime inimical to democratic dissent has pushed for a reorientation of their activities and operations? Relatedly and secondly, what socio-political and legal contours constitute such reorientation of spaces and to what extent the reshaping of their institutional and operational spaces complement the directive, vision, and framework of these NGOs? And finally, how does this shift reinforce or negotiate the democratic potentials of service-providing NGOs and their related act of conduct? To address the inquiry, the study undertakes a thorough analysis of FCRA (The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act -an act that every Indian NGO needs to comply with for receiving funds from foreign donor individual/organization- database 1976 and the two later amendments (2010 and 2020) and its impact on the service-providing NGOs; state-issued policy reports; the report from Indian Social Sector Service Delivery Resource Book (a report that showcases state and NGO engagement in service delivery missions); and secondary literature and research reports that are specifically relevant to the operations of the service-providing sector. The Empirical material will be obtained from semi-structured and guided interviews conducted with active members from three selected service-proving NGOs and their sister-organizations in India. The empirical cases have been selected based on typology that enables distinguishing the cases based on their engagement, outreach, legitimacy to seek available resources (foreign funds) and mode of operations in India, i.e., focusing on the degree at which one service-providing NGO is found more legitimate than the other operating within a similar political discourse.

Benoit Megan

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Abstract

Introduction

Transitions represent a relevant subject in social science. In cause of fading “normal biographies” (Levy 1977), social science begins to focus on individualized courses of life of these-called „reflexive modernity“ (Beck et al. 1996) from a subject oriented perspective (cf. Brock 1991: 13). In view of transitions from academic studies to profession, a variety of processes of transformation and crisis can be stated among young people, which gain attraction in qualitative transitions research that is linked to research focusing on crisis management and resilience (cf. Von Felden 2010: 36) Yet, crisis is not only defined as a traumatic but as an existential part of life, which initiates the new by crisis management (Oevermann 2012). Among others, research in the field of music psychology states the relevance of music concerning crisis management. For musicians who decide to turn their hobby into their profession, music and crisis management become relevant in manifold ways. In social work/music therapy, music has many functional purposes that become relevant according to the encouragement of explicitly nonmusical competences, e.g., establishing relationships. Due to the specific input of music in therapeutic/pedagogical settings there is not only a transition from study to profession but also from an individual to a representative crisis management, finally from private to professional context. Musical activities are shifted from a private scope of action to a professional in purpose of crisis management. Music is commercialized and commodified. This project focusses on transitions of young people after finishing their study and entering a social field of work. It aims for a better understanding of transformative processes and contributions of meaning in the context of professionalization in the field of music therapy/social work.

Theory

This project is located in a phenomenological and interactional frame in which biographies in western industrialized countries are understood as cultural and social differentiated social processes of construction and *fait sociaux* (cf. Dausien 1999: 238) Therefore, music is *temporary* defined as: „ästhetisches Phänomen“ (Rosa 2019: 112), which is able to open a range of experience „welcher (anderen) Sprachen und symbolischen Zeichensystemen nicht zugänglich ist“ (ibid: 161) and functions as „extra-soziale [r] Spiegel für die Seele des (modernen) Menschen“ (ibid: 265) in which music is the medium, „das die Modi, Transformationen und Intensitäten der Weltbeziehungen *unmittelbar* [emphasis by author.], das heißt ohne kognitive Projektion oder Vermittlung zum Ausdruck [zu] bringen vermag“ (ibid.). „[Musik]ermöglicht es menschlichen Subjekten, >im Anderen ganz bei sich selbst zu sein<, mithin also in eine >reine< Resonanzbeziehung zu treten.“ (ibid.)

Method

The project uses a qualitative approach. Biographical Interviews with young professionals in the field of music therapy/social work are conducted for a better understanding of the dynamics of relationships between profession, musician and music. Especially attributions of meaning, as well as musical understandings and their transformation become relevant. The interviews will be analyzed by objective hermeneutics, accompanied by an autoethnographic perspective (Ellis & Bochner) focusing on the rationalizing of the research subject “music” by doing research and reflecting the researcher as subject. Participant observations are planned.

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Griet Roets

Abstract

Becoming a fellow citizen through elderly care: Educational and integrational pathways of refugees in Denmark

Policy context: In Denmark there is a massive lack of welfare workers within the field of elderly care and calculations have shown that in 2028 there will thus be a shortage of 41.001 employees within this field. As a result a number of municipalities have chosen to apply the ‘Integrationsgrunduddannelse’ (IGU) policy with a focus on recruiting new employees for this area. The IGU is an education and integration strategy in Danish policy and provides an integration training course. The purpose of the IGU is to ensure the possibility of work and educational upgrading of refugees whose qualifications and productivity are not yet meeting the requirements of the Danish labor market. The IGU policy rhetoric also claims that this strategy will give the refugees qualifications which provide the basis for commencing a vocational education or achieving permanent employment in the Danish labor market. The rationale behind this approach is that many of the refugees, and mainly women, are experienced in taking care of older family members in their home countries.

Objective and theoretical perspective: The main objective of this doctoral research project is to investigate whether underlying assumptions at stake in these recent policy and practice developments in Denmark are socially unjust. The doctoral research project is underpinned by a literature review of the existing body of research, which reveals that these ideas square with the research finding that caring work will continue to be relegated to the private domain of human activity, and might be gendered, yet also classed and racialized. Furthermore, the project relies on critical theory concerning conceptualizations of citizenship underpinned by Victor Turner’s theory of liminality, which entails that citizen subjects’ sense of belonging is considered as being *betwixt and between*.

Methodology and findings: The central aim is to explore the diverse histories and backgrounds of the refugee women being involved in the IGU, learning how their migration and education pathways relate to their experiences concerning the IGU. Through a *retrospective biographical approach* I want to investigate both their past, present and future experiences, perspectives and aspirations.

The doctoral research project in general will be carried out as a work-package of cluster research activities of qualitative fieldwork in a combination between qualitative semi-structured research interviews (Kvale, 2003) and participant observation (Spradley, 1980) supplemented with insights in policy documents.

In the first study I focus on how the women develop a sense of belonging while being between places, status of class, gender and race, and positions in terms of educational background and employment opportunities, using Turner’s theory of liminality.

Cajko Eibicht Monika

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Supervisor: Doc. PhDr. Zuzana Havrdová, CSc

Abstract

Promoting reflection in the education of nurses and social workers

Reflection and related notions such as reflective practice, reflexivity, critical reflection, and critical thinking have gained increasing importance in many professional and academic disciplines (Van Beveren et al., 2018). Research and literature addressing the importance of reflective practice in nursing and social work reveal that reflecting professionals are more proficient in developing strategies that promote a flexible, individualized, and holistic approach to clients (Miraglia and Asselin, 2015). Reflection also improves critical thinking and communication skills (Asselin, 2011) paramount in both professions; it also appears to reduce the risk of burn-out (Shapiro, Brown, and Biegel, 2007). In short, reflecting professionals are better equipped to resolve problems through thoughtful reasoning and more inclined to monitor and enhance their professional competence (Rees, 2013; Lengelle et al., 2016). Professional practice foundations begin within the educational system, and educators play an essential role in forming the future professions. Academic study programmes for helping and therapeutic professionals are increasingly oriented towards professional competences. Reflection used in the academic context is deliberately nested in programs to meet specific educational and clinical goals and facilitated by the educators, and imparting specific reflective competencies thereby plays a crucial role (Miraglia & Asselin, 2015). Despite the positive findings, the view of this emergent international consensus, it is of concern that research reveals that reflective teaching and learning are instead still the exceptions within the Czech higher education (Bezděková, 2012; Kolář, 2012; Macháčacková, 2012; Svojanovský, 2019; Trešlová, 2009). This research project therefore, therefore, examines which didactic devices are best suited to impart reflective competences on professional university courses in nursing and social work. The project starts from the results of a preliminary study which tested the presence of core elements of the overall ability to reflect (self-reflection and insight, awareness and acceptance) by using two recognized test scales (SRIS, Grant et al., 2002, and the Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale, PHLMS, Cardaciotto et al., 2008) and revealed that only very explicit attention to techniques of self-reflection and awareness in training could produce increases in reflective abilities. The question guiding my research is: How could the educators of graduate and postgraduate nursing and social work programs enhance their teaching/learning strategies and promote reflectivity?

To answer the question, I will use Participatory Action research. I have chosen this methodology because it brings together action and reflection with theory and practice. Both in participation with others and in the pursuit of practical solutions to pressing concerns to people, and more generally, the flourishing of individual persons and their communities. (2001, p. 1, cited in Brydon-Miller et al., 2003)

Methodology: The project will predominantly use a phenomenological epistemology and establish the meaning and importance educators on selected nursing and social work university study courses in the Czech Republic attribute to reflectivity and how they translate their understanding into specific didactic devices. It will use semi-structured qualitative interviews, the analysis of their module descriptions and non-participative classroom observations. A comprehensive literature analysis of current didactic discourses on reflectivity-enhancing approaches with particular emphasis on corresponding forms of supervision will provide the epistemological grid for the evaluation of the data. Epistemological approach – social constructivism, phenomenology Current contact restrictions due to the Corona crisis will determine the extent of direct contacts with students and with teaching situations, but it is intended to distribute questionnaires reflecting the SRIS and PHLMS scales to students before and after exposure to the respective teaching modules.

Claypool Emily

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Supervisor: Zhiying Ma, PhD

Abstract

This project interrogates implementation science, a burgeoning field of research which attempts to shorten the “science to service gap,” the putative temporal lag between the findings from a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) and its uptake in social service practice. Although RCTs hold a status of epistemic authority in the field of social welfare, the evidence-based interventions they produce are often stifled as they enter saliently new contexts comprising constraining routines, practices, divergent political beliefs, and treatment ideologies. Implementation science understands intervention efficacy as contingent upon the context through which an intervention circulates and therefore seeks to transform sites of social service delivery to ensure intervention adoption and stabilization. It manages messy processes like research-community collaboration, organizational buy-in or enrollment, and, to ensure stabilization of the intervention within the RCT, standardizes disparate treatment ideologies through surveilling and controlling frontline workers as they provide social service care. Thus, the role of implementation science could be understood as smoothing over the tensions inherent to—and thus facilitating processes of—translation. This project seeks to understand how evidence-based interventions are developed and rendered portable to inform social service delivery across time and place. Both anthropologists and implementation scientists are concerned with how interventions are shaped by service contexts. However, implementation science operationalizes context as a category to be measured and altered to improve intervention uptake. This analytic tendency is rooted in the experimental model, which aims to identify and control for “extraneous” variables in order to distill causal mechanisms and measure outcomes (May, Johnson & Finch, 2016). In doing so, implementation science largely conceptualizes context by what Dourish (2004) calls “representational,” whereby issues like culture, context and climate are quantified and abstracted into neat categories and framed as either facilitative or as a barrier to intervention efficacy. However, scholars of STS and medical anthropology have consistently demonstrated the mediation, situated practices, as well as social and material relations which compose treatment efficacy, rendering it difficult to analytically separate intervention from context or its periphery (Hardon & Sanabria 2017; Brives, 2016). This tension generates the central questions of this project:

What practices are entailed in making interventions developed in one place and time useful to others across time and space?

- a. Understanding intervention efficacy as highly mediated, how is ‘context’ accounted for, managed and produced while creating an intervention that both relies on but must transcend its context?
- b. What social asymmetries and subjectivities are produced in transforming and managing experimental sites? In remaking experimental sites, how is replicability imagined?

I will pursue these questions through an ethnographic study of a National Institute of Drug Abuse-funded randomized controlled trial (RCT) to develop and test a “peer-recovery” case management intervention to reduce opioid overdose for people exiting jails and prisons. The researchers deploying this RCT not only examine the fidelity or faithful replication of the intervention protocol to ensure the intervention is stabilized across sites, they assess the contextual factors of the intervention (e.g., organizational characteristics, attributes of stakeholders using the intervention, acceptability) in order to explain differences in intervention outcomes across sites. This allows them, they hope, to better understand how the intervention fits in particular contexts to foster scale up around the country. As a project assistant, I will serve as a participant observer to observe the reflexive processes of researchers and implementation actors as they negotiate the ethical, epistemological and political tensions of their work.

Cohen, Noa

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Prof. Carmit Katz and Prof. Karni Ginzburg

Abstract

Parental child maltreatment (CM) is a widespread phenomenon with potentially destructive short and long-term ramifications, one of the main ones being Complex Post Trauma Disorder (C-PTSD). Different elements in the family system in childhood and adulthood, such as family climate and sibling dynamics, may moderate the relationship between CM and C-PTSD in later life. However, there is relatively sparse empirical research on this potential moderating role.

Drawing from Systems Theory, the present research aims to examine the moderating roles of family climate and the sibling dynamics in childhood and young adulthood. Family climate will be addressed through the prism of the Circumplex model (family cohesion, adaptability and communication), and the sibling dynamics based on a theoretical typology that was developed for the present study. This typology takes into account the complexity in the sibling sub-system, which is central in family life. The typology encompasses three aspects of the sibling dynamics: (1) rivalry, (2) camaraderie, and (3) differentiation. Self-report surveys were developed accordingly, and expert child protection practitioners and researchers assessed their validity. Factor analysis will be carried out during a pilot study, after which the final forms will be distributed as part of the general study.

Participants: a community sample of 700 adults (ages 20-35), who were raised in the same household with at least one sibling.

Instruments: self-report surveys, including Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ- SF; Thombs et al., 2009), International Trauma Questionnaire (ITQ; Cloitre et al., 2018), Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES-IV-SF; Priest et al., 2020), and Sibling Camaraderie, Differentiation and Rivalry (developed as part of the present study).

da Silva Carreira Edgar

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Supervisor: Professor Marjo Kuronen and university lecturer Kati Turtiainen

Abstract

The aim of my PhD research is to study the meaning and relevance of leisure in the integration of highly-skilled immigrants (HSI) into the Finnish society, especially in larger cities in precarious times. Concerning the integration of immigrants, both in the academic and the public debate in Finland, the focus has been on the issues of refugees and asylum seekers (even though some of them are HSI). However, there is also a need to attract a more varied group of migrants, with an emphasis on the HSIs, i.e., those with a higher education degree, to contribute to the Finnish society and economy. Thus, “what makes migrants satisfied and confident in host societies deserves to be taken seriously” (Horolets, 2012). The Western societies have so far only conceived and implemented work as the means of integration (Mongin, 1996; Santos, 1999). But in precarious times like those that Finland is facing right now, alternatives must be found to promote the integration of those who migrate to Finland. Although having a job is seen as an “indispensable” condition for the integration, it is not a sufficient requirement (Lipovetsky, 2008). Even though the HSI tend to move to Finland due to work purposes, they generally stay in Finland because of “soft factors” related to leisure, safety, clean environment, good services, etc. (Kepsu *et al*, 2009; Trux, 2002). Leisure is an aspect that gains an additional weight in a time in which short-term employment has become a typical phenomenon among the highly-skilled people in Finland (Outinen, 2011). Thus, one of the main challenges for the responsible entities seems to be the development of the abilities to accommodate diverse populations with distinct leisure interests and aspirations within the same social and physical space (Lança, 2007). This seems of particular importance since in a society focused on work, leisure is the only public sphere in which the individuals could decide mainly based on their own satisfaction, as Elias and Dunning suggest (1992, cit. Cuenca Cabeza & Prat, 2012).

Previous research on HSI in Finland has focused mainly on the residential patterns (Eskelä, 2013; Vaattovaara *et al*, 2010) and the processes of socialization (Koskela, 2010, 2014). This research, instead, is concentrated on leisure as the core field in an individual’s life in which the identity is more shaped and can be expressed more widely (Kelly, 1983). Leisure is an opportunity to keep connected with one’s own culture, traditions and past experiences (Hilbrecht, 2007). At the same time, it is a privileged field for the questioning of the working, familial and cultural values (Camargo, 1984). On the other hand, leisure is also seen as an essential aspect to build and shape social networks (Glover & Hemingway, 2005), crucial to live in the Finnish society (Raunio, 2003). Then, leisure could be an opportunity to understand the cultural diversity, deal with its conflicts and to improve the quality of the social relations between the individuals. Thus, leisure is conceptualised in this study as the culture (in a broad sense) that is lived during the time away from work. However, leisure is also more than just time, evolving also spaces and attitudes (Marcellino, 2000). In this way, leisure is also understood as a source of satisfaction that is itself an end (Tolle, 2006).

The spaces where leisure will be explored in this research are four Finnish cities: Kuopio, Jyväskylä, Tampere and Turku. The societies today offer bigger chances for the living of leisure experiences, but those experiences are enjoyed in different ways by each individual (Cuenca Cabeza & Prat, 2012). Hence, the research questions are: 1.) What does leisure mean to the highly-skilled immigrants living in the Finnish cities? and 2.) What is the relevance of leisure in the integration process of highly-skilled immigrants in the Finnish cities? This gains even more relevance with the actual context, where remote work (meaning less time commuting) gives more free time to each individual.

De Troyer Silke

Ghent University and University of Antwerp – Belgium

Supervisors: Prof. dr. Griet Roets, Prof. dr. Stijn Oosterlynck and Prof. dr. Peter Raeymaeckers

Abstract

Solidarity and religion: co-creating complementary forms of solidarity through action research

Soligion, a combination of solidarity and religion, is a project in which the University of Antwerp, KULeuven and Ghent University work together and in which I work as a PhD researcher. It's a project about solidarity, that investigates the collaboration and complementarity between Faith-based organizations (FBO's) and Welfare State Institutions (WSI's) in five Belgian cities. My doctoral research is about solidarity and complementarity within the interaction between FBO's (civil society) and WSI's; and tackles four specific issues/ themes. The first one is the referral issue, in which WSI's are referring clients to FBO's nevertheless ethical and political sensitivities. The second one is the funding issue, because FBO's are experiencing difficulties to apply for funding because of their identity. The third issue is about the role of intermediary actors, who often lack support and adequate methodologies and the fourth issue includes the core task debate, which is addressed through the lens of the expressed right to a culturally specific funeral (De Munck, 2019). These issues/ themes came out of some insights, which were defined in the preliminary research. Welfare State Institutions, like OCMW's in Belgium, are experiencing difficulties to respond to the needs of (some) people with a precarious citizenship status (or people who don't claim their social rights). These people can hardly be helped by state institutions because of their status and lack of formal rights, which normally allows people to get help from these institutions in the welfare state. But on the other hand, these people are getting more and more supported by religious inspired initiatives and organizations. In this light, Faith-based organizations and initiatives are getting more and more involved in social support, in which they provide direct or informal solidarity. This interaction between FBO's and WSI's is subject of research because it can cause frictions, tensions,... (captured in the four issues/themes) but can also create possibilities (De Munck, 2019; De Troyer, 2020). Interactions, the four issues, difficulties, complementarity,... between Welfare State Institutions and Faith-based organizations, will be examined through action research. This method implies that I, as a researcher, intervene in the existing practices of FBO's and WSI's in an intensive dialogue and collaborate with the actors. Action research is about 'knowing through doing' over 'knowing through thinking' (Reason & Bradbury, 2003) but since I am a beginning PhD researcher, this action research has not yet started. New procedures, practices, complementarity, policy notes,... are pursued as the output of this research.

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rudi Roose
Cosupervisor: Prof. Dr. Griet Roets

Abstract

Researching the relationship between Child Welfare and Protection Services (in Flanders – Dutch part of Belgium) and poverty

Background and purpose: Social work is currently increasingly rooted in changing socio-economic and political developments, which is reflected in the persistent prevalence of poverty and an intensification of existing social inequalities. Poverty and social inequality have, however, far-reaching consequences for the lives of children and families, and these developments provide major challenges for Child Welfare and Protection. This doctoral research focuses on the question whether, and if so, how, Child Welfare and Protection Services can deal with social inequality and poverty as a social and structural problem instead of merely a problem of individual parents and children. Based on a literature review, we examine how the relation between CWPS and poverty historically took shape – in Flanders and internationally - and the debates which surround this question in contemporary CWPS practices. Historically, Child Welfare and Protection is organized in the 19th century as an answer from the government to the problem of poverty and the consequences of this structural problem for children. In short, at that time the purposes of the state was to protect society against the problems caused by poverty and to prevent and protect children for the sake of becoming good and productive citizens. In the pedagogical answer to the social problem and in the guidance of families, the poverty problem seems to be ignored, historically and actually, because of the complexity of poverty as a structural problem.

During the last decades, the relationship between poverty and Child Welfare and Protection Services (CWPS) has frequently been problematized by a wide diversity of stakeholders. This relationship is subject to recent international and national studies, which show evidence of the impact of interventions on families in poverty. CWPS have received critiques for being controlling instead of supportive towards families who come into contact with CWPS services and professionals. Until now, this research encompasses several empirical sub-studies in which we examine how frontline practitioners and policy actors on organizational and governmental level deal with poverty and what the underlying assumptions are behind their actions. We focus on the frontline workers and the policy actors of the Youth Welfare Agency, a governmental organization in Flanders (the Dutch speaking part of Belgium), responsible for child welfare and child protection, which has a public mandate to intervene in families for the sake of the safety of the child. Like in many countries, Child Welfare and Protection in Flanders is currently working according to Signs of Safety, which is perceived as an innovative, strengths-based, safety-oriented and evidence-based model of child protection casework. The first part of our research concerns the strategies of frontline professionals in CWPS of the Agency in dealing with risk in poverty situations. Through in depth interviews and focus groups that were analyzed, the findings show that professionals of CWPS are poverty-aware and overall they have a view on poverty as a structural problem in society and as such they develop different strategies in dealing with poverty. The managers of the governmental organisation do not overtly consider poverty as a negotiable issue on the organisational level. In the absence of an organisational policy and culture in which this complexity can be a vital subject of debate, a friction appears for the practitioners between organisational expectations and the concerns of the families. In this regard, what has been referred to as ‘poverty is the wallpaper of practice’ by Morris et al. (2018) seems to exist on an organizational level rather than on the frontline level. The dominant perspective on poverty and the idea of a limited role of practitioners can be seen as a ‘hegemonic project’ with the Signs of Safety approach as the vehicle of this project.

The second sub study consists of 23 in depth interviews with policy makers of Child Welfare and Protection and other organizations that have influenced the organizational policy to find out what the underlying assumptions are behind their decisions. The study is based on an exploration of the perspectives of the managers of the Youth Welfare Agency to investigate whether they are aware of the link between poverty as a social problem, the challenges and daily struggle of frontline practitioners and the families in which they intervene in dealing with poverty and social inequality, and the influence of implementing Signs of Safety on poverty-aware frontline practice. Methodologically a theoretical framework to analyze the interviews is developed, based on the writings of the Italian theorist and political activist Antonio Gramsci (1891 - 1937) on the significance of 'hegemony', 'common sense' and other key elements. The challenge consists in analyzing the interviews by 'thinking with Gramsci' based on the method of 'plugging one text into another' (Jackson and Mazzei, 2016).

Dewanckel Lore

Ghent University, Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. dr. Griet Roets

Abstract

Researching the role of social work in the non-take up of social rights: a retrospective analysis of the pathways of people in poverty

During the development of the welfare states after the second World War, the concepts of citizenship and social rights were coined in Europe. The welfare state is responsible for pursuing and legally protecting these social rights its citizens are entitled to. The role of social work within the welfare state is to support people to realise their social rights. Recently, however, the welfare state has been under pressure and is facing growing social, economic and demographic challenges which create barriers in realising the social rights of certain groups. Citizens are formally entitled to social rights, but in practice research evidence shows that their rights are not realised. This widespread phenomenon has been called ‘the non-take up of social rights’. The non-take up of social rights has been designated as a major factor inducing and maintaining poverty. Therefore this research project focusses specifically on the non-take up of social rights of people in poverty, and on the role of social work in supporting the take up of social rights in situations of poverty. The central objective of this research project is to gain insight into and deepen the current knowledge about the complex and dynamic processes that are at play in the non-take up of social rights of people in poverty. We adopt a dynamic rather than a static definition of non-take up, that perceives non-take up as a complex process. Research shows, for example, that there can be a lack of take up of social rights due to the non-knowledge, the non-claiming and the non-reception of people according to their rights. Of great importance here is looking at the reasons behind this lack of take up. Moreover, we define non-take up as a lack of material as well as immaterial resources, and focus not only on the individual but also look at the relationship between the individual and the structural level. The paradigm of lifeworld orientation developed by Grunwald and Thiersch will therefore serve as the theoretical framework for this qualitative research project. This leads to the three main research questions which are the following: (I) Which material and immaterial structural resources are available for people in poverty that can enable them to take up their social rights? (II) How and why do people in poverty make use of material and immaterial structural resources that enable them to take up their social rights? (III) How can social workers support people in poverty to reveal their aspirations in making use of material and immaterial resources that enable them to take up their social rights? This research project will be divided into four different work packages, each consisting of a cluster of research activities, which apply a complementary variety of qualitative research methods. The first three work packages each focus on one of the research questions and cover specific strategies of data collection and data analysis, that are systematically integrated in the fourth work package.

Di Matteo Claudia

Lund University, Sweden

Supervisors: Norma Montesino, Roberto Scaramuzzino

Abstract

The general aim of my PhD proposal is to reconstruct state responses at the intersection of Gender and Migration. In particular, I will focus my attention to the study of Gender-based Violence (GBV) welfare services accessed by stateless women displaced in Italy, France, Sweden. Those three countries have been chosen because representatives of the conventional division of European welfare states in “systems/regimes”. In practical terms, the aim is to analyse how racism and gender inequalities are normalized, taken for granted, and can co-exist within democratic European institutions that are the very expression of human rights and equality principles.

A systematic literature review will be carried out to gather evidences in the field of GBV. This will be followed by interviews with experts in field in order to identify the main linguistic categories related to GBV. In doing that, the codification of the material will aim to reframe the state of the art with the language of intersectionality (e.g. to what extent stateless women are visible/invisible in the field of GBV? What type of sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity is represented and therefore protected by the routinized professional practices?)

The systematic literature review and the state of the art will help me progressively to move into the complex every-day organisation of practices.

In order to empirically inquire what are the social categories used in the field and what is the impact on the daily practice, the aim is to explore the habitus of the social workers/practitioners involved in this community of practice. The habitus is a disposition for action that is shaped by social categories internalised by the subject (social workers).

I will carry out semi-structure interviews with practitioners, working in five specific social services institutionalised by the EU Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women (Istanbul Convention, 2011). The EU Convention has been ratified by Italy, France and Sweden, so the data will be comparable.

The technique used for the interview is the so-called vignette method, which consists in presenting short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances. During the interviews, will be asked to the participants to describe how they feel the person in the story would act, how they would respond, and how they feel about it. This exercise will enable the professional to self-reflect on what Bourdieu called *doxa*, which means reflecting on the daily actions that are taken for granted by professionals and that have an impact on service users. The data created will be analysed throughout a process of ‘**sorting**’, which means giving a structure to the mental map of the individuals. In doing this, it is possible to sum up the individual maps, creating a cluster of ‘**collective maps**’, making possible the comparability of the data collected from professionals who are different in terms of socio-economic background, work status, organisational context, professional expertise. Other methods are still under evaluation.

Dierckx Melissa

Ghent University

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Michel Vandebroek, Dr. Jochen Devlieghere

Abstract

Social cohesion is placed at the heart of our society as - metaphorically speaking - the glue that binds our society together. It refers to the interdependence between individuals in society and received momentum in research and policy in response to societal developments that are deemed to inhibit this particular social cohesion. Social cohesion, subsequently made its appearance in the domain of social work. The International Federation of Social Workers claims that social cohesion is one of the objectives of social work practices: *“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work”*.

A particular field of interest to grasp the concept of social cohesion in social work lies in child and family social work as child and family services have gained momentum as ideal for creating social cohesion. Interesting is how these child and family services have been placed high on the political agenda by legislative bodies to achieve the aim of restoring social cohesion. In the end, it has been and still is argued that child and family services can and should foster social cohesion in our society. However, it remains highly unclear how social cohesion is conceptualised in the field of child and family social work. This lack of conceptualisation of social cohesion inhibits its operationalisation and jeopardizes the study of theory-based practices. The main objective of this research is to contribute to the conceptualisation and operationalisation of social cohesion in relation to child and family social work. The central research question, on the conceptualisation and operationalisation of social cohesion in relation to child and family social work in contexts of increased diversity, unfolds in several research questions: (I) What could be theoretical conceptualisation(s) of social cohesion that is both scientifically valid and addresses the changing needs of policy makers in relation to child and family social work?; (II) How is social cohesion operationalised in child and family services? (III) How can a theoretical framework of social cohesion be integrated into an applicable theoretical framework for theory-based practices in child and family services? Considering the nature of the research questions, we engage in qualitative, interpretative research. Thereby we integrate a multi-level approach, combining the levels of the community, institutions and individuals. In so doing, social cohesion will be approached as a sensitizing concept. Sensitizing concepts are opposite to definitive concepts, according to Blumer *“whereas definitive concepts provide prescriptions of what to see, sensitizing concepts merely suggest directions along which to look”*.

A multi-method design will be applied, combining a systematic literature review, document analysis, qualitative interviews, critical incident technique, participant observation, focus groups and the Delphi method. The research will take place in three carefully selected cases, where each case represents a typical but significantly different neighborhood. The neighborhoods vary on the history and nature of diversity and neighborhood deprivation.

Diletta Mauri

Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science Trento University (Italy)

Supervisor: Silvia Fargion

Abstract

The overall aim of my research project is to investigate the relationship between problematic experiences in childhood and the assumption of a parental role. I mean to take into account both risk factors and strategies aimed at breaking the intergenerational transmission of deprivation, mistreatment and disadvantage. For this reason, I'm going to carry out a systematic study of representation of parental role by care-experienced adults, that is mothers and fathers who, as children, have been placed in out-of-home care. Care-experienced people are exposed to the long-term impact of traumatic events and conditions undergone during childhood or adolescence. I will examine the group that have become parents, to find out how they live their parental role, how they give meaning to their experience, how they connect it to the past, which coping strategies they have addressed it or are facing it with.

Innovative aspects

Scientific literature shows that research in this area is mainly concerned with mothers, especially in the early years of their motherhood, and the risk factors connected with the negative experience during childhood. The aim of my project is to better understand the agency of care-experienced parents, while not denying the vulnerability on which most of the scientific literature is focused. Moreover, I would like to give voice to anti-oppressive narratives, which allow to discuss discriminatory mechanisms and stereotyped identities full of negative characteristics. With my research, I aim to explore "silent spaces" of parenting exposed to multiple risk factors. Qualitative research has long explored stories of individuals and neglected silences. As Charmaz & Belgrave¹ stated, many situations have often been studied, but that does not mean that the subjects and their experiences have been heard. Widespread knowledge about vulnerable parenthood has developed, but perceptions and subjective experiences are still a dark area. This will be the focus of my research, including the point of view of fathers, a group often not considered in previous research.

Method

The research strategy is qualitative and participatory as it allows in-depth access to the representations of mothers and fathers in relation to their parental role. My aim is to provide an in depth understanding of the parenthood of care-experienced people and not only to describe it, I therefore intend to use a methodology that allows to approach their point of view in a systematic way and that opens up to the understanding of the subjective experience². Although I remain open to various research methodologies, what seems to me best fitting to this purpose is constructivist Grounded Theory.

Results

My research aims to provide useful elements for professionals engaged in support of parenthood and for policies aimed at protecting and supporting children and families. In addition, I want to contribute to the scientific debate on how the environment and life experiences affect the parental role, especially in relation to the negative experiences in childhood. I would like to highlight what is perceived as supporting and the factors that parents consider breaking the intergenerational transmission of deprivation, mistreatment and disadvantage.

Dohnalová Eva

Charles University, Faculty of arts, Prague, Czech Republic

Supervisor: PhDr. Kateřina Šámalová, Ph.D

Abstract

The role of municipalities in the integration policy of the Czech Republic

The aim of my research is to examine the setting of municipal policies towards migrants and at the same time the attitudes of local politicians and local government employees towards foreigners and the implementation of integration policy in their municipality. Due to the nature of research questions, I chose qualitative research, the multi-case study. The research sample consists of 5 cities in the Czech Republic. It is a deliberate selection, where the main criteria are the size of the city, the number of foreigners and experience with integration policy.

Hranice - a town with up to 20,000 inhabitants; foreigners about 2% of the population predominant group of foreigners are seasonal agency workers mainly from Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania in an industrial zone; the absence of an explicit integration policy.

Havlíčkův Brod - a town with about 23,000 inhabitants; foreigners about 3% of the population, long-term experience with foreign workers (esp. from Mongolia), implementation of integration projects since 2015.

Olomouc - a regional city, foreigners about 3.6% of the population, the share of permanently settled foreigners and with a temporary stay is similar, there is no explicit integration policy.

Brno - regional city, foreigners about 7% of the population, the share of permanently settled foreigners and with a temporary stay is similar, formulated strategy for the integration of foreigners 2020-2026.

Prague - the capital and region, the largest share of foreigners in the population of about 16%, formulated integration policy since 2014.

So far, I have carried out research in 1 city, Hranice.

The main research question is: **What importance do municipalities attach to the policy of integration of foreigners and how do they implement it?**

The subqueries are as follows:

1. Who does the municipality consider a foreigner?
2. How does the municipality evaluate the state of integration of foreigners in its territory?
3. What is the integration policy of the municipality?
4. How does the municipality evaluate the current integration policy?
5. What should the (successful) integration of foreigners look like in the concept of the municipality and what instruments of municipal policy can it support?

To obtain data, the main research tool is conducting semi-structured interviews with respondents from:

- Political representation of the city
- Municipal staff
- Civil society organizations
- Employers
- Health facilities
- Schools

Another technique of data collection is document analysis (strategic and conceptual materials, legislation), analysis of relevant secondary data and research on integration policies in the Czech Republic and interviews with experts in the field of migration and integration.

The term integration policy refers to legislative, strategic and conceptual documents at the level of the EU, state, regions and municipalities that explicitly deal with the topic of integration of foreigners. In the analysis, I deal with integration policy at the declaratory level, not at the level of evaluating its implementation.

Dons Gretl

Ghent University Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Rudi Roose

Abstract

This is my first specialist course as part of my doctoral studies. I officially started last year in May. So it's all pretty new to me. In my daily life, I am the director of a small non-profit organisation in East Flanders. It is my daily practice that has triggered me to do research.

This course is completely in line with my research. After all, it's about transparency in child and family social work. My problem statement is that we strive for "participation" in child and family social work at all levels (from the government, social work practices to pressure groups). Starting from its personal theoretical framework, every sector and every organization has its own interpretation of the concept. Obviously, this has an impact on those who undergo interventions. After all, the degree to which and the way they collaborate participatively with the client system depends on the interpretation of this concept that is used by the organization. This can range from informing families when implementing a care plan to full partnership.

A democratic form of partnership in social work is possible only if people have access to comprehensible information about the arguments built up by social workers. At the same time, research shows a great lack of transparency in arguments leading to interventions in child and family social work. Social work often builds up its own arguments - for instance through diagnosis -, and based on those arguments they make decisions.

My research questions are:

which dilemmas, paradoxes and inherent tensions come to the fore in the issue of transparency and what can be helpful for practitioners who are confronted with this on a daily basis?

- How is transparency conceptualized by child and family social workers?
- How do they translate transparency into practice and what dilemmas, paradoxes and underlying fields of tension do they encounter?
- How can child and family social workers be supported in achieving transparency?

Together with child and family social workers, we want to investigate how they make the concept transparency explicit in their daily practice and what dilemmas they face in this context.

Eichhorn Anja

University of Siegen, DFG graduate program 'Consequences of Social Services Work'
Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Albrecht Rohrmann, Prof. Dr. Chantal Munsch

Abstract

In my dissertation I examine the consequences residential child care (Heimerziehung) has on involved mothers and fathers. Impact studies on residential child care mainly focus the biographical development of young people. The co-operation with (birth) parents is recognized as an important impact factor. However, (birth) parents' perspectives, experiences and appropriation processes of residential child care are empirically under-represented. According to German law, the main purpose of residential child care is to ensure the wellbeing of children and adolescents as well as to promote their development, education and participation. Depending on the young person's age and level of development as well as the possibilities of improving the upbringing conditions in their family, residential child care shall either try to achieve a return to the family, prepare for upbringing in another family or prepare for an independent life. The cooperation between institutions and parents is often ambivalent because a child's out-of-home-placement goes hand in hand with a public questioning of parenthood (Pomey 2015: 156). The need for 'being worked with' continuously confronts parents with their own failure and partially deprives them from their parenting role (Trede 2017: 251). Receiving help presupposes a deficit attribution to the (upbringing ability of) parents. According to Schrödter (2002: 2), one consequence of this is that help "is only available at the price of a damaged identity". Following this consideration, I want to use narrative interviews to reconstruct as "who" or "what" fathers and mothers position themselves in the reflection of residential child care. By the term 'self-positioning', I understand the idiosyncratic identifications of parents with which they relate themselves to discursive phenomena, addressings or attributions they encounter (Varga & Munsch 2017). This process, in turn, I understand as one possible consequence of residential child care. The perspective on the "(relatively) unbiased term of 'consequences'" (Dollinger 2020: 425) makes it possible to transcend perspectives of mere 'success', 'failure', subject-related 'benefits', 'non-benefits' or 'harm' of residential child care. Narrative interviews are particularly suitable as a research instrument because they offer the interviewees the opportunity to develop their individual perspectives and to set their own relevancies.

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Feryn Nele

Ghent University

Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Rudi Roose & Dr. Joris De Corte

Abstract

The link between social inequality and health has been widely recognized, as there are systematic differences in health between people from lower and higher social classes. Accordingly, the exclusively medical model of disease has shifted to a more integral approach of health, because people have beside medical, also social needs. As a consequence, there is a widespread consensus that there is a need for partnership between health care and social work in order to deal with the complexity and multidimensionality of health and social problems. Primary health care services are increasingly integrating the approach of interprofessional collaboration for service delivery. Consequently, the role of social work is expanding in these primary care services. This is mainly the case in Primary Care Centres (PCC), known as ‘maison médicales’ in the Walloon and Brussels-Capital Regions and as ‘wijkgezondheidscentra’ in the Flemish Region. Those centers distinguish from other primary care settings as they provide an integrated service of care working in partnership with different professionals. In addition to medical concerns, attention is paid to social factors of a person’s life. Because of the local context and accessible way of working, they reach a diverse population, including people who are in a vulnerable position. Despite the current focus on these practices, in the existing body of research on interprofessional collaboration within health and social work practices, we can identify some critical shortcomings on different levels. First, it is unclear how service users themselves experience these interprofessional practices, including the role of social work. Second, despite the rapid increase of social workers within primary care settings, little is known about social work’s integration and role into this current expanding area. In this PhD we will therefore examine the experiences of different stakeholders regarding interprofessional collaboration between medical and social professionals in primary care centers.

Heyenn Hannah

Department of Social Work and Social Welfare in Kassel, Germany

Supervisor: Patricia Frericks

Abstract**“Mobile Welfare Arrangements in the EU – Social Protection of Highly Mobile Union Citizens”.**

“Mobile Welfare Arrangements in the EU – Social Protection of Highly Mobile Union Citizens” generates data, analyses and theoretical approaches on the link of mobile life courses of EU citizens and social security institutions on a supranational, national and informal level.

By investigating the social security of migrants with high mobility in their life courses in the transnational context of EU social policies, the dissertation links the micro level of life courses and migration practices of individual migrants to the meso level of social assistance through urban networks of migrant and welfare organisations up to the macro level of the defacto and dejure social security of hypermobile Union citizens. The largest group of mobile union citizens in Germany, the Polish, serve as the case.

Research question:

To what extent does transnational social protection of mobile EU citizens contribute to social inequality at the intersection of gender, migration and class? "

Methods:

The cumulative dissertation uses a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research question. The concept for the investigation of mobile welfare arrangements is designed on the basis of a literature review and desk research. The meso level of the migrant networks and organizations as well as the institutional change in the social security of Eastern European migrants is developed on the basis of narrative individual and diadic interviews using the documentary method of analysis. The evaluation of the regulations and laws for the welfare inclusion of mobile EU citizens takes place via a policy analysis. Empirical data on the application of the concept of mobile welfare arrangements based on the case study of mobile EU citizen from Poland are collected quantitatively using an event history survey. The biographical data recorded in the survey are recorded using quantitative life course analysis in a typology of mobile life courses and welfare arrangements. The influence of independent variables such as gender, class (or educational background, income group) and age on the welfare arrangements is evaluated by regression analyses.

Horvat Gordana

Faculty Of Law Osijek, Study of Social work , Croatia

Supervisors: Prof.dr.sc. Vito Flaker, Prof.dr.sc. Jana Mali, Faculty of social work, Slovenia

Abstract

There is an increasing number of divorces, family ties are weak (Cooper, 1967, p. 44), the new division of labour leads to the need to harmonise roles in the family, and pressures on the family caused by economic difficulties are growing (Janković, 2008, p. 19). The question arises as to how families today reconcile work-life balance, taking into account the new division of labour, family roles and available institutional and community support. Support for families of institutional origin, based on support for the existing division of labour, thus enabling a person to go to work by relieving their functions and caring for family members who do not enter the labour market, is no longer sufficient. In working with the family, it is necessary to develop equality and cooperation (Madsen, 2007, p. 34), respecting families as experts in their lives, and such considerations and approaches distinguish social work from other sciences. The problem is that there are not enough developed models of support for families outside of institutional care, and in the development of new models it is necessary to hear the voice of the family and look at its perspective. The family group conference model is based on equal access to each family member. The model can be applied as a form of work with the family and the way in which social work approaches the complexity of the family, but it is not present in Croatian practice and does not deal with the impact of work on the family.

Thesis 1: Conflict between work and family life and gender differences in employment characteristics are difficult to reconcile and do not have an adequate response to assistance.

RQ1: How do mother and father experience gender differences in work and family life?

RQ2: How do parents experience reconciling work and family life and how much it burdens them?

RQ3: What difficulties in the functioning of the family do parents recognise and how do they experience them?

RQ4: What institutional and community resources do parents use to reconcile work and family life and are they in contact with social workers or other professionals to help them?

Thesis 2: Social work assistance and support to families can be provided by family group conference empowerment method through a community support network including sphere of work.

RQ1: How does the family group conference method help to form family support?

RQ2: How do family members perceive the help and participation of community members?

RQ3: How to include the sphere of work in the family group conference model and how does it contribute to family empowerment?

RQ4: How the experience of family group conference differs from other methods of support in social work?

The research will be conducted in three phases according to the funnel principle. In the first phase, a quantitative research will be conducted on a sample of 428 parents, in the second phase an interview with thirty families will be conducted, while an action research will be conducted in the third phase of research with five families in the form of a family group conference. The data collected in each individual phase, after analysis, will provide knowledge and basis for the implementation of the next phase and determining the nature of the issue and the direction of research.

It is important for the science and practice of social work to understand the reality as it is perceived by users, but also the reality that can be changed. We need to approach transitional changes in families by studying new approaches and methods following the development of new difficulties that families face. The research will be partly carried out through action research using a family group conference, which will thematise the work that has not been recorded in the research so far. The contribution of the proposed research is in the representation of family reality and the collection of practical knowledge from the family as well as knowledge that the family will adopt and thus develop, which is a two-way process. Research in social work is mostly focused on the cause of the problem and the help needed, while this research, with its developed methodology based on knowledge and in accordance with action theories, will focus on the important need of social work, which is to say how.

Kattein Alexandra

University of Rostock/ Germany

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Vicki Täubig

Abstract

Studies of forced migration and refugees are under-represented in the German research landscape, especially those on the internal dynamics and everyday life in refugee camps. Those (few) studies dealing with standards of living in German refugee camps (mostly published in the years of 2015/16) address the poor living conditions and the high levels of violence and conflict. Staff members inherit a key role in governance, hierarchy formation, and distribution of resources. Some studies even mention an active role in abuse of power and maintenance of exclusion.

How to position oneself as a social worker ethically and professionally remains a question of personal attitude and inner negotiation. The reconstruction of these professional and ethical attitudes and positions in the marginalized environment of German refugee camps is the main interest of my research. Between January and June 2020, I conducted a field study in a refugee camp in Berlin focusing on questions of everyday life, governance, and the influences of the COVID-19 pandemic and if/ how these are contributing to marginalization processes.

The onset of the COVID-19 crisis and the collective dismissal of the team - due to the termination of the contract between the authorities and the refugee camp's operating company - are two major incidents in the collected data, which make some remarkable phenomena visible. These events can be seen as 'critical events in a field of crisis', making intensified variations of everyday life visible. Discussions, negotiations and positioning of professionals were now done in the open and could be observed by the ethnographer.

The ethnographic field research (approx. 200 pages of observational protocols) was conducted in the position of an 'observing participant'. For coding and theoretical sampling of the data, I am operationalising the methodology of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss). The aim is to find contrasts in the material and construct hypotheses and theories through the analysis of the data, so the results can contribute to the professionalization discourse and debates pertaining to social work with refugees.

Koltun Gil

University of Haifa – Israel

Prof. Anat Freund

Abstract

The main objectives of the proposed study are to examine the career intentions of social workers, and to locate the factors that predict them by examining attitudes, norms, and perceived perception at the employee level. According to Planned Behavior Theory (Ajzen, 2002, 2001), on which the study is based, employees' career intentions are reflected in three career patterns: (a) the kaleidoscopic career pattern; (b) the Protean career pattern; and (c) the "career without boundaries" pattern. Consistent with the planned behavior theory, the study suggests three main factors for predicting social workers' career intentions : (a) attitudes toward the given behavior; (b) subjective norms towards conduct; and (c) perception of behavior control.

Population

The study population is comprised of social workers from the private, public, and third sectors from all over the country.

Sampling procedure

The sample will include about 600 social workers from different organizational sectors (the private sector, the public sector and the third sector), with varying degrees of tension and diverse specializations. The sample in the present study is a non-randomized sample.

Research tool

The research tool is a closed questionnaire containing 72 items. The questionnaire is divided into six sub-questionnaires. Most questions are rated using a Likert scale ranging from 1-5 (there is one questionnaire rated using a 1-7 scale).

Findings

The study findings suggest that the main factor in predicting career patterns was *perceived behavioral control*.

Discussion

Perceived behavioral control reflects the extent to which a person perceives a particular behavior as easy or difficult to control, taking into account factors such as the resources, information, and opportunities that are available to him or her at a given time (Doll & Ajzen, 1992). In the context of the present study, social workers will take an active stance towards career development according to their beliefs – conscious and unconscious – regarding their perceived behavioral control. As mentioned, behavioral control develops, among other things, by receiving up-to-date and professionally vital information, gathering information about existing opportunities in the labor market, and controlling existing resources at the employee level. Thus, when the social worker perceives his behavioral control as low, he will find it difficult to develop his career, regardless of one organization or another. In contrast, when social workers have high perceived behavioral control, as the findings of the present study suggest, they will be characterized by a more active approach to career development –through resources, opportunity, and knowledge control (Brinkert, 2018). Based on these findings, it may be assumed that social workers have a basic sense of the personality structure of perceived behavioral control; thus, they probably feel some kind of control over the situation as well as a sense of power to influence and initiate change. Whether this feeling is conscious or not, one can assume that it is just this type of attitude which led them to engage in a therapeutic profession in the first place. This is because these professions require the ability to provide others with the necessary knowledge and support needed to bring about change processes.

Kumara Susantha

MU/Czech Republic

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Pavel Navratil

Abstract

Social Well-being of Young Suicide Survivors in the Post-discharged Period: The Role of Professional Social Work

This study is premised on the hypothesis that a thorough and deep scholarship and knowledgebase on the very personal social well-being experience of young suicide survivors is a prerequisite in the possible development of an effective postvention support system, which will curtail the recurrence of suicide reattempts and help the survivors to return to a 'normal life'. However, close examination of existing literature suggests that social work research on suicide prevention is insufficiently developed in the area of social wellbeing experience of suicide survivors. Though early studies have discussed the experience prior to the attempt, emotions and feelings attached to survival, and the quality of service received after the attempt, there has not been sufficient academic inquiry into how suicide survivors reintegrate with society and return to normalcy. It is very logical to think that the ultimate goal of postvention support systems on suicide prevention should be improving the social well-being experience of survivors and helping the survivors to achieve a dignified and meaningful life through successful social reintegration in the period after discharged from inpatient care. Therefore, it is evident that there is an important knowledge gap on the suicide survivors' very personal experiences on key dimensions of social well-being such as social inclusion, social acceptance, social actualization, social contribution and social coherence which are the key indicators of success of returning to normal life and withdrawing from suicide mentality. In response, this study seeks to answer how young suicide survivors experience of social inclusion, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization and social coherence in the post-discharged period. The investigation of social well-being experience of suicide survivors is extremely significant not only to enrich the suicide prevention literature, theoretically, but also to develop an effective postvention support system.

Lance Hemady Chad
University of Edinburgh
Supervisor: Dr Franziska Meinck

Abstract

The impact of maternal exposure to childhood adversity on infant outcomes: Mediating role of teratogens

Exposure to adversity during childhood (e.g. child maltreatment) is consistently linked with long-term adverse biopsychosocial outcomes. There is also evidence that suggest that the intergenerational transmission of adversity, from mother to child, can occur through biological pathways (e.g. maternal-placental-foetal gestational biology), and can increase the child's vulnerability toward both short-term and long-term negative health outcomes.

This doctoral thesis will explore the role of cumulative exposure to early childhood adversity on infant outcomes, specifically concerning the infant's gestational age and birth weight. The study will also examine if the use of teratogens (alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs) plays a mediating role between the two. Most of the studies involving adverse childhood experiences are from high-income countries. This study will analyse data collected as part of the Evidence for Better Lives Study, an ongoing global prospective birth cohort study conducted in eight low- and middle-income country sites and involving 1208 mother-dyads.

Descriptive analyses will include demographic characteristics of participants, prevalence of ACE and teratogen exposure as well as associations between these factors and infant outcomes. Further, multilevel mediation analysis will be conducted to test the direct and indirect effects of the predictor on the outcome, through the mediating factor.

The cross-cultural comparative focus of the study can help formulate evidence-based recommendations that would inform context-specific public health and social work practice.

Further, it can contribute to national and international policies regarding child protection, violence prevention, and early child development.

Le Pavic Gaëlle

Ghent University, Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ine Lietaert

Abstract

Access to social welfare within and across *de facto* borders: The role of civil society organisations in the case of Abkhazia and Transnistria

After the collapse of the USSR, borders shifted significantly because of the independence of the fifteen Soviet Republics. New borders resulted from this fluid conjecture but were not always recognized internationally. Some of these borders have been erased through reintegration processes; others still exist *de facto* as opposed to *de jure*. The materiality of these borders has a significant impact both at the state level (e.g. in the *de facto* state - parent state relation) and at the micro level; in the population's daily life. This impact is tangible not only at the *de facto* border but also in everyday life aspects such as access to education, labor and healthcare. This research focus on access to welfare across the *de facto* border and particularly on the role played by civil society organisations (CSOs) in welfare provision to those living in the *de facto* territory.

Two case studies have been selected: Abkhazia and Transnistria, both labeled as *de facto* states as they parted from their parent state (respectively Georgia and Moldova) in the 1990s and are only partially internationally recognized.

Three studies will be conducted following a grassroots approach with a qualitative methodology.

- **Study 1:** Maps CSOs intervening within and across the *de facto* borders of Abkhazia and Transnistria in the field of social welfare and social services with a specific emphasis on the impact of the *de facto* border on CSOs activities. This will be done through document analysis complemented by online in-depth semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders (n= 2x10)
- **Study 2:** Investigates the impact of bordering practices on CSOs operating within and across *de facto* borders to provide social welfare services. This will be done through ethnographic observations within a selected CSO. We will focus on the interactions among social workers, between social workers and beneficiaries, and with the *de facto* state and parent states' authorities as well as with donors. This participant observation will be completed with in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews (n=2x15) with key informants such as CSO workers and volunteers.
- **Study 3:** Analyzes access to social welfare in the two *de facto* states from the point of view of beneficiaries with a particular emphasis on the impact of *de facto* borders and citizenship policy on access to social services and welfare. This will be done through in-depth semi-structured interviews and one focus group will be conducted in each setting. Participants (n=2x20) will be selected and invited during study 2.

These three studies document the impact of *de facto* borders on access to social welfare and social services with a specific emphasis on the role played by CSOs. CSOs prove to be an essential agent in facilitating access to social welfare as the *de facto* statehood hampers significantly this access (Kolstø & Blakkisrud 2011).

Levrouw Delphine

University of Ghent

Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Stijn Vandeveld and Prof. Dr. Rudi Roose

Abstract

In residential youth care (RYC), supporting the quality of life (QoL) of children is a main priority. One of the key factors in providing good quality of care aimed at improving children's QoL, in these services, is developing a positive living group climate (Avby, 2015; Bettelheim, 1967; Kok, 1984; Ter Horst, 1977; Van der Helm, 2011, 2019; Ward, 2004). From a human rights perspective, children have the right to grow up in "normal" circumstances. A positive living climate is also described as the main therapeutic factor in RYC (Triesschman, 1969). Furthermore, Ros et al. (2013) showed that a positive living climate decreases the number of aggression incidents and separation, absconding behaviour (Attar-Schwartz, 2013). Yet, the development of a basic pedagogy seems to be under pressure, due to some evolutions, including de-institutionalisation and considering residential youth care as "a last resort" (Frensch & Cameron, 2002; Knorth et al., 2008; Boendermaker et al., 2013; Thoburn, J., 2016; Whittaker et al., 2016), a strong focus on "what works" (Boendermaker, Van Rooijen & Berg, 2013; Biesta, 2007) and managerial thinking (Clark and Newman, 1997; Mc. Lean, 2013); leading to high rates of administration, and registration tasks as perceived by youth care and educators. Taking into account this context, the development of a positive living is a complex matter. Consequently, group workers are looking for guidance concerning how they can act professionally and what good professionalism means in the current establishment of a positive living climate.

The central focus in my research relates to how organisations define "a positive living climate" and how group workers in residential youth care perceive and construct their pedagogical work with young people in line with current research underscoring the importance of a positive living climate. My research initially was linked to a learning trajectory in Flanders, led by a youth care organization in Flanders (VOT, Ieper)¹. This project focused on the meaning and the implications of an approach involving the improvement of the living climate in residential youth care. In a first work package, we investigated what could be learned from the project in improving the living climate in residential youth care. In a second work package, our research was focused on how respondents perceived a positive living group climate and which tensions they experienced in relation to the development of a basic pedagogy; In a third work package (start 2021) we will investigate on how group workers give meaning to and shape the living group climate in relation to the development of a basic pedagogy.

Leworthy Nathalie

University of York, England

Supervisors: Professor Yvonne Birks and Dr Kate Baxter

Abstract

My thesis is focused on people who pay for their own adult social care in England, also known as self-funders. Within this self-funding population, I am looking specifically at people who have recently been diagnosed with dementia and addressing how intergenerational dynamics affect their experiences of navigating the care system and the decisions they make around both their support and financial needs. My sample is a sub-set of a larger existent research project called 'Determind' under which my PhD sits. The Determind project is conducting seven different workstreams addressing various aspects of inequalities and quality of life for people living with dementia.

My thesis begins with an overview of the adult social care system in England and the impact this has on people who are over the current financial threshold of £23,250. People with savings and assets above this amount are required to fund their own care, and are often left unsupported and expected to organise this themselves. Busy council social service departments are already stretched and despite the fact that they should legally be providing advice support and information to self-funders under the Care Act 2014, in reality this is not the case as self-funders try to navigate a highly complex system on their own. A review of the literature on self-funders highlights that they often end up paying higher rates for the same care as council-funded clients, are often in care settings that are an over-provision for their level of need, and can experience great difficulty trying to obtain the information and advice they need in order to make informed decisions. Furthermore, when self-funding clients have exhausted their finances on paying for their care, they can also experience negative contact with councils as they 'pick up' the funding, sometimes resorting in traumatic moves of accommodation to cheaper alternatives.

My research aims to speak to self-funders and their families to determine how they went about making decisions about their care and finances, and what factors may have come into play – such as family inheritance, and informal care. My project will consist of a mixed methods approach beginning with qualitative interviews with self-funders and their families. This will be followed by secondary quantitative data analysis by generating hypotheses from my qualitative data analysis in order to test whether the first set of findings can be further understood through the use of the larger data set that I have access to via the Determind project. This is to see if my small-scale findings can be applied to a wider population to inform further research, policy or practice in adult social care.

Meylemans Eveline

Ghent University - Belgium

Supervisors: Prof. dr. Lieve Bradt, Prof. dr. Lieselot Dewilde

Abstract

Children as co-researchers: a participatory research on contemporary images of childhood and citizenship

The question of children status as democratic citizens has over the past few decades regained interest as subject of debate and topic of research in many European countries. This recent wave of (re)interest in children's citizenship is grounded in concerns about their perceived social and political alienation and is linked to the possible erosion of the democratic society.

Historically, societies have not always thought of children in terms of citizens nor stressed the importance of children's participation to public or political life. In that sense, the current emphasis on the 'active', 'participating' child seems to illustrate an important shift in our way of perceiving children and childhood. Due to the fact that questions on (good) citizenship and (good) citizenship education always reflect broader questions on how a democratic society and interactions within that society should look like. In this way, the debate on active citizenship of children should be broadened to a debate on the general position of children in society today, in which children themselves must have a clear voice.

The general aim of this research project is to deepen our understanding of children's citizenship in today's society and the way childhood is "socially" (Jenks & Fionda, 2001) and/or "generationally" (Alanen, 2002) constructed. A first study consists of a literature review on how children's citizenship (education) is historically understood and portrayed in international policies and societal debates. Further studies consist of a child-led approach, researching citizenship, childhood and children's participation rights in society. This empirical research will combine a complementary variety of research methods in which children are not only involved as object of research, but also as. In an effort to go beyond the tradition of constructing and reconstructing childhood from an adult-centred perspective, children will be included in developing the research design. Child-led research arises new possibilities to approach childhood studies and to challenge the dominant understandings and beliefs of and about children.

Naumann Katrin

Hochschule Mittweida, Germany

Prof. Dr. Barbara Wedler

Abstract

The framework of my doctoral project is addiction research at the Faculty of Social Work. The focus of my research interest is the CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) concept, which I briefly introduce in the following section:

In Germany, according to estimates by the Deutsche Hauptstelle gegen Suchtgefahren, 5-7 million relatives of alcohol addicts are considered to be directly affected by addiction. Relatives of people with substance-related disorders show increased rates of stress-related illness and psychosocial impairment. CRAFT is a concept whose central content is that relatives can have an intended direct influence on the further consumption of the addicted relative. This in turn has a positive effect on the motivation to seek help. Various skills that serve the purpose are supplemented with skills that should contribute to an increase in the quality of life of the relatives. CRAFT has been evaluated for its effectiveness in randomized controlled trials. This has been tested for problematic alcohol use as well as illicit drugs and pathological gambling. CRAFT's goals are threefold:

- Reduction of alcohol consumption
- Treatment admission of the alcohol dependent person
- Improvement of the quality of life of the relative

The addiction counselors who work with CRAFT have not yet been the focus of research. This is the starting point of my doctoral thesis. I would like to interview addiction counselors with the help of an expert interview. At the same time I would like to ask relatives about their experience in connection with CRAFT. Qualitative content analysis will be used for the evaluation. Open research questions of my dissertation are in particular: What do the providers associate with CRAFT? What do the providers implement from this concept? Which clients do they consider suitable? Which clients do they consider unsuitable? (e.g., dependent on chronification, own comorbidity, etc.) How do family members experience this intervention?

Obert Hannah

Institute for Social Work and Social Politics (ISP), Germany

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Carsten Ullrich

Abstract

One point of departure of my research project is the construction of deviance through labelling. People and social groups are labelled because of different qualities and ascribed qualities: language use, behavioral patterns, problem solving strategies etc. In my research project I focus on one quality in particular: the specific use of public space as a quality that leads to be labelled as deviant.

The public space is gendered. Whereas men can use public space not only for transit but also for leisure time activities and just being, women aren't able to use the public space in such extensive ways. Non-conform female clients of social work are women who use public space in different ways than only for transit. Examples for those women are homeless women, street sex workers and members of countercultures such as street punks. The mentioned social groups are using the public space very variant for differing reasons. Some are 'thrown' into the public space because they don't have a lasting accommodation, others are pursuing their profession which is labelled as 'deviant' through the society. Others again are using the public space to tend their image as countercultural members and for community building and peer grouping. I decided to use an ethnographic approach to reach my research aims. This means my research is based on ethnographic observation protocols, model manuscripts of the observed institutions, interactional sketches and protocols of 'friendly conversations' (Spradley).

The core of my reconstructive research are interactions between female social workers and/or female clients. Therefore, my sample group are women who are sojourning in public space, who are labelled as addressees of social work and the female social workers who are working with them. To observe interactions, I contacted different institutions of social work which are focusing on people who are labelled as deviant users of public space.

At first the current pandemia led to an interruption of my research. I planned field entry for the first half of 2020; I had to postpone my plans to conduct ethnographic material to the second half of 2020. The observation of two institutions had to be interrupted due to ethical considerations and newly imposed lockdown measures. Though I managed to observe interactions in two institutions of social work ('Bahnhofsmissionen') during the late summer months.

Currently I'm at the beginning of the reconstruction of the conducted material. I decided to fragment the protocol in interactional sequences and compare those fragments focusing on aspects of gendered behavior, the construction of gender as well as the construction of deviance, the use of public and institutional space and the discrimination because of differing personal economic positions.

Opio Mary

International Doctoral School REASON, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany
Supervisors: Prof. Birgit Dorner (Katholische Stiftungshochschule München), Prof. Ingo Kollar (Universität Augsburg)

Abstract

Teaching Assessment Competence in Social work with Flexible Computer Supported Scripts and metacognitive Reflection Prompts in a Digital Case-based Learning Environment

As E-learning gains prominence in social work curricula, there is need for research on how E-learning environments can be designed effectively to equip students with skills for practice.

Computer supported scripts (CSS) are scaffolds (instructional interventions) which provide learners with external guidance regarding when, how and in what sequence to perform certain activities. Research from the Learning Sciences shows that CSS can be used to support learners acquire domain specific skills. Providing learners with too detailed scripts, however, comes with the danger of limiting students' autonomy and self-regulated engagement in the learning process. We build on Wang, Kollar and Stegmann (2017)'s research which suggests that adaptability can be used to realize the flexibility of CSS and findings of Davis (2003) underlining that much as metacognitive prompting enhances self-regulated engagement, the form of reflection instruction influences how productive students reflect.

The aim of our project is to

- 1)examine how CSS can be used to teach assessment in social work education and whether their effects can be boosted by aid of (a) granting learners the opportunity to adapt the CSS to their own needs and (b) providing them with different kinds of reflection prompts to help them in their adaptation process.
- 2)analyze the thematic patterns of students' reflection as a means of drawing implications for digital based social work education

We raise the following research questions:

1. What are the effects of different types of external scripts (adaptable vs. strict) and metacognitive reflection prompts (specific vs. generic) as well as their different combinations on social work students' assessment competence?

We hypothesize that specific prompts should increase assessment competence more than generic prompts. Combining flexible scripts with specific prompts increases assessment competence

2. What thematic patterns can be observed in students' reflection processes, which implications can be drawn for digital based social work education?

Method

We established a 2x2 quasi experiment, with the independent variables (1) CSS (strict vs. flexible) and (2) reflection prompts (specific vs. generic). In our pre-post-test design, social work students (n=100) received four case vignettes to stimulate their engagement in a child welfare assessment.

Analysis

We create a coding rubric for the dependent Variable assessment competence and conduct statistical analysis on the material at hand. Furthermore we conduct a thematic analysis on the students' response using the reflexive approach of Braun and Clarke (2019).

References

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Piusha Madhusarie Gunawardane Chamalie

Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Supervisor: Prof Dr. Mojca Urek

Abstract

Breaking the Tolerance: Addressing Elder Abuse and Victimization at Home and Elderly Care Homes

It is not a myth that world's elderly population is increasing and each and every country has its own challenges attached to the demographic transitions. For instance, decline of birth rates increases the number of fewer participants for the workforce while decrease of death rate increases the number of dependents. The recent global pandemic Covid 19 also invited the world to consider the issues attached to growing elderly population and elderly care to a greater extent. Ageing is a biological incident in which there is a huge social and cultural perspective is applicable with reference to the elderly care. Exploring the ontology of ageing is essential as ageing is mainly seen with death and dying. On the otherhand, though child abuse is highly discussed and researched there is very less significant given to identify elder abuse it is due to many reasons. As WHO (2018) data, around 1 in 6 people 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings during the past year. Also, WHO predicts that elder abuse can be increased in many countries which are experiencing rapidly ageing populations. The main purpose of the study is to understand and explore the forms of elderly abuse against men and women in both domestic and institutional spheres in Sri Lanka. In this study, neglect, elderly maltreatment as well as need of long term care will be highlighted. Moreover, the study leads to identify how elderly men and women become victim of abuse in their old age as gender plays a main role in each life stages of men and women. This study expects to conceptualize its literature on how elderly care should be understood with fields of population trends, gerontology, gender and safe elderly care. Sample of 40 elderly men and women will be selected purposively and qualitative research design will be followed in data collection. The narrative analysis would be the focus when analyzing the field data. This study hopes to identify the care methods that prevent elderly abuse in both domestic and institutional level.

Prior Ayelet

Tel Aviv University, Israel

Supervisor: Prof. Einat Peled

Abstract

Identity construction among men who pay women for sex

A growing number of studies in the last decades sought to understand the motivations, the perceptions and the experiences of men who pay women for sex (MWPWS). Two main ideological positions seem to have guided the academic debate about these men. The first sees paying for sex as a normative behavior and thus the MWPWS are represented as legitimate clients of a commercial transaction. The second sees paying for sex as a deviant behavior that reflects patriarchal exploitative power relations and thus the MWPWS are represented as criminals who should be punished. Public discussions regarding MWPWS in Israel and around the globe also tend to be polar. Nonetheless, the social construction of paying for sex as a crime is becoming more popular, and the legal status of MWPWS is changing. In Israel, a new law that criminalizes those who pay for sex took effect in July 2020. The changing legislation and the growing social judgments of MWPWS amplify the long standing religious and moralistic views of paying for sex as a transgression and a sin, and are likely to further challenge men's self-perceptions and social interactions. The field of knowledge concerning paying for sex still lacks an understanding of what it means to be MWPWS in light of current social discourses about masculinity, sexuality, and consumerism. Therefore, this study seeks to understand how MWPWS perceive their actions within the overall array of their lives and how they manage their identity as MWPWS, which nowadays is mostly labeled as deviant. This qualitative research uses symbolic interaction as a theoretical framework to study identity construction. Symbolic interaction assumes that identity is constructed in mundane interactions, and that those interactions are shaped by and are reflected in relevant social discourse, in a constant spiral process of constructions and re-constructions. This theoretical perspective is especially relevant for studying identity construction in the context of social problems and socially-labeled identities. The study is conducted using constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis methodologies. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried with twenty three Israeli MWPWS. Data is analyzed using interpretive content analysis: rigorous axial coding is conducted in order to facilitate a multi-dimensional theoretical model explaining the identity construction of MWPWS. The present study is the first to inquire how MWPWS manage their stigmatized behavior within various family, work, social, and recreational identities and roles. Based on the data-analysis that has been conducted so far, MWPWS ascribe various and multifaceted meanings to their experiences of paying for sex and to their identity as MWPWS. Even well-established notions of intimacy and relationship for example, are assigned new and unexpected meaning in the context of paying for sex. Although these are only tentative preliminary findings, as the analysis progresses the significance of this research becomes clearer. The study will advance the overall theorization of the phenomenon of paying for sex, and eventually will contribute to the design and evaluation of social measures aimed at paying for sex within the current Israeli context.

Regasa Dereje

Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy, Ghent University, Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. dr. Ine Lietaert

Abstract

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are forced migrants who remain within a boundary of their country. These people would be labelled as refugees if they crossed a recognized international boundary. At the end of 2019, more than 50 million people were internally displaced, a record high in history, due to conflict, violence, disaster with Ethiopia being on the top of countries with highest number of IDPs. Despite its magnitude and interrelated consequences to the displaced, host as well as the nations, IDP issue has remained marginal and underrepresented in international humanitarian policy and academic discourse compared to refugees and asylum seekers. Being uprooted forcibly, IDPs experience gross human right violation including loss of property, livelihood, social network, access to basic needs and employment. These consequences are more intense for a constantly increasing urban IDPs who find themselves in already impoverished settings where in addition to resources shortage, 'informality' aggravates their plight and makes their adaptation difficult. As they can easily melt into the urban poor, urban IDPs seem to have been invisible to policy makers and thus their living conditions and agency are inconspicuous. This PhD research rely on qualitative approach with the main aim of exploring the lived experiences and agency strategies of people who fled home due to violence and resettled in urban areas of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa and suburbs in focus. Relying on ethnographic research, the study investigates in to the trajectories, living conditions as well as adaptation of IDPs in different socio-spatial settings thereby challenge the predominant discourse of internal displacement that seems to have standardized IDP experiences.

Key words: IDPs, Ethiopia, trajectory, agency, urban

Rivlin Lilach

Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel

Supervisors: Dr. Yohanan Grinshpon, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, Dr. Yair Ronen, Ben Gurion University, Israel

Abstract

My research studies the formation of an individual's professional identity, sense of belonging and attitude towards his/her calling. To examine this issue in depth, I focus on reviewing the theories that strive to understand the personal need for meaning. The discourse is inspired by the thought and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi - following his work and corresponding with his messages from various points in his life in South Africa and India.

Gandhi's teachings are pertinent to anyone coping with the delicate balance of yearning for self-realization, development, and personal freedom in light of the stress, fears, and intensity of Western society's lifestyle. The research presents Gandhi's concept and practice of truth. His messages have inspired world leaders as well as the poor and oppressed; in his words and actions alike he assumed that no difference exists between individual and society. Understanding his teachings and the vision upon which the "Satyagraha" is based may contribute to our ability as individuals and as a society to examine significant positions and choices and to reach decisions. Additionally, the exploration of Gandhi's life story may contribute to the broader discussion of personal, cultural and social issues concerning the lives of all people, everywhere in the world.

Robben Laure-Lise

LUCAS, KU Leuven, Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. dr. Koen Hermans

Abstract

Identifying and estimating homelessness is a very complex process. In particular in Belgium, where the lack of data restrains consistent and comparative research on homelessness. In an attempt to capture homelessness, local municipalities engage in collecting primary data via Point-In-Time (PIT) counts. However, this short-term strategy has been criticized. For instance, persons experiencing short-term housing insecurity will not be counted, nor persons who are not in contact with participating services (e.g. couch-surfers). Counts are an interesting instrument to gain insight into profiles, but not into trajectories in and out of homelessness. In order to meet these shortcomings, there's a need for combining this method with a long-term strategy that makes use of available administrative data.

In this PhD project 'TRAHOME', we will study the potential of administrative data for mapping homelessness in Belgium. This will be an interesting exercise to further discuss the value of quantitative data for social work research. Specifically, we will take a closer look at the trajectories into and out of homelessness and the non-take-up of social rights from a pathways perspective. Furthermore, we discuss how and to what extent administrative data can be used for longitudinal research on homelessness in Belgium.

Said Salem Ruwayda

Ghent University – Belgium

Supervisor: Prof. dr. Lieselot De Wilde

Abstract

In recent years, the Belgian colonial past and its contemporary legacies have increasingly become the subject of a polarized public debate (Verbeke, 2020). A recent study from the University of Antwerp (2020) shows that (1) the Belgian population is strongly divided with regard to the general evaluation of Belgium's colonial past and that (2) the association of negative emotions with the colonial past differs widely among Belgians. Some even state that Flanders ignores the Congolese history, offering only a forum for assimilated and conformist migrants who cherish the Belgian identity and forgive Belgium's violent past (Verbeke, 2020). The colonial history of Belgium remains largely unprocessed (Smakman, Goddeeris, 2015b). In this sense, the tension in the Belgian postcolonial debate not only stems from disagreements about the dominant narrative of the past (cf. Eurocentric view on Congo), but also from the general ignorance and lack of (Congolese) counter-voices (Goddeeris, 2015a;2015b; See Boehemer & De Mul, 2012). Reducing the inhabitants of a post-colonial world in the position of passive recipients of a legacy from the past causes misconceptions, silences and misunderstandings of the Belgium colonial historiography (de L'Estoile, 2008, 2007a, 2007b; Mathys, 2017). This can be partly explained by the fact that Belgium, in contrast to other countries, has continuously emphasized the positive aspects of their colonial past, resulting in belittling or twisting the more painful aspects of this history (Smakman, 2011; See Goddeeris, 2015b). A theoretical foundation for expecting countries to give a positive version of their own history can be traced back to Anderson's (1991) idea that nation-states are based on a mythological representation of one's own history, and that nations derive a sense of belonging from this. In fact, most former European colonial metropolises, such as, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Britain, the legacy of colonialism is a part of a contested past, precisely because the past is so prominent in the present and the postcolonial memory inspires much debate and controversy (Goddeeris, 2015). In Europe, as in formerly colonised countries around the globe, the colonial legacy is embodied in material culture (cf. monuments, architecture, ...) but also, in less tangible but no less crucial ways, via politics, economics and artistic life (Arnold, 1999; Goddeeris, 2015a, 2015b). The current plea to put the colonial past back on the political agenda stems from the ambition to change something about that present and especially from the viewpoint of 'counter-voices', who view the dominant, shared colonial narrative not as their own (UAntwerpen, 2020). The question of what it means to contest the past refers to the struggle on the terrain of the truth and truth-telling which reveals certain preconceptions about the relationship between the past and the present (Bevernage, 2007, 2010; Hodgkin & Radstone, 2003; De Wilde, Vanobbergen, Roets, 2018). In this vein, postcolonial empires are struggling with claims of minority groups demanding recognition for past wrongdoings. In an attempt to seek political truth, Western states often resort to an official public apology. But what if saying sorry isn't enough? This complex issue of taking into account what 'life after the apology' might entail for social policy and social work, should be placed on the research agenda of social work. Social work needs to critically deal with its own confusing history, with which it is interwoven, to be able to clarify what contemporary social work represents (De Wilde et al., 2018). This article raises awareness of the relational nature of the world we live in and could also open the possibility of imagining other ways of relationships that would not erase the colonial past or reach an impossible consensus about it, but would allow us to learn to live together with our shared colonial legacies (de L'Etoile, 2008). So, in addition to finding ways to come to terms with the past, Western welfare states should seize the opportunity to reflect on current policies while being inspired by the past. Exploring this mode of presence of the past offers social work a wide field

of inquiry, which can help shape current social work practice and policy. Such an effort to apprehend the colonial debate in Belgian sheds light on the complex interplay between the construction of personal and collective memories and narratives of suffering which mobilise the past to make claims in the present (de L'Étoile, 2008).

Salkauskiene Ieva

Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences, Department of Social Work Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

Supervisor: Randi Juul

Abstract

Searching for collaboration between young children, families and Child Welfare Practitioners in Norway

The PhD project is part of the research project “*Beyond participation - younger children as collaborative partners in ongoing case work in child welfare practices*”. Project period 01.08.2020-31.12.2024. The research project is led by Randi Juul and will generate knowledge about interaction and collaboration between professionals in child welfare and children aged 0 - 12 years who are experiencing life situations that may challenge. This PhD project aims to study how child welfare workers facilitate the collaboration with younger children and their families during CWS proceedings (assistance, follow-up, decision-making), meeting the child’s needs for support, care, processing of bad experiences, and the rights for participation. According to Juul and Husby (2020), collaboration is essential for child welfare professionals in order to meet a child’s needs and help to improve the child-parent relationship. They suggest that cooperation or collaborative relationship usually involves some forms of conversation between the parties involved, and the agencies’ public mandates will affect the collaboration and conversation between the child, parents and professionals. Collaboration can be understood as a high level of participation. In recent years, the terms ‘partnership’ and ‘co-development’ have been used in this area. These concepts help to draw attention to the collaborative process and «the journey a child (service users) takes together with professionals».

The project would focus on collecting data about young children (0-12) and their families’ (Norwegian and Eastern European) experiences communicating and cooperating with CWS, in addition with practitioners’ perspectives. It is important to investigate whether practitioners providing assistance to the Eastern European family take into account possible cultural differences, language barriers, socio-economic situation of the family, or other possible difficulties family and child may face. In addition, it can possibly be compared if there is any difference in relation to CWS and ethnic Norwegian families.

Data basis for analysis will be gathered from interviews and observational study. The observational study aims to map how the collaboration is implemented in day-to-day work of CWS. Collected data will be used to provide recommendations on practical tools, theories and supervision methods that can be used in seeking for more effective child participation. The provided data could be beneficial for CWS practitioners, NGOs, researchers, policy makers, professionals working in an educational sector, and for those working with relevant projects, bearing in mind the main goal of presenting recommendations in order to improve collaboration, and ensuring the rights of the child.

Samyn Sophie

Ghent University

Supervisor: Prof. Griet Roets

Abstract

During the last decade, the (understanding of) homelessness has increased and diversified in Belgium, as in most European countries (Pleace 2010, Mayock, Sheridan et al. 2012, Feantsa 2019). There is an urgent need for a better understanding of contemporary dynamics that are at stake in this social problem in order to imagine social change (Maesele, Bouverne-De Bie et al. 2013). The Phd project 'The denizen rebel. Hidden homelessness in the shadow of the welfare state' will focus on qualitative data collection and is part of a larger BELSPO financed project TRAHOME, a collaboration between UGent, KULeuven and UCL, which looks into pathways of hidden homelessness in Belgium today. The Phd will give further insight into the trajectories and lived realities of Intra-European migrant homelessness in the city of Ghent and their relationship with social work practices and social policies. Intra-European migrants have access to different social rights, closely related to their work and housing situation, which complicates their agency and that of social workers. In three substudies the Phd will focus on two forms of outreach social work practices and one civil society volunteering network and the homeless they come in contact with. The study will take a longitudinal approach for a period of approximately three years. This will allow looking at changes over an extended period of time to reveal certain evolutions and changes. Data will be collected by the researcher through ethnographic data collection which will include (participant) observations, conversational interviews and other qualitative, participatory methods. Additionally, focus groups will be used to gather data.

Sandberg Elinn Leo

School of Social Work, Lunds University, Sweden

Supervisors: Anna Angelin and Anna Meeuwisse

Abstract

Despite recent changes in the Swedish welfare system with devaluation of income from Social Services and an invitation from government to civil society to carry out welfare tasks little research has been conducted on service users' experience of support from civil society. This project aims to study non-profit organizations (NPO) food aid in Sweden, its *practices*, and *rationales* from a service users' perspective. Food aid is rapidly increasing in western countries, including Sweden. In a Nordic context one to four per cent of the population experience severe food insecurity (Borch & Kjaernes 2016). A clear majority of food receivers in Sweden also obtains long-term social welfare benefits indicating that the level of economic support holds inadequate capacity to provide reasonable living conditions (Angelin 2013, Karlsson & Vamstad 2018). There could be a possible tension between a growing charity practice and the traditional Swedish welfare state based on social rights. Food poverty is a serious health risk with negative effects on the well-being and dignity of vulnerable citizens. International research on service users' experience reveals emotional consequences and humiliating experience, inducing stigma and shame (Middleton et al. 2017, Knight et al 2018). Moreover, pre-packaged baskets reduce agency as groceries are often unsuitable for the households needs (Leo Sandberg 2019). Wainwright et. al (2018) and Lumbie-Mumford (2015) suggests that food aid can be described as a stress-relief for individuals as well as a short-term "band-aid solution". However, service users' perspective on food aid in a Swedish context have not been studied. The empirical data collection will consist of qualitative interviews with service users. They will be contacted through the three biggest national NPO: s in Sweden; the Church of Sweden, the city mission and Hela människan - Social Work from a Christian Standpoint. Possibly quantitative elements will be included later.

So far the study questions are:

what rationalities are service users' employing?

what characterized the practice from a service users' perspective?

Schorn Astrid

Free university Berlin, Germany

Supervisor: Professor Dr. Uwe Flick

Abstract

“Topsy-turvey into the social arena” - Social circus through the eyes of youth

I run an exploratory qualitative study on social circus for youth, among them social disadvantaged. Social circus is an interconnection between circus arts and social intervention, a form of social work linked to arts education.

My research interest is connected with the subjective meanings (relevancies) of social circus among young participants. I selected to compare two cases of social circus, one in Germany and one in Russia, because of my excellent field access. In fact, I conducted and analysed my data of ethnographic investigations and talks, open interviews (mix of narrative and episodic) with youth (N=18) and focussed interviews with staff (N=6) in accordance with the (Constructive) Grounded Theory (Strauss/Corbin 1990; Charmaz 2014). In my ongoing analysis, I explored the main phenomenon within the narrations of youth: their search for affiliation (Anschluss). This has led me to investigate understandings of affiliation on three heuristic levels: 1) to Self, 2) to others and 3) to world through circus participation. I categorized the narratives of the participants and their preferred verbalized level of affiliation.

Furthermore, the teenagers articulated a special understanding of inclusion in their circuses, what I call regimes of inclusion. The Russian circus is predominantly seen for social disadvantaged (“troubled”) youth, who struggles for recognition, especially through their professional performances. This I identified as a regime of `exclusive inclusion`. The German circus is open for everybody, but social disadvantaged participants are underestimated (at least by numbers). And they express their feelings of exclusion not only in society but even in the circus, in terms of their disadvantaged material income or/and academic background. This regime is classified as an `inclusive exclusion`. So, both cases show limitations of the method and general tendencies of the development of social circus. From the beginning there is a focus on at-risk youth as a target group, then it turns to a broader leisure orientated circus and finally presents middle class interests. That are conclusions about the context in which social circus is used as a (social) pedagogical tool.

Now I am in the process of formulating the (Grounded) theory of affiliation processes through circus participation.

Seun Enakele Alkauthar

Masarky University, Brno, Czech Republic

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Pavel Navratil

Abstract

Domestic violence against men in Nigeria: A case study of Ondo State

Domestic violence (DV) is a global problem affecting people of different social-cultural, educational and religious backgrounds in both developing and developed countries. For this research, domestic violence and abuse also termed intimate partner violence (IPV). It is experienced by both male and female as a significant public health issue globally. More than 1 million cases of domestic violence are reported each year across the globe. About 4.8 million women experience domestic violence-related physical abuses in the United States of America, USA, and men are victims of about 2.9 million domestic abuse. In England and Wales, 8.2% of women and 4.0% of men estimated to have reported domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to a likely 1.3 million female and 600,000 male victims.

Domestic violence against men is a term describing violence committed against men by the man's intimate partner. In general, men are considered perpetrators of this type of violence, but they can also be victims. Men's experience as victims of intimate partner violence is still yet not described and characterized in Nigeria. This study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of women's violence toward their male partner, based upon descriptions by men's who have experienced such situations by using their perceptions to conceptualized the experiences of men victims of domestic violence in Ondo State, Nigeria.

The study adopts the patriarchal cultural theory of intimate partner violence (IPV) to explain the phenomenon of domestic violence against men. Domestic violence's cultural perspective against men may differ from nation to nation. However, men are culturally assumed to be the aggressor, and the victims are the women in an abusive relationship. Therefore, the context of violence against men is base on the patriarchal cultural structure that defines gender because men have bloated egos in the hierarchy; However, patriarchal theorists assert that the sole cause of IPV is society's gendered structure.

The study follows the qualitative methodology of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The participants in the study are recruited through the Association of social worker's male support organizations. All participants were required to have experienced domestic violence issues within the last two years. However, the abuse could have occurred at any time through the lifespan. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and via telephone following a semi-structured schedule. Data was gathered by conducting semi-structured interviews with ten (10) men who have experienced domestic violence.

Söderlind Marie

Lund University, Sweden

Supervisor: Prof. Kerstin Svensson

Abstract

Residential care for children and youth who in one way or another live a destructive life exist in most countries. The reason for placement is usually psychosocial problems, substance abuse or crime. In Sweden, there are 22 state run institutions under The National Board of Institutional Care (SiS). These homes have, by Swedish law, authority to constrain the young residents if need be, separate them for treatment in solitary, and use solitary confinement for a shorter time when the resident is violent or doing severe harm to themselves. SiS receives about 1200 children per year, 400 of them are younger than 15 years. There is a lot of research on the residents and institutions in terms of: the environment, ethical conflicts in compulsory care, the young people's psychological problems, girls in institutions, about ethnicity and about threats and violence in institutions to name a few. There is evidence that institutional care has negative effects on children. Traditionally, the research is done broadly across all age groups but there is no research that focuses on the youngest children alone. My first results show that during the last 10-year period, the residents are getting younger. This at the same time as the children's perspective is continuously strengthened in society. Since the beginning of the 2000's, the best interest of the child should always be in focus in child care investigations, and in 2020 the Convention on the Rights of the Child was, in Sweden, stated as law. Family homes are generally seen as the best option when children and youth cannot remain in their own families, and there is resistance in placing younger children in institutions. But still we do. It's therefore important to research the phenomenon in order to understand which children are placed, why they are placed, and how the staff and children experience it. The purpose of the dissertation is to examine and analyze the youngest children, 8–12 years, in order to gain an increased knowledge of this group by answering the following questions; How are these children's life situation? In which institutions and for how long are the children accommodated? How does social workers reason and motivate this residential care for the youngest children? How does SiS staff perceive and describe the youngest children in institution? How do the children experience and describe their placement at SiS?

The first substudy that describes the children at group level is based on SiS 'own register data. The respondents are decoded by SiS and consist of intake and background information, as well as variables from the assessment tool Adolescent Drug Abuse Diagnosis (ADAD) that is used for all children placed at these institutions. Variables regarding family situation, school, physical and mental health, friends and leisure, alcohol, drugs and crime. The remaining material will be collected via thematized unstructured interviews where the respondents are free to reason about their experiences in order to compile explanatory models in different accounts.

Sten Marjukka

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Supervisors: prof Marjo Kuronen and Lect. Marianne Notko.

Abstract

Custody dispute or custody stalking – Is procedural stalking after divorce discerned by the system? Finnish mother's experiences.

When a violent relationship ends the abuse is not necessarily over. Actually, there is a heightened risk of violence after the divorce. In addition the abuse can take other forms as stalking and harassing. My intention is to explore the continuation of coercive control women experience after divorce, especially cases where abuse has taken the form of custody disputes. Vivienne Elisabeth has used in her recent study (2017) a new concept when describing these situations: custody stalking. She defines it malevolent course of conduct involving the use or threatened use of legal and other bureaucratic proceedings by fathers to obtain, or attempt to obtain, care time with their children far in excess of their involvement with them prior to separation". Elisabeth views custody stalking as a specific pattern of coercive control that gains its efficacy from the unique insights former partners have about how to 'punish, humiliate and torment women'. Batterers use system-related manipulations against their former partners such as lawsuits, making false reports of child abuse. Child custody and implementation proceedings are especially ripe for this kind of system-related abuse because they force the victim in continuous contact with the abuser. Often the abuser takes the role of the victim. In child custody cases this means for example claims of being alienated from the children. Most of the actions themselves are not illegal but the context they are used, the intent behind them (i.e. to exert control over the victim) and the duration of these actions indicate coercive control. Stalking tends to wear the victim down. The experience that battered women share is that system-related stalking is far more debilitating than physical abuse. In Finland there is almost no research done on this topic before. There is a need to look at custody stalking in the Finnish system and I find important to write in Finnish and construct the concepts in Finnish. My research task is to describe custody stalking from the mother's standpoint. Custody stalking is based on system related manipulations, so is it discerned in institutions' policy and/or in practice? When talking about the system I mean especially two institutions namely courts and child protection. I am going to do 7-10 interviews with women who are victims of custody stalking. My aim is in developing theoretical understandings of a broader social phenomena, so the aim of the work is not just to give a voice to a phenomenon that is hidden but make the social relations that construe the phenomenon in everyday life visible. In this I base on institutional ethnography and the works of Dorothy Smith. Institutional ethnography is an alternative sociology that examines social relations and social institutions from the standpoint of the experiences of active subjects. According to Smith the primary task of the researcher is to tell "how things work" and she emphasises commitment to truth through analysing the concrete events of everyday life (->primary narrative). Procedural stalking is based on constant mixing of truth and lie, confusing the primary narrative and facts and making false accusations. Emphasising how things really work is therefore an essential question. In order to find the troubling ruling relations that form the individual experiences I look at who and which institutions are these women talking about? Secondly which texts are they talking about? Thirdly which concepts they are referring to?

Current status of my Ph.D. work

I have been accepted as a Ph.D. student 2019 at University of Jyväskylä, but the last two years I have worked fulltime elsewhere and only starting now 2021 I am able to do research fulltime. My work will consist of four articles and at the moment I am writing the first one.

Terbish Bayartsetseg

Ghent University

Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Griet Roets, Prof. Dr. Ine Lietaert

Abstract

My doctoral research aims to gain indigenous knowledge about the sense of belonging, coping strategies, and aspirations of residents in sub-urban “*ger*” areas of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia to inform the further development of social work theory, social policy and social work practice in Mongolia. Doctoral research consists of four different studies. So far, the first two studies have finished resulting in an academic publications while the other ones are in the progress. Under the umbrella methodology of urban ethnography with a socio-spatial approach, I currently engage in fieldwork in the target area of Tahilt by applying (1) content analysis of policy documents, reports produced in Mongolia in an area of social work and social development, urban and spatial planning for ger areas as well as population migration policies, (2) structured observation, [3] qualitative interviews with social workers, welfare and civic registration officers and other public representatives in power, and conducting (4) in-depth biographical interviews with newly arrived residents in the Tahilt area.

As the studies are under progress, contents of this specialist training seem relevant to my undertakings of positionality and reflexivity of the researcher, which I would like to explore more. My research also applies varying methods rooted from different disciplines such as urban studies, sociology and anthropology. In this connection, I would also like to understand their interlinks and implications in applying to social work research. Finally, I would also like to understand what we mean by ‘transparency’ in social work research. Thus, the aim of the course suits my overall aim of the doctoral project.

Tizazu Ashenafi Tirfie

Ghent University

Supervisors: Prof. Dr Ine Lietaert and Prof. Ilse Derluyn

Abstract

Return and Reintegration of Ethiopian Forced Returnees From the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Northern Wollo, Ethiopia: Processes, Challenges and Impacts.

History is filled with stories of human migrations. Starting in East Africa, the footprint of humans has reached all over the globe through migration (Koser 2007; MFA 2013). Yet, globalization processed to an increase of international migrants from 65 million in 1965 (Ostergaard-Nielsen 2003) to 244 million in 2015 (IOM 2018) and the diversification of countries that receive and send migrants. Within migration processes, return migration is also part of the task for many migrants regardless of their residential status in destination countries (Van Houte and Davids 2008). Return migration refers to- **the particular movement of returning to the country or place of origin after a period in another country or region** (King 2000). Migration researchers have clearly illustrated that the socio-demographic characteristics of the people, the condition of their departure, the conditions in the country of destination, and those in the country of return, create diversity within the population of returnees (Cassarino 2008; Kuschminder 2013). It has also been highlighted that return is not like moving back to the old (Vathi and King 2017). Due to the exposure to a new cultural dynamic, returnees come back with newly acquired experiences (Stefansson 2004). Similarly, the features of the left behind communities might be changed upon return. And because (re)connecting with the economic, social and cultural aspects of origin communities is a relational processes, returning and starting life in the country of origin, the process of reintegration is also a process of renegotiation and readjustment for a sense of belonging and for a new life (Kuschminder 2013). Yet, it has been widely demonstrated that reintegration is not easy and most returnees tend to face many problems in their attempt to reintegrate themselves in to the communities (Stefansson 2004). Due to its geographical, political and socio-economic conditions, **Ethiopia** is a striking example of how the movement of people from, through and within the country has been an ever-present phenomenon throughout the country's history (Fransen and Kuschminder 2009). Although an increasing number of new migrants keep on leaving Ethiopia, there are also Ethiopian migrants who are returning and have returned home (Koser and Kuschminder 2015). Recently, following the implementation of two interrelated policies of Saudi; the "Saudization" employment policy which aims to replace emigrant workers by Saudi nationals and the new illegal immigration policy that cracks down irregular labor migrants from Saudi, between November 2013 and March 2014 a total of 163,018 Ethiopians were forcedly returned(RMMS 2014). According to IOM (2013:7),this is **“the most colossal airlift the world has ever witnessed.”**

Despite the enormous scale of the above mentioned **forced South-South return of labor migrants** and the knowledge that **reintegration is a difficult process**, in particular for those who are forced to return (Lietaert et al 2017), the group has been fairly absent within current discussions. Up until now, return migration studies mainly focus on the reintegration outcomes and needs upon return in frame of North-South return or South- South refugee return. Yet, reality shows that nearly half of the migrants origination from Southern countries live and work in other Southern countries (Ratha and Shaw 2007). **The gaps of knowledge regarding the return processes of this group of returning South-South labor migrants is not only urgent because of its magnitude.** The literature also reveals reiterating claims regarding the impact of return migration on the development of origin countries. However, two opposing strands coexist in academia (de Haas 2008): Some scholars highlight the increased magnitude of poverty, inequality and further migration due to return migration (UNHCR 2004). In this view, return

development seriously hampers the achievements of the objectives of UN development goals- Other studies on the contrary have argued that the flow of saving and skilled human capital through returnees intensifies the development processes of the sending communities (Black and Gent 2004). While some academics have challenged this unidirectional link between return and development by highlighting the structural factors that imposing returnees to take up the role of being "the new developers" (Akesson and Baaz 2015), **the little and fragmentary evidence on post-return realities of South-South returnees makes the demand for research on this issue very urgent.** This particular group of Ethiopian returnees from the Gulf States did already caught some interest in Ethiopian context, however, with **essential knowledge gaps**, which also mirroring gaps in the field of return migration studies in general. Specifically:

RQ1:To what extent do forced returnees reintegrate into the social and economic structures of origin communities?

RQ2: What are the determinants of Successful Reintegration in Rural Ethiopia?

RQ3: What are the returnees strategies to cope with challenges and opportunities that they are faced with during the reintegration processes?

RQ4: What are the socio-economic impacts of return and reintegration on recipient households and communities?

RQ5: Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative methods will be applied to collect the data and mixed convergent analysis design will be applied to triangulate, compare and contrast statistical results with qualitative findings (Creswell and Clark 2011).

Tomašević Suzana

Faculty Of Law Osijek, Study of Social work , Croatia

Supervisor: Prof.dr.sc. Jana Mali, Faculty of social work, Slovenia

Abstract

The aging of the population in recent decades has affected almost all of Europe. According to the first indicators (Central Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Croatia, 2011), the number of elderly people increased in the 1950s. In parallel with this demographic trend, the social welfare system in Croatia was developing, which was aimed at protecting children, youth, the unemployed and the poor (Šućur, 2003). Care for the elderly became relevant in the 1990s, when the importance of the aging process was given more and more importance in Europe. The principles of the United Nations covered the areas of independence, social participation, care, self-fulfillment and dignity, which needed to be developed in order to improve life in old age. Member States are required to implement these principles in their national programs. In the field of social work, a concept of working with users has been established, oriented according to the principles of Burack-Weiss and Brennan (Mali, 2011), and related to partnership, power perspective, anti-discrimination orientation, social network and community care, which together include a comprehensive understanding of the individual and its needs, the individual is a partner in the help process whose influence on the choice of different types of help is brought to the fore (Mali, 2011, p. 659). In Croatia, the need for additional knowledge and skills of working with the elderly has been noticed (Štambuk, Sučić and Vrh, 2014), the need for education of experts on new generations of the elderly is emphasized (Havelka, Despot Lučanin and Lučanin, 2000) and the need is indicated in defining the competencies required in the work. The need for scientific contribution in the field of methods of working with the elderly was noticed, especially in the non-institutional form of care. With the aging of the population, various forms of care for the elderly also developed, which were mainly focused on institutions and institutional accommodation. In addition to homes for the elderly and infirm, various forms of non-institutional forms of care are being developed in Croatia, such as family homes, foster families, home help services and day care. The role of social work in the development of various forms of care for the elderly is not clearly defined. Social work as a profession according to different legal standards is present in care for the elderly, but its role in the development of care has not yet been explored. The aim of this dissertation is to investigate what is the role of social work in the development of care for the elderly? How do social workers participate in this area? What is the role of social work in creating social policy? What is the social policy in the field of care for the elderly? What knowledge and skills do social workers have in working with the elderly? Explore the perspective of social workers working with the elderly. Previous research has pointed to the importance of developing social work in the field of care for the elderly that includes a holistic approach to the development of care and change at the micro, meso and macro levels (Mali, 2014). According to recent data, the development of long-term care as a system will be necessary, and until then, in addition to formal care available to the elderly, the most prominent is informal care that older people receive within their social networks (Smolić and Čipin, 2020). In order to connect social work with the needs of the elderly, it is necessary to understand the needs of the elderly, it is important what the elderly will say, their involvement in planning services and connecting with people planning services to gain insight into the life of the elderly (Grebenc, 2014). A social worker working with an older person should be able to assess the situation in which the elderly person finds himself, check his ability to take care of himself, define potential resources and obstacles from his environment, work with the elderly involves nurturing specific values, possessing specific knowledge and practical skills (Mali, 2013, p.32).

Tourne Juno

Ghent University, Belgium

Supervisors: Prof. dr. Lieve Bradt, Prof. dr. Rudi Roose

Abstract

Despite economically advanced countries having well-resourced and high-quality education systems, the educational reality is that strong social inequalities persist. Several international studies show that young people's SES remains the most powerful factor influencing their performance in education. In previous research we have argued the importance of navigational agency in order for all youngsters to enjoy meaningful education, meaning youngsters should have the opportunity to diverge from expectations in school, have their different identities present in school and have a voice in their education. Previous research that analysed school policies, however, showed that the navigational agency of youngsters is rather limited in current education and, moreover, that a coherent pedagogical vision is missing from these policies. We attribute this to the growing penetration of neoliberal ideology in education and argue that a new perspective to adequately address educational shortcomings is necessary. The commons are an alternative value and action system, most often invoked as a direct challenge to neoliberal hegemony and the destructive drive of capitalism to enclose what remains of the world's shared fund of natural and cultural wealth. The 'commons' comprise goods and resources that are collectively used and produced. Commoning consists of making and managing a collective good in a manner of openness, equality, co-activity, plurality and sustainability. The commons have limits, rules, social norms and sanctions determined collectively by the commoners. With regard to education, priority is given to youngsters' needs and their broader development, rather than their preparation for the marketplace and the process of economic production. More concretely, the commons offer room for deviation, consider students' context and put students and educators on an equal footing in decision-making processes.

Seeing as school leaders occupy a pivotal position in schools and their vision is crucial in inspiring teachers and students, this study researches secondary school leaders' vision on education. Answering the question: How do school leaders perceive the role of a school? And who plays a part in shaping a school?

Tucker Laura

University of York, United Kingdom

Professor Martin Webber

Abstract

Unweaving the web: Using a mixed methods approach to understand the role and contribution of mental health social work to the delivery of mental health services in England and Wales.

Social work has been integral to mental health services in the UK since the early days of formalised care. Despite moves toward genericism in mental health practice in the early twenty-first century, interest in specialist mental health social work has regained prominence in recent years, with the development of formal policy definitions and national investment in fast-track specialist training. Despite this, however, there remains a lack of understanding of the structure and contribution of social work in mental health settings, with provision dictated on a local basis, and arranged according to organisational agreements and priorities and resource pressures rather than an appreciation and application of unique social work skills and knowledge. While this has not been explored on a national scale, indications from previous research are that social workers in mental health operate within a wide variety of organisational and service contexts, and these contexts in turn influence how and why they undertake their practice.

This research uses a mixed method approach to understand the national picture in the provision of mental health social work and to explore social worker perspectives on their role within and contribution to mental health services. A national survey of state-led mental health providers was undertaken to establish the structure and position of social work within mental health settings. This has been followed by a national survey of social work practitioners and a series of in-depth interviews to explore perspectives on professional identity and how this is influenced by the practice context. This aims to generate a more comprehensive, practice-led understanding of the role, which can inform service structure and delivery to support effective mental health care.

Van Elsen Saan

Ghent university, Belgium

Prof. Dr. Lieve Bradt

Abstract

Understanding young people's leisure motivations and leisure patterns

Young people's disparate involvement in leisure activities is a recurring concern in the leisure debate. Several studies have demonstrated that young people's leisure time participation is socioculturally and socioeconomically determined, where young people in vulnerable situations (such as young people from families with a lower socioeconomic position and/or a migration background) seem to be underrepresented in organized leisure time activities and are more likely to spend their leisure time in an informal and spontaneous manner. This underrepresentation of socially vulnerable young people is problematized since studies have shown that participation in organized leisure activities fosters positive youth development such as academic performance, educational attainment and occupational success and provides young people with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to socially integrate as responsible adult citizens. As a result, during the past years both researchers and policymakers have increasingly been focusing on directing this group of adolescents towards organized leisure activities, based on the assumption that their participation into these organized settings will facilitate their integration into other domains in society. This approach of 'guiding into' has been more and more criticised. It not only reduces organized activities to instruments for social integration and participation, but it is also based on an adult-centred understanding of the concept of leisure time. In addition, it renders young people to passive objects of socialisation rather than recognising the different meanings that leisure time participation might have for young people themselves. The existing body of literature seems to either focus on motivations of a specific well-defined group of participants (mostly adults) or look at a specific type of leisure activity or setting. Against this background, this study aims to gain a better understanding of young people's motives for engaging in leisure time activities (for both organized and unorganized) by (1) analysing socioeconomic and sociocultural differences in young people's leisure time aspirations and (2) examining associations between adolescents' leisure motivations and their actual organized and unorganized leisure patterns, as it remains unclear whether these young people search different things in their leisure time or whether they look for the same things through other activities. To answer these research questions we rely on data from a survey conducted in 2018 by the Flemish Youth Research Platform (JOP-schoolmonitor 2) among more than 8000 young people (aged 12-18 years) in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking community of Belgium), whereby an abridged version of the Leisure Motivation Scale (Beard & Ragheb, 1983) was adopted. To the best of our knowledge, this large-scale study is one of the first to focus on leisure motivations of a socioeconomically diverse group of young people in relation to a broad range of leisure activities.

Vrebos Hanne

KU Leuven, Belgium

Supervisor: Professor Karin Hannes & Professor Koen Hermans

Abstract

The concept of participation is not only commonly used in urban (re)-development and place making practices, it is also well studied. Participatory urban design processes are generally considered beneficial due to their social, physical, environmental and democratic potential, and their contribution to build sense of place. The right to the city is a concept that assigns residents the right to democratic engagement to influence decisions and actions to limit nuisance and make their neighborhood more livable, as the local community is considered most impacted by those interventions. However, participatory processes haven't been solely perceived as positive, as a number of scholars has also highlighted concerns related to exclusionary processes, unchallenged power dynamics and nominal, instrumental or tokenistic processes.

Through globalization, technologic and mobility innovations, environmental, societal, political and economic contingency, neighborhoods and communities are increasingly uncertain, networked and 'in flux'. While fast urban transformation increases flows in and out of the city in the here and now, these flows are at the same time connected to the past and future tense of what the place has been and will become. The current 2020 pandemic has introduced even more abrupt changes to these flows, as many, if not most, place-based connections are being limited while virtual connections are skyrocketing. The known models of participatory design are insufficiently adapted to address this complexity of neighborhoods in flux, as their focus is generally on clearly (pre-) defined communities (Sorensen and Sagaris 2010). This PhD research will study participatory mapping methods in relation to the development of place relations and changing power dynamics. The objective is to develop innovative and inclusive models of participatory research that adapt the right to the city principles to current day dynamic place reality and integrate a multiplicity of voices, including those of the underprivileged citizens but also of the accidental by-passer, virtual visitor or more-than-human actor.

In a first part, the research looks at theoretical and methodological approaches of emplacement to understand the entanglement between physical and social aspects of place. Second, I conduct a systematic review to look at power dynamics related to place representation, specifically around in participatory cartographic research in the humanities and social sciences. The third section contains a theoretical reflection of bottom up initiatives of expressions of solidarity, protest and community building during the pandemic lockdown. The last and biggest second of the project is an empirical case-study that experiments with participatory mapping as a way to bring in a multiplicity of perspectives into the place-dialogue.