INVESTIGATING THE PROFESSIONAL PRESSURES FOR SOCIAL WORKERS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON JOB PERFORMANCE: FIELD STUDY APPLIED TO A SAMPLE OF AL-AMAL COMPLEXES IN SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

Occupational pressure is caused by many factors, when we respond to the pressures; it could lead us to physical or emotional disease, which will reflect on the performance of employees. The purpose for this paper is to highlight on the work pressures that social workers in Al-Amal complexes in Saudi Arabia are subjected to, and its effects on their work performance. This paper investigated the phenomena of work pressures that face the social worker in the Al-Amal complexes for psychology health in Saudi Arabia as well as the impact of these pressures on occupational performance. The strategy of systematic census was used as a research methodology for this paper. On the other hand, the paper showed increasing in the level of sense regarding occupational pressures in the Al-Amal complexes, based on the study community responses which indicated that a percentage of (66.7 %) from the mentioned community feel in pressures at the complexes where they work, also, where the pressures generated from the lack of administrative support to the largest percentage of those surveyed. It is also showed that there are no statistically significant differences in dimensions according to the qualification. Moreover, it revealed that the presence of different negative impacts to the pressures of work which lies on the social workers, and showed that the approval from the sample memberships regarding the existing of advantages for the pressures of work. In conclusion, the pressures of work which generated from the lack of administrative support are considered as top the list of work pressures sources, followed by the pressures caused by the lack of clarity and multiplicity of roles, as well as the pressures which caused by career load increased.

Field of Research: Social Pressures, Psychological Pressures, Occupational Pressure, Social Workers, Job Performance.

1. Introduction

Most researchers were agreed about the importance of the availability of a suitable environment for cadres of workers through their implementation of the responsibilities entrusted to them. The occupational pressures levels vary from one career to another (Al-Qublan, 2005). Occupational pressures is caused by many factors, and when we respond to such pressures the response will not be only "mentality", but the extent of response period could lead to physical or emotional illness also. The treatment of work pressures makes the western schools get involved, and does not take into account the privacy of the Arab and Islamic communities (Al-Kurdi, 2012). In addition, the social workers who deals with various personalities in the medical field required being generous always and social services is no longer only a social response to the stimulus or reaction, but became head of career and an active partner in the treatment process. This paper examined the phenomenon of work pressures which faced by social workers in Al-Amal complexes for Mental Health in Saudi Arabia, and the impact of these pressures on job performance, through answering the following question "what's the impact of pressures on job performance of Al-Amal Complexes social workers". This paper investigated the work pressures which affects the workers’ performance of Al-Amal complexes for Mental Health in Saudi Arabia, in order to inform decision-
makers in those complexes on the factors that may hinder the productivity of their workers, and to address its causes, in a non-traditional way which understand the psychological needs of employees, find alignment between them and the elements of various work environments including physical and human resources.

1.1 Significance of the Research

The importance of this paper appears to eliminate the gaps that created by the lack of studies on the assessment of the sources of professional pressures for the social workers, as well as it identify the methods of dealing with the professional pressures for social workers to cope with stressful events, and handled in a manner to ensure the balance in the life. Also, this paper reports officials and interested professional social service people and whom interested in planning, to improve and develop the professional practice for Al-Amal Complexes social workers. The results of this study looking for preparing appropriate organization to eliminate the negative effects of professional pressure, it could contributed in the improvement of therapeutic services for patients by solving professional pressures problems which lead to increase the performance of employees. This study, seeks to make cognitive enrichment for the medical social service field. Furthermore, the paper aims to highlight the work pressures which faced by social Workers in Al-Amal complexes for mental health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its impact on the professional performance.

1.2 Definitions of the Study

The study revolves around a number of concepts, a concept of "pressures" supplied by the study as a situation suffered by capita when the capita faced urgent overload demand or when capita get involved in sharp conflict (Abdul Rahman Al-Tareri, 1994). The definition of "social pressures" is efforts oriented to individuals and groups in order to modify their attitude to reach some specific aims. Social pressures by public opinion often directed to the governments and legislative bodies to get to work, in relation to certain social problems (Badawi, 1993). "psychological pressures" also which is that the individual is under emotional pressure or physical pressure, if these pressures take a long period of time, aversion and lack of acceptance will be exist and this could lead to psychosomatic disturbances as well as to anxiety and depression (Mohammad, 2000). "work pressures" which is " the respond to any inducement, overburdened or any external stressful factors lies on social worker in degree of which feelings of tight and tension take a place, and when this pressures increase in sharp manner the social worker could lose the ability to be balance, and change the pattern of the total behavior as well as resulting in exploitation of social worker to all of his energy to get rid of this burden, which if continued will eliminate him or damage his functions. The researcher also focuses on the social workers whose works in the social services complex of Al-Amal for Mental Health in Saudi Arabia, either males or females form the current population of the study. In addition "Al-Amal complexes for Mental Health" is a medical complex includes multiple facilities that provide therapeutic rehabilitative services, gratuitous awareness in the field of mental illness addiction in modern methods and specialized ways. The researcher means by "impact", the total degree where research individuals will gain through their answers to the scale of positive negative effects which used in the current research. As meant by "job performance" the outputs and objectives that the organization seeks to achieve through its employees, and therefore this concept reflects both of goals and necessary means to achieve them, "job performance" also defined as a set of actions and duties expected by society who occupies a certain social status and at certain time, and what society and its individuals expect from the member in particular position which is a set of responsibilities and duties performed by a Worker at the hospital.
2. Literature Review

Askar and Abdullah (1988) addressed in their study "The level of exposure of workers to pressure of work in certain professional social jobs" the pressures of work in the community of Kuwait through the professional relationship between the individual and the organizations as an entrance to the pressures resulted from the environment of work, nevertheless it is aimed to compare the degree of pressures to different variables of work faced by the workers in specific sector, as teaching in private institutes, nursing, psychological service, and social service. The results of the study generally pointed to the absence of a high level of pressure among workers in those four occupations, although the workers in the nursing are the most vulnerable to the pressures compared with other three jobs with a mean average (3.179), but this average doesn’t consider meaningful, because the analysis results indicate that there’s a differences in the results based on various variables such as sexual variable excepting the professional social work.

An analytical study of the trends of workers under the pressures of work in the public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia was prepared, (Al-Nemr, 1994). The results showed that the public sector is more vulnerable to the pressures of work, which comes forefront growth and career advancement, followed by the physical conditions of work and the amount of work, in while the type and quantity comes in forefront pressure for workers in the private sector, also it shows that the Saudis are feeling in the pressure more than non-Saudis, and persons in administrative field more vulnerable to pressure from workers in technical field.

Omari study (Omari, 2003) the pressures of work between teachers, and it aimed to test the relationship between demographic and functional variables on one hand and the pressures of work on the other hand in Riyadh-governmental schools. The results showed a negative correlation with statistical significance between demographic variables (age, monthly salary, and length of service) and work pressure.

According to (Mashaan, 1998), considered a comparative study between Kuwaitis employees and non-Kuwaitis in the public sector, the study aims to determine the pressure sources of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis workers in the public sector, the results of study showed that there were significant statistical differences between the Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaitis workers of work sources pressure, where the Kuwaiti have more feeling of pressure of work of non-Kuwaitis except in professional variable development, also the non-Kuwaiti are more vulnerable to the pressures of work than Kuwaitis, as well as there are significant statistic differences between female and male workers in the sources of the pressures of work, where the female are more vulnerable to the pressures of work from the male, also there are no statistically significant differences among those with high school and university graduates with respect to the sources of the work pressure only in a role of manager, the environment and the organizational structure variables, where the university graduates are more vulnerable to the pressures of work of non-academics, but in terms of the environment and organizational structure variables, we find that the secondary graduates more vulnerable to the pressures of work of the university graduates, also the study showed that there are no differences between married and unmarried workers.

Genghis and Calhoun, (Jenkins and Calhoun, 1992) study pressures on teacher and interferences issues, which aimed to identify the sources of work pressure for teachers of public education schools in the state of Georgia, USA and the results of the study proved that the increased of workload and the lack of incentives one of the most important sources of work stress.

On the other hand the impact of work pressure leads to resign, Steve (Steve, 1992) wrote a Letter entitled “Human perspectives on teacher Resignation “was aimed to identifying the causes of the resignation of teachers from the teaching jobs and whether the resignation is a very strong response to pressure. The results of the study identify the most important reasons for resigning
which is the arrival of teacher to a critical point towards teaching job, those unable them to keep pace with changes in the educational process, suffering from negative perception of the society towards the teaching job, the lack of return, students bad manners, and bad relationship with colleagues.

Smith & Bourke (Smith, and Bourke, 1992) examined the job satisfaction, entitle “Teacher Stress examining g - A model based on Context Workload and Satisfaction ”, this study was aimed to describe the relationship between pressure of work, workload and professional satisfaction. Results showed that working conditions and workload, directly affect in pressure occurring, as well as the study variables like: sex, years of experience, job title, teaching load, the composition of the class and the school, and the subject of teaching have a significant impact on the pressure of work.

2.1 Theoretical Background

The researcher used (ecological system model), as a model explained the theory, (Hartman and Larid, 1983) mentioned that the ecosystem patterns model focused on a balance between the living systems, the environment and the way you can maintain that balance and support, this form confirmed on the interaction between people and environments which is made by man himself, and then he is interested in the relations that arise between systems and sub-systems (Al-Damagh, 2010: 2).

Al-Beblawi (1988) defined the pressure as the situation where the individual exposed to circumstances or demand imposed upon some sort of adjustment, and this case increase to the degree of risk where ever the severity of conditions and demands increased or continued for a long time (Al-Ghurair, Abu Said, 2008: 25). The researchers did not agree to find one definition of the professional pressures, but they agree on a common points, which is the requirements of the environment or what the individual asked to do have a greater degree of self -potential and abilities of the individual, where they couldn’t perform the required work to the fully which makes them feel the pressure, and the pressure level depends on individual awareness of the failure in their faces of those requirements.

It was agreed that the pressure had three phases, the first phase, called the warning response, where at this stage the body call all his defense strength to face the danger which faces, the second phase, called the stage of resistance, this stage include physical symptoms which caused by continuous exposure to stimuli and stressful situations where the individual has acquired the ability to adapt, and the third phase, called exhaustion or fatigue, if the individual exposed to multiple pressures for a longer period, he will be get to the point where he couldn’t continue the resistance making him enters to the stage of exhaustion and becomes unable to fully adapt.

Rapper (2010) mentioned that it is normal to the human to deny or resist a pressure existence; we all have a tendency to indulge in a work, and then continue to work harder in order to overcome situations that cause stress, instead of recognizing the situation and therefore withdrawal. If we continue to surrender to the pressure, and let ourselves to do anything in order to warn of the seriousness of this situation, it is probably to be generated physical ailments such as fatigue.

We find four types of symptoms associated with pressure, the first behavioral symptom, are the changes in normal patterns of behavior, the deterioration of personal hygiene, and withdraw from others. The cognitive symptoms, such as the imbalance in thinking, difficulty in decisions making. Also the emotional symptoms, such as emotional shock, anger, and depression. Finally the organic symptoms, such as excess sweat, bouts of dizziness, pacemaker rate plus, high blood pressure, and rapid breathing.

The work pressure phenomenon have been increased among employees in modern times organizations, thus of what the contemporary world witnessing in knowledge and information.
revolution as a result of recent technological advances, which played a major role in achieving human welfare, on the other hand may pay advances tax from the increased complexity in our daily lives and thus flow psychological and physical ailments which threatens human life (Mashaan, 1421: 68). Currently many organizations and institutions have become with its different activities suffering from increased work pressures and it’s widely spread among its employees, also it’s proved that its continuity leaves negative effects on their mental and physical health, then on their career performance (Faaq, 1417: 153). And this is what called us for the study of professional pressures.

Social workers facing professional pressure which can be divided up on sources into two parts: **Organizational Sources**: which placed under the professionalism difference, the professionalism circumstances, academic achievement, the number of working hours, low pay, lack of suitability for work, inability to provide the appropriate conditions for work, and the workload of the role( which includes increase or decrease in role, Increases may be quantitative or qualitative where the employee given more over its intellectual, mental and physical ability, the decreases where the employee given less than his abilities), the conflict of role( conflict of duties, practices and responsibilities that are issued simultaneously from the direct head of the employee), and the annual increments and benefits (Faaq, 1417), (Al Ghurair, Abu Said, and 2008: 51). **Personal Sources**: (factors or variables related to individuals, which led to the formation of his character as genetic, the environment where they lived and grew up, in addition to self-structure of every person which consists of the nature of the events in which they exposed to and influenced character build, along with the self-awareness and understanding of itself), where this is due to several factors including personal style, sex, compatibility between the capabilities of the individual and professional needs, physical and physiological status, social problems of daily life, health problems, the relationship between president and colleagues, and the fear of the loss of a job or job title.

As result of pressure, where it mentioned in Gibson form and his colleagues (1994), and Al-Mir (1995), and Mashaan (1421) psychological effects, and behavioral (tendency to accidents, and heavily smoking), and the cognitive effects (such as not being able to take the right decision, and poor memory), and physiological effects (such as heart rate increased, increased blood pressure), and organizational effects (such as a poor job performance and absenteeism, and lack of job satisfaction).

We find that the level of optimal performance is determined by the level and kind of pressure, also noted that the level of low pressure on the person leads to maintain a specific type of performance, due to the point they don’t feel suffering or tension or stress, and vice versa where stimulate and activates individual when faced an increase in job stress that raises the level of performance, but on the other hand if the level of pressure faced by the individual is very high, the negative effects begin to appear as feeling tired or dissatisfaction, and others.

One of the most important strategies where the organization management can followed to faces the pressure: the evolution of the selection and appointment systems, follow-up the programs help workers, job redesign, adopting advanced training systems; follow up the incentive systems and performance evaluation.

Also among the most prominent working mechanisms to deal with pressures of work: religious and spiritual attribution, medical examination, exercise and hobbies, change the concept of philosophy of life and self-rebuilding, behavior change through training, and search for alternative employment opportunities.
3. Research Methodology

In this study, strategy of systematic census used, where case study approach and content analysis approach regarding data collection about chairmen and officials in Al-Amal complexes used, and a social survey approach as well as linking approach used regarding the collection of data on social workers who work in Al-Amal complexes. And descriptive study defined as studying the fact or phenomenon as existing in reality, and interest with it as an accurate description expressed by qualitative or quantitative expression, where qualitative expression describes to us the phenomenon and illustrates its characteristics, and on the other hand quantitative expression gives us a digitally description shows the amount or size of this phenomenon (Obidat, 1996).

This study aims to address contemporary phenomenon, in addition to clarify the relationship of professional pressure with some independent variables, where they adopted the use of several methods of approach like (survey, linking, case study and content analysis), for the studied phenomenon need in this research to describe the feelings of professionals Workers involved in it, and then to identify other variables which influenced those feelings and sensations. The survey method identifies as the approach which aims to describe the studied phenomenon in terms of its nature and the degree of its existence.

The main goal of the linking method is to find out the existence of the relationship, or its absence. If it is found the relation proportion or inverse, positive or negative? The approach has been applied to the case study and content analysis approach to four cases of heads of departments of social service and concerned complexes administrators where it is extensively studied with all of the variables associated with and dealt with the full description and analysis. Were also analyzed the content of the guide of the interview in order to reach objective description, systematic and quantification of the apparent content of the interview.

The sample of the study has been determined with certain variables related to a professional pressure of the work which has been examined using a sample of social Worker workers in Al-Amal Complexes in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The gross total of the study sample (93) Workers, the main sample of study composed from a group of social workers in Al-Amal Complex in the Kingdom, and the questionnaires have been distributed on (93) Worker, only (60) questionnaire were return.

The reasons for choosing these complexes referred to a number of justifications, including:

1- Availability of a sample of a study consisting of social workers in the Al-Amal Complexes.

2- The Approval of officials in the Ministry of Health and Al-Amal Complexes to perform the search.

3- The desire of the researcher to differ geographical location of the participant complexes to ensure getting different pressures of work faced by social workers in the Al-Amal Complexes.

4- The different internal regulatory legislation and laws for each participant complex.

5- We aspire to be the results of this survey; cognitive and statistical and graphic addition in the field of mental pressure for social Workers in particular and mental pressures in general.

3.1 Field of Study

1 - The human field: the human field was identified within participants from social workers working in Al-Amal Complexes for Mental Health in the Kingdom and it is estimated (60) social Worker from both gender. Who applied a pressure of work estimated scale study, through questionnaire...
paragraphs that was designed for this purpose, and then the questionnaire list were distributed on social Workers, as well as we interviewed (3) of the department heads, and one supervisor, therefore it is expected to have particular impact of Complexes on the results of the study, so should be taken with caution when disseminate results on the other health institutions environments.

2 - Time Field: how long the field survey will be implemented, the questionnaire has been applied on members of samples of study, from the date (25-8-1432) to (3-12-1432).

3 - Location Field: this study has been applied to Al-Amal complexes for Mental Health in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as follows:
A - Al-Amal Complex for Mental Health and Addiction in Dammam
B- Al-Amal Complex for Mental Health and Addiction in Riyadh
C - Al-Amal Hospital for Mental Health and Addiction in Jeddah

With regard to the tools of study, the choice of the appropriate tools for data gathering will depend on the type or nature of the data needed to answer the research questions, that the right tool for data gathering are determined by the nature of the study (Rajab, 2003). This study will based on strategy of systematic counting, which will be used two tools for data gathering; questionnaire and the interview guidance.

A – Interview Guidance: a group guidance interview usually consists of a small number of questions and is considered as the agenda of discussion in the group meeting, which directly comes out from identifying research problem, and usually the researcher involved the head of the debate in advance in the process of guidance preparation which allows consecutive questions to complete the required data (Rajab, 2003).

B - Questionnaire tool: the questionnaire means " Method which used to collect data based on the formulation of a set of questions in special technical ways, and it send by mail or published in newspapers to note down the respondents of their answers and then resend it back to the supervising authority on the research"(Rajab, 2003).

3.2 Method of Analysis Data Processing

First: the method of statistical analysis and data processing (Quantitative): The statistical analysis and data processing aimed to display data of study and described it according to the objectives and its questions, as well as the questionnaires which obtained from social worker in the Al-Amal Complexes for Mental Health in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been revised, to identify the workers who said they do not feel the pressures of work and to identify Workers who answered that they fall under the pressure of work, and has been encoded, processing of data, and analysis it with descriptive statistical method, by using the computer programme (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) “SPSS”.

Second: qualitative analytical method: this method is dependent on qualitative analysis through analyzing the required parts in the questionnaire, as well as the interview guidance form.

4. Results

The results of the study showed the raise of the level of feeling of professional pressure in Al-Amal complexes based on the responses of the sample of study who reported (66.7%) they feel pressure in Complexes in which they work as well as the pressures resulting from the workload formed top of the eight-list pressures, where the study revolved around it, then the resulted pressures coming
of administrative support, also the pressure resulting from the lack of clarity of roles and multiplicity, followed by pressures resulting from human communication, then pressures resulting from the professional work modification, then the pressure resulting from the weak physical and moral incentives, so the pressures resulting from professional development, and finally the pressures that result from the work environment.

The study also showed no statistically significant differences in all dimensions according to qualification. And it also showed the present of different negative effects of the pressures of work located on the special social workers. Nevertheless the sample showed approval that there are different pros to the pressures of work.

5. Conclusion

It noticed from the order of the main axes of the sources of eight-list pressures of work which tested in the current study that the pressures of work resulting from the lack of clarity of roles and multiplicity considered top of the list in the sources of pressure, as well as the pressures increase by workload, followed by pressures resulting from human communication, then pressures resulting from the professional performance modification, then the pressures resulting from professional development, followed by the pressures resulting from the weak physical incentives.

5.1 Recommendations

This study made a number of recommendations; the most important one is to work to decrease the pressure of professional Workers in the field of social service which activated human communication between those responsible of the management of the complex and the higher authorities of the Ministry of Health to raise the morale of workers and improve functional and creative mental performance returns. It’s recommended to be careful, follow-up and review the psychological and scientific specifications to be met by the social worker, especially for the new appointment, and work to instill professional and ethical values that lead to mastery and dedicated of work.

It is recommended to enhance the work environment to fit the desires of social workers and strengthen the social and psychological stability, therefore its ability to cope with the physical, psychological and social pressures that may result to instability. It also recommended also improving the physical conditions of the work environment for Al-Amal Complexes especially that the data of study proved a high proportion of pressure resulting from this side.

It also recommended of the commitment to the principle of fairness and objectivity in equal opportunities for social workers in the field of professional growth, development, and modification, and increase the skills of Worker social workers by providing greater opportunities to attend training courses that support continuous learning to reduce their sense of the pressures of work and increase their efficiency.

And also to enable the opportunity for workers in the medical institutions to participate in instituted the managerial and operational policies to raise their morale and make them feel part of those institutions, by discuss the promotions system used to upgrade workers in the medical complexes, And implemented training programs aimed at developing the capacity of Worker social workers in dealing with work problems.

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