

ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of Tulebayev Nurbol Nasirbekovich on the topic «Public perception of social work and social workers in Kazakhstan» for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the specialty «6D090500 - Social work»

General description of work. The dissertation research is devoted to the study of public perception of social work and social workers in Kazakhstan. The work is a large-scale study aimed at studying social work as a type of professional activity and scientific knowledge in Kazakhstan and identifying the opinions of social workers about what the public thinks of them, their image and profession.

The purpose of the research: to study the public perception of social work and social workers in Kazakhstan, as well as to compare expectations and beliefs about the formed public opinion.

Research objectives:

- conducting a review of scientific literature and developing a conceptual framework for the study of public perception of social work;
- to study the experience of studying the public perception of the profession of social work and social worker in Kazakhstan and abroad;
- to analyze contextual factors in the formation of professional identity of social work;
- to develop research design, development of methods, techniques for collecting and analyzing empirical data;
- to carry out qualitative and quantitative measurements (survey of the population, statistical tests - Likert scale, narrative interviews among students of the social work specialty, in-depth interviews among specialists performing the functions of a social worker) aimed at analyzing the public perception of social work and social workers;
- to examine stereotypes of professional identity, practice and expectations of social workers from the profession and the public;
- to study of the perception and attitude of students-social workers to the profession;
- to assess the effectiveness of the model and developing recommendations for creating a positive image of social work and building the capacity of social workers in Kazakhstan.

Research methods: general scientific (generalization, deduction and abstraction) and special methods of analysis, as well as methods of comparative, systemic, functional and complex analysis were used in the dissertation research. In the dissertation research methods of conceptual synthesis of data comparison and comparison of statistical tests and correlates are applied.

The main statements (proven hypotheses and other conclusions) submitted for defense:

1. Social work is actively moving towards the status of a professional profession on a number of criteria, including paradigm and the development of a distinctive theoretical knowledge base, ethics, the transition to practice and academic research in science and

in higher education, the attitude to the profession and the practice of its perception are variable.

2. Public perception of social work influences and shapes the profession. Negative public perceptions of social work can lead to many serious consequences, including undermining confidence in the social work profession, negative stigma associated with those who apply for the services of social workers, refusal to hire those who enter the profession, and a decrease in the number of services for those in need

2. Professional identity is not a sustainable entity; it is an ongoing process of interpretation that is shaped by contextual factors. Thus, most professionals who do not have formal training or education in the field of social work performing social work roles have problems with identity and consistency, in addition to a lack of scientific knowledge in this area.

3. The rating of the profession of a social worker is not comparable with other professions in terms of status and prestige: the leading motives for which people choose "service to society" are those guided by the values of altruism, ideals and the desire to help people in solving certain problems. However, judgments about the prestige of the profession in the wider community depend largely on the professional beliefs of social workers themselves and on how social workers themselves position their profession.

4. Social work deals with those lifestyle problems of individuals, families and social groups that are socially considered as a reason for social assistance, which is provided by social administration and social forms of work on supervision, case management, advocacy, care, training, education, group work, quasi-therapy and others. However, social work cannot solve all the problems and respond to all the problems that are claimed by the victims or attributed to them by society, perhaps even against their will.

5. Social workers practice in a variety of settings and perform different functions in each of them, where it is often difficult to distinguish social workers from specialists of other related professionals (nurse, psychologists, social educators), interaction with which reduces the ability to identify oneself as a separate profession.

6. Persistent negative attitudes towards occupation can take the form of stigma, which means that individuals or groups are belittled by other groups in society because of some attribute. This "belittlement" is a negative social meaning or stereotype placed on individuals or groups that serves to limit a person's ability to positively fulfill a particular role.

7. In order to create a positive public image of social work, social workers need to take responsibility for informing others about their profession, strengths and skills of its professionalization; identify effective strategies for changing public perceptions and improving the identity of social work in that community.

8. Reinvesting in social work is one step towards the stated goals, but social workers in Kazakhstan still have many steps to take before they are achieved. The current research aims to measure the perception of social workers in the context of the Kazakhstani context, aimed at studying the factors that influence people's perception of social work, professional preferences and their knowledge in the field of social work.

Scientific novelty of the study:

1. the conceptual field of discourse and the methodology for researching the public perception of social work and workers are determined, in particular, an integrative

approach to the study is proposed, which makes it possible to identify the widest possible range of factors that influence the formation and development of social work in Kazakhstan;

2. a research approach methodology has been developed using mixed types of methodologies from building a strategy to disseminating results: determination of sample sizes, measurement criteria, data collection, pre-testing of data collection tools, collection of secondary data methods, quantitative and qualitative methods used, data analysis software, ensuring the reliability and reliability of data;

3. there is a significant increase in the fragmentation of the social work professional identity structure, defined by conceptual ambiguity, lack of consensus on core attributes, and problems in determining what matters in the identity constitution;

4. it has been proven that the patterns of public perception of social work and social workers are variable, but generally positive, with a lack of knowledge about the professional roles and abilities of social workers, the range of services they provide and their diverse roles;

5. professional and personal self-stigmatization of social workers was revealed, which finds its expression in the belittling of one's own status and the manifestation of professional insecurity, however, motivation, commitment to the values of the profession and the need for customer support outweigh the negative stigma;

6. students' perception of the specialty "Social work" of their future profession is presented: there is minimal interest in choosing this specialty as a career option, but the motivation and assessment of the importance of the profession grows from course to course; the representation of girls in educational programs of social work at all levels is much more frequent than that of boys; the ability to identify social work professionals is enhanced at the master's and doctoral levels.

The object of the study is social work as a profession and social workers performing their functions in various organizations and institutions of Kazakhstan.

The subject of the study is to study the features of the development of social work as a profession and science in Kazakhstan, various expectations of public opinion about the role of social workers, as well as identifying significant differences between the public perception of social workers and the expectations of social workers regarding how the public perceives social workers.

Methodological and theoretical foundations of the study.

The scientific provisions of the classical and modern approaches of the social sciences made it possible to reveal the systemic nature and ways of categorizing social work in science and practice and to consider their manifestations in all their diversity: from theories of "coping with life" to discursive-analytical concepts. Consistency and construction as the main principles of the analysis of social work determined the use of paradigmatic approaches and frames as an abstract form of social work. Of methodological value are theories formed in line with individual approaches that generalize many different concepts of the reflexivity of social work as a science.

Theoretical and practical significance of the work. The presented study of the public perception of social work in Kazakhstan makes it possible to formulate a holistic view of the profession, the specifics of its development, which will serve as a paradigmatic and conceptual methodological basis for further research. The provisions

substantiated in the work make it possible to expand the theoretical foundations of the study of this issue in the context of a comparativist analysis.

The key points can be used in the process of further developing a holistic approach to building the capacity of social workers in Kazakhstan, and are applicable in teaching courses and preparing social work manuals for students. The ideas and provisions of the dissertation research can be used by government agencies in managing social processes of the formation and development of resource potential, to develop the main directions of social macropolicy, analytical institutions as a methodological basis for further research. The practical recommendations presented in the dissertation are also applicable in the activities of administrative and public structures in the field of social security.

Personal contribution of the author. The author carried out the main body of theoretical and empirical research presented in the dissertation work, including: collection and analysis of the source base and bibliography; development of theoretical models in the design of social work and methodology and design of the research approach using triangulation and mixed types methods with the definition of the target audience of three studies; calculation of the optimal sample size of a mass survey; conducting preliminary testing of data collection tools; preparing the design of quantitative and qualitative methods; using SPSS software for data analysis; analysis and presentation of results in the form of scientific publications and scientific reports.

Empirical base of research: is based on several empirical measurements carried out over the course of three years at the Center for Sociological Research and Social Engineering of al-Farabi KazNU and approved by the Local Ethical Committee of the University:

(1) performing an assessment (using a combined methodology for analyzing quantitative measurement data and qualitative interpretation of a narrative interview (free storytelling-essay) among students of the specialty "social work" of leading universities in Kazakhstan;

(2) conducting a quantitative study using a stratified sample (sample - 526 people) for Almaty as a large metropolis;

(3) conducting a qualitative study aimed at obtaining complete and in-depth information through a series of in-depth expert interviews with Kazakhstani social work practitioners.

The dissertation work corresponds to **the directions of development of modern science, state programs and legislation in the field of social work and development.** The third phase of the empirical study was carried out within the framework of the project "Improving state programs for pre- and post-graduate training and retraining of social workers and specialists performing social work functions, taking into account the basic competencies for interaction at the individual level and in the community to change social norms and behavior in Kazakhstan in the framework of the UNICEF-EU program on the protection of children in migration processes" under the guidance of professor Abdiraimova G.S.

Approbation and implementation of research results. The main provisions of the dissertation were tested in the author's presentations at scientific and international conferences. 9 scientific papers were published on the topic of the dissertation: 4 of

them in publications recommended by CQESES, 4 in reports of international scientific conferences, 1 article indexed in the database Scopus: Tulebayev N.N. Practices of public perception of social work and social workers (case of Kazakhstan) // Public Policy and Administration. – 2021. – Vol.20, №5. – P.715-726. Q3, CiteScore – 68.

Dissertation structure. The dissertation consists of an introduction, 2 sections, conclusion, list of references, applications.