

Abstract

Social work, as one of the essential helping professions, must respond to the challenges of today, and social workers must reflect current events in the content of their work on a daily basis. The profession of social work and its theoretical foundations can be viewed from different perspectives. The thesis focuses on the description and analysis of the social work profession in its sociological-psychological-cultural context.

The theoretical part is based on the conceptualization of the social work profession from the perspective of social constructivism. Malcolm Payne (2021) explains that a good reason for using social constructivism at social work is the idea that social conditions are "not set in stone". The nature of social work changes, just as historical events or relationships change in different social contexts. It is therefore not possible to define social work in one way for all times and across the whole world.

The objective of the empirical part is to find out how social workers and the public perceive the profession of social work in the Czech Republic and thus supplement the so far missing empirical base with knowledge of the current state. The rating of the importance of the social work profession by the public and the rating of the importance of the social workers' own profession to compare with each other and also to compare them from the point of view of the opinions of social workers according to individual systems of social work performance (social services and public administration).

As part of the research study, which combined quantitative and qualitative methodology, an overview study of the number of social workers and areas of employment was prepared. In a completely unique way, social work was shown in a ranking of prestige among other professions, including a comparison of the differences in the perception of this profession by the public and social workers. The PCPA (post-covid professional attitude) index was innovatively constructed, which examines subjective changes in the professional self-concept of social workers.

Key Words

social work; profession; professional identity; self-concept; social constructivism; prestige; index; subjective perception; public administration; social services