



## Analysing the Challenges Faced in Practice by Social Workers during the Covid-19 Pandemic in South Africa

Dillo Justin Ramoshaba

Lecturer, University of Limpopo, Department of Social Work, Private bag X1106, Sovenga 0727, South Africa

E-mail: [justinramoshaba17@gmail.com](mailto:justinramoshaba17@gmail.com)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v6i10.1619>

---

### **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many socio-economic activities and destabilised the lives of many individuals wherein professionals such as social workers were expected to help mitigate these challenges in South Africa. It is from this background that this study sought to analyse the practice of Social Workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. This study adopted the non-empirical research method wherein existing literature was reviewed. The researcher reviewed and analysed documents on the practice of social workers during the COVID-19 pandemic from search engines such as EBSCOhost, google scholar and ProQuest. The inductive Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) was used to analyse the collected data. The findings of the study show that social workers faced challenges in managing their private and work lives. It was also found that psychological difficulties, anxiety, and trauma-related issues were experienced. The implementation of western knowledge in an African context was also revealed as a challenge. Lack of recognition and resources are some of the challenges that also confronted social workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Conclusions and recommendations are also provided in this study.

**Keywords:** *Social Workers; COVID-19 Pandemic; Challenges; Practice; South Africa*

### **Introduction**

South Africa, like the rest of the world, was affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Masipa, Ramoshaba, Mabasa, Maponyane, Monnye, Mampa, Chuene, Kgarose & Motloutse, 2022). According to Ramoshaba (2023a) Social workers were expected to play a role during the COVID-19 pandemic despite the uniqueness and newness of the pandemic. In the same breath, Ramoshaba and Singwane (2023) aver that, challenges such as increased domestic violence cases during the COVID-19 pandemic required social workers to be at the forefront. Social workers were expected to be at the forefront of responding to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic despite them not being immune to the

corona virus. This is in line with Collins (2007) who argues that social workers during their practice are more likely than other people to be exposed to a range of adverse emotions related to natural disasters because they are expected to control such emotions in such stressful circumstances. According to Tugade and Frederickson (2004) high psychological resilience of professionals such as social workers enables them to adapt to situations of intense stress or hardships. According to Leong, Lee, Ng, Lee, Koh, Yap, Guay and Ng (2004), professionals such as social workers and psychologists who care for the mental health of individuals during pandemics are also affected mentally by such pandemics. In the same breath, McGarry and Jackson (2020) state that social workers like many other professionals experienced psychological stress because of the new and challenging nature of the COVID-19 workload.

This study adopted the non-empirical research method wherein existing literature was reviewed. A narrative literature review was adopted as a research design due to its ability to identify and synthesize different books and journal articles about a chosen topic (Bruce, Beuthin, Sheilds, Molzahn, & Schick-Makaroff, 2016). Secondary data was sourced from research engines such as Google scholar, EBSCOhost and ProQuest that focused on the topic in question. For purposes of relevancy, data collection was restricted to the years 2002 to 2022 and the data collection was determined by data saturation (Maluleke, 2020; Mokwena & Maluleke, 2020). The data was analysed thematically using inductive Thematic Content Analysis (TCA).

The introduction presented the background of social work practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction also described the objective of the study which was to analyse the challenges faced in social work practice during the COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa. The following sections are discussed in the article. Firstly, the reviewed relevant existing literature on social work practice amid pandemics. Secondly, vulnerability theory is also discussed as an underpinning theoretical framework, this was done to indicate how the theory offers thorough analysis of the practice challenges of social workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. Thirdly, the adopted methodology is discussed. The paper also discusses the findings of the study. Conclusion and recommendations of the study are provided.

## ***Literature Review***

### **Social work Practice during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Some individuals and families developed their resilience through the social work services that were offered online during the strict COVID-19 restrictions and regulations period (Ferguson, Kelly & Pink, 2022). Ferguson, Kelly and pink further indicate that some social workers used digital methods of visiting clients; others used gardens or remained on the doorsteps of clients to avoid contact. However, it must be noted that at some point contact methods were used by social workers with strict regulations such as screening of families for face-to-face interviews or sessions being applied (Ferguson, et.al., 2022). On the other hand, the researcher is of the view that online services cannot be as effective as the traditional contact services as supported by several studies which show that offering services online has limitations on processes of helping clients (Baginsky & Manthorpe, 2020; Ryan, Maclean & Weideman, 2020; Cook & Zschomler, 2020). It should also be noted that social workers' practice was also guided by legislations as averred by Ramoshaba (2023b).

Ferguson et al. (2021) reported that some social workers had to improvise by using cellphones were physical sessions or family visitations were not feasible which was not as effective as contact sessions. In addition, Cook and Zschomler (2020) avow that some social workers had to adopt virtual home visits during the COVID-19 Pandemic which makes concentration difficult during sessions. On the contrary, Racher and Brodie (2020) report positive results of online services wherein some social workers

used innovative forms of online working such as using popular social media platforms to protect individuals and families by engaging them online. In the same breath, Pearce and Miller (2020) aver that some agencies observed the urgency of utilizing the online services coupled with the existing processes which assisted some individuals and families.

According to Baginsky and Manthorpe (2020), online methods such as video conferencing brought benefits such as protecting individuals and families during the COVID-19 Pandemic. On the contrary, Truell and Crompton (2020) postulate that online methods that were used to provide social work services presented both opportunities and challenges during the global pandemic. This is in line with several studies which shows that online social work practice carries complex ethical concerns such as compromised confidentiality and privacy (Rummell & Joyce, 2010; Simpson, 2017; Pascoe, 2021). According to Megele and Buzzi (2020), there is a need for proper training on online practice and there is a need to place an emphasis on maintaining professional standards when utilizing social media platforms for social work practice.

Madianou and Miller (2011) argue that technological innovations and platforms play a crucial role in the communication of social workers, clients, and families as features such as video calls have proven to support social relationships and even of those who are overseas. In the same breath, Hjorth, Pink, and Horst (2018) posit that smartphones and social media platforms are internationally instrumental in the generation of everyday feelings of 'togetherness' beside being physically apart from each other during pandemics which breaks family bonds. Moreover, Megele and Buzzi (2020) found that some individuals and families acknowledge the importance of digital social work because they deem it as flexible and crucial in the generation and sustenance of feelings of closeness and caring in cases where contact sessions are not possible.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

#### **Vulnerability Theory**

The Vulnerability theory was adopted in this study due to its nature of being strongly rooted in the fields of natural disasters and poverty as stated by Wisner, Blaikie, Cannon and Davis (2014). The theory state that vulnerability represents the physical, economic, social proneness of People, their families and communities to damage when faced with misfortunes (Cardona, 2006; Emrich & Cutter, 2011). The outbreak of the COVID-19 globally including in South Africa has created challenges for most practitioners in balancing their personal and work lives. The vulnerability theory was important to this study as it provided lenses to understand the challenges that were faced by social workers when practicing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ncube, Mangwaya and Ogundeji (2018) observed that in some cases vulnerable people do not receive support or resources to help them cope with stressors such as natural disasters. Khan, Vasilescu and Khan (2008) posit that people and families that do not have capacity to minimize and deal with risks that are associated with natural disasters run a risk of being vulnerable. Thus, the researcher was able to understand that factors such as lack of support can cause vulnerability in individuals and practitioners such as social workers.

### ***Methodology***

This study adopted the non-empirical research method wherein existing literature was reviewed. The researcher reviewed and analysed documents on challenges and social work practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. A narrative literature review was adopted as a research design due to its ability to identify and synthesize different books and journal articles about a chosen topic (Bruce, Beuthin, Sheilds,

Molzahn, & Schick-Makaroff, 2016). Considering this, the researcher gathered secondary data from various journals using a purposive sampling technique since there are promenade papers on the COVID-19 Pandemic. This secondary data was sourced from research engines such as Google scholar, EBSCOhost and ProQuest that focused on the topic in question. For purposes of relevancy, data collection was restricted to the years 2002 to 2023 and the data collection was determined by data saturation (Maluleke, 2020; Mokwena & Maluleke, 2020). The use of secondary data was motivated by Creswell (2014) who avows that researcher may collect data from qualitative documents such as accredited journals, internet sources and public documents. Furthermore, Matthews and Ross (2010) confirm that collected data can be qualitative in nature, for example, it may allow the researcher to determine the ideas that are expressed in a document or the underlying approach of a document. Moreover, the search was limited to work on the COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa. The data was analysed thematically using inductive Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). This method allowed the researcher to identify, analyse and report patterns within the data set, allowing for the descriptive organisation of the data in a way that facilitates the interpretation of various aspects as O'Reilly and Kiyimba (2015) avers.

## ***Findings and Discussions***

### **The Following Themes Emerged**

#### **Theme 1: Managing Private and Work Lives**

Social workers found themselves experiencing challenges in managing their private and work lives during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hopkins & Pedwell, 2021). According to Williamson, Walker, Bhaskaran, Bacon, Bates, Morton, Curtis, Mehrkar, Evans, Inglesby and Cockburn (2020) front line workers had to risk their well-being to address increasingly complex clients' needs during the pandemic with some neglecting their family responsibilities. It was challenging for social workers to manage their work and private lives during the COVID-19 pandemic as some clients skipped boundaries in attempt to get assistance by contacting social workers outside working hours as alluded by Mishna, Sanders, Sewell and Milne (2021). It can be noted that such acts by clients had contributed to the functioning of the social workers' families. According to Ross, Schneider, Muneton-Castano, Al Caldas and Boskey (2021), social workers were pressured by COVID-19 pandemic to balance their personal and work lives by meeting emergent and acute clients' needs and the needs of their families.

#### **(a) Theme 2: Psychological Difficulties, Anxiety, and Trauma-Related Issues**

According to Ramoshaba (2023c), the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the mental health problems in South Africa. In addition, Redondo-Sama, Matulic, Munté-Pascual, and de Vicente (2020) argues that the existence of the COVID-19 pandemic increased the number of people who need social services and restricted access for some. This is supported by several studies which show that preventative measures such as isolation and the increased risk of depression and anxiety caused by COVID-19 pandemic, impacted the access to social services (Dominelli, 2021; Banerjee, 2020; Farkas & Romaniuk 2020). According to Banks, Cai, De Jonge, Shears, Shum, Sobočan, Strom, Truell, Úriz and Weinberg (2020), professionals such as social workers were confronted with fear of compromising their own health by practicing in the hotspots of the COVID-19 pandemic which put them at risk of moral injury.

Past studies have revealed that social workers working within the context of unexpected disasters and pandemics often experience psychological difficulties, anxiety, and trauma-related issues (Prost, Lemieux & Ai, 2016; Caringi, Hardiman, Weldon, Fletcher, Devlin, & Stanick, 2017; Aafjes-van Doorn, Békés, Prout & Hoffman, 2020). In addition, Tosone, McTighe and Bauwens (2015), in their study

revealed that social workers who worked in the event of the Hurricane Katrina disaster experienced traumatic stress. Thus, the impact of pandemics on the well-being of professionals such as social workers can be noted. Greenberg (2020) avows many professionals such as nurses and social workers who worked in the health care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic were at the risk of experiencing COVID-19-related mental health issues. Studies show that it was a challenging moment to practice social work during the COVID-19 pandemic (Greenberg, 2020; Williamson et al., 2020).

### **(b) Theme 3: Implementing Western Knowledge in an African Context**

According to the National Association of Social Workers [NASW] (2020) Social workers were placed at the forefront of providing social services during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa. In the same breath Bright (2020) avows that social workers were expected to be competent and use their skills to respond accordingly to the challenges that emanated with the COVID-19 pandemic despite a possible challenge of lack of African knowledge and training on the pandemic. According to Mwansa (2011), social work is a result of foreign methodology rather than a gradual societal shift in African nations such as South Africa. The researcher views the dominance of practice methods and approaches that are western as well as limited knowledge on African Social work practices as a possible challenge that social workers faced when practicing in the African context during the COVID-19 period. In addition, Rwomire (2012) avers that social work education and training has shortfalls as it does not capacitate social workers to deal with all types of problems in developing countries. Thus, this can be noted as a possible challenge that was faced in South Africa when social workers offered services to individuals and families.

### **Theme 4: Lack of Professional Recognition of Social Workers**

The researcher has observed limited professional recognition of social workers in South Africa which might have potentially tempered with the morale and motivation of social workers in going an extra mile during and after pandemics such as the COVID-19. This is in line with Chitereka (2010) who asserts that many governments across a number of nations do not value social workers' activities, especially in hospital settings, which could provide difficulties for the successful practice of social work in such contexts. On the same wavelength, there is a challenge of limited number of social workers in several health facilities and medical social workers' services are not often acknowledged by other core health professionals in hospital settings, which has an impact on service delivery (Dako-Gyeke, Boateng & Mills, 2018). Some of the challenges that are faced in the social work practice are instigated by the notion that social welfare programs do not directly contribute to the growth of the economy and that they should not be prioritized and adequately funded and supported (Kreitzer, Abukari, Antonio, Mensah and Kwaku, 2009). Thus, this can also be noted as a possible reason for the lack of professional recognition of social work.

### **Theme 5: Lack of Resources**

One issue that hinders the successful practice of social work in African countries such as South Africa is inadequate financial and material support (Umoren, 2016). This cannot be ruled out as the possible challenge that was faced by social workers when they were practicing in South Africa which is a developing country in the African region. Umoren (2016) and Dako-Gyeke and Kofie (2017) aver that social workers face a huge challenge of lack of resources when fulfilling the needs and promoting and protecting the well-being of individuals, families and communities amid natural disasters. According to Banks et al. (2020), social workers struggled to manage daily work routines and address clients' needs due to inadequate resources. Professionals such as social workers are always facing the risk of burnout when providing services to individuals and families during natural disasters such as the COVID-19 due to



factors such as increased clients' needs and changes in the normal and usual practice as stated by Bohman, Dyrbye, Sinsky, Linzer, Olson, Babbott, Murphy, deVries, Hamidi, and Trockel (2017).

Delatorre (2019) avers that in the event of disasters and pandemics, social workers find themselves struggling to conduct accurate assessments due to lack of resources. According to Shanafelt, Ripp and Trockel (2020), health care workers such as social workers who worked in hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic practiced without adequate Personal Protective Equipment which made them to develop anxiety and fear of contracting COVID-19 and infecting their family members. Banks et al. (2020) posit that social workers during the COVID-19 pandemic faced a variety of dilemmas such as placing clients who need hospital bed in a lower level of care due to hospital overcrowding. This is a challenge as clients were not given the needed services due to the pressure and lack of resources. Horesh and Brown (2020) aver that some practice measures of dealing with trauma do not capture the nuances of COVID-19 related issues which created challenges for social work practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Abrams and Dettlaff (2020), when the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges, social workers had to be prepared for the challenges and respond to the national outcry for social services. According to Maglajlic (2019), when practicing amid pandemics, disasters and crises, it is common for resources to suddenly be unavailable and concomitant ethical challenges to emerge. This points out that social workers do face challenges when practicing during disasters and pandemics.

### ***Conclusion***

Social workers play a crucial role of saving lives and promoting the well-being of different individuals and families. However, it was revealed that they also face challenges when practicing during natural disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In the process of Implementing western knowledge in the African context, challenges are also faced. The lack of resources and professional recognition of social workers was revealed as a challenge when practicing social work during natural disasters. It is from the findings of this study that the following recommendations are developed:

- Social work curriculum and practice must be Africanised to accommodate all African contexts.
- The South African government must develop strategies of enabling professional recognition of social workers.
- The South African government must also avail resources and support social workers during natural disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ***Acknowledgement***

The author has read and agreed to the content of the manuscript.

### ***Author contribution***

The author has contributed to all the sections of the manuscript.

**Ethical Issues/Informed Consent Statement:** The study did not involve humans or animals as secondary data was used. However, the researcher took the following into account to ensure ethicality: University of Limpopo research ethics policies and exercising honesty in terms of acknowledging 'all' sources used in this study, aided by the list of references and avoiding of plagiarism.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflict of interest.

## References

- Aafjes-van Doorn, K., Békés, V., Prout, T.A. and Hoffman, L., 2020. Psychotherapists' vicarious traumatization during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(S1), p.S148.
- Abrams, L.S. and Dettlaff, A.J., 2020. Voices from the frontlines: Social workers confront the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social Work*, 65(3), pp.302-305.
- Baginsky, M. and Manthorpe, J., 2020. Keeping children and young people safe during a pandemic: Testing the robustness of multi-agency child protection and safeguarding arrangements for schools. NIHR Policy Research Unit in Health and Social Care Workforce, The Policy Institute, King's College London.
- Banerjee, D., 2020. The COVID-19 outbreak: Crucial role the psychiatrists can play. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 50, p.102014.
- Banks, S., Cai, T., De Jonge, E., Shears, J., Shum, M., Sobočan, A.M., Strom, K., Truell, R., Úriz, M.J. and Weinberg, M., 2020. Practising ethically during COVID-19: Social work challenges and responses. *International Social Work*, 63(5), pp.569-583.
- Bohman, B., Dyrbye, L., Sinsky, C.A., Linzer, M., Olson, K., Babbott, S., Murphy, M.L., deVries, P.P., Hamidi, M.S. and Trockel, M., 2017. Physician well-being: the reciprocity of practice efficiency, culture of wellness, and personal resilience. *NEJM Catalyst*, 3(4).
- Bright, C.L., 2020. Social work in the age of a global pandemic. *Social Work Research*, 44(2), pp.83-86.
- Bruce, A., Beuthin, R., Sheilds, L., Molzahn, A. and Schick-Makaroff, K., 2016. Narrative research evolving: Evolving through narrative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15(1), p.1609406916659292.
- Cardona, O.D., 2006. A system of indicators for disaster risk management in the Americas. Measuring vulnerability to hazards of natural origin: towards disaster resilient societies, pp.189-209.
- Caringi, J.C., Hardiman, E.R., Weldon, P., Fletcher, S., Devlin, M. and Stanick, C., 2017. Secondary traumatic stress and licensed clinical social workers. *Traumatology*, 23(2), p.186.
- Chitereka, C., 2010. People with disabilities and the role of social workers in Lesotho. *Social Work & Society*, 8(1), pp.82-93.
- Collins, S., 2007. Social workers, resilience, positive emotions and optimism. *Practice*, 19(4), pp.255-269.
- Cook, L.L. and Zschomler, D., 2020. Virtual home visits during the COVID-19 pandemic: Social workers' perspectives. *Practice*, 32(5), pp.401-408.
- Creswell, J.W. 2014. *Research design. Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Dako-Gyeke, M. and Kofie, H., 2017. Improving mental healthcare in Ghana: The role of social work practice. *Handbook of Social Work and Social Development in Africa*, pp.181-189.
- Dako-Gyeke, M., Boateng, D.A. and Mills, A.A., 2018. The role of social work in the provision of healthcare in Africa. In *African Perspectives on Ethics for Healthcare Professionals* (pp. 107-118). Springer, Cham.

- Delatorre, J., 2019. Thrownness: One practitioner's experience of an unexpected disaster. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 29(2), p.132.
- Dominelli, L., 2020. *Surviving COVID-19: Social work issues in a global pandemic (Child protection and welfare, social care)*. Stirling: Stirling University.
- Emrich, C.T. and Cutter, S.L., 2011. Social vulnerability to climate-sensitive hazards in the southern United States. *Weather, Climate, and Society*, 3(3), pp.193-208.
- Farkas, K.J. and Romaniuk, J.R., 2020. Social work, ethics and vulnerable groups in the time of coronavirus and Covid-19. *Society Register*, 4(2), pp.67-82.
- Ferguson, H., Kelly, L. and Pink, S., 2022. Social work and child protection for a post-pandemic world: the re-making of practice during COVID-19 and its renewal beyond it. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 36(1), pp.5-24.
- Greenberg, N., 2020. Mental health of health-care workers in the COVID-19 era. *Nature Reviews Nephrology*, 16(8), pp.425-426.
- Hopkins, L. and Pedwell, G., 2021. The COVID PIVOT—Re-orienting child and youth mental health care in the light of pandemic restrictions. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 92(3), pp.1259-1270.
- Horesh, D. and Brown, A.D., 2020. Traumatic stress in the age of COVID-19: A call to close critical gaps and adapt to new realities. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(4), p.331.
- Khan, H., Vasilescu, L.G. and Khan, A., 2008. Disaster management cycle—a theoretical approach. *Journal of Management and Marketing*, 6(1), pp.43-50.
- Kreitzer, L., Abukari, Z., Antonio, P., Mensah, J. and Kwaku, A., 2009. Social work in Ghana: A participatory action research project looking at culturally appropriate training and practice. *Social Work Education*, 28(2), pp.145-164.
- Leong, I.Y.O., Lee, A.O.K., Ng, T.W., Lee, L.B., Koh, N.Y., Yap, E., Guay, S. and Ng, L.M., 2004. The challenge of providing holistic care in a viral epidemic: opportunities for palliative care. *Palliative medicine*, 18(1), pp.12-18.
- Madianou, M. and Miller, D., 2011. Mobile phone parenting: Reconfiguring relationships between Filipina migrant mothers and their left-behind children. *New media & society*, 13(3), pp.457-470.
- Maglajlic, R., 2019. Organisation and delivery of social services in extreme events: Lessons from social work research on natural disasters. *International Social Work*, 62(3), pp. 1146–58.
- Maluleke, W. 2020. The African scare of fall armyworm: Are South African farmers' immune? *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies*, 12(1), 207-221.
- Masipa, M.D., Ramoshaba, D.J., Mabasa, L.T., Maponyane, K.A., Monnye, K.N., Mampa, S., Chuene, T.A., Kgarose, M.F. and Motloutse, K.J., 2022. An Assessment of Covid-19 pandemic quarantine and isolation programmes: A case study of the University of Limpopo. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa*, 10(2), pp.17-30.
- Matthews, R. and Ross, E., 2010. *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Pearson Education Ltd.



- McGarry, S. and Jackson, K., 2020. Guidance for Medical Social Workers; Responding to Covid\_19 Pandemic. Ireland: Irish Association of Social Workers.
- Megele, C. and Buzzi, P. eds., 2020. Social media and social work: Implications and opportunities for practice. Policy Press.
- Mishna, F., Sanders, J.E., Sewell, K.M. and Milne, E., 2021. Teaching note—Preparing social workers for the digital future of social work practice. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 57(sup1), pp.19-26.
- Mokwena, R.J & Maluleke, W. 2020. South African rural communities and the land restitution process: The application of criminological and legal theories in identifying obstacles to rightful allocations of land. *Gender and Behaviour Journal*, 18(3): 1614516156
- Mwansa, L.K., 2011. Social work education in Africa: Whence and whither?. *Social Work Education*, 30(1), pp.4-16.
- NASW—National Association of Social Workers. 2020. ‘Coronavirus (COVID-19)’, available online at <https://www.socialworkers.org/Practice/Infectious Diseases/ Coronavirus> (Accessed 30 August 2023).
- Ncube, A., Mangwaya, P.T. and Ogundeji, A.A., 2018. Assessing vulnerability and coping capacities of rural women to drought: A case study of Zvishavane district, Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 28, pp.69-79.
- O’Reilly, M & Kiyimba, N. 2015. *Advanced qualitative research: A guide to using theory*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Pascoe, K.M., 2021. Considerations for integrating technology into social work practice: A content analysis of nine professional social work associations’ Codes of Ethics. *International Social Work*, p.0020872820980833.
- Pearce, J. and Miller, C., 2020. Safeguarding children under Covid-19: What are we learning?. *Journal of Children's Services*, 15(4), pp.287-293.
- Pink, S., Hjorth, L., Horst, H., Nettheim, J. and Bell, G., 2018. Digital work and play: Mobile technologies and new ways of feeling at home. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 21(1), pp.26-38.
- Prost, S.G., Lemieux, C.M. and Ai, A.L., 2016. Social work students in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Correlates of post-disaster substance use as a negative coping mechanism. *Social Work Education*, 35(7), pp.825-844.
- Racher, A. and Brodie, I., 2020. Joining the dots? Tackling child exploitation during Covid-19. *Journal of Children's Services*, 15(4), pp.275-285.
- Ramoshaba, D.J. and Singwane, T.P., 2023. Thematic content analysis of lockdown and domestic violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic in South Africa. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147-4478), 12(2), pp.370-375.
- Ramoshaba, D.J., 2023a. Thematic Content Analysis of the Roles of Social Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic in South Africa. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6(8), pp.118-127.
- Ramoshaba, D.J., 2023b. Analysing the natural disaster and related legislations of South Africa in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147-4478), 12(4), pp.511-516.

- Ramoshaba, D.J., 2023c. Mental Health Issues Caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic on Individuals within Selected Families in Polokwane, South Africa. *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 6(7), pp.543-551.
- Redondo-Sama, G., Matulic, V., Munté-Pascual, A. and de Vicente, I., 2020. Social work during the COVID-19 crisis: Responding to urgent social needs. *Sustainability*, 12(20), p.8595.
- Ross, A., Schneider, S., Muneton-Castano, YF., Al Caldas, A., Boskey, ER. “You never stop being a social worker:” Experiences of pediatric hospital social workers during the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social Work in Health Care*, 60(1), pp.8-29. doi: 10.1080/00981389.2021.1885565.
- Rummell, C.M. and Joyce, N.R., 2010. “So wat do u want to wrk on 2day?”: The ethical implications of online counseling. *Ethics & Behavior*, 20(6), pp.482-496.
- Rwomire, A. (2012), “The role of social work in national development”, *Social Work and Society*, 10(1).
- Ryan, P.G., Maclean, K. and Weideman, E.A., 2020. The impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on urban street litter in South Africa. *Environmental Processes*, 7(4), pp.1303-1312.
- Shanafelt, T., Ripp, J. and Trockel, M., 2020. Understanding and addressing sources of anxiety among health care professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Jama*, 323(21), pp.2133-2134.
- Simpson, J.E., 2017. Staying in touch in the digital era: New social work practice. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 35(1), pp.86-98.
- Tosone, C., McTighe, J.P. and Bauwens, J., 2015. Shared traumatic stress among social workers in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. *British Journal of Social Work*, 45(4), pp.1313-1329.
- Truell, R. and Crompton, S., 2020. To the top of the cliff: How social work changed with COVID-19. *International Federation of Social Workers*.
- Tugade, M.M. and Fredrickson, B.L., 2004. Resilient individuals use positive emotions to bounce back from negative emotional experiences. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 86(2), p.320.
- Umoren, N., 2016. Social work development in Africa: Encouraging best practice. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research*, 7(1), pp.191-203.
- Williamson, E.J., Walker, A.J., Bhaskaran, K., Bacon, S., Bates, C., Morton, C.E., Curtis, H.J., Mehrkar, A., Evans, D., Inglesby, P. and Cockburn, J., 2020. Factors associated with COVID-19-related death using OpenSAFELY. *Nature*, 584(7821), pp.430-436.
- Wisner, B., Blaikie, P., Cannon, T. and Davis, I., 2014. *At risk: natural hazards, people's vulnerability and disasters*. Routledge.

## Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).