MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL STUDIES

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE AND SOCIAL WORK

TAMBUDZAI CHISHAMISO SANDRA MUSENGI

(FULL TIME MASTER'S DEGREE IN SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH)

MASTER'S THESIS

PANDEMIC SOCIAL WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Supervisor: Dr.Jolanta Pivoriene

Vilnius 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

1. THEORECTICAL BACKGROUND 6

1.1 General System Theory 6

1.2 Family system theory 9

1.3 Ecological system theory 11

1.4 Policies in social work 16

2. Challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic. 19

2.1 Behavioral challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic 19

2.2 Psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic 23

3: Roles of social workers with children and youth 29

3.1 Roles of social workers with children and youth before Covid-19 29

3.2 Roles of social workers with children and youth of frontline workers during the pandemic 33

4 Social work intervention 38

4.1 Methods of social work intervention 38

4.3 Models of social work intervention 44

5. ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH FACING DIFFICULTIES DURING COVID-19. 48

5.1 Research Methodology 48

5.2 Data Analysis: Research Results 54

5.2.1 Intervention of social work in addressing the challenges faced by children and youth during Covid-19. 54

5.2.2 Results discussion: Intervention of social work in addressing challenges faced by the children and youth during Covid-19. 63

REFLECTIONS 73

CONCLUSION 74

RECOMMENDATION 75

SUMMARY 77

BIBLIOGRAPHY 78

ANNEXES 88

INTRODUCTION

Children and youth together make the future generation of any society. Although they are most energetic they tend to be the most fragile and vulnerable group of people. Vulnerability involves being weak and poorly defended and having their rights, wellbeing, and self-esteem easily violated. Children and young youth also tend to explore and experiment, involving themselves in high risk behaviors and hence increased susceptibility to accidents, emotional trauma, medical problems, physical injuries and criminal offenses. This calls for the need of social work intervention.

Social work plays a pivotal role in creating a safety net and security to children in need. It provides vulnerable children and youth with support of enhancing themselves to have their own independence (Crouch, 1979). Social workers are there to enable the wellbeing and protection of children, their mental health and cross-cultural practice (Healy, 2010). Economic and financial crisis were problems which were faced by social workers with children and youth in 2000s (Serra et al., 2019) in addition to cyber bullying and online abuse (Willoughby, 2019). Recently, Covid-19 pandemic has become the new normal that has changed lives of children and youth. A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that occurred and covered a wide geographic area such as a country and it crossed the continents. It is associated with a higher mortality and morbidity compared to outbreaks and epidemics (Çevikelli Yakut et al., 2020). Covid-19 is a type of pandemic, which is a novel disease with a partly described clinical course in children (Cucinotta et al., 2020). According to World Health Organization, over 200 countries have been affected with over 94 963 847 confirmed cases and over 2 050 857 deaths reported by 20 January 2021. England had increased numbers of confirmed cases and deaths due to the Covid-19 pandemic, hence that has brought behavioral and psychological challenges to children and youth of frontline healthcare workers an easily neglected group who can benefit from social work intervention.

Relevance of the topic. Children and youth constitute about 42% of the world population and have been reported to have milder symptoms of Covid-19 illness if infected. However, psychological distress, emotional, mental and behavioral changes are the most reported and footprints that Covid-19 leave on the children (Imran et al., 2020). This study will outline the challenges faced by the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the Covid-19 pandemic, the psychological and behavioral challenges. An outline of what other researchers

have contributed about the pandemic with children and youth, the social workers intervention and roles on the challenges faced by the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19 will be noted through the review of literature.

Novelty of topic. Since the start of the pandemic much focus has been given to the rising mortality rates, ways to mitigate and limit the spread of the virus and less has been done to shift the focus to avoid irreversible scarring of the upcoming generation, the children and youth (Ghia et al., 2020).The other studies concentrated on the challenges faced by children and youth with disability and chronic illnesses such as obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders (Nissen et al., 2020), not much literature or studies has focused on the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers, therefore need for social workers intervention on assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers an emerging group that was not considered before the pandemic, hence the new aspect of this study. Much focus has been placed on economically and socially disadvantaged children but the children of frontline healthcare workers although they might not be economically disadvantaged are at a greatest risk of stress response (Alon et al., 2020).

The children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were exposed to separation, anxiety and fear in light of the risks that their parents take when caring for people who are afflicted by Covid-19 virus. They fear that their parents might be affected or even die from the virus (Vranda et al., 2020). Most frontline healthcare workers had psychological and emotional stress from increased workload and being surrounded by death of their patients which they may project on their children resulting in a vicious psychological stress on the children (Fang et al., 2021). This concluded that no focus was placed on their children, their needs, no communication and not hearing their views as children are judged as incompetent as they are not able to express their views and feelings (Cousins et al., 2007) . The new target groups that the researcher interviewed were experienced social workers who worked with children and youth in their day to day life.

Practical and theoretical value of paper. The research defined the social workers roles and intervention to assist children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who faced behavioral and psychological challenges during Covid-19. This ensured the wellbeing of children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19. Theory is a conceptual framework that gives meaning and explanation of events and problem-solving efforts. Applying theory to practice of social work helps social workers to identify knowledge gaps about practice and explain the

clients situations and why they behave the way they do (Gentle-Genitty et al.,). The researcher will use system theory to link knowledge about challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers and knowledge about professional intervention and recommendations that are practical in assisting children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. Communication is one of the key strategies by the social workers to assist children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. System theory is a belief that individual behavior grow and develop in interaction with their environment, be it physical or social and factors that contributes to behavioral changes including friends, family, social settings and home environment (Teater, 2015).

Object social workers intervention for children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Goal To explore the intervention of social workers with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who faced difficulties during the pandemic.

Objectives

- To identify the behavioral and psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers.
- To analyze the roles of social workers to assist on the challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.
- To explore on the intervention used by social workers in assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers.

Research questions

- What are the behavioral and psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic?
- What roles do social workers play when dealing with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers infected and affected by Covid-19?
- What are the methods of intervention social workers use to assist the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers facing challenges during the pandemic?

Research Methods Research method is defined as a strategy, technique or a process that is used to collect data or any evidence for analysis purpose and used to find solutions to research problems (Goundar, 2012). The main reason is to have new information and a better understanding of the study. The researcher used qualitative research method to gather data about

the roles and intervention of social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who faced difficulties during the pandemic. Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that allows the researcher to gain access to the life world of individuals in order to appreciate and understand the meaning of their experience (Wilson et al., 2007). The researcher used Phenomenology unstructured interview, conducting intensive individual interviews with a number of social workers to explore their roles and ways of intervention they applied to assist the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who faced difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Thesis Structure Introduction defined an overview of the study, the problem statement, aim, goal and the relevance of the study. Chapter one reviewed the literature of the research area, bringing the gaps in the study that has being carried out in other literature. Chapter two explained the behavioral and psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. The role of social workers was outlined in chapter three. The intervention of social workers was mentioned in Chapter four. Chapter five was about the research design that was used in the study, the method implemented and the information that was relevant for the study and the finding of the study. The data collected, analyzed and a clear discussion of the results was also part and parcel of chapter five. Recommendations, conclusion, summary and reflection of the study were outlined to conclude the topic under study.

Vocabulary of the study

- ***Covid-19 Pandemic*** **-** Covid-19 is a disease that spread rapidly and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (Getaneh et al., 2020). Its spectrum ranges from asymptomatic to life threatening severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sarinoglu et al., 2020).
- ***Children and youth*** **-** A child is defined as a human being below the age of eighteen years (Kuper, 2010). Youth is a group between the childhood and maturity (Nithithijanantham, 2021).
- ***Frontline healthcare workers*** **-** Frontline healthcare workers are professionals who are present to assist emotional, stressed , sick people in the society, assist patients and communities in times of need (Shanafelt et al., 2020).

- ***Social work*** **-** Social work is a profession that carters for the wellbeing of people, providing equality, intervening at the point of interaction between people and their environment, providing social justice and human rights principles (Boland, 2014)

Summary

This chapter has provided a basic understanding of the study. It reviews the challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic and how best social work as a discipline can intervene.

1. THEORECTICAL BACKGROUND

The chapter gives an appreciation of the theoretical framework that is tangled with the topic under study, pandemic social work with children and youth. The purpose of the study is to identify social work roles and intervention on the challenges faced by the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19. The researcher applied the integrative review. This type of review evaluates critically and synthesize in a systematic way and its results of multiple studies on a particular topic of study, contributing to broader knowledge about the investigated problem under study (Oliveira et al., 2018). It also summaries past research by having an overall conclusion from different studies, identifying the research problem and includes the behavioral response and comparative with the topic of study (Broome, 2000).

1.1 General System Theory

The study is premised on the system theory. Theory intervenes for people within their environment so as to increase social justice, empowering them through assisting individuals, their families, social groups in society and communities.

Theories and policies are used to ease the relationship impact of families and their children globally (Marmor et al., 2021). Theories are used in social sciences as a way to explain different aspects of reality and their underlying regularities, how to predict the future. The knowledge that is applies in theories is gained through thoughts and less on experience (Heidingsfelder, 2021). Theories are used in social work to identify social problems and their goals are to generate knowledge on what causes social problems, consequences and potential solutions to the problem (Thyer, 2008). Some examples of theories are psychosocial, cognitive development, psychoanalytic, person centered, genetic theory, cognitive behavioral theory, self-psychology, constructivism and family theory (Thyer, 2008).

System theory is used by the researcher in the study. The system theory create feedback which is either positive, so as to improve changes and negative feedback to correct errors (Burmistrov, 2020). System theory looks at the world where an individual phenomena will be viewed as interrelated rather than isolated and complex (Adams et al., 2014). The System Theory states that behavior is influenced by a variety of factors that work together as a system such as families, friends, economic challenges, social challenges, communities, religious structure and individual home environment.

The system theory is composed of the inputs that are the resources and information. The next stage is the process in the system theory, that is the activity and lastly the output which is the outcome (Burmistrov, 2020). System theory enables and encourages social workers to work with other different organizations and systems (Dalrymple et al., 2013). It also gives some guidance to social workers on how they can act in their profession (Gallant et al., 2017). System theory enables social work professionals to think about how each family dynamics need to be dealt with both inside and outside the family surroundings (Thyer, 2004).

System theory was originally introduced by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in 1901-1972 and he further develop the general system theory in 1930-1940s that represent the complex relationship of elements that form entities (Turner, 2011). Other contributors of system theory include family system theorists, Alfred North Whitehead, Kirt Lewin, Silvano Ariete and Kenneth Boulding (Laszlo et al, n.d.). The goal of Bertalanffy was to achieve a coherent perspective view of the world as an organization with all different disciplines and having a better understanding within the environment (Turner, 2011).

System theory comprise of open, closed and isolated system. An open system theory looks at the relationship between the organization and its environment. It involve the ability of the organization to adapt to any changes within the environment (Mele et al., 2010). This is also applicable to humans, be it an individual, group and community. An individual need to adapt to the changes within their environment so as to have a better relationship to one another and if not will affect their attitude and behavior towards each other and their environment. In closed system theory, there is no exchange of matters or information within an organization or a family and in isolates system theory, there is no exchange of elements within an organization or family setup (Mele et al., 2010).

System theory integrate principles contexts such as biological, social, psychological and physical among the workers of different fields and disciplines about the theory importance (Mele et al., 2010). The system theory involves the concept of relationship between the elements that constitute the whole system. These elements include an individual, groups or communities (Turner, 2011). System theory components comprise of different attributes that influence it such as knowledge, values, relationship, quality and environment (Mele et al., 2010).

The system theory has different entities in the world called the system. The system has properties and types that are common (Rapoport, 1986). A system is a complex of the element with

interaction be it non-random nature or in an orderly manner (Turner, 2011). The system theory focuses on the interaction. The theory defined that the behavior of an individual as a single autonomous element within his/her environment. System Theory helps to increase ones interpersonal, political, influence, personal and socio-economic power of the people so as to improve their conditions (Yildirim, 2021). It is a belief that individual behavior grow and develop in interaction with their environment, be it physical or social factors they contributes to behavioral changes that include friends, family, social settings and home environment (Teater, 2015). These enable system theory to be incorporated with other systems such as family theory, contingency theory, ecological theory and social system theory.

The system theory constitutes of the other theories that are important in social sciences. Ecological system theory and family system theory are two theories that were used within the research. Family system theory is a set of individuals who stand in an interrelation to one another. It predicts and gives an explanation on how people in a family interact and shows the difference from those outside the family setup (Priest, 2021). Family system theory is applicable in cases of child obesity, treating both the child and the entire family (Fair et al., 2018). In the research, the frontline healthcare workers and their children is the type of family that the researcher focused on in the research under study.

Ecological system theory, humans are in constant interaction with their environment and the impact that an individual and family encounter, be it a positive or a negative one (Wilder, 2010). The ecological system theory analyses the social environment and its social focus when addressing a problem (Wilder, 2010). The ecological system theory has five levels which are the individual, microsystem, mesosytem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. One level does influence the behavior of another. Changes in environment affect the wellbeing of children and their parents as well. Covid-19 is an environmental change that occurred in frontline healthcare workers families with their children and changed their way of life in a negative way.

Summary

Different theories are used in social work as guidelines to identify and solve problems for individuals or communities. System theory was used in this study and it outlined the relation between an individual with the family and his/her environment.

1.2 Family system theory

A system is defined as a set of interacting units that have relationships to each other, it is a set of connected elements (Burmistrov, 2020). A family is defined as a system consisting of a set of people who are related, maintained and need for members to communicate (Bavelas et al., 1982). Family system theory is a theory that focuses on the behavior exchange and the interaction between family members. It views the sequences and symptoms of an individual with his/her family interaction (Johnson et al., 2016).

Family system focuses on family units, its structures and behavior patterns. It also outlines the family dynamics of troubled families and their change process (Crittenden et al., 2009). A family is derived from a Roman word which is famulus meaning servant. It is a major social institution where a person's social activity is formulated from. This is where a person/child is taught his/her first experiences in everything be it the first step, joy and sorrow before deciding to be on his/ her own (Jecinta et al., 2019). It gives social support, provide physical, financial, emotional support to a person to survive (Antony et al., 2017). Family is where an individual character and behavior patterns are taught, reinforced and observed (Johnson et al., 2016).

Family system theory borrowed its concept from system theory where a family system is analyzed by governing similar rules of another natural system (Tadik, 2016). The family culture and configuration plays a crucial and significant role in child well-being. Parental substance abuse, mental health issues, psychiatric illness and marital distress affects the child wellbeing (Hooper, 2007). Therefore, there is need for communication in each family for easy interaction and understanding so as to maintain a positive feedback in the entire family system (Segal et al., 1982).

The emotional wellbeing of individuals like a child or an adolescent cannot be separated from its family (Haefner, 2014). It is through the family's pattern, rules and interaction that prevent and promote the family wellbeing (Priest, 2021). The behavior of each family member come from the push and shove from the family members as they try to endeavor their balance between their differences and their togetherness (Haefner, 2014). The family plays an important role in the child develop and healing even though the interaction between the child and family might be complex. Children develop problems in a family setup and for the child to heal fast, a family must be involved and work together (Maras, 2021).

Frontline healthcare workers and their families

Frontline workers are those people who provide direct service where they are mostly needed, such as treating and diagnosing other people (Tasnim et al., 2021). Frontline healthcare workers are professionals who are present to assist emotional, stressed and sick people in the society (Shanafelt et al., 2020). The frontline healthcare workers , such as doctors and nurses work directly with patients and some indirectly such as medical laboratory technicians, aides and waste handlers (Joseph et al., 2016).

The frontline healthcare workers are affected with hazardous disease such as tuberculosis, they work in physical hazardous areas with chemicals as well as working long hours (Joseph et al., 2016). They have faced SARS CoV-1 in 2003 and they encountered post-traumatic stress symptoms and changes in their health wellbeing. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, it has added more burden to frontline healthcare workers who had overwhelming jobs by adding more responsibilities to them such as awareness generation, vaccination and treating patients, whilst fighting to save lives of patients, they end up contracting the virus (Chaudhary et al., 2021).

The emerging of Covid-19 which can be referred to as SARS-CoV-2 had a negative impact globally especially on the healthcare systems (Tasnim et al., 2021). The pandemic came as a surprise and no one was prepared for it. It had a huge impact on the health system services, causing an increase in patients infection but having less resources such as ventilators, intensive care beds, protective equipment and medication (Tasnim et al., 2021). They are most at risk because they are always in contact with people who have signs and symptoms of Covid-19.

Due to lack of resources, this has caused overwhelming pressure and nervousness on frontline healthcare workers (Tasnim et al., 2021). Frontline healthcare workers faced challenges that were physical and psychological. They were exposed more to Covid-19 virus because of working in overcrowded environments such as hospitals with patients who are infected with Covid-19 (Hassan et al., n.d.). According to Amnesty International, more than 7 000 healthcare workers had died due to Covid-19 and some continued to work with inadequate personal protective equipment (Essex et al, 2021). Due to different fear of contracting the virus and anxiety many frontline healthcare workers ended up taking leave from work without any notice and also they no longer wanted to treat any patients with Covid-19 (Tasnim et al., 2021).

Frontline healthcare workers feared to infect their families whenever they get back home to their families. They ended up living in separate rooms so as to prevent infecting their children (Hassan

et al.,). Exposing of frontline healthcare workers to Covid-19 pandemic cannot only affect them but also their family member (Selden et al., 2021). Frontline healthcare workers families consist of children of different age groups ranging from 3 to 18 years of age, differentiating a child from a teenager. A child is defined as a human being below the age of eighteen years (Kuper, 2010). Youth is defined as a transition between the dependence that is childhood and independence that is being an adult (Wong et al., 2021).

Parenting during Covid-19 was a challenge to most parents due to school closure especially in countries and households with low income (Cluver et al., 2020). Frontline healthcare workers were amongst the parents who were facing difficulties of parenting during Covid-19. Frontline healthcare workers as parents, siblings, and spouse, they had fear to spread the disease to their children and spouses (Souadka et al., 2020). Children of frontline healthcare workers have been taken care of by their relatives or grandparents during their parents absence from work causing them to have excessive worry and anxiety (Mahajan et al., 2020). Their parents absence has caused negative effects of confinement and emotional stability (Souadka et al., 2020). Children are easily prone to peer pressure into substance use, anxiety and other psychological stressors and tend to have worst outcomes (Matthews et al., 2012). Due to Covid-19, children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were depressed, they had post-traumatic stress disorder, disruptive behavior such as use of substance and anxiety. This affected their frontline healthcare workers parents to perform well at work (Skokauskas et al., 2020).

The parents, who are frontline healthcare workers had to regularize their daily routines and schedule so as to spend more time with their children (Mahajan et al., 2020). They needed to be encouraged to spend time with their children and do activities together with their children to ease the mind of children during the Covid-19 crisis (Mahajan et al., 2020)

Summary

A family gives support and provides for a child's needs for his/her survival. It is a family that builds a child in either a positive of negative way. Family system theory is a concept that is derived from a system theory that plays an important role of ensuring and providing necessities for the wellbeing of a child.

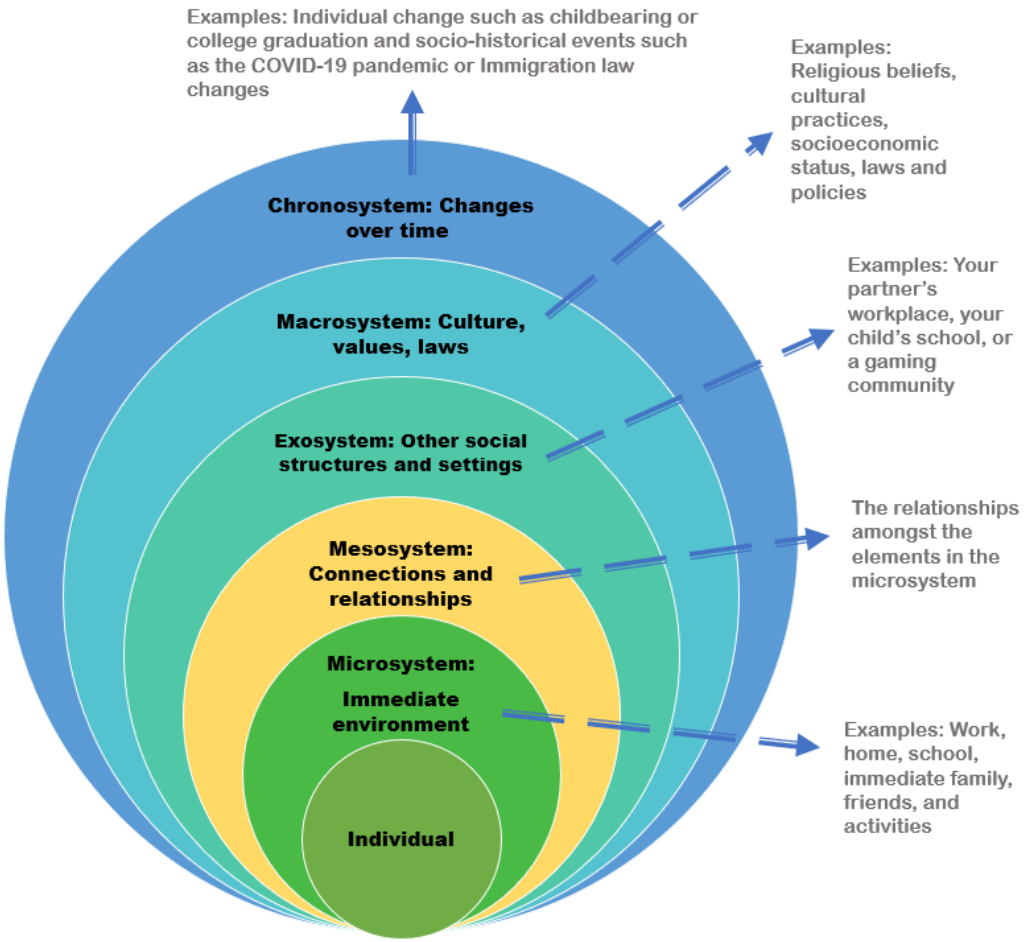
1.3 Ecological system theory

Ecological theory is an approach of the system theory and the ecological principles (Wilder, 2010). It shows the process of development between an individual and his/her environment such

as their families, school, friends and society. It is the study of the relationship between living organism such as humans and their physical environment (Arifin et al., 2020). It explains how one can promote a positive and health development of a child, starting from the smaller and direct setup up to larger, indirect and distant setting that influence development of a human being (Ettekal et al., 2017).

The main purpose of ecological system theory is to understand the relationship between human and their world around them, that is how they associate and how they can use the resources around them to have a healthy environment and better future (Arifin et al., 2020). Ecological system theory consists of 5 stages that contribute to the child's development and these levels of Ecological system theory was explained by Fricke et al., 2020. These levels of ecological system are shown in Figure1 below:

Figure 1: Description of Ecological System Theory in child development



(Fricke et al)

The figure above shows the five level of ecological system theory that consists of microsystem, mesosytem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem and explained below:

Microsystem: These are setting that are direct to each and every child, their immediate environment such as peers, school and parents.

Mesosystem: This is the relationship between the microsystem and the life of a child. The child's life is linked to another one. An example is the performance of the child who is neglected at home, affects the attitude of her/his performance at school.

Exosystem: This is a system whereby children do not have direct influence with them but changes their way of life. These types of systems include government rules and policies, religious systems and economic system.

Macrosystem: It involves the culture, ethnicity and race of the family and the child. In addition, it comprise of their way of living depending with their country be it in developing and developed countries.

Chronosystem: Event that occurs over a period of time in a child's life. It involves the shift that can occur over time in a child's lifespan. This can also involve natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods and socio-historic events such as Covid-19.

The major factors that affect the wellbeing of children and youth of frontline healthcare workers.

Chronosystem level: Covid-19 pandemic

There are different factors that affect the wellbeing of children and youth with their families. These factors can be defined using the ecological system theory. Two major levels that affect the wellbeing of children and youth are the microsystem level, that is the family and the chronosystem level that is the change in their environment. Chronosystem level does affect a microsystem level that is a family. It causes changes in their behavior towards each other. Environmental factors such as disasters and diseases like pandemics affect the way families, children and youth behave.

A pandemic is a disease well known for affecting children and youth on a global scale be it countries or continents (Çevikelli Yakut et al., 2020). Covid-19 is a disease that spread rapidly and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (Getaneh et al., 2020). It changed the way of life for children and youth and less attention was given to them (Pachter et al., 2020). Covid-19 had caused a lot of changes and disruptions for every child as it caused

disruption in their health, social impact, education, food insecurity and escalating of violence especially against girl child (Namli, 2020). Regardless of their age, they had to face situations like family illness, loss of income and support from their families, death, the closing of daycare centers, after school program and schools (Pachter et al., 2020).

The pandemic has caused limitation in the use of health due to the lockdown and social distance issue. Virtual classes were introduced during lockdown, increase in screen time leading to headaches, poor sleeping and visual straining in children and youth occurred (Pachter et al., 2020). It has also caused a decrease in physical activities, limitation of children to play outside, higher exposure to smoking in young generation (Pachter et al., 2020). The lockdown has not only cause epidemiological risk in children and youth, it has caused an increase in poor mental health (Maguire, 2021).

The closure of schools had caused loss of nutrition as well from free meals provided in schools especially for the low-income families (Saasa et al., 2020). Children and youth started to fall behind academically in terms of their grades, that is their pass rates and increase in school dropouts (Saasa et al., 2020). Due to academic stress related to learning, exam pressure and cyber bullying was witnessed for those who were able to attend school online and the children and youth suicidal rate started to increase (Manzar et al., 2021). Most frontline healthcare workers have psychological and emotional stress from increased workload and being surrounded by death of their patients (Blake et al., 2020). This caused difficulties not only to the frontline healthcare workers, but also their children. The children of healthcare workers were subjected to psychological, mental, behavioral and emotional stress. They were subjected to projected stress from their parents and suffered from separation anxiety as well as excess worry (Usher et al., 2020). There are efforts to date to vaccinate as many people as possible to aim for herd immunity and hence halt the disease progression by the frontline healthcare workers (Suryadi et al., 2020).

Microsystem level: family

A family contributes to the growth and wellbeing of a child. It is a social system that has an effect on its members for support, welfare and survival (Priest, 2021). Parents are the major contributors in a family setup, if parents fail to provide adequate nurturing and bonding to the child, it will affect the family wellbeing and attachment (Hooper, 2007). Factors such as domestic violence and child maltreatment affect children and youth wellbeing within the family.

Family violence is violent behavior that threatens a child or current intimate partner be it physical, sexual and psychological (Usher et al., 2020). Children and infants where family violence between partners or parents occurs have high risk of sexual abuse, physical neglect, emotional and physical abuse (Harrison, 2021). Due to economic stresses, lockdown, less family support and unemployment benefits during the Covid-19 time, has caused an increase in domestic violence cases in homes (Usher et al., 2020). Due to work overload, most frontline healthcare workers spouses feared for their lives with their children. Most frontline healthcare workers encountered work violence trying to assist patients to, while and from work (Yang et al., 2021). This affected their mental health leading to family abuse and violence to their own families affecting their children and youth.

Child maltreatment is any form of emotional and physical ill-treatment that is imposed on children be it sexually, emotionally or physically that can result in harming the children's dignity, development, health and survival (Conti et al., 2020). This form of child ill-treatment is done at home with their parents or any legal guardians or their extended family members (Simkiss, 2004). Parents abuse their children when they go under pressure such as loss of job and work overload be it at home or work and also because of fear, stress and anxiety about what is happening around them (Magner et al., 2021). Frontline healthcare workers are also parents who also go under pressure from work during a disaster or a disease outbreak and they have burnout (Young et al., 2021). They try to relief their stress from work on their children who cannot defend themselves and end up being hurt by the people who are close to them and whom they look up to. This will cause the child especially adolescents to change in their behaviors. Suicide ideation, drug use, self-harm and also engaging in violent crimes can affect their brain development (Laffan et al., 2015).

Summary

Due to changes of the environment, it caused a negative impact on the families especially on the children and youth. The children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were affected by the outbreak of the Covid-19. They faced behavioral and psychological challenges due to absence of their parents from home as they worked long hours during the Covid-19 lockdown, not knowing when this will end and when will they have a normal family time.

1.4 Policies in social work

Social policies defines moral and ethical values that are applied in social work to ensure the wellbeing of people in their societies with their resources so as to promote the welfare of individuals or groups (De Corte et al., 2018). Social policies are applied at international, national and professional level, but the professional level is determined by the national level. Policies that are discriminatory, unfair or unsuitable need to be amended to achieve the goals of social work values and principles (Pawar, 2019).

International policies

There are different organizations that deal with the wellbeing of children and youth. Many policies were put in place to ensure their protection in guaranteed. Organizations such as the United Nation, their Article 12 on the rights of child centralized on the principles of asserting the child's right to express his/her views on matters that concern their lives (Cousins et al., 2007). This supported the document that they released in 2000 for the child's right in time of the pandemic (Littlechild, 2000) . The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child (UNCRC) and the Human Rights Act with the child protection system assessed the mean to validate the child's experience and views and aiding to the participation and allows their full representation of their views, wishes and taking into consideration the requirements in child protection decision making (Littlechild, 2000).

International organizations were also involved during Covid-19 to ensure that the children rights and protection are met during Covid-19. Every child will have the rights to express how he/she feels during the time of pandemic, especially if they feel neglected and abused (Zakary et al., 2020). World Health Organization also recommends the hygiene to reduce the spread of the virus in all public areas where children and youth meet that is at school. They had to include respiratory hygiene, food safety practice and hand hygiene (Zakary et al., 2020) as mitigation measures and policies to ensure the well-being of children and youth during the time of Covid-19 pandemic.

England policies

The government of England applied different regulations and policies so as to ensure the wellbeing of children. The government of England introduced the Child Act in 2004 that ensure the safety of children. "Every Child Matters" was a policy that was introduced in England to improve their protection from any form of harm and neglect (Watson, 2006). The act ensures that

every child must be educated and to make sure that the mental health and their emotional wellbeing is improved (Watson, 2006). Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the government of England had to introduce some policies to govern the wellbeing of children and youth during the pandemic.

England is one of the European countries that has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and had to make some certain mitigation measures so as to avoid the spread of the Covid-19 and the first case was recorded in York city north of England on 31st of January 2020 (Keeling et al., 2020). England is a part of the United Kingdom and it shares its borders with Wales and Scotland. Its main language is English. The capital city of England is London and has the highest population prior to Brexit of about 7.5 million people (Hollis, 2007). England has recorded 3.8 million confirmed cases of Covid-19 and around 105 000 death by the end of January 2021 (Southall et al., 2021).

The government of England initially introduced control polices to prevent the spread of Covid-19 through closing of restaurants, pubs, closing of schools and non-essential shops following the lockdown on 23 March 2020 and one was allowed to leave the building to buy essential things such as food, medication and those from essential work (Southall et al., 2021). Other countries including the government of England also introduced the use of Covid-19 alert apps to alert who tested positive to Covid-19 and those whom have been in contact with the person who tested positive (Mardon et al., 2020).

The government of England joined the Global Matrix Report Card that was initiated by the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance (AHKGA). It is a program that addresses the physical activities for children and youth in different countries during the lockdown. It enables countries to access the physical activity done by the children in their countries (Katewongsa et al.,2020). The England government introduced some tiers within different regions of England and was divided into three tiers so as to reduce the spread the Covid-19. When schools were re-opened, parents were supposed to pick-up and drop-off their children without mixing and parents were encouraged to work from home (Southall et al., 2021). Bubbles were created that were allocated to children and staff to reduce the spread of the pandemic. If one child or staff tested positive, all the other members in the bubble were supposed to go for testing and 14 days isolation (Southall et al., 2021).

Social work policies

Social work profession policies follow the rules and regulation of the country (Pawar, 2019). Child protection in the field of social work is important as it involve the prevention and respond to abuse, neglect and violence against children (Marmor et al., 2021). The policies in England are implied to protect the children and prioritizing their wellbeing during the pandemic (Katz et al, 2020). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, social work in England had to change its policies during the lockdown so as to keep their citizens safe as social distancing measures were implied by the government of England (Pawar, 2019). The policies regarding children protection were implied during Covid-19, therefore need for international and national levels to establish standards that are best to protect children and youth. Social policies in the western countries including England are premised on values such as justice, opportunity, rights and needs of the citizens especially those who are vulnerable (Zufferey, 2009).

Summary

Covid-19 is a pandemic that affected people in a negative way and is changing their way of life psychologically, economically and behaviorally and the need for social work intervention so as to improve the wellbeing of children and youth. Different policies were applied so as to ensure the wellbeing of children and youth. The social work policies govern the way social workers will intervene, to show their competence in assisting the children and youth during the Covid-19 pandemic who are encountering behavioral and psychological challenges.

2. Challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.

This chapter outlined the behavioral and psychological challenges that children and youth faced during Covid-19 pandemic.

2.1 Behavioral challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic

The behavioral challenge focuses on the way children and youth act or how they conduct themselves towards the changes around them. Children are vulnerable across all age groups and tend to display different behavioral changes as a result of Covid-19. Behavioral challenge is a public health concern in the current situation of Covid-19 and the number increased as the pandemic continues (Conti et al., 2020). Clinginess, distraction, fear of losing a family member due to the pandemic, irritability are some behavioral distress in children and adolescent during the pandemic (Zeshan, et al., 2020).

Sadness, crying and irritation

Children cry as a way of calling for attention or any form of aid from their parents or their caregivers and their cry is with different reasons (Moore, 2021). Crying is a normal physiological behavior and excessive crying of child or teenager is associated with high rate of parental post-natal depression. Sadness is a negative emotion state and it decrease cognitive activity (Duarte et al., 2016). The sadness and anger are the labels for negative emotions children show especially on their facial expression (Sellabona et al., 2020). Joy, sadness and anger can be noted especially in children from the age of 3 to 12 years of years and adolescents as well (Sellabona et al., 2020). Irritation is defined as a form of anger caused by frustration and this is common in youth (Krieger et al., 2013). It is an impaired clinical problem that occurs in adolescents and children (Brotman et al., 2017).

There are different reasons why children and youth are easily irritated, sad and cry a lot. Factors such as chronic diseases, child abuse and pandemic cause children and youth to be sad, cry and easily irritated. Children and youth who have underlying illnesses or diseases before, had irritation, crying and screaming occurs in them (Freedman et al., 2009). Examples of such children are those with neurological impairment. They suffered from excessive crying and also the increased frequency of pain and irritability (Hauer et al., 2007). Child abuse is another factor that causes children to cry. This was noted especially in infants who had abusive head trauma

because of shaken baby syndrome (Freedman et al., 2009). Playground is another place where children and youth normally cry, get sad and are easily irritable when they do not get along during playing in the field or when they get injured during the play (Kleiven et al., 2018). Children cry especially in the school surrounding, especially those in pre-schools especially when there is conflict and disputes between the child and the pre-school teachers especially those from different cultures (Moore, 2021).

The Covid-19 infection is mild in children and is important that they are protected (Sivabalan et al., 2020). They are common symptoms of Covid-19 that were noted in children such as dry coughing, vomiting, sore throat, pain in their lower limbs and respiratory distress (Parri et al., 2020). Due to Covid-19, it has caused changes in children behavior. Use of face mask and the lockdown restrictions such as social distancing upon children was difficult for them to cope with (Sivabalan et al., 2020). Sadness and irritability was another behavioral challenge that occurred in children and youth during Covid-19. Sadness is elicited by events such as losing someone or not getting what one wants or feeling rejecting (Duarte et al., 2016).

Crying was the behavioral change that started to occur in children due to fear as they were always at home with their caregivers or attenders (Srinath et al., 2020). This also occurred to the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who were left in the hands of their caregivers as they needed their parents the most. Sadness, swing moods and easily irritable were witnessed in these children and youth. This led to substance abuse especially in teenagers. Children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were sad and emotional due to loss of their parents who work as frontline healthcare worker who contracted the Covid-19 from patients (Vranda et al., 2020).

Substance abuse

Children and youth face behavioral and emotional challenges, affecting their daily lives such as school performance, introducing themselves to substance use, violence and disturb their growth (Magai et al., 2018). Children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect have a higher change of being alcohol and substance users, committing suicide, crimes and have sexual behaviors (Harrison, 2021). Substance abuse is a harmful way of using psychoactive substances such as tobacco, alcohol and different types of drugs (Moriano et al., 2021). Alcohol is liquid and substances are drugs that can be smoked or injected into one's body (Bass et al., 1993). The main reason why most children and youth are engaged in alcohol and substance use depend upon

each and every child. Factors such as peer pressure, low grades performance in schools and high expectation from the parents and teachers and parents who use substances led to children and youth to be substance and alcohol users (Karandikar et al., 2020).

Alcohol and substance abuse occurred especially in children and youth whose parents had an abusive childhood and children out of care. Children out of care who have experienced abuse and neglect in their childhood use alcohol and substances as a way to console themselves (Cross et al., 2020). Alcohol consumption is believed to cause more than 200 different diseases such as cancer and is an addictive element (Testino et al., 2021). Parents who are substance users influence their children and youth to start using substances as well. Old age who are survivors and long term users of substance abuse also influence the children and youth to start using substances as well (Moriano et al., 2021).

Alcohol and substance use has been a challenge globally for a long time in the public health sector as it caused devastating consequences in individuals, families and the society (Mupara et al., 2021). Due to Covid-19, there was an increase in substance abuse due to lockdown, causing social isolation triggering a psychological impact on individual leading to alcohol misuse in families (Steffen et al., 2021). Lockdown caused some change in moods, anxiety and all this linked to addictive behavior such as gambling, alcohol consumption, increase in drug use such as tobacco and cannabis (Rantis et al., 2021).

Covid-19 brought changes in people lifestyle and problematic alcohol consumption, that is excessive drinking without control (Kim et al., 2021). Alcohol use increased in summer month of 2020 when the news of Covid-19 was clear that it will continue till fall (Southall et al., 2021). Use of drugs was also another challenge during Covid-19. Drug overdose increased and had a negative health outcome and addiction (Amram et al., 2021). Substance abuse affected those who once were alcohol and substance users. Those people use opioids, alcohol and cannabis as a way to comfort themselves during Covid-19 lockdown (Kumar et al., 2021) Due to anxiety, depression and fear of Covid-19 pandemic, an increase in cases of mental health especially in youths was recorded. Use of substances was high during lockdown because of social isolation and loneliness (Horigian et al., 2020).

During Covid-19, children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were amongst the new group of users who were substance abusers due to Covid-19 situation. Frontline healthcare workers were affected by their children's depression and even their ability and willingness to

work was difficult for them. However, their absence from home caused depression to their children, causing anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and use of substance abuse (Skokauskas et al., 2020).

Criminal behavior

Crime is widespread among men especially young generations as they get arrested because of committing crime, those from 18-30 years of age (Grogger et al., 1998). A crime is biological, caused by hormonal imbalance and it can be caused by economic and psychological changes (Allgood et al., 2007). It can be influenced by the use of alcohol, drugs and nicotine, fault brain development, poor nutrition and birth complication (Crawford, 2014). There are other factors that causes crime in societies such as market wages and this is very common in youth as one of the major crime they commit according to the race and age (Grogger et al., 1998). Young people are well known of committing crime than older people as they engage in illegal activities. Criminal behaviors that adolescent are involved in include drug use, property vandalism, arson, violent offenses such as assaulting other people and minors are responsible for the offenders (Allgood et al., 2007).

Criminal behaviors have a negative impact for the young generation with their families, the victims, to the society that is the loss of productivity and external costs to the society, the legal costs and the incarceration of the minors (Allgood et al., 2007). There are different factors that cause children and youth to commit crime such as poverty, substance use, mental disorder and the pandemic. A person who is raised in a poverty environment and around criminal activity will eventually have the criminal behavior (Crawford, 2014). The person who has mental disorder and is exposed to use of tobacco and drugs are the major causes of crime. People with anger issues, aggression and stressed are well known to be violent criminal offenders (Crawford, 2014). Types of crimes that youth are committed to is because of racial discord, terrorism and family abuse and the type of crime being robbery, theft, drug and alcohol addiction (Crawford, 2014).

Covid-19 pandemic has led to increase in crime rate such as abuse, rape and minors calling to the hotline reporting about their perpetrators. The perpetrators being their family members whom they will be living with (Piquero et al., 2020). The lockdown had a negative impact on humans. It caused an increase in death toll, loss of jobs and looming of global financial crisis worldwide (Boman et al., 2020). Crimes namely robbery, shoplifting, burglary, vehicle theft and deadly

assaults using deadly weapons were reported during Covid-19 (Campedelli et al., 2021). Use of alcohol and substance caused children and youth to commit crime. Due to underage drinking with friends they ended up committing crime in groups under the influence of alcohol and drugs (Boman et al., 2020). Use of gun violence was witnessed during Covid-19 because of economic hardships. The volume of gun violence increased due to the strain activities, fear of the unknown of the virus and financial crisis (Kim et al., 2021). This caused the children and youth to be exposed to such dangerous environment and ended up being part and parcel of the crime.

Covid-19 had caused minor offenders cases to increase than before and was reported to have committed serious crimes. The children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were amongst the children and youth who committed crimes during the pandemic. The school closure and students not concentrating on their schoolwork made the youth to commit crime because of no supervisor or little supervision at all and leading to spiking of crime (Boman et al., 2020).

Summary

Behavioral challenges such as sadness, irritation and crying occurs in children and youth whenever they are encountering different problems in their lives. Children and youth of frontline workers are amongst the children and youth who had such challenges during Covid-19 in the absence of their parents. The use of substance and alcohol caused criminal behaviors due to lack of attention from their parents who were frontline healthcare workers. The new normal was staying at home 24 hours, social distancing and quarantine, affecting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers well-being.

2.2 Psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.

Mental health disorder

Different crisis or events have a negative impact to children's psychological well-being such as anxiety, depression and impairment in social interaction (Zeshan, et al., 2020). Mental disorder is a malfunctioning in the brain and cannot be naturally reproduced, as it affects the mind. Mental health disorder is a disease that affects mental and physical state of a person (Stárek, 2021).

There are different types of mental disorders that include depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorder gives people the feeling of worry, fear and

anxiety disrupting daily life of an individual (Mao et al., 2021). Mental disorder is a well know malfunctioning that can occur worldwide. Different age groups are affected by mental disorders, but the well-known age affected with mental health disorders are adolescents and senior aged people. It is recorded that yearly, 20% of adolescents have mental health disorders and 75% of the young adults who are struggling with mental health disorder have been affected during their childhood (Auler et al., 2021). Senior adults also are affected with mental disorder due to age. The senior aged people will have psychosomatic symptoms that will affect the whole body and will be even affected if they change their social environment (Stárek, 2021). Another group of people who face mental disorders are migrants. Migrants experience anxiety and depression when they are residing in another country. They face difficulties and different challenges such as cultural conflicts, trying to achieve some certain targets and expectations that cause mental health problems (Kourkouta et al., 2019).

Mental disorder is normally caused by environment and genetic factors such as trauma, tumors, degeneration and infections (Mao et al., 2021). Covid-19 pandemic is the new environmental factors that changed lives of people. Pandemic has been uncertain and is a cause for mental health and its impact increased during Covid-19 (Roy et al., 2020).

Covid-19 brought a lot of challenges to different families, lack of personal space at home, families financial loss, terror of getting infected during Covid-19 and boredom had a negative impact on children and youth mental health (Brooks et al., 2020). School closure during lockdown resulted in minimum interaction between children and youth reducing their opportunity for physical activities causing mental health issues due to anxiety, lack of sleep and depression (Yeasmin et al., 2020). The children and youth who were mostly affected and under suspicion of contracting Covid-19 developed mental disorders due to anxiety and stress (Imran, Zeshan, et al., 2020). Different children and youth were affected due to Covid-19 such as children with special needs. Children and youth who once suffered from anxiety and depression felt overwhelmed because of Covid-19 cases rising and death recordings affected the children and youth with obsessive compulsive disorder (ODC) (Zeshan, et al., 2020).

Due to Covid-19, mental health professionals faced mental challenges during Covid-19 and children and youth were vulnerable during the time of Covid-19 affecting their mental health (Courtney et al., 2020). Frontline healthcare workers were not the only ones affected by the pandemic, but also their children and youth. The children and youth of frontline healthcare

workers suffered from preexisting conditions like mental disorders and other medical conditions (Mahajan et al., 2020). This worsened the preexisting psychological problems as they needed more attention from their parents who were always busy with work.

Deliberate Self harm

Deliberate Self harm refers to injuring oneself intentionally on one's body and can see visible marks. The intention of harming oneself can be either suicidal, attempting to kill oneself or non-suicidal not having an intention to die (John et al., 2021). Deliberate self-harm occurs in adolescence as they use it as a copying strategy whenever they encounter challenges such as depression, stress that is uncontrollable, feeling and negative thoughts (Robillard et al., 2021).

Deliberate self-harm is caused by factors such as history of self-harm, antisocial personality and current unemployment (House et al., 1999). Individuals who deliberately harm themselves tend to have poor verbal communication skills, poor tolerance to distress and have poor social problem solving skills (Fernandes et al., 2020).

Youth can be self-harmers, especially those who have history of cutting themselves. Youth who have ineffective coping strategies in life such as self-injury behaviors and self-blame are well known self-harmers (Greydanus et al., 2009). United Kingdom is one country in Europe that is well known for its self-harm and suicidal thoughts within their citizens. The self-harm life time experience was reported to be 6.4% in 2014 (Iob et al., 2020). Deliberate self-harm is a major problem in the United Kingdom with rates of 250-300 per 100 000 every year (Owens et al., 1995). The rate of deliberate self-harm decreased during lockdown in England in 2019 where they recorded 18% than in 2020 where they recorded 13.5% (Hawton et al., 2020). Although they were a decrease in self-harm in England, it still has an impact to those who are committing it.

Social lockdown that was introduced due to Covid-19 as a way of reducing the spread of the pandemic, introduced social isolation in people lives that led to mental health issues such as depression and deliberate self-harm (Kim et al., 2021). One cause of deliberate self-harm in children and youth that was recorded during Covid-19 was cyber-bullying. Cyber bullying is electronic bullying that can occur through using email, online gaming sites, or even through a phone message (Mkhize et al., 2021). The young generation use internet for learning purpose and social interaction during their free time (Židová et al., 2021). The issue of cyber bullying is common in school students affecting their academic performance and psychosocial health

leading to depression and deliberate self-harm (Bharati et al., 2021). Deliberate self-harm also occurred in prisons during Covid-19 as they were feeling isolated and neglected without their family members paying visits during lockdown (Hewson et al., 2020). The stress of the parents losing their jobs affected their children causing addiction and self-harm (Mahajan et al., 2020).

The frontline healthcare workers faced some challenges of deliberate self-harm during Covid-19 lockdown from their children as well. As parents and frontline healthcare workers they had to isolate at home to reduce the risk of infecting their families as they were in constant contact with infected patients (El-Hage et al., 2020), reducing the time of talking to their children and also exhaustion from work that caused distancing from their children who stayed at home. This made them feel unloved, lonely and isolated during the time of Covid-19 causing deliberate self-harm on themselves.

Child maltreatment

Child maltreatment or abuse is a non-accidental injury such as emotional, physical and sexual abuse that is inflicted on a minor from his/her own parents or care givers (Dahake et al., 2018). World Health Organization (WHO) defined child abuse as a form of neglect or maltreatment that cause harm to a child‘s health, dignity and development and different types of child abuse are sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect (Mahalakshmi et al., 2018). According to World Health Organization, on 16 September 2019 (*WHO guidelines for the health sector response to child maltreatment)* reported that one billion children are experiencing sexual, physical and psychological abuse every year worldwide. Maltreated children have physical and psychological symptoms such as anxiety, suicide, depression and also posttraumatic stress disorders (Lawson, 2015).

Sexual abuse is a type of child abuse, and one of the most serious problems in terms of public health faced in the society, all cultures at all level (Diraditsile, 2018). It is a form of any sexual contact that involve penetrating, when the consent or minor is being forced (Oh et al., 2018). It includes child pornography, incest, molestation, child prostitution as sexual maltreatment types. Physical abuse is a non-accidental trauma or action that incurred to minor caused by punching, striking with a hand or object, kicking, biting and burning (Oh et al., 2018). Emotional abuse can be defined as soul murder, whereby the parent critically attacks, reject, devaluate and ignores the child, undermining the child’s emerging identity (Finzi-Dottan et al., 2014). It is a form of non-physical violence caused through non-verbal and verbal action and it is deliberate, affecting

those without resources and power (Stark, 2015). Neglect is failure to care for a minor, to provide for basic needs and poor supervision that they need (Constantinescu et al., 2017). Examples of neglect are educational neglect, emotional neglect, medical neglect, exposing a child to domestic violence, physical neglect that involve lacking supervision, inadequate provision of food, shelter, inattention to the child's personal hygiene, clothing and also his/her welfare of physical safety (Rodriguez, 2021). Child maltreatment is done in families. There are many reasons why child maltreatment is common within family setup. Such factors include means of punishment, culture and ritual beliefs and also the parents have experienced abuse as well during their childhood (Runyan et al., 2002).

Cases of child maltreatment were recorded during Covid-19 and there was an increase in such cases compared to before Covid-19. However not all cases were recorded because of the lockdown because the children and youth lost contact and were in isolation and no one was able to notice any sign of abuse and distress that they were encountering (Courtney et al., 2020). Many traditional reporters of child abuse such as school nurses and teachers were not able to report such cases because of school closure during Covid-19 lockdown. Major causes of child abuse during Covid-19 was loneliness, depression, anxiety and loss of employment during the lockdown (Rodriguez, 2021). Most cases of child maltreatment were recorded in families. Parents' burnouts which are a lengthy respond to overwhelming stress that caused mental exhaustion and some physical symptoms such as lack of sleep, job loss and work overload, children school work during lockdown made them to feel trapped. This led to child abuse because of parental burnouts and the child abuse increased as the level of parental stress increased (Griffith, 2020).

Quarantined children suffered psychological changes during the pandemic away from their families and sibling (Mahajan et al., 2020). Children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were amongst the children who were encountering child maltreatment during Covid-19. Due to workload and burnout at work led to frontline healthcare workers to abuse their children. The issue of child abuse increased while the support decreased during the lockdown causing suicidal tendencies in children (Mahajan et al., 2020).

However, all being said and done, more attention was placed on old age groups as they were more vulnerable to the pandemic, the mortality rate, children and youth in juvenile having more physical health disorders and mental problems due to solitary confinement in addition to social

distancing of Covid-19 (Gagnon, 2020), social care homes, the disabled as they are said to be more vulnerable to physical, social and mental problems of the pandemic (Courtenay et al., 2020) and those with chronic diseases, leaving out the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who worked to save lives of people in England and all over the world. No attention was given to this group as they believed they have normal homes and parents around them, assuming that all is well with them.

Fear of infection from the pandemic, inadequate information about the disease, social distancing, no physical conduct from friends, being in a confirmed space, having a sense of insecurity and uncertainty increase the risk of psychological challenges (Sethy et al., 2020). However, the mental health service was more focused on improving education for the children ("Mental Health Services for Young People," 2020) instead of focusing on the wellbeing of the children and youth, especially of frontline healthcare workers who were always at work saving lives. More so, more studies were placed on the changes of the economy, the economic shock which was felt across different regions and countries as the supply chain was affected by lockdown, 80% of the supply chain declined within a specific period of 2 months by 27% (Inoue et al., 2020) and also the shut downing of industries and the workshops, inconsistence of supply has led to reduction in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Pillai et al., 2020). This proves that their studies were more concerned on the economy and not on the wellbeing of children and youth who are the future of tomorrow, especially focusing and being concerned about the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who were doing their best to save the world.

Summary

Psychological challenges affected the mental and emotional states of children and youth especially of frontline healthcare workers. This led to irreversible mental changes. Therefore, there is great need to check on the mental wellbeing of children of frontline healthcare workers as they might not be economically disadvantaged but suffer the same or more psychological trauma. Not only do they suffer from mental health disorders but also they encountered child abuse during lockdown that led them to commit suicide and isolate themselves from the family and the rest of the world.

3: Roles of social workers with children and youth

Introduction

The subchapter defines social work and the concept of social work as a profession with children and youth before the pandemic and also during the pandemic. What roles they take to assist the children and youth that is their competence.

3.1 Roles of social workers with children and youth before Covid-19

Social work is a profession that carters for the wellbeing of people, providing equality, intervening at the point of interaction between people and their environment, providing social justice and human rights principles (Boland, 2014). It is a profession that seeks to improve the quality and well-being of an individual, be it groups and communities so as to solve social disadvantages such as poverty, physical illness and social injustice (Mahalakshmi et al., 2018). Social workers have the responsibility of assisting their clients to deal with psychological stress and multifaceted needs and integrate them into the society (Shepherd et al., 2020). Social workers are not limited to adults, they also guard the well-being and the rights of children and youth. Therefore, most social workers work towards the children's service and protection (Higgins, 2015). The objective of social work is to assist in terms of humanitarian needs, solving their psycho-social problems and creating self-sufficiency for the society and the scope of social work include working with families and child welfare, counseling youth welfare and crisis intervention (Rahman et al., 2020).

Social workers assist families with young people who needed social grants or welfare for their children education. Child welfare is important as it ensure better living conditions for children and superseding in a family setting where it is needed (Julkunen et al., 2013). Social workers have facilitated the removal of some children from their homes due to evidence of abuse and neglect and are placed in stable social homes where they are assisted by child welfare grants (Ward, 2015). Social workers have the responsibility of assisting their clients to deal with psychological stress and multifaceted needs and integrate them into the society (Shepherd et al., 2020).

Child abuse and neglect is a reason for social work intervention to assist children and youth (Constantinescu et al., 2017). World Health Organization (WHO) defined child abuse as a form

of neglect or maltreatment that cause harm to a child‘s health, dignity and development (Mahalakshmi et al., 2018). While neglect is failure to care for a minor, to provide for basic needs and lacking supervision that they need (Constantinescu et al., 2017). Social work intervene through providing home visits or online communication with children and parents educating the parents through counseling them (Bengü et al., 2011). The risk of abuse and neglect had increased and raised awareness in social policy, frontline services such as social workers, who are needed for intervention prioritizing the most vulnerable and at risk population (Turnbull et al., 2011).

Not only children are being abused in schools and at home, some other factors such as bullying, school suspension, mental problems and family problems disrupts a child from his/her school work making social workers to intervene in children and youth lives (Johnson, 2018). Social work offers counseling in schools, educating learners, providing training to the school staff in their development program as well as engaging parents or guardians of the children through some focus group discussions concerning children wellbeing within their school environment (Masilo, 2019). Social work is a profession that assist students who have problems within their communities and society and is there to assemble the common request and wellbeing of the children and youth within their societies (Mahalakshmi et al., 2018).

Societal exclusion is another factor that social workers intervene to assist the children and youth of sexual minority group such as transgender group, gay and lesbian youths suffering from exclusion within their societies causing human violation rights and discrimination (Ghosh, 2017). Social workers ensured that societal inclusion of such people is done within their society providing counseling, educating their communities and advocating on behave of the sexual minorities (Ghosh, 2017).

Social workers also faced some challenges in their profession when dealing with children and youth not appreciated within the society and not willing to cooperate and communicate so as to assist the children and youth (Sadraei et al., 2020) and the death of a child in their care (Hromková, 2020). Some challenges they faced when working with children and youth include the increase of cases such as street kids, runaway girls, children at risk in terms of sexual and physical abuse and addiction whilst the number of social workers who handle the cases are less. The ratio of social workers to workload was not proportional (Sadraei et al., 2020). It was

difficult for them to take the child from his/her abusive and neglecting parents putting them in the care system (Ward, 2015).

Social workers role is to be case workers, community worker, researcher and trainers be it assisting individuals, groups or in a community (Dhavaleshwar, 2016). Social workers are also researchers. They research in suicide behavior cases that occur within families. Suicidal behavior is an attempt and thoughts to kill oneself and be it a fatal outcome or not (Maung, 2021). Alcohol and drug abuse, hanging, use of agricultural pesticides and opium poisoning are examples of methods used to commit suicide (Balvardi et al., 2021).

Worldwide, more than 800 000 people die because of suicide, which is about 1.5% total death (Marine et al., 2021). Suicide behavior is common in incarcerated people. Long term imprisonment causes prisons to feel frustrated and loss of hope in life cause them to commit suicide (Tartaro et al., 2008). Suicide behavior is common in people with opioid disorder, mental health disorders and prolonged pains (Pergolizzi et al., 2021).

Substance abusers face challenges in suicide and suicide behaviors. Most of the substance abusers have history of suicide attempts due to substance dependence, family history of suicide. Adolescents are the major substance abusers and at risk of suicidal behaviors (Erinoff et al., 2005). Suicide has been a major health issue and a psychological challenge in adolescents especially in low and middle income countries. Suicide is very common in youths as it is considered the peak period, having suicidal ideation when they are trying to fit into the community (Nurunnabi et al., 2021). Suicide behavior is influenced by environmental and biological factors and is difficult to prevent and predict (Marine et al., 2021).

Social workers do research, so as to find solution on how best to prevent suicides and suicide behaviors and taking part in training and educating families who are facing such challenges (G et al., 2017). They are scientific researchers who investigate in individual and social issues within the community be it in rural, urban or tribal which can affect the development of an individual within the community (Dhavaleshwar, 2016).

Social workers are facilitators. They facilitate to ensure the wellbeing of people especially refugee families including children and youth by providing them with necessary needs and services for them to survive (Abdelhamed, 2021). They facilitate their assistance to the service users through different benefits provided by the governments and international non-governmental organizations to assist those who are socially excluded and disadvantaged and the

disempowered ones (Dhavaleshwar, 2016). Social workers are community agency, responsible for the human relief operation. They provide services to those injured victims, their families and survivors of those who were missing and killed during the disaster.

Disaster are really traumatic events that causes physical and mental consequences to people's lives. It causes difficulties in terms of cost of living psychologically, social , injuries and personal losses (Kumar, 2020). Disasters such as floods, earthquakes and cyclones have a negative social impact on children and women as it causes diarrhea, cold fevers and dysentery, lack of clean water, environmental pollution therefore depriving good standards of living for the affected people as well as suffering of children from health vulnerability (Razzak et al., 2019).

Social workers faced a new and a different challenge is believed to be a disaster to human kind, Covid-19. Covid-19 is a disease that spread rapidly and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (Getaneh et al., 2020). It changed the way of life for children and youth and less attention was given to them (Pachter et al., 2020). The pandemic caused social and economic changes in children and youth lives. The Covid-19 caused the doubling of food insecurity from 135 million in 2019 to 270 million due to rise in price and unemployment benefits worldwide (Christopher et al., 2020). Covid-19 caused children rights crisis, as they faced long term survival challenges worldwide (Kyeremateng et al., 2021). It disrupted daily routines of children and youth and introducing of social distancing so as to avoid the spread of the disease leading to loss of contact with relatives and friends as well as coaches, teachers and counselors (Pachter et al., 2020). The cases of children and youth who faced difficulties during the Covid-19 pandemic started to increase whilst the number of social workers remained the same (Sadraei et al., 2020). The social workers had to deal with children and youth with disability, chronic diseases and new group of children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who started to have some behavioral and psychological challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Caffo et al., 2020). Different roles and social work intervention methods and models were to be applied so as to assist the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers to overcome their behavioral and psychological challenges they faced during the pandemic.

Summary

Social workers have applied different roles such as being counselor, facilitators, researcher, advocators and educators in families with children and youth before Covid-19 and they continue to provide such roles and support again during Covid-19. The roles of social workers are to

support and assist the children and youth with their families to ensure their wellbeing and empowering them no matter the difficulties they are facing in life.

3.2 Roles of social workers with children and youth of frontline workers during the pandemic

This section outline the roles of social workers, the roles they played in people's lives especially children and youth with their families, such as frontline healthcare workers families. It also explained the plan of action that the social workers devised to provide long term assistance to children and youth of frontline healthcare workers in time of the pandemic.

Counselors

Social workers work in collaboration with the clients to guide and ensure the best possible solutions (Thompson, 2003). Counseling is a special form of communication that is applied in social work profession. It is based on confidentiality, assisting people to have support in times of their crisis as they explore their feelings, their thoughts so as to reach their solution, their goals and their problems that they are facing (Vîşcu, 2013). It is a therapeutic tool that is used with social workers to their clients who are facing difficulties (Ebimgbo, 2019). The purpose of counseling is to assist individuals or families to explore their problems, conflicting issues and have new alternatives of dealing with their problems and deciding what is best and how to do it (Hill et al., 1990). It is a face to face communication through a process of interaction between two or more people and the counselor will be assisting the clients to make their own decisions during the process (Ebimgbo, 2019).

Social workers use counseling in different aspects of live and different situations. Social workers use counseling in prisons assisting adults and youths who are incarcerated, supporting them with their emotional needs (Richter et al., 2021). They also provide counseling to families who what to reunify with their children and so that they will know what is best for their children (Talbot, 2021). Counseling is also applied to couples and families who have youths who have negative behaviors such as isolation, anger, aggression, feeling confused and addictions (Bloom et al., 2015). In addition, families and children who have witnessed or are survival of traumatic events such as earthquakes and wars have to go for counseling as a way of assisting the children to reframe and face their trauma (Villalba et al, 2007).

Covid-19 brought a negative impact upon parents and their children through shutdown of schools and layoff at work, therefore need for counseling to be done .(Suwidagdho et al, 2020). Layoff of

parents from work has led to financial instability in families, affecting both the parents and children. It is one of the consequences of the pandemic due to temporary and permanent job loss for some breadwinner such as frontline healthcare workers due to injuries that occurred during working hours and sometimes death due to the infection of the pandemic. Therefore, need for social workers to help individuals or families to access unemployment wages, food, healthcare as well as counseling. Social workers provided counseling to the children and youth who were taken to foster care after losing their parents who were working as frontline healthcare workers and getting in contact with patients who were infected. These children suffered grief, quite susceptible and loneliness (Mahajan et al., 2020).

Educators

Professional training and educating has to be part and parcel of the continuous training in social work profession (Žiukas, 2015). Education is defined as a task that social workers use to pass information and provide their skills to service users. It gave an opportunity to an individual to have an understanding and different point of view in the society in terms of decision making (Luo et al., 2020). The social workers as educators enable them to inform the public through trainings so as to increase their awareness about how they can assist each other in their health care, as well as child welfare and mental health so as to achieve social justice (Talbot et al, 2014). Social workers educate service users who are suicidal and intervene through training or educating them and continue monitoring the progress of each client. Family members have to be educated about the suicidal behavior and being alert to take all necessary precautions if the service user wants to commit suicide (G et al., 2017).

During Covid-19, social workers played a role in helping clients to control the spread of Covid-19, educating people about the hygiene and local safety guidelines that they need to use during the Covid-19 (Subasinghe et al, 2021). Social distancing and quarantine has brought by a lot of psychological problems during the pandemic. Social workers assist the children who are in quarantine or isolation by providing the best copying mechanisms and helping in creating a schedule that can break the cycle of stress (Ghosh et al., 2020). The social workers educate and monitor caregivers and parents so that they know what is happening during the time of Covid-19, increasing their knowledge about mental health issues so as to support youth having mental challenges during Covid-19 (Ferguson et al., 2021). Social workers educated parents and caretakers to know how to provide social support to their children , providing a sense of safety

and making regular routines schedule, such as good sleeping patterns, eating habits, symbolic play, physical exercise, and learning (Rousseau et al, 2020). Educating young people is important and is crucial to every young generation (Berlin et al., 2019). Children of frontline healthcare workers are among the children who needed assist through educating them during the pandemic. With their parents working long hours in virus infested hospitals, these children were anxious about the parents contracting the virus and dying or infecting the whole family when they come back from work (Walton et al., 2020).

Mediators

The Romans defined mediation as a process designed to deal with the problems caused by unresolved conflicts and need of a mediator or advocate to help resolve the conflict (Budeva, 2021). It is a process that is designed to deal with difficulties around service users to solve conflicts and the need of a third person to help resolve the conflict between two or more people (Budeva, 2021). Mediation can be done through face to face discussion between the parties and mediator acts as a go-between for both the parties or participants (Bradt et al., 2014). The purpose of mediation is enabling the participants or parties to come to an agreement, finding a solution to their conflict (Budeva, 2021).

Social workers work as victim-offender mediators. They are there to assist in mediation towards the crime committed by the offender and finding a better way for offender to take responsibility of their consequences (Bradt et al., 2014). Mediation is also applied in a family setup. Family mediation is done when a family dispute occurs and a mediator is there to assist them to reach an agreement (Riveros et al., 2019). Social worker mediator offers a way to solve a family dispute through giving them priority. Also social workers act as divorce mediators within the family, to make sure that participants will be responsible for making good decisions concerning their lives especially children well-being and empowering themselves (Ahmad et al., 2010). In addition, social work mediators work with children and youth who are vulnerable such as street children who do not have access to social services. Therefore their role is to represent them to different institutions so that they will have a better life (Mareva, 2018).

Covid-19 pandemic is a type of a disaster categorized as a public health emergency that need social workers intervention (Luo, 2021). Social workers have been mediators during Covid-19 between the health professional and the information that they needed to inform about the new variant of the Covid-19 and the community. They were the ones who explained and pass the

information so that the people will have a better understanding and agreed to the new rules and mitigation measures that were needed to be done (Bern-Klug et al., 2020). Furthermore they mediate for those vulnerable to get services from different organizations, government and institutions especially the families that have lost their jobs during the Covid-19 pandemic and in need of food whilst in lockdown (Henley et al., 2021).

Social workers addressed personal roles during Covid-19 at the same time they were family members and this was a challenge to them (Ben-Ezra et al., 2021). Social workers were also part and parcel of frontline healthcare workers as mentioned in article of Ashcroft et al., 2021 as they faced challenges working during Covid-19. Whilst the social workers were part and parcel of frontline healthcare workers who were working during Covid-19, their children and youth faced challenges during Covid-19. The children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were exposed to separation, anxiety and fear in light of the risks that their parents took when caring for people who were afflicted by Covid-19 virus. They feared that their parents might be affected or even die from the virus (Vranda et al., 2020).

Advocators

Social workers have been leaders of reforms and social justice advocates for over 100 years (Talbot et al., 2014). Advocacy is an activity that is used in social work profession to solve problems of different service users and implemented when there is complex of regulations and bureaucratic rules. It is a professional role partaken by role workers on behalf of those in need of the service be it an individual, group or community to exercise their rights (Parker, 2020). The benefit and the use of advocating is to empower service users so that in future they will be able to speak for themselves (Uhnáková, 2017).

Advocacy is needed when service users are not able to represent themselves, having less control and power to get their own decision in their favor (Scourfield, 2021). Advocating is done in social work when service user is ill or disabled and when there are human rights violation, restrictions and discrimination (Uhnáková, 2017). Social workers work as advocates in different areas of their field. Social workers work as advocate for children and their parents' reunification. They assist parents who once had their children taken away from them due to abuse and neglect and they assess if they is a change for them to be reunified with their child (Talbot, 2021). They advocate for inmates in prisons for them to have better living conditions and supporting those with emotional needs (Richter et al., 2021).

Social work advocacy is applied especially in critical and crucial crisis, such as during Covid-19. Social workers advocate on behalf of families and residents of the society or community and provide information about what they need during the lockdown such as resident rights and health insurance (Bern-Klug et al., 2020). They also engaged in community assistance through advocating for those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged (Henley et al., 2021). However, social workers do not advocate for the disadvantages but also for those neglected or easily forgotten in the communities, the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. Health care providers were having post traumatic syndromes due to emotional and psychological stress because of work (Si et al., 2020). However this caused them to maltreat their children at home due to burnouts. Social workers advocate for the children and youth about the challenges that they were encountering during the absence of their parents, as they spoke on their behalf, hearing their views because they could not express their feelings and views (Cousins et al., 2007).

Summary

Covid-19 had brought a lot of changes within the human way of life. Roles of social workers such as counseling, mediation, advocacy and educating individuals, people about the Covid-19. Due to the mass sickness of Covid-19, social workers arranged for child care wellbeing and training both the children and youth to overcome the challenges during Covid-19. However, more focus has been placed on elderly people than children and youth because of having mild symptoms.

4 Social work intervention

Intervention in social work is the skill, knowledge, action and value that are applied with social workers, to assist service users. Intervention is a scientific process in social work and patterns that social workers apply to cases of individuals, groups and communities (Malachy et al., 2019). Intervention in social work helps those with anger, violent and aggression and this can be done using therapy to those people who are violent (Crawford, 2015). This can be applied in different forms depending on their purpose, that can be direct and indirect (Boihtlung, n.d.). The purpose of social work intervention is to learn new skills in their social work field, coping with the changes in individual or family life situation and support individuals whenever they have problems and promote one's independence that is empowering them (Boihtlung, n.d.).

4.1 Methods of social work intervention

Methods are used by the social workers to solve psycho-social problems of individuals, groups and communities. A method is a systematic and a planned way that is used to resolve problems or challenges faced by people (Rahman , 2021). Social work intervention involves different methods which are social group work, individual or family casework and community development (Boihtlung, n.d.). These types of methods are called primary or direct methods. Social action, social welfare administration and social work research are other different types of social work methods and they are called secondary or indirect methods (Rahman , 2021). The researcher focused on the primary or direct methods in the research under study.

Community organization/development

Community development is a process that is used to empower the communities through their groups, leaders, institutions, advocates and volunteers (Chukwu, 2019). The community development is a type of method used in social work intervention to address issues such as high unemployment rates, poor housing and environmental poverty. It has a direct impact on individuals, families and community (Boihtlung, n.d.). Community organization can be referred to as the macro practice and it is through the community that social workers work with individuals and they are the main focus in the field of social work (Chukwu, 2019) . Government and non-governmental organization are involved so as to assist the communities in collaboration with social workers so as to identify the problem, resources needed to develop and organize materials needed to assist communities (Rahman , 2021)

Pandemic is a change that affected community development. Due to the lockdown certain restriction were applied so as to reduce the spread of Covid-19. It caused negative impacts on humans in different communities such as, increase in death toll, job losses, unemployment and looming of financial crisis worldwide (Boman et al., 2020). The social workers dealt with individuals and families in communities during the pandemic by educating them about the pandemic and sending alerts about the pandemic especially to those facing challenges during Covid-19. Cases such as domestic violence and abuse are handled at community level so as to educate the community (Khatoon et al., 2021). Frontline healthcare workers as parents and other parents needed training within the community on how best they can assist their children and youth during the Covid-19 pandemic. Parents training program is a good method to prevent child violence (Manoj et al., 2012). Community based intervention is another way social workers can assist families in communities. It helps to assist families within the society who are struggling because of violence in their homes (Manoj et al., 2012).

Social group work

Social group work is another primary method used in social work intervention that works with people who use and abuse drugs and alcohol, offenders, mental health difficulties and unaccompanied asylum seekers (Boihtlung, n.d.). A group is defined as the connection between two or more people and is a fundamental part of social life. A group can be formed by people and can be natural and natural group consist of family, class or tribe (Chukwu, 2019).

The social workers are there to assist the groups through providing mutual support, promote their self-esteem, their identity and confidence. Social workers empower the people using the social work services and reducing the service user isolation to the service (Boihtlung, n.d.).

Clients in groups are assisted by qualified social workers through activities and planned programs. The social group work works hand in hand with casework because social workers intervene assisting clients one on one in their individual cases and social workers work in various groups depending with the case in the group (Rahman , 2021). Advantages of social group work are it uses group session so as to assist member of the group who have similar problems so they will be able to share their problems and it saves resources and time (Chukwu, 2019).

There are different types of groups which are social action groups, support/therapeutic groups and reciprocal groups (Chukwu, 2019). Support/therapeutic treatment group is used with social workers to assist groups who need treatment in order to solve their problems. Most therapeutic

groups have common problems and they will be assisted with professional, experienced social workers using their skills and techniques (Rahman , 2021) . Social group work works with problems related to addiction and those who have lost their spouse, siblings and parents (Chukwu, 2019). Alcohol and drug addictions are believed to have problems of abuse in their lives. Most substance users of drugs and alcohol are believed to have the reason of being addictions and have been abused during their childhood (Lake et al., 2014). Rehabilitation is used especially for those substance abuse parents. It is a process that motivates an individual to change his/her behavior through the use of non-formal and formal psycho-education program (Javed et al, 2020). Children and youth and their families are educated through group therapy within the communities especially the abused children and youth. Group therapy is a solution to assist sexual abused children as it creates an environment where survivors of sexual abuse meet and talk about their present problems (Goren, 2020).

Children and youth are the common users of alcohol and drugs during this time of Covid-19. Children and youth of frontline healthcare workers are assisted with social workers during Covid-19 through social group works after losing their parents who work as frontline healthcare workers due to Covid-19 (Fang et al., 2021).

Individual or family casework

Individual or family casework is another intervention in social work that assists individuals and their families so that they will be able to cope with the difficulties that they will be facing for survival reasons. It is a unique way to solve problems that helps individuals solve their psycho-social problems (Rahman , 2021). A client who is involved in any form of problem is unable to deal with it because of the condition that is beyond his/her capability and control to solve the problem will involve the social case worker (Chukwu, 2019). The experience and expertise of social workers will be used as a way of solving problems where there is any parental difficulty within the families, promoting self-esteem and confidence so as to adopt different approaches to any problem that will have existed (Boihtlung, n.d.).

The case social workers will have the information about the client who he/she needs to assist. They will have to know about the environment, the cause of the problem, prepare the treatment, build a relationship with the client so as to make some changes in the attitude, behavior and perception of the client (Rahman , 2021). The intervention process involve studying, ,diagnosis,

treatment, evaluation, termination and follow-up and has four basic components which are person, problems, place and process (Chukwu, 2019).

Social work is about the wellbeing of people, providing equality, intervening at the point of interaction between people and their environment, providing social justice and human rights principles (Boland, 2014). Case social work is used when assisting children and youth and their families who are encountering psychological and behavioral challenges during Covid-19. Such cases include that of abuse and neglect of children and youth. Child abuse is a non-accidental injury such as emotional and sexual abuse that is inflicted on a minor from his/her own parents or care givers (Dahake et al., 2018). It also causes psychological problems, physical and social problems and disorders such as anger, post-traumatic disorders, depression, fear, conversion disorders and substance abuse (Kesen, 2015). Social work ameliorate suffering of any abuse in humans that reduce their happiness and wellbeing by intervening and protecting the vulnerable members of the society (Masilo, 2019).

The children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced psychological challenges during Covid-19. Frontline workers worked more than their normal working hours as they no longer had normal schedules of work due to high demand and increase of patients who were admitted in the hospitals (Tasnim et al., 2021). Due to deaths from work and overwhelmed with work, they ended up abusing and neglecting their children causing them to commit suicide or have suicidal behaviors (Mahajan et al., 2020). Therefore need for case social work intervention with children and their families.

Summary

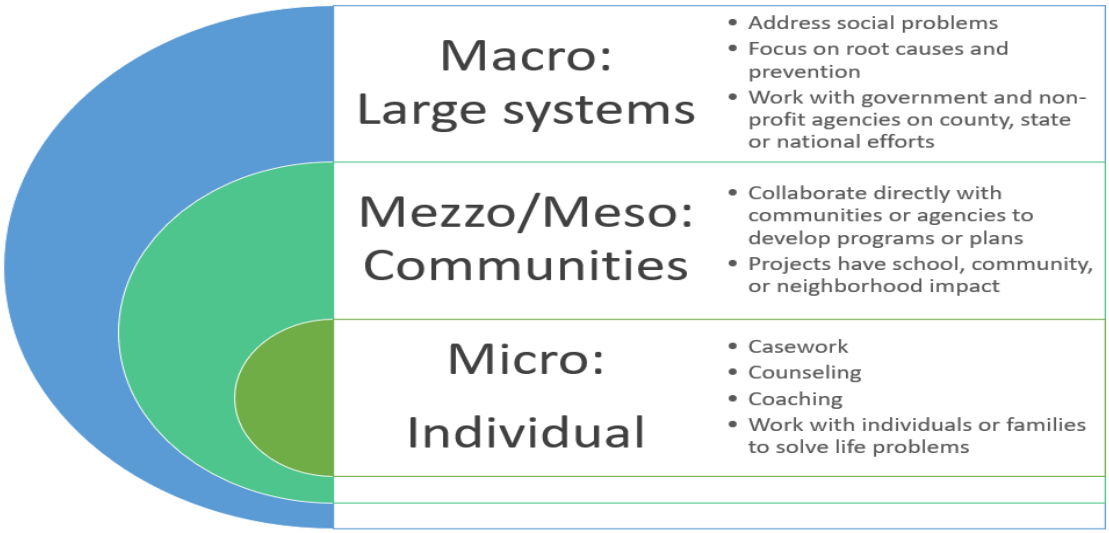
The methods are used by social workers to assist service users when they are having problems. The methods mentioned about are dealt with in different levels in social work intervention which are the micro that deals with individuals and families, the mezzo that deals with small to medium groups and macro that deals with the communities at large.

4.2 The levels of social work intervention

The practice area of social work are micro that deals with families and individuals, mezzo that is for smaller groups and macro, the larger one that is societal level (Rahman et al., 2020).

The diagram below illustrated the macro, mezzo and the micro in social work area of practice.

Figure 2: Levels of social work practice



(Fricke et al)

As shown by the diagram, social work assists clients by intervening in different practical areas which are macro, mezzo and micro. Macro empowers clients by involving them in a systematic change. This level includes working with communities, neighborhood and societies to achieve the social change and development (Malachy et al., 2019). The mezzo level deals with small to medium sized groups. An example of such groups include schools, neighborhood and other local organizations (Malachy et al., 2019). This level ensure that the challenges and needs of other groups engaged such as the micro and macro are met through using resources from the individuals and wider society (Boihtlung, n.d.). The micro level is involving the individual that is the intrapersonal process of an individual. Individual seek the services of social worker when experiencing difficulties with their personal adjustment, his/her inter-personal relationship and the environmental stress (Malachy et al., 2019).

The micro level engages directly, extensively and deeply with an individual client or family so as to solve problems and this is done through therapy and counseling (Gray, 1996). This is done so as to facilitate changes in one's life, behavior and relationship (Boihtlung, n.d.).

The environmental stress that is affecting individuals and their family in the micro level is the pandemic which created changes in individuals and their families, including families of frontline

healthcare workers with their children and youth. Social workers share their experience and knowledge to influence and assist individuals who have problems (Gray, 1996).

Covid-19 pandemic had caused some changes in individual and families which are negative. Covid-19 pandemic is transmitted through close contact and small particles produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talk or breath are transmitted from an infected person (Mustafa, 2020).

Due to lockdown they faced challenges such as sleeping disorder, eating disorders and social withdrawal on an individual and their families. The pandemic changes people lifestyle causing anxiety, boredom and isolated at home during lockdown leading to unhealthy intake of food, causing obesity (Bakkar et al., 2021). Due to Covid-19 lockdown, there was an increase in food consumption as it changes one's lifestyle, eating habits and their physical activity patterns (Özlem et al, 2020). Psychological and emotional challenges of Covid-19 has caused dysfunctional eating behaviors in children and youth and reduced physical activity resulting in obesity (Di Renzo et al., 2020).

The Covid-19 lockdown led to confinement at home, causing anxiety and the reduction in positive stimuli. This did not affect adults only, but also children and youth. The effects of stress led to poor sleeping habits in terms of normal sleeping hours, time of sleeping and duration resulting in increase of sleeping disorders and insomnia through stress (Gupta et al., 2020). Normal sleeping hours changed from 22:00 and 00:00 before lockdown to 02:00 and 04:00 during the lockdown (Singh et al., 2020). A forced home stay, home-schooling for the children and youth reduced their social interaction changed their daily activities and evening sleeping periods (Huang et al., 2020).. Children and youth who once had mental condition before were not the only ones affected by the pandemic having sleepless nights but also children and youth of frontline healthcare workers (Becker et al., 2020).

Socially withdrawn children are at risk of developing depression, anxiety and low self-esteem which are lifelong consequences (Rubin et al., 2018). Social withdrawal of children and youth was even affected by the Covid-19 by staying at home, not being able to communicate with their friends feeling worse isolated and even withdrawal more from the world. In addition, due to cyber bullying, it has caused the children and youth to isolate and withdraw. Mental health disorder is one type of psychological challenge that children and youth and their families faced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to mental pressure from work, most frontline healthcare

workers were not able to cope with family issues, attending to their children. They had psychological and emotional stress from work overload and losing their patients (Fang et al., 2021) and affected their children, isolating themselves from their parents and not being able to express how they feel (Cousins et al., 2007). Social withdrawal reflects the underlying feeling and the thoughts of depression, anxiety, loneliness and insecurity (Rubin et al., 2001). This caused depression and anxiety. Depression and anxiety is among the mental disorders that children and youth face during Covid-19 and led to suicide behaviors (Yeasmin et al., 2020).

The impact of Covid-19 affected the children and youth with their families. The issue of not having physical activities and being home alone led to sleepless nights to children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic as their parents were working most the time (Mahajan et al., 2020). Children and youth of frontline healthcare workers are amongst the children and youth in the community who were undergoing eating disorders during Covid-19 lockdown. The Covid-19 caused stress in the lives of children of frontline healthcare workers causing somatic complaints and obesity led to premature death (Mahajan et al., 2020).

Summary

Micro, mezzo and macro are practice area of social work intervention that is used by the social workers to assist individuals, groups and communities. These practice area were used by social workers to assist children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19 when they faced behavioral and psychological challenges. Not only methods are assessed on micro levels but also different models are applied in social work level of intervention.

4.3 Models of social work intervention

Different models of intervention are used by social workers to assist children and youth in different situations which are cognitive behavioral therapy, crisis intervention model, problem solving model, task centered practice and solution focused therapy (Boihtlung, n.d.). Problem-solving model, cognitive behavior therapy and crisis intervention model will be explained in depth.

Problem-solving model

Perlman owes the existence of the problem-solving model and the focus of this model is on the social casework as an extension of ordinary living processes. This model assists people, service users in the social work field with solutions to solve their problems. Social workers teach the

service users how to apply different problem solutions or ways to solve their problems so that they will develop their own solutions (Boihtlung, n.d.). One way that social workers use for service users apply whilst working with children and youth and their families is to involve parents in their children's lives as the best way to solve problems. Parental involvement is the interaction that occurs between the parents and their children to ensure their wellbeing and development, through use of different activities (Jaiswal, 2017). The parents norms, attitudes and beliefs contributes to the way parents behaves and interact with their children, so as to be involved in their development (Forbes et al., 2021). Parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community are different ways parents are involved in their children's lives (Driessen, 2021).

Parental involvement is applied both at home and at school so as to assist the child in his/her school performance (Jaiswal, 2017).Parental involvement can occur for academic purposes. They are there to assist the children through their learning processes. Their involvement is done through participation, discussion, encouragement and homework involvement (Driessen, 2021). Parents were involved during Covid-19 as they were assisting their children. Parents were also involved in assisting their children homework during the lockdown so that they will not lag behind and making sure that their performance was not affected with Covid-19 lockdown (Jaiswal, 2017). Their involvement was also noted during lockdown in assisting their children and youth who were facing depression and anxiety during lockdown. They were involved in play therapy with their children who were facing depression, social withdrawal, behavioral and anxiety disorders (Maras, 2021). The parents were taught how best they can empathize with their children's feeling, developing their self-confidence senses and also setting the boundaries during their joint play therapy (Maras, 2021).

The frontline healthcare workers faced challenges that were emotional and behavioral during Covid-19 pandemic and were among the parents who were not able to manage their children. The exposure of children to direct and indirect violence, the increase of child abuse was also noted during the Covid-19 lockdown in families, therefore the need for the parents to build better social interaction with their children, being involved in their wellbeing and spending time with them including frontline healthcare workers as parents. The parents in general were involved in their children and youth lives through use of entertainment, reading stories together and doing

home physical exercises together, as this was a better way of distressing children and building a positive relationship with them (Imran et al., 2021).

Crisis intervention model

Social workers use this type of model when assisting service users who have mental health issues, suicidal and have suicide behaviors, abuse victims and domestic violence. They use crisis intervention model so as to influence a positive coping mechanism to the service user in their field of work (Boihtlung, n.d.). This method is used to offer immediate help to an individual with problems and how best they can express or talk about the problem that they have encountered.

The best way social workers can assist children in crisis to express how they feel is through encouraging them to draw, write their experience and playing as well so that they will speak and have the sense of safety when playing especially to the children who are victims of abuse, neglect and domestic violence. Play is an activity that children use in their stages of development and that is how they develop creativity and ability to solve different problems (Maras, 2021).Play therapy is a psychotherapeutic method and a natural way that is used for children to express themselves through using different techniques, media or toys (Maras, 2021). It is used especially on children so as to reduce depression and anxiety relieving them from their painful experience (Silva et al., 2016). Play therapy can be done virtually within a group playing activities enabling children to engage and feel like it is a real-work object (Li et al., 2011).

Play therapy is the most suitable method for children. Play therapy is useful for children as it give them an opportunity to interact with their friends and creating a non-threatening atmosphere for them to express their fear and concern (Li et al., 2011). It can be applied on children with cancer who are hospitalized so as to assist them to cope with stress (Li et al., 2011). Play therapy can be used as well on children with anxiety disorder. It can help reduce their emotions, being aggressive and their social abilities and academic performance will improve (Nursanaa et al., 2020).

Due to Covid-19, children and youth encountered mental challenges, depression, anxiety and social withdrawal. The play therapy was necessary because it was proven to be an effective way for children who were facing difficulties in social interaction, in anger management, have anxiety disorders and also those children with special needs such as children with autism spectrum disorder (Maras, 2021). Social workers did not only use play therapy to assist families especially children, but also group therapy especially for the youths and their parents. Group

therapy was applied to those in rehabilitation centers, substance abuse children or parents during Covid-19. Rehabilitation is a process that motivates an individual to change his/her behavior through the use of non-formal and formal psycho-education program using group sessions (Javed et al., 2020). Group therapy assisted sexually abused children as it created an environment where survivors of sexual abuse meet and talk about their problems (Goren, 2020).

Children and youth of frontline workers were also among the children and youth who faced anxiety disorders and mental health issues during Covid-19 lockdown. Social workers had to intervene, educating the parents to learn how best they can empathize with their children's feeling, developing their self-confidence senses and also setting the boundaries during their joint play therapy (Maras, 2021). In addition, the group therapy with individuals and families was considered as a method of social work in preventing suicide.

Youth who had drug and alcohol addicts, mental health issues, and suicidal behaviors were assist through crisis intervention model.

Summary

Different models are used with social workers to assists children and youth with their families, intervening for the wellbeing of the families with their children and youth. Types of intervention models are crisis intervention and problem-solving model mentioned in the study.

5. ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH FACING DIFFICULTIES DURING COVID-19.

5.1 Research Methodology

The chapter explores the research Methodology used by the researcher within the topic of study. The researcher gave an appreciation of the topic of study through exploitation of research methodology, research instruments, research design, sampling, and the data collecting techniques, data analysis, feasibility, limitation and the ethical considerations. Research methodology is defined as a systematic way that is used to solve problems within the research and understanding how the research is to be done (Yusuf, 2019).

Type of research: (qualitative)

Qualitative research methodology uses descriptive procedures so as to generate meaningful and understandable phenomena of the area under study (Techo, 2016). It consists of words, languages and also observations, pictures and photographs. It gives an understanding why and how things have been done as it gives a rich depth in its analysis (Kumar, 2020). It permits researcher to access data on difficult cases and situations in real life and certain issues can be examined in depth (Nwabuibe, 2014). The researcher used qualitative research method to gather data from social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who faced difficulties during the pandemic. The data that the researcher used is based on human experience and observations.

Sampling procedure

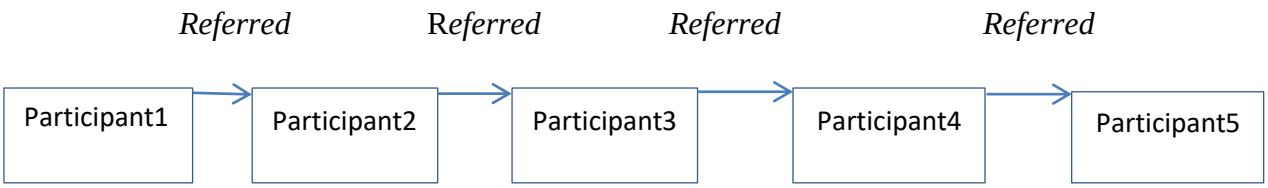
Sampling is defined as a method which uses some members of a certain larger group, selected so as to represent the group as a whole (Kumar, 2020). Non-probability sampling was used in the topic under study, which is a procedure whereby the researcher selected the sample elements not basing on a determined probability (Mweshi et al., 2020). Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that was used in the topic under study. Snowball sampling is a formation of a sample group that starts with one individual informant, who will be providing information, and then the research participant will then provide only one referral, and when the second referral is recruited into the sample group, he/she will also provide only one referral and will be a chain of connection. The pattern will continue until there is enough number of research participants for

the sample group (Bhardwaj, 2019). Snowball sampling is used to collect data and meaningful information where there is no easily accessible data and also when the potential participants or subjects are difficult to locate (Naderifar et al., 2017).

The research participant was a social worker who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who referred another social worker who also worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers to the researcher. This group of social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were not easy to locate because the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers was a new group in the social work field due to Covid-19, there are children of professional people considered to be doing well and was an easily neglected group during the time of Covid-19. The social workers who worked with children and youth were not easily located as most of them worked with children in care homes and juvenile, making it difficult to locate such an inaccessible and experienced social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers.

The researcher managed to interview 5 social workers through the use of referring of one social worker to another who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers from two organizations in one county in England. Snowball sampling aided the researcher to have enough data that she needed to analyze and draw conclusive results in the research to make informed decisions and was the best sampling type to apply in this research as it provided a better understand of the research in terms of locating an inaccessible and experienced social workers who were working with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the time of Covid-19, so as to identify their roles, methods and techniques to assist the challenges that the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced during the time of Covid-19.

Diagram 1: Linear snowball sampling



Sample description

Social workers from 2 different organizations but 1 county in England were interviewed during the research. The researcher sent an email to the first organization asking for assistance to interview social workers who worked with children and youth within their organization. The manager agreed and linked the researcher to the social worker within her organization who was working with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers cases. The social worker agreed to be interviewed and it was done through Zoom meeting. After the interview, the researcher asked the social worker if she can recommend anyone whom she knows was working with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers, and she referred the researcher to another social worker within her organization and she agreed to be interviewed as well. The steps were repeated until the needed sample size of 5 social workers (4 females and 1 male) was done, 3 social workers from one organization and other 2 from another organization. The data that was collected from the social workers through the use of snowball sampling was analyzed and coded. The number of research participants who were interviewed was five. This was an appropriate number of sample sizes because it showed the sample under study and the results will not be bias and will cover the uncertainties. In addition to that the time was limited and five social workers were appropriate to interview in the research under study. In general, social workers who are experienced can deal with cases above 7, therefore the data that the researcher was undertaking was more of assessing at least 25 to 60 children and youth of frontline workers, their behavioral and psychological challenges through the experience of only 5 social workers. The data collected using snowball sampling technique was similar from all social workers within different organizations, therefore no new codes were found and no emerging themes occurred during the research.

Table 1: interviewed social workers information.

Number of social workers	**Age**	**Gender**	**Education level**	**Experience**
Social worker1	40	Female	BA social work ,MA international social work	11
Social worker2	38	Female	BA social work, MA in social work with children and youth	9
Social worker3	35	Male	BA Social work	8

Social worker4	33	Female	BA Social work	7
Social worker5	29	Female	BA Social work	5

Data collection methods

Data collection method is used to describe the systematic process of preparing and gathering data for a certain purpose and from different sources (Hlafta, 2018). Data collection purpose is to obtain some information, making decisions about important issues and also how to keep the records of the collected data (Hlafta, 2018). The research used the semi-structured interview method for data collection. Semi- structured interview is a verbal conversation that occurs between two or more people as the interviewer will gather data or information from another person who is the interviewee using series of questions (Mannan, 2020).

The semi-structured interview is used in this research because it does away with non-response, the researcher was able to observe non-verbal cues and they offered a more complete picture of the effects of pandemic (Covid-19). It allowed the researcher to get an understanding and detailed information about the research in Pandemic social work with children and youth. During the interview with social workers, quite a lot of key topics were incited during the interview, such as addressing the challenges that children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced that is behavioral and psychological challenges, the roles of social workers and the methods and techniques of social workers dealing with behavioral and psychological challenges that the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced. The interview questions that were used by the researcher during the interview with the research participants are referenced in Annexes: Annex 1: interview questions of the research under study. All the interviews were done on Zoom meeting and they took about 30-45 minutes and all the ethical issues such as confidentiality and informed consent were observed during the interview.

Research instruments

Research instruments are tools used when contacting data collection and must be reliable and produce consistence results after being applied (Bastos et al., 2014) .This study made use of interview guides as its specific data collection instrument. An interview is defined as a technique for collecting information through a conversation between two or more people as questions are asked and another person responding (Mannan, 2020). The interview guides consist of open ended questions which are personal and gives room for identifying participants' thoughts and feelings towards the case under study (Adams et al., 2008), that is social workers, who worked

with a new group of children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19 . The use of open ended questions allowed the researcher to probe for more answers and helped in ensuring that there was no ambiguity and provided multiple answers to the same question (Husain et al., 2012). A set of interview guides were used in this study, to interview social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers to identify the challenges these children and youth faced and the roles, methods and techniques implemented by social workers during the time of Covid-19.

Note: (***For the research instruments see ANNEXES, Annex 1: interview questions- page 88 and 89***)

Data Analysis Methods

Data analysis is defined as the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them (Kawulich, 2004). The researcher used thematic analysis to analyze data, providing an easily interpretable and brief description of the data collected and the researcher was able to pinpoint the patterns across the data sets. Data analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within the data and it organizes and describes data set in details (Braun et al., 2014). The interviews were recorded and then transcribed to find out about the opinions, the experience and the views of social workers towards the challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers, social workers roles, methods and techniques. Coding of data was done in thematic analysis after transcribing. Themes were generated after codes were created identifying the patterns from the data collected, combining of several codes into single theme. Different sub-themes were grouped under one single theme. Use of thematic tables and maps were done to give a better understanding of the data collected through the use of sub-themes and a single theme, so as to give an overview of the relationship between sub-themes and a single theme.

Limitation of the research

Linking one social worker to another took time than expected and some were not willing to cooperate after being referred with another social worker to the researcher. The issue of network connection was also another challenge whilst conducting the interview. Sometimes the interviewer could not hear the interviewee properly and, the interviewer had to repeat the question to the interviewee to check if he/she is still connected. There was need to liaise with

them so that they could find time to accommodate the researcher in their schedule due to their time of work.

Ethical issues

Ethics is a philosophy that deals with conducting people and guiding their norms or the standards and behavior of people and their relationship with each other (Akaranga et al., n.d.). Ethics are rules and principles that govern humans to distinguish between right and wrong (Jose, 2020). The researcher during this study considered all appropriate values at all stages while conducting the research.

Confidentiality is about making the identity of the participant to be unknown or not to be disclosed (Osho, 2017). The researcher did not disclose the information that was discussed or spoken by social workers who work with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers from different organizations used in the study. The research involved social workers who work with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers who shared sensitive issues and information during Covid-19 and the researcher had to keep the information shared confidential. The researcher made it clear that whatever information that the social workers shared would only be used for academic purposes and names would not be mentioned in the research.

Informed consent is about contract between the participants and the researcher as the research participants will be informed about the data that he/she will provide and if there is any consequences and this will be provided using a written signed consent (Fleming et al., 2018). The researcher had to emphasize that participation in the study was voluntary and the research participants were free to withdraw at any given time during the study, understanding their rights to withdraw at any point in time and to access their information. All proceedings of the study were transparent for all research participants to know what they were getting into thereby agreeing willingly. Furthermore the researcher had to explain everything in a clearly understandable language. Before the interviews, it should be communicated to the research participants that the information was important and the reasons for the importance and the willingness of the interviewer and the purpose of the interview should be clear.

Summary

The research gave a validation for employing the qualitative methodology in this study and the use of snowball sampling in contacting the study. The data collection method used was semi-structured interview. The data collected was analyzed using the thematic analysis as it provided a

brief description of the data collected. Issues of limitations of the study were also explored. The researcher adhered to the ethical responsibilities such as confidentiality and informed consent.

5.2 Data Analysis: Research Results

5.2.1 Intervention of social work in addressing the challenges faced by children and youth during Covid-19.

The chapter presents the findings from the study carried out from 2 organizations in one county in England. The thematic categories are revealed using tables and a map to show the relationship between the themes and the sub themes.

The research questions are assessed and answered in this chapter, which are:

- What are the challenges faced by children and youth of frontline workers during the pandemic?
- What are the roles of social workers when dealing with children and youth during Covid-19?
- What is the best intervention method to apply when assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic?

Theme 1: Behavioral challenges

This theme consists of deliberate self-harm, online sexual behaviors, criminal behaviors and abuse of alcohol and drugs as sub- themes.

Table 2: Theme 1: Behavioral challenges

Theme	**Sub- themes**
Behavioral Challenges	• Online sexual behavior
	• Abuse of alcohol and drugs
	• Criminal behavior

Social workers outlined that when they were working with children and youth of frontline workers they needed to know the behavioral challenges that were affecting their wellbeing during Covid-19, hence the reason for social workers to intervene to assist this new group of children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19. Without identifying the behavioral challenges of these children and youth they were not be able to know the best way of

intervening and roles to take depending with the behavioral challenge that the child faced so as to assist him/her and his/her family.

An online sexual behavior is one of the challenging aspects that children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced during the pandemic. It is a new aspect that social workers had to deal with during the pandemic as compared before the pandemic, where sexting and physical sexual behavior was the most challenging aspect that they once dealt with children and youth in general.

"... The boyfriend ended demanding for nude pictures, nude videos and typing vulgar language with the girl and started to behave weird" (Social worker 3).

Abuse of alcohol and drugs is well known being used with mental health issues in the past and those who had abusive childhood. Due to Covid-19 it has affected children and youth of frontline healthcare workers, their teenagers as outlined during the research by the social worker.

"Therefore will make the teen to start using drugs and alcohol as a way of comforting himself/herself to erase painful moment in his/her live that is occurring of Covid-19" (Social Worker 5).

Social workers also outlined that children and youth are involved in criminal activities due to boredom, having an idle mind and seeking attention from their parents who are always busy with work during the Covid-19.

"Criminal behaviors such as harassment of other children online, that is cybercrime, possession of weapons and drugs, gangsters, and driving their parents cars without a license and driving after Covid-19 curfew were the major factors that caused such criminal activities" (Social Worker 4).

Children and youth of frontline workers are encountering difficulties that change their way of conduct such as online sexual behavior and abuse of alcohol and drugs during the time of Covid-19 in the absence of their parents. Social workers also outlined some other factors such as alcohol and drug use and criminal activities as some of the behavioral challenges that children and youth of frontline healthcare workers were engaging in during Covid-19 during the absence of their parents because of the change in their environment, that is the outbreak of Covid-19 that has brought about a negative impact in their lives.

Theme 2: Psychological challenges

This theme consists of child maltreatment, mental disorders and senses of isolation are the sub-themes.

Table 3: Theme 2: Psychological challenges

Theme	**Sub- themes**
Psychological Challenges	• Child maltreatment
	• Deliberate self-harm
	• Mental disorders
	• Withdrawal / Sense of isolation

Child maltreatment is a major concern in day to day life of children and youth before and during Covid-19. The cases of child maltreatment increased during Covid-19 because of burnouts and stress from parents and their absence from home leading to psychological challenges in children and youth of frontline workers. Having family members who are abusive to take care of the children will affect their mental and emotional well-being.

"…vulnerability comes from the place of the parents as frontline workers who are constantly out of the house and exposing these children to all sorts of abuse, because they had to bring in family members to care for the children or to actually leave the children alone and thereby neglecting them" (Social Worker 1).

Social workers outlined that children and youth are deliberately harming themselves during the pandemic in their parents' absence and receiving some reports on how they are harming themselves. This was cited with social workers in their interviews:

"…she drank medicine (overdose) that was in her parents' cabinet due to depression of the lockdown and another one tried to commit suicide, cutting himself with sharp objects such as razor blame due to the threats that they received online" (Social Worker 5).

Mental disorder is a psychological challenge that children and youth of frontline workers faced during the lockdown due to their parents' absence from home and lockdown restrictions. This was mentioned by social worker 2 during the interview.

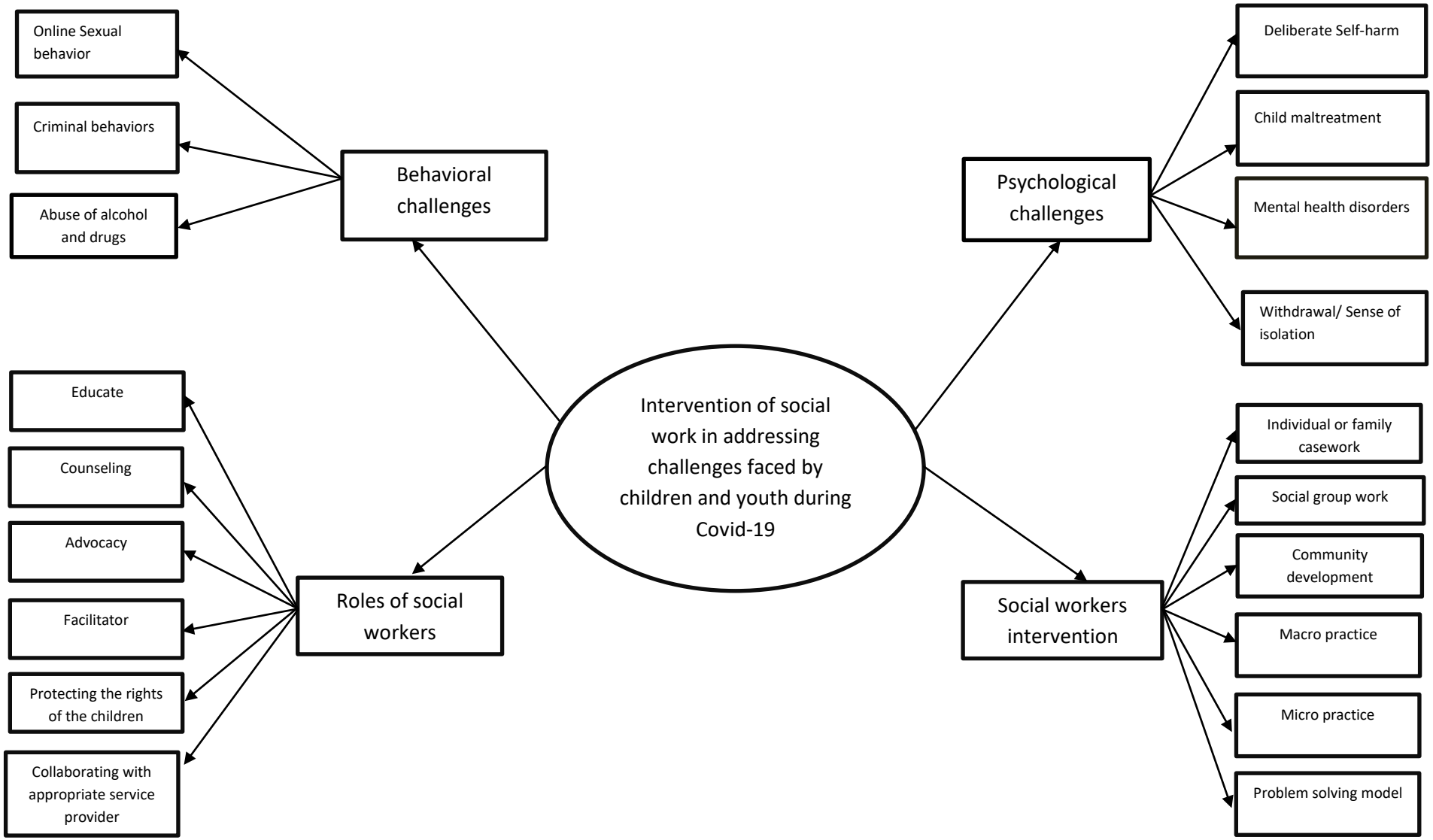
"…new challenges that we're facing, working with children and youth of frontline workers, especially during this pandemic, is mental health issue. Most children have not been going to school because of the lockdown affected their mental wellbeing" (Social Worker 2).

Social workers have noted sense of isolation and it led to psychological withdrawal and changes in behavior in children and youth during the lockdown. They also outlined that some factors such as lockdown restrictions, absence of the parents at home who are frontline workers, neglect and cyber bullying is causing sense of isolation in children and youth of frontline workers.

"Most of the children and youth are not willing to talk to their parents or any next of kin about what is happening to them, leading to shyness, isolation, fear and poor performance in school work as well as poor concentration in day to day life activities"(Social Worker 5).

Psychological challenges were mentioned by social workers as another challenge that children and youth of frontline workers were encountering during the time of Covid-19. Such challenges include mental disorders due to lockdowns and closing of schools making them to be idol. Other factors such as child maltreatment were also mentioned by social workers. They explained that children were abused and neglected by the guardians in the absence of their parents who are frontline workers who are constantly out of their homes working to save patients during the time of Covid-19. In addition sense of isolation was highlighted by social workers as the children and youth of frontline workers felt neglected and unloved by their parents and not willing to share what is troubling them, isolating themselves from their families and everyone around them. Figure 2 gives a summary about the objectives of the topic under study. The thematic map shows the themes and sub-themes, analyzed data.

Figure 2: Thematic Map showing the general overview of thematic category and sub themes



Theme 3: Roles of Social workers

This category consists of counseling, educate, collaborating with appropriate service providers, advocacy and protection of children's rights and intimate practice are the sub- themes.

Table 4: Theme 3: Roles of social workers

Theme	**Sub- themes**
Roles of social workers	• Educate
	• Counseling
	• Collaborating with appropriate service providers
	• Advocacy
	• facilitators
	• protecting the rights of the children

Social workers believe in educating their clients or service users such as the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers with their families to ensure that they interact well and to prevent any harm that can affect the wellbeing of the children and youth. Educating parents, children and youth is a role of social workers during the time of Covid-19. Parents will be able to assist their children when they are facing behavioral or psychological challenges whilst they are not around. Social worker 4 outlined that in the interview:

"We try to educate and to inform their caregivers and parents so that they are well vested with how they can communicate with the children and youth of different age groups depending on their maturity, to ensure that the child understands what kind of risk that they are exposed to and informing them about Covid-19" (Social Worker 4).

Assisting the children and youth during the Covid-19 through counseling was done so as to avoid and deal with their behavioral and psychological challenges they are encountering during the Covid-19 pandemic such as suicidal ideation, self-harm and mental issues.

"…. Counseling enables the children to share what they feel about what is happening around them, sharing their most sensitive and painful moments during the lockdown especially in the absence of their parents due to work." (Social Worker 5).

Collaborating with appropriate service providers is another role that social workers do to assist the children and youth during the Covid-19. This was done by the social workers to link children and youth to appropriate professionals such as therapists, doctors and also the law as a way of solving the challenges at hand that they might have encountered. This was outlined by different social workers during the interview.

"….. l work with other professionals so as to assist the children and youth of frontline workers during this time of Covid-19. For example, we refer them to camps, which deal with issues relating to mental health especially during this time of Covid-19" (Social Worker 2).

Social workers advocate for the children and youth so that their voices can be heard. This will help to overcome their challenges during Covid-19. Most parents do not have time to hear their children and youth so social workers are there to act on their behavior to change the lives of the children and youth for the better. This was mentioned by social worker 1during the interview.

"The child' is our main role and we try to make the parents understand where that child is coming from. We are the child's voice as we allow the child to speak through us"(social worker 1).

Social workers are facilitators who are involved to gather a group of people together for different reasons who have a common purpose or reason. This was similar to social workers who worked with children and youth of frontline workers who were assisted by social workers to have a support group to share the challenges that they were encountering during Covid-19 and how best they can overcome them. This was indicated by social worker 3 during the interview:

"….we offer support through facilitating support groups for children and youth who have common difficulties during the pandemic to make them share and work together to overcome their challenges together"(social worker 3)

Child's voice and protection is a crucial role of social workers especially during the time of Covid-19. They have the role to listen and try to protect the children and youth through the use of information that have been provided to them even though sometimes it is challenging for them to do so but they will try their best to find a way to assist and protect the children and youth.

"My role is firstly to talk to the children, getting to understand their views, getting to understand their wishes and feelings, and protecting them if they're being exposed to any harm within the family. Then I also do assessments, to assess the needs of the children, to see how best we can support these children" (social worker 1).

Social workers play an important role to assist children and youth as well as their parents so as to know how to deal with behavioral and psychological challenges their children and youth are facing during Covid-19. The roles that they apply include counseling the children and their parent, educating them, advocating for the children and youth, being the voice of every child who is vulnerable and protecting their rights. Social workers also collaborate with other professional service providers to ensure the well-being of every child.

Theme 4: Social workers intervention

This category consists of individual of family casework, community development and macro practice as sub- themes of social workers intervention.

Table 5: Theme 4: Social workers intervention

Thematic Category	**Sub- themes**
Social workers intervention	Individual or family casework
	Social group work
	Community development
	Problem solving model
	Micro practice
	Macro practice

Social work intervention consists of methods, models and practice area that are applied by the social workers to assist children and youth of frontline worker. This ensures that their wellbeing in their families and society will be provided and protected. Individual or family casework is a method of intervention that focuses on assisting a child facing behavioral and psychological challenges during Covid-19. This can also include the family.

"…for change to take place we need to improve and work with families first and improve their life, working on the challenges they are facing during Covid-19" (social worker 4).

Social worker 3 outlined that sometimes it will be necessary to use social group work to solve challenges faced by children and youth especially substance abuser through working with them in groups and can share what they are encountering during Covid-19 and finding the best solution to their problem

"…social group work method is applicable when assisting substance and alcohol abusers and abused children and youth of frontline workers in groups so that they will be able to share and talk about what is happening to them " (social worker 5).

Social workers use methods to intervene, assisting children and youth on their challenges they faced during Covid-19 but will depend on the method of intervention that will be used to assist the children and youth. Social workers outlined that it will be best to assist children and youth in community development because all children and youth are facing same challenges such as eating and sleeping disorder during Covid-19 and hence need to be addressed on a larger scale, community development as polices, rules and laws are applied on community development and will apply to all children to ensure they are protected and safe during Covid-19. This was outlined by social worker 1 during the interview.

"….government and international organization policy makers not only focus on one group of children and youth but impose rules, laws and policies that will govern the wellbeing of every child during the pandemic no matter his/her background because everyone is affected by the pandemic" (social worker 1).

This was supported by social worker 2 as she mentioned that there will be need for protecting and preventing burnouts of frontline workers that that they will be able to spend more time with their children and youth. All parents must have time with their children especially during this time of Covid-19 when they needed them the most

"…*frontline workers and other working parents during this time of Covid-19 had to considered by the government of England to ensure their protection and more time with their children and youth and better working schedule*" *(social worker 2)*

The practice area consist of three levels which are the micro, mezzo and macro.it is part and parcel of social workers intervention that determine the level of intervention where social workers need to consider when assisting children and youth who are facing challenges during Covid-19 so as to know how best they can help them to overcome their challenges. Social worker 1 mentioned that if assisting children and youth of frontline workers it will be best to assist them in macro practice as it will also address not only the children and youth of frontline workers but all children and this was supported by social worker 2 during her interview.

"…*the macro practices because it focuses on the entire community as a whole every children and youth, including children and youth of frontline workers" (social worker 1).*

Social worker 2 support this as she mentioned that if any changes need to be done it will benefit all children including children and youth of frontline workers as well

"… *if the government, local and international organization implement some laws and policies that concern the wellbeing of children it will benefit and have an impact on every children and youth including the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers"(social worker 2).*

The micro practice is used by social workers as well to assist children and youth and their families to deal with the challenges within the family setup. This was mentioned by social worker 3 during the interview as below:

"… *micro practice that deals with individuals or family which is a direct to ensure the wellbeing of these children and youth which has a one on one interaction and intervention of tackling the problem for a particular family depending with the challenge and finding the best solution to solve their problem" (social worker 3).*

Models are part and parcel of social work intervention and are used by social workers to solve challenges faced by children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. The social worker explained during the interview that she applies models to their social work practice depending with the challenges that the child is facing during Covid-19.

"…*Problem solving model is appropriate where l will assist the family on how best they can find solution that concern their child's challenges and involving them all the way during the process"(social worker 1).*

5.2.2 Results discussion: Intervention of social work in addressing challenges faced by the children and youth during Covid-19.

Sexual activities do occur in teenagers due to hormones during puberty (Ekasari et al., 2020). However it will become a challenge when it has a negative impact on these teenagers due to poor decision making and lack of maturity. An online sexual behavior is an aspect that started occurring on children and youth due to Covid-19 and with a greater negative impact. Ghorashi (2019) noted in his article that use of technology, use of internet has caused problems such as internet addiction, cyber bullying and sexual activities such as watching pornography. Due to the pandemic, children and youth are more exposed to such sexual activities online because of their learning and studying that has been commenced online to Covid-19 restrictions. The participants during the interview pointed out that Covid-19 outbreak and its restrictions led to children and

youth of frontline workers to find comfort on the use of the internet in the absence of their parents, increasing their online sexual addiction.

This was supported by the article written on the 21st of September 2020 *"Children with harmful sexual behavior (Volume 10)"* published by Hackett et al, noting that online sexual behaviors is caused by factors such as leaving the children on their own to take care of themselves with poorly unmonitored television and parents not providing close supervision due to work, as they will end up viewing explicit sites, sending nude videos and pictures on the internet and participating in sexual chats online whilst they are under age. Such a behavioral challenged causes sex addiction at an early age leading to unhealthy sexual behaviors, being infected with sexually transmitted diseases and prostitution in future especially for a girl child. Due to such factors, this has affected the children and youth in general including the children and youth of frontline workers as well, especially during this time of Covid-19 as a way to find comfort but causing changes in their behaviors and leading to a sexual activity addiction in future.

Alcohol and drugs will become a behavioral challenge the moment that it is mentioned as addiction and abuse. Alcohol is believed to be a solution of eliminating moods but can lead to its misuse and abuse (Albanese, 2012). Due to their parents absence from home, cyber bullying online and boredom were some reasons that were outlined with the social workers as reasons that contributed to youth of frontline workers to start drinking and use of drugs and leading to addiction and abuse of it. This was supported with (Zima, 2018) that alcohol is not seen as only as a behavioral challenge but causes cancer and other different types of diseases due to abuse of it. This was to highlight the problems that will occur after abusing alcohol and also this will lead to other problems as mentioned by social worker 2 in her interview that after they find out that the alcohol and drugs will cause some chronic diseases they will start to withdrawal from their families not even willing to talk to any family member and they start being violent and aggressive. Pompili et al., (2010) mentioned that alcohol abuse also causes suicidal ideation due to impulsiveness, impaired judgment and disinhibiting.

Addiction and abuse of substances or drugs was also mentioned by social workers that it is a very serious problem that they are facing so as to deal with the youth especially as they are the group that is mostly affected with drugs and substance use. Substance abuse is viewed as a coping strategy that resulted in neurobiological alterations causing deterioration and physical addiction (Segura-Garcia et al., 2015). Social worker 1 mentioned that it takes time for a

teenager to stop using drugs and substance after using them and most of the children whom they were dealing with they needed to refer them to other professional service providers for assist. Due to their parents absence from home no one is able to assist them to define the good from the bad and guide them. This was outline by Segura-Garcia et al.,(2015) that parents are the ones who lead their children to represent themselves in future through helping them to make good decisions and developing good personality for their own behavior. Social worker 5 during the interview said that due to the absence of these children and youth parents from home, this had affected the children and youth of frontline workers as they made poor decisions introducing themselves into substance use and drugs affecting their behaviors.

A criminal behavior is about acting in an immoral way that is illegal, anti-social and unconditional change. It is associated with crime that is a person breaking the law (Bamisile, 2017). Criminal behaviors such as cyber-crimes, driving a car without a license under the influence of alcohol and drugs and also in possession of weapons such as guns and knives were some cases that were reported being done by children and youth of frontline workers. The social workers pointed out that most of the children and youth of frontline workers who ended up committing crimes are those who have mental issues caused by the pandemic. This was supported by Crawford (2014) as he mentioned that the crimes are most committed with those with mental issues especially those who have issues of drug addicts and taking an advantage that they could buy more substances and drugs so as to support their addiction and all this is done under the influence of alcohol and substance. Bamisile (2017) added that criminal behaviors are influenced by different approaches such as psychological approach, this was appropriate especially supporting the topic under study as this was mentioned by the social workers who are working with children and youth of frontline workers who are involved in criminal activities due to psychological problems such as mental issues and making them to make poor decisions that will lead them to be arrested.

Pandemic had a negative impact on children and youth in general, their well-being especially their health. Child maltreatment affects physical and mental health problems in children and youth (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Child maltreatment is one of the major public health concerns and is a non-accidental injury such as emotional, physical and sexual abuse that is inflicted on a minor from his/her own parents or care givers (Dahake et al., 2018). Social workers outlined in their interviews with the researcher that child maltreatment is happening in every children and

youth including the children and youth of frontline workers as well. It might be intentional or un-intentional due to Covid-19 stress. This was supported by Lawson et al., 2020 identifying that stressed parents will respond to their children's needs, demands or behaviors in a harshly manor that will be aggressive or abusive to them. Home is supposed to be the child's first line of defense and protection as indicated by social worker 1 but it shows that in their home environments and from the people whom they love and trust that is their parents and family members during the lockdown is where most child maltreatment is occurring (Lawson et al., 2020). During the pandemic, child abuses such as sexual, emotional and physical abuse have being reported during the pandemic in emergency departments of hospitals. Child maltreatment is a psychological challenge that will lead to mental issues and substance misuse in children and youth in future (Panchal et al., 2021).

From the research, children and youth are facing psychological challenges such as deliberate self –harm during the pandemic because of lockdown. Deliberate self-harm is triggered by physical and emotional pains, traumatizing past events or memories and are difficult to express in words and ending up punishing oneself for the feelings and past or present experience (Runcan et al., 2020). A study that was conducted in England about deliberate self-harm supported the topic under study outlining that deliberate self-harm is a problem that personal disturbances, substance use, poor performance at school and depression causes self-harm in children and youth (Uh et al., 2021).

Social worker cited that they encountered different cases that were reported of self-harm that included inserting objects in their bodies, overdosing of medicine such as antidepressants, self-destructive behaviors such as eating disorders, finger biting and also self-cutting and self-hitting. The current major contributor to deliberate self-harm in these children and youth of frontline workers is the pandemic. Social worker 4 indicated that the Covid-19 has changed the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers trying to seek attention from their parents who are always working so as to save lives of peoples who are infected with Covid-19. The Covid-19 lockdown restrictions such as staying at home, learning online causing cyber bullying, closing of schools, making them to lack physical social interaction with their friends and the traumatic events that they will be experiencing such as being abused emotionally by the guardians, as well of the death rate happening around them and not even having an idea of when this will end and putting the blame on themselves contributed to deliberate self-harm.

The pandemic has caused mental health problems globally affecting health care workers who are assisting the patients, the patients as well and the children and youth (Wu et al., 2020). Children and their families started to have mental problems during the pandemic and in need of psychiatric care as it affected their health, education and occupation. (De Figueiredo et al., 2021) Social worker 3 citied that mental issues in children and youth of frontline workers started to increase due to the lockdown restrictions and the parents always at work and no one to share their problems and to talk too.

(Mamun et al., 2021) supported the view of the social worker in his literature mentioning that mental health becomes a concern during the Covid-19 due to educational institutions that are closed, limiting the social interaction of children and youth and making it difficult for them to adopt to online lessons bringing more changes to them such as cyber bullying causing mental problems and suicide ideation. In addition, (Courtney et al., 2020) revealed that the major causes of mental disorders in children and youth is depression and anxiety. (Hossain et al., 2020) supported that Covid-19 pandemic has a high burden of mental health such as depression, anxiety, stress, somatization disorders, emotional disturbances as well as suicidal behaviors. This is affecting children and youth during the lockdown, and will have a long time negative consequences especially on adolescent (Auler et al., 2021).

The psychological consequences of the quarantine have brought changes in both adults and children such having mental disorders, fear, being frustrated and having sense of isolation. The sense of isolation in children and youth has caused fear of being affected, anxiety about their own health as well as fear of losing their family members. Sense of isolation is another type of psychological challenge that children and youth of frontline workers are facing. Social worker 1 pointed out that due to lockdown restrictions of the pandemic and not having their parents around at home due to work, cyber bullying and feeling neglected are causing the children to be depressed, feeling sad, crying and this lead to withdrawal/sense of isolation. She also mentioned that the children and youth are having physical traits such as headaches, stomach pains, sleeping disorders as well as loss of appetite. (De Figueiredo et al., 2021) stated also that sense of isolation or withdrawal causes eating disorders in children and youth during the lockdown, leading to weight gain. Due to changes in their environment, the dramatic change in their routine, absence of outdoor activities led the children and youth to experience loneliness and sense of isolation or withdrawal (Ferguson et al., 2021).

The social workers role is to educated children and youth of frontline workers who are experiencing behavioral and psychological challenges such as sexual behavioral, self-harm, emotional neglect and abuse at home, their parents' absence at home who are frontline workers whilst they are at work during the Covid-19. They educate the children and youth through assisting them in their studies when struggling with behavioral, emotional and as well as mental health during the Covid-19. Educating is done in social work as a form of assisting children and youth undergoing some challenges be it in family cases, juvenile as well as in care homes. This was supported by (Hirschfeld, 2010) that social workers teach their clients to have the ability to act within a given conceptual context and supporting their ability to bear strains. The social worker 4 outlined in the interview that educating not only the children and youth of frontline workers, but also their parents and caregiver on how best to assist their children and youth during the time of Covid-19. She further mentioned that the children and youth have to know and understand about the Covid-19 and why such things are happening around them such as not having their parents at home during the time of Covid-19.

Counseling of both the parents and their children is another role that the social workers applied in this area of study. Personal details of one's emotions, physical, stress, risk factors, mental well-being, their sensitive and crucial information is shared and explored in counseling (Ebimgbo, 2019). It involve two individuals, the first one is the one seeking professional assistance and the one is the trained person assisting the other and the need of counseling is to encourage and develop an individual ability and attitude (Nizami, 2020) . The social workers will counsel the children and youth of frontline workers such that they will avoid self-harm, use of substances and alcohol as a way to solve their problems and any form of sexual abuse and criminal behaviors that they had encountered in their parent's absence from home and even from their parents due to work pressure issues.

Also they provide counseling to parents, as social worker 3 and 4 mentioned that the frontline workers as parents must know that after work they are also parents and they need to know what their children are feeling and going through in their absence from home during the time of Covid-19. The social worker mentioned that counseling enabled the sharing and releasing of painful emotions experienced by the children and youth during the Covid-19 lockdown in their parent absence from home that need attention and the need to build the relationship the children and their parents again. This was supported with Vîşcu (2013) as he outlined that it assist and

explore the feelings, thoughts , support in crisis times and how best a solution can be reached depending with the problems. Counseling helps to resolve any present underlying issue that can disrupt the coping capacity and social function of people within their environment (Ebimgbo, 2019). The social worker 1 outlined that counseling was also done remotely so as to prevent the spread of the virus and assisting the children and youth who have experienced anxiety and depression. It was supported with (Arrieta et al., 2021) that counseling of children and youth can be done remotely especially during the time of Covid-19.

Social workers refer the children and youth to appropriate service providers. This is done as a way to assist the children and youth to overcome their challenges as well and to protect them and ensuring that their well-being is being considered during the time of Covid-19. The use of other service provider was mentioned by the social workers, when the challenge that the children or youth is beyond their control, and when they cannot provide such service. Edoh-Torgah et al, 2021 supported the idea of different service providers coming into play to assist children and youth who have been sexual abused during the time of Covid-19 as they will be taken into social welfare whilst their offenders will be prosecuted with the court of law and the child will be treated at the hospital and do therapy so as to help her/him to overcome emotional and mental disorders due to the trauma of being abused. This will allow the children and youth to be open, not blaming themselves of any challenges that are happening around them and if they need any assistance from any other professions in future they will be able to trust and report any form of problem that they might encounter so as to receive appropriate services before their well-being is disturbed.

A social workers role is to protect the children and youth and advocate on their behalf that is to make the child's voice to be heard. Advocacy was and is an integral component in the practice of social work and is guided by ethics within the profession (Talbot et al., 2014). This was supported with Brown et al., (2015) as they mentioned that the profession of social work originated from advocacy, advocating for the voiceless within the society, vulnerable and the oppressed so as to improve the person's situation and condition within the society. Social worker 4 mentioned that the social workers are the child's voice meaning they advocate on their behalf whenever any form of maltreatment, oppression and hinders the well-being of the children and youth that need attention from the social work profession. Advocate meaning to help people

in terms of their rights, have better opportunities, empowering them so as to improve their lives, human dignity, oppressed, vulnerable and those in need (Cleaveland, 2010).

Social workers provide protection to the children from any form of harm that they will encounter. The social workers during the interviews they specified that the social workers are there to protect the children as they investigate any form of allegation of child abuse, neglect and any form of danger that the children and youth of frontline workers might have encountered during the Covid-19 and to check if he/she is in a safe environment and state. Ferguson et al., (2021) however mentioned that protection of children during the pandemic was not properly done due to online visit and one cannot tell if a child is well protected or not due to social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, Ferguson mentioned that even when social workers were able to do home visits, the parents were present during the talk between the child and the social worker. The child won't be able to talk and express how he/she feels because of fear. Moreover, it will be challenging for social workers to visit a minor at home in the absence of their parents. As this was one issue that they encountered as a challenge to provide protection to these children so as to investigate their well-being in the times of Covid-19.

Therefore, protection in the field of social work is still a challenge for social workers to know how best they can protect the children from any form of abuse, neglect that is occurring to these children and youth of frontline workers during the time of the pandemic. Even though the social workers are facing such challenges of how best they can provide the best protection to the children and youth during the time of Covid-19, social worker 1 cited that they do their best to protect these children and youth no matter the cost, if they need to summon the court or have a court order to visit these children and youth so that their protection and rights are considered will be done.

Social workers are facilitators in the field of social work. The reason for them to facilitate is for them to assist service users who are facing difficulties and this they do so by planning, designing, directing and also managing the activities and meeting that are appropriate for the service users so as to make the service users focused and have a common goal (De Vreede et al., 2002). The social worker 3 during the interview mentioned that they facilitate support groups for the children and youth of frontline worker who are facing challenges during Covid-19 so that they could work together to overcome their challenges. This was supported by Costello, 2013 when

he/she mentioned that facilitators initiate connection for different participants. Therefore in this area of study, the social workers participants are the children and youth of frontline workers.

There are different methods of social work intervention that is used in social work to assist children and youth by social workers during the pandemic such as community development, social group work and individual or family casework (Malachy et al., 2019). During the interview with the social workers, they mentioned that community development is used during Covid-19 so as to make changes to the community to identify the problem that is affecting people, groups, families and individuals. This was supported by Boihtlung when he mentioned that social workers are there to assist individuals, communities and families and has a direct impact.

The social workers mentioned that the changes occur within a community will also change the group and families with their children. This was supported by Chukwu, 2019 when he mentioned that it is through the community that social workers assist individuals and will be the main focus in social work field. Therefore this concludes what was mentioned by social worker 1 and 2 during the interview that it will be easy for the government and international policy makers to implement rules and policies that govern the wellbeing of children and youth including children and youth of frontline workers who are facing psychological and behavioral challenges during Covid-19 as well.

Social group work is another method that can be used to intervene in children and youth of frontline workers. Social group work is a connection of two or more people with common values (Chukwu, 2019). Social worker mentioned that group social work was used to assist children and youth of frontline workers who were abused and neglected and also who were substance abusers caused by lockdown during Covid-19 and they could share common challenges that they have encountered and find solutions to their problems together as a group. This was supported by Chukwu, 2019 as he mentioned that social group work uses group sessions to assist members of the group who have similar problems so as to share their problems.

Individual or family casework is another method used as a form of intervention in social work field and is a different way of solving problems that helps individuals (Rahman, 2019). Social workers mentioned that it is easy to work with a family and individual to work on their challenges that the child is facing during Covid-19 face to face with their families and knowing how best each and every family will be problem can be solved during Covid-19. They mentioned

that it is easy to deal with each and every family problem than to work on that using a group. Individual or family casework can be dealt with in micro, which is a practice area in social work which deals with individual of family directly and solving problems through the use of counseling and therapy (Gray, 1996). Social worker 3 mentioned that micro practice is used to deal with individuals or family of frontline workers who are facing challenges to ensure their wellbeing and finding solution to each and every problem that they were encountering during Covid-19 and this can be done through using therapy or counseling so as to assist children and youth of frontline workers.

Macro practice works with communities, societies and neighbors fo social change and its development (Malachy et al., 2019). Macro practice is a social work practice that social workers used when assisting children and youth but on a community level. Social worker 1 outlined that the best way of solving a problem that concern children and youth is to deal with such issues at community level this will benefit every children and youth including frontline workers children.

Problem solving model was used by social workers to intervene in solving problems of children and youth of frontline workers during Covid-19. This was supported by Boihtlung when he mentioned that the problem solving model is used by social workers to apply different problem solutions or ways to solve problems and develop their own solution. This was supported by social worker when she mentioned that problem solving model is appropriate where l will assist the family on how best they can find a solution that concern their child's challenge and the parents getting involved during the process.

Summary

The results have contributed to four thematic categories that are linked together. It highlighted the understanding of social work intervention and roles in addressing the challenges faced by the children and youth of frontline workers during Covid-19. The results also explains the relation between the thematic categories, their sub-themes and the thematic map giving the general overview of how they are interconnected to explain the intervention of social workers, their roles in addressing the behavioral and psychological challenges that children and youth of frontline workers came across during Covid-19.

REFLECTIONS

The research under study "Pandemic social work with children and youth" talked about the behavioral and psychological challenges faced by children and youth during Covid-19 specifically children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. Therefore need for social workers to intervene assisting the children and youth. The study permitted the researcher to gain knowledge and skills needed as a social worker to assist the community or the vulnerable and have a clear picture of what the actual or real practical social work is like when dealing with the vulnerable children and youth during Covid-19.

The researcher as a social work student learnt to have abilities and knowledge of using different ways of intervention which are the methods and also roles to assist the children and youth in need whenever an emergency occurs in future to the best ability. The researcher intended to bridge the gap that exposed children and youth of frontline healthcare workers as more researchers paid attention to children and youth in general and rarely from frontline workers households.

Every child matters policy within the topic under study was not included especially during Covid-19 pandemic and much focus was done for the elderly people as they were the most affected by the pandemic due to their mortality rate.

The researcher learnt that there is need to focus also on children of frontline workers as they are often overlooked, given the fact that their parents are essential service providers. The assumption is that naturally they can cope and yet in actual fact they tend to be the most neglected in issues that affect them as their caregivers are pre occupied. Researcher observed that like all the other children, those of frontline healthcare workers also have different coping capacities and some are less resilient in comparison to the general assumption that they are resilient living in a household with professionals.

The researcher learnt to solve the problems and issues surrounding the children and youth and their families and the possible solutions that can empower and improve their way of life. She also learnt that it is important to be a good listener and be the voice of the vulnerable. Social work is increasing in demand due to challenges that people faced due to Covid-19 pandemic. As the researcher in social work field, there is need to apply critical thinking and empowering the children and youth during their challenges. Therefore need for the researcher to apply different theories, methods, techniques and approaches to assist the vulnerable children and youth.

CONCLUSION

Chapter presents the evidence which validates the study of pandemic social work with children and youth, specifically the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19. It outlined the challenges that they encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic, roles of social workers and the intervention of social workers to assist the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19 in England.

- The behavioral challenge focuses on the way children and youth acts or how they conduct themselves towards the changes around them, the Covid-19 pandemic. The abuse of alcohol and drugs and criminal are the challenges that the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers faced during Covid-19. Psychological challenges refer to a spectrum of condition that arise in the mind and are related to mental and emotional state of a person. Mental health disorders and child maltreatment were the psychological challenges faced by children and youth during the pandemic.
- Social workers roles were to provide support and counseling to children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the time of Covid-19. They were the voices of the children and youth facing challenges during Covid-19. They were educators and mediators to both the children and youth and their parents on how best they could overcome the behavioral and psychological challenges during Covid-19.
- The intervention of social workers was important, assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during the time of Covid-19. Social work intervention using methods and practice areas to solve problems and models were applied by the social workers to deal with the behavioral and psychological challenges that children and youth of frontline healthcare workers encountered during Covid-19. The study exposed the need of social workers who were experienced to take part in assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers during Covid-19.

However all this being said and done, it is not only the duty of social workers, parents and guardians to assist these children, but the ministry of health in England and the policy makers to participate in assisting the children and youth during the time of Covid-19 so that they won't feel lonely and they will be able to overcome the psychological and behavioral challenges they were encountering during Covid-19. In future, after they survived this pandemic, they will say "l once lived in the time of Covid-19 with the aid of everyone around me".

RECOMMENDATION

- **Social workers to educate parents and caregivers to have an open and honest communication with their children**.

  Social workers to educate and inform parents and guardians to discuss with the children and youth about what is happening around them and listening to their worries and anxieties will help the children to cope with challenges they are facing during the Covid-19 pandemic. Fear of the unknown and helpless over a situation may trigger behavioral and emotional challenges in children and youths. Therefore need for social workers to educate the families especially the parents and guardians to spend as much time as possible with the children.

- **Policy makers to prioritize children and youth wellbeing.**

  Policy makers such as governments, local and international organizations should prioritize and value the rights and needs of children and youths in every community. The child policy of "every child matter" is to be reminded and applied to every child, even children who have parents working overtime to save lives of people affected by the Covid-19. There should be dissemination of recent and updated information through fliers, pamphlets, books and sharing online on social media platforms how to address the challenges or difficulties that the children and youth are facing during this time of Covid-19 in every community no matter the differences in cultures, races and ethnicity.

- **Minister of health to expand and protect frontline healthcare workers**.

  The Minister of State of health under Minister Edward Argar deals with the National Health Service (NHS) workforce of England should employ more frontline healthcare workers during the time of Covid-19 and provide more protective clothing for them so that they will not be afraid to spread the virus to their children at home. Employing more frontline healthcare workers will allow the parents to spend reasonable working hours at work and still cater for their children's needs. The parents will not be overworked and burnout and this will allow them to spend time with their children and address their anxiety and worries associated with Covid-19. The parents will also oversee the children education, family time and activities that will reduce behavioral and emotional challenges associated with the pandemic.

- **Social workers to facilitate support groups for the children and youths**

  Social workers should facilitate support groups for the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. This will allow the children and youth to meet occasionally in person and online and share experiences, fears and anxieties associated with the pandemic. Having support groups help the children and youth to deal with mental, emotional and psychological challenges as they vent out their frustrations and worries. This allows the children to understand they are not alone and share copying mechanisms.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the study, Pandemic social work with children and youth is to analyze the behavioral and psychological challenges that children and youth encountered during the Covid-19. The study focuses on a new emerged group of easily neglected children and youth due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers. Social work as a profession plays a role in assisting the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers to overcome their behavioral and psychological challenges during Covid-19. Mediation, counseling and advocating for the children and youth were some roles that the social workers applied in assisting the children and youth of frontline workers.

The type of research used was qualitative research and snowball sampling type was used in the research. The researcher managed to conduct five interviews with social workers who work with children and youth of frontline workers in England. Semi-structured interviews were used in the research. The interviews were conducted online using Zoom platform and ethical issues were observed during the interview. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The research results outlined that the children and youth were facing behavioral challenges such as online sexual behaviors and criminal behaviors and psychological challenges such as mental disorders and sense of isolation/withdrawal. The results concluded that Covid-19 pandemic caused a negative change and impact in children and youth lives and need for intervention of professionals such as social workers to assist them to overcome their behavioral and psychological challenges. The study recommends prioritizing children and youth well-being during the time of Covid-19 because every child or youth is vulnerable in the time of a pandemic. Protecting frontline healthcare workers during the Covid-19 so that they won't be overworked or feel burnout and will be able to spend more time with their children and meeting their needs and addressing their worries during Covid-19.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdelhamed, K. (2021). Social Worker Roles with Refugees. *Egyptian Journal of Social Work, 1*

Adams, A., & Cox, A. (2008). Questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus groups. *Research Methods for Human-Computer Interaction*.

Adams, K. MacG., Hester, P. T., Bradley, J. M., Meyers, T. J., & Keating, C. B. (2014). Systems Theory as the Foundation for Understanding Systems. *Systems Engineering*, *17*(1), 112–123. https://doi.org/10.1002/sys.21255

Agordzo Edoh-Torgah, N., & Matafwala, M. (2021). *Counseling Sexually Abused Children: Lessons from Ghana and Zambia*. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.97413

Ahmad, S., & Hak, N. (2010). FAMILY MEDIATION AND SULH: AN ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN MALAYSIA. *International Journal of Social Policy and Society*.

Akaranga, S. I., & Makau, B. K. (n.d.). Ethical Considerations and their Applications to Research: A Case of the University of Nairobi. . . *Pp*, *3*, 9.

Albanese, A. (2012). Management of Alcohol Abuse. *Clinics in Liver Disease*, *16*, 737–762. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cld.2012.08.006

Allgood, S., Mustard, D., & Warren, R. (2007). *The Impact of Youth Criminal Behavior on Adult Earnings*.

Amram, O., Borah, P., Kubsad, D., & McPherson, S. (2021). Media Exposure and Substance Use Increase during COVID-19. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *18*, 6318. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18126318

Antony, S., A., T., & Muralidhar, D. (2017). *Family Centered Social Work in Clinical Social Work*.

Çevikelli Yakut, Z. A., Şakarcan, S., & Şener, G. (2020). What we know about COVID-19 and its treatment. *Journal of Research in Pharmacy*, *24*(5), 602–616. https://doi.org/10.35333/jrp.2020.215

Chaudhary, A., Priyanka, & Chamotra, S. (2021). COVID-19 and Indian frontline workers. *International Journal of Research in Medical Sciences*, *09*, 2889–2891. https://doi.org/10.18203/2320-6012.ijrms20213438

Christopher, F., Yongsi, N., Blaise, H., Mpeh, N., & Madelle, N.-M. (2020). COVID-19 and food insecurity in Cameroon. *GSC Advanced Research and Reviews*, *05*, 111–117. https://doi.org/10.30574/gscarr.2020.5.2.0104

Chukwu, N. (2019). *Methods of Social Work Practice* (pp. 47–63).

Cleaveland, C. (2010). "We Are Not Criminals": Social Work Advocacy and Unauthorized Migrants. *Social Work*, *55*, 74–81. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/55.1.74

Cluver, L., Lachman, J. M., Sherr, L., Wessels, I., Krug, E., Rakotomalala, S., Blight, S., Hillis, S., Bachman, G., Green, O., Butchart, A., Tomlinson, M., Ward, C. L., Doubt, J., & McDonald, K. (2020). Parenting in a time of COVID-19. *The Lancet*, *395*(10231), e64. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30736-4

Constantinescu, M., Constantinescu, C., & Dumitru, C. (2017). *Social Work and Protection of Abused and Neglected Children*.

Conti, E., Sgandurra, G., De Nicola, G., Biagioni, T., Boldrini, S., Bonaventura, E., Buchignani, B., Della Vecchia, S., Falcone, F., Fedi, C., Gazzillo, M., Marinella, G., Mazzullo, C., Micomonaco, J., Pantalone, G., Salvati, A., Sesso, G., Simonelli, V., Tolomei, G., & Troiano, I. (2020). Behavioural and Emotional Changes during COVID-19 Lockdown in

Crouch, R. C. (1979). Social Work Defined. *Social Work*, *24*(1), 46–48.

). *Generalist Practice*. https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/humanservices/chapter/generalist-practice/

G, R., Hamza, A., & Kvn, S. (2017). Suicide Prevention in India: Role of Social Workers. *Social Work Chronicle*.

Gagnon, J. (2020). The Solitary Confinement of Incarcerated American Youth During COVID-19. *Psychiatry Research*, 1–2. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113219

Gallant, J., & Thyer, B. (2017). *Usefulness of General Systems Theory in Social Work Practice* (pp. 250–258). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351327404-13

Gentle-Genitty, C., Chen, H., & Karikari, I. (n.d.). *Social Work Theory and Application to Practice: The Students' Perspectives*. 12.

Getaneh, Y., Yizengaw, A., Adane, S., Zealiyas, K., Abate, Z., Leulseged, S., Mekonnen, H., Yimer, G., & Abate, E. (2020). *Global lessons and Potential strategies in combating COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia: Systematic Review*. https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.05.23.20111062

Ghia, J.-E., Gaulin, S., Ghia, L., Garancher, L., & Flamand, C. (2020). Informing children citizens efficiently to better engage them in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic. *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, *14*(11), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0008828

Ghorashi, Z. (2019). Teenage Sexting and Sexual Behaviors in an Iranian Setting. *Sexuality & Culture*, *23*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-019-09622-6

Ghosh, B. (2017). *Representation of the Hijra: Need for Social Work Intervention*.

Goren, A. (2020). 'Something else' in child psychotherapy with traumatised adopted children. *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, *46*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/0075417X.2020.1791228

Jecinta, E., Nnama-Okechukwu, C., Uzuegbu, C., & Okoye, U. (2019). *Social Work with Families*.

John, A., Eyles, E., Webb, R., Okolie, C., Schmidt, L., Arensman, E., Hawton, K., O'Connor, R., Kapur, N., Moran, P., O'Neill, S., McGuiness, L., Olorisade, B., Dekel, D., Macleod-Hall, C., Cheng, H.-Y., Higgins, J., & Gunnell, D. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on self-harm and suicidal behaviour: Update of living systematic review. *F1000Research*, *9*, 1097. https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.25522.2

Johnson, B., & Ray, W. (2016). *Family Systems Theory*. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119085621.wbefs130

Johnson, J. (2018). *School Social Work Interventions: Children with Special Needs*.

Jose, N. (2020). *ETHICAL ISSUES*.

Joseph, B., & Joseph, M. (2016). The health of the healthcare workers. *Indian Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *20*(2), 71–72. https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5278.197518

Julkunen, I., & Rauhala, P.-L. (2013). Otherness, social welfare and social work – a Nordic perspective. *Nordic Social Work Research*, *3*, 105–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/2156857X.2013.834266

Karandikar, D., & Tagad, D. (2020). A Study of Substance Use In Children And Adolescents In Community Setting. *VIMS Health Science Journal*, *7*, 104–109. https://doi.org/10.46858/vimshsj.7403

Katewongsa, P., Pongpradit, K., & Widyastari, D. (2020). Physical Activity Level of Thai Children and Youth: Evidence from Thailand's 2018 Report Card on Physical Activity

Lawson, M., Piel, M. H., & Simon, M. (2020). Child Maltreatment during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Consequences of Parental Job Loss on Psychological and Physical Abuse Towards Children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *110*, 104709. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104709

Li, H., Chung, J., & Ho, E. (2011). The effectiveness of therapeutic play, using virtual reality computer games, in promoting the psychological well-being of children hospitalised with cancer. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, *20*, 2135–2143. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2702.2011.03733.x

Li, X., & Kleiven, S. (2018). Improved safety standards are needed to better protect younger children at playgrounds. *Scientific Reports*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-018-33393-z

Littlechild, B. (2000). Children's Rights to be Heard in Child Protection Processes—Law, Policy and Practice in England and Wales. *Child Abuse Review*, *9*(6), 403–415. https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-0852(200011/12)9:6<403::AID-CAR659>3.0.CO;2-9

Luo, H. (2021). The Role of Social Work and Social Work Leadership in Pandemic Crisis Intervention. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, *09*, 639–650. https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2021.95036

Luo, J., Rajendra, J., Roberts, M., Rapallo, N., Khan, F., Mardon, A., & Mardon, C. (2020). *Education During COVID-19*.

Macdonald, S., Headlam, N., & Centre for Local Economic Strategies (Manchester). (2008). *Research methods handbook introductory guide to research methods for social research*. Centre for Local Economic Strategies.

Manzar, D., Albougami, A., Usman, N., & Mamun, M. (2021). Suicide among adolescents and youths during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns: A press media reports based exploratory study. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing*. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcap.12313

Mao, R., & Tang, Y. (2021). Genetic and environmental factors of mental disorders. *E3S Web of Conferences*, *308*, 02020. https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202130802020

Maras, A. (2021). Play therapy in the prevention of behavioural disorders of school-aged children. *Global Journal of Guidance and Counseling in Schools Current Perspectives*, *11*, 37–44. https://doi.org/10.18844/gjgc.v11i1.5472

Mardon, A., Baskaran, K., Anant, S., Hamzea, N., Li, A., & Zhao, A. (2020). *Roles of Technology during COVID-19*.

Mareva, V. (2018). *The role of the mediator in mobile social work*.

Marine, A. A., CHAN-CHEE, C., LAAIDI, K., FIFRE, G., LEJOYEUX, M., Vaiva, G., PEYRE, H., & Geoffroy, P. (2021). *Seasonal Changes and Decrease of Suicides and Suicide Attempts in France Over the Last 10 Years".* https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-1031840/v1

Marmor, A., Cohen, N., & Katz, C. (2021). Child Maltreatment During COVID-19: Key Conclusions and Future Directions Based on a Systematic Literature Review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 15248380211043818. https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380211043818

Masilo, D. T. (2019). A Call for Social Work Intervention to Address the Phenomenon of Child Sexual Abuse against Learners in South African Schools: A Review of the Literature. *Global Journal of Health Science*, *11*, 152. https://doi.org/10.5539/gjhs.v11n12p152

Matthews, S., & Sykes, S. (2012). Exploring Health Priorities for Young People Leaving Care. *Child Care in Practice*, *18*(4), 393–407. https://doi.org/10.1080/13575279.2012.717913

Özlem, A., & Mehmet, N. (2020). EATING HABITS CHANGES DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN. *Eskişehir Türk Dünyası Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi Halk Sağlığı Dergisi*. https://doi.org/10.35232/estudamhsd.796735

Pachter, L., García Coll, C., Perez-Brena, N., Lopez, L., Halgunseth, L., Mistry, R., Stein, G., & Carlo, G. (2020). Assessing the Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Youth. *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, *6*, 40–41. https://doi.org/10.32481/djph.2020.07.011

Panchal, N., Kamal, R., & 2021. (2021, February 10). The Implications of COVID-19 for Mental Health and Substance Use. *KFF*. https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/

Parker, J. (2020). *Social Work Practice: Assessment, Planning, Intervention and Review*. Learning Matters.

Parri, N., Magistà, A. M., Marchetti, F., Cantoni, B., Arrighini, A., Romanengo, M., Felici, E., Urbino, A., Da Dalt, L., Verdoni, L., Armocida, B., Covi, B., Mariani, I., Giacchero, R., Musolino, A. M., Binotti, M., Biban, P., Fasoli, S., Pilotto, C., … Lazzerini, M. (2020). Characteristic of COVID-19 infection in pediatric patients: Early findings from two Italian Pediatric Research Networks. *European Journal of Pediatrics*, *179*(8), 1315–1323. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00431-020-03683-8

Pawar, M. (2019). Social Work and Social Policy Practice: Imperatives for Political Engagement. *The International Journal of Community and Social Development*, *1*(1), 15–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/2516602619833219

Pergolizzi, J., Cortes, L., Magnusson, P., Lequang, J. A., Batra, A., & Colucci, R. (2021). Suicide by Opioid. *Cureus*.

IOSR Journal of Environmental Science Toxicology and Food Technology, *13*, 17–24. https://doi.org/10.9790/2402-1312031724

Richter, M., & Emprechtinger, J. (2021). Social work in confinement: The spatiality of social work in carceral settings. *Geographica Helvetica*, *76*, 65–73. https://doi.org/10.5194/gh-76-65-2021

Riveros, C., & Coester-Waltjen, D. (2019). Alternative dispute resolution in family disputes in Europe and Chile: Mediation. *Revista Direito GV*, *15*. https://doi.org/10.1590/2317-6172201914

Robillard, C., Turner, B., Ames, M., & Craig, S. (2021). Deliberate self-harm in adolescents during COVID-19: The roles of pandemic-related stress, emotion regulation difficulties, and social distancing. *Psychiatry Research*, 114152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.114152

Rodriguez, C. (2021). *Mothers' non-lethal physical abuse of children* (pp. 448–470).

Rodriguez, C., & Gonzalez, S. (2020). *Child Physical Abuse and Neglect* (pp. 1–11). https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119171492.wecad224

Rousseau, C., & Miconi, D. (2020). Protecting Youth Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Challenging Engagement and Learning Process. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaac.2020.08.007

Roy, S., & Kaur, N. (2020). Issues and Challenges With COVID-19: Interventions Through Social Work Practice and Perspectives. *Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics*, *17*(2), 85–91.

Rubin, K., & Barstead, M. (2018). *Social withdrawal and solitude* (pp. 2101–2103). https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506307633.n780

Rubin, K., & Burgess, K. (2001). *Social Withdrawal and Anxiety* (pp. 407–434). https://doi.org/10.1093/med:psych/9780195123630.003.0018

Runcan, R., Runcan, P., Goian, C., Nadolu, B., & Gavrilă-Ardelean, M. (2020). *SELF-HARM IN ADOLESCENCE*. https://doi.org/10.32008/NORDSCI2020/B1/V3/27

Runyan, D., May-Chahal, C., Ikeda, R., Hassan, F., & Ramiro, L. (2002). *Child Maltreatment* (pp. 59–86).

Saasa, S., & James, S. (2020). COVID-19 in Zambia: Implications for Family, Social, Economic, and Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *51*(3/4/2020), 347–359. https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.51.3-4.010

Sadraei, B., & Azizi Rostam, F. (2020). *PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF SOCIAL WORK*.

Sarinoglu, R. C., Sili, U., Eryuksel, E., Yildizeli, S. O., Cimsit, C., & Yagci, A. K. (2020). Tuberculosis and COVID-19: An overlapping situation during pandemic. *Journal of Infection in Developing Countries*, *14*(7), 721–725. https://doi.org/10.3855/jidc.13152

Scourfield, P. (2021). *Using Advocacy in Social Work Practice: A Guide for Students and Professionals*. Routledge.

Segura-Garcia, C., Rania, M., Aloi, M., Palmieri, A., Grande, B., Fazio, S., & De Fazio, P. (2015). Parental Bonding in substance and alcohol abusers. *Heroin Addiction and Related Clinical Problems, 18*.

Selden, T. M., & Berdahl, T. A. (2021). Risk of Severe COVID-19 Among Workers and Their Household Members. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, *181*(1), 120–122. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2020.6249

Sellabona, E., Amadó Codony, A., Rostan, C., Caparros, B., & Sidera, F. (2020). Identifying Emotional Expressions: Children's Reasoning About Pretend Emotions of Sadness and Anger. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.602385

Serra, F. H., Carvalho, M. I., Pinto, C., & Rauktis, M. E. (2019). Social Work Practices for Children, Youth and Families in Portugal: Challenges and Approaches. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *36*(3), 223–226. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-019-00620-z

Sethy, M., & Mishra, R. (2020). An Integrated Approach to Deal with Mental Health Issues of Children and Adolescent during COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Clinical & Diagnostic Research*, *14*(9), 1–3. https://doi.org/10.7860/JCDR/2020/45418.14002

Shanafelt, T., Ripp, J., & Trockel, M. (2020). Understanding and Addressing Sources of Anxiety Among Health Care Professionals During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *JAMA*, *323*(21), 2133–2134. https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.5893

Shepherd, M. A., & Newell, J. M. (2020). Stress and Health in Social Workers: Implications for Self-Care Practice. *Best Practice in Mental Health*, *16*(1), 46–65.

Si, M.-Y., Su, X.-Y., Jiang, Y., Wang, W.-J., Gu, X.-F., Ma, L., Li, J., Zhang, S.-K., Ren, Z.-F., Ren, R., Liu, Y.-L., & Qiao, Y.-L. (2020). Psychological impact of COVID-19 on medical care workers in China. *Infectious Diseases of Poverty*, *9*(1), 113. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40249-020-00724-0

Silva, R., Austregésilo, S., Ithamar, L., & Lima, L. (2016). Therapeutic play to prepare children for invasive procedures: A systematic review. *Jornal de Pediatria*, *93*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jped.2016.06.005

ANNEXES

Annex 1: interview questions:

I am Tambudzai Musengi, I'm a student at Mykolas Romeris University. I'm studying masters in social work with children and youth. Thank you so much for having me. Thank you so much for allowing me to ask you some questions. I invited you because I'm doing my research in pandemic social work with children and youth specifically, a new emerging, and easily neglected group of children and youth of Frontline healthcare workers. Frontline healthcare workers like doctors, nurses, paramedics, midwives, and social workers.

So the reason for this interview is to hear your opinion and also your experience as a social worker when you are dealing with children and youth of frontline healthcare workers, especially during this time of Covid-19. I also want to find out about your roles and how you intervene to assist these children and youth. I would also what to hear about the challenges that the children and youth of frontline healthcare workers are facing during this time of Covid-19.

So the goal of this interview is to have a better understanding of the challenges these children and youth of frontline healthcare workers are experiencing and how you seek for solutions. That is how you intervene and apply your roles as social workers to assist these children and youth. So it might take about 30 minutes, more or less, so if you feel that, you no longer want to be a part of this interview, just let me know and we can stop. Will that be ok with you?

1. Can you describe a typical workday as a social worker when you are dealing or working with children and youth?
2. What are the new and major challenges that you are dealing with affecting children and youth of frontline healthcare workers?
3. Can you tell me one of the challenging cases that you encountered when you were dealing with these children and youth of frontline healthcare workers
4. What are your roles as a social worker especially when you are dealing with these children and youth during Covid-19?
5. What is the best method of intervention that you can apply when working with children and youth and their families during this time of Covid-19?
6. What is the best practice area in social work that can impact the wellbeing of children and youth of frontline workers in their day to day life?

7. What action do you take when a case of behavioral or psychological challenge coming from a child or youth is reported to you?
8. What do you think will be best for these children and youth wellbeing, in your own opinion as a social worker?

Annex 2: Results of the research

Table 1: Behavioral challenges

Themes and subtheme	**quotations**
Thematic category: behavioral challenges faced by children and youth of frontline workers	
Online sexual behavior	*"... The boyfriend ended demanding for nude pictures, nude videos and typing vulgar language with the girl and started to behave weird"* *(Social worker 3).*
Abuse of alcohol and drugs	*"Therefore will make the teen to start using drugs and alcohol as a way of comforting himself/herself to erase painful moment in his/her live that is occurring of Covid-19"* *(Social Worker 5).*
Criminal behavior	*"Criminal behaviors such as harassment of other children online, that is cybercrime, possession of weapons and drugs, gangsters, and driving their parents cars without a license and driving after Covid-19 curfew were the major factors that caused such criminal activities"* *(Social Worker 4).*

Table 2: Psychological challenges

Themes and subtheme	quotations
Thematic category: psychological challenges faced by children and youth of frontline workers	
Child maltreatment	*"…vulnerability comes from the place of the parents as frontline workers who are constantly out of the house and exposing these children to all sorts of abuse, because they had to bring in family members to care for the children or to actually leave the children alone and thereby neglecting them" (Social Worker 1).* *"… emotional neglect. Most of the children of the frontline workers have felt that their parents weren't even there for them, they felt left out. You would realize that the pandemic itself has been very difficult, even for the adult person now coming to a child who constantly hears about coronavirus and how people are dying and not having a parent there to explain to them what it is that is happening"(social worker 1)*
Deliberate self-harm	*"…she drank medicine (overdose) that was in her parents' cabinet due to depression of the lockdown and another one tried to commit suicide, cutting himself with sharp objects such as razor blame due to the threats that they received online" (Social Worker 5).*

Withdrawal / Sense of isolation	*"Most of the children and youth are not willing to talk to their parents or any next of kin about what is happening to them, leading to shyness, isolation, fear and poor performance in school work as well as poor concentration in day to day life activities"(Social Worker 5).*
Mental disorder	*"…new challenges that we're facing, working with children and youth of frontline workers, especially during this pandemic, is mental health issues. Most children have not been going to school because of the lockdown affected their mental wellbeing"* *(Social Worker 2).*

Table 3: Roles of social workers

Themes and subtheme	**quotations**
Thematic category: roles of social worker to assist children and youth of frontline workers	
Educate	*"We try to educate and to inform their caregivers and parents so that they are well vested with how they can communicate with the children and youth of different age groups depending on their maturity, to ensure that the child understands what kind of risk that they are exposed to and informing them about Covid-19" (Social Worker 4).*
Counseling	*".... Counseling enables the children to share what they feel about what is happening around them, sharing their most sensitive and painful moments during the lockdown especially in the absence of their parents due to work."* *(Social Worker 5)*
Collaborating with appropriate service providers	*"..... I work with other professionals so as to assist the children and youth of frontline workers during this time of Covid-19. For example, we refer them to camps, which deal with issues relating to mental health especially during this time of Covid-19."* *(Social Worker 2)*
advocacy	*"The child' is our main role and we try to make the parents understand where that child is coming from. We are the child's voice as we*

	allow the child to speak through us" *(Social worker 1).*
facilitators	*"....we offer support through facilitating support groups for children and youth who have common difficulties during the pandemic to make them share and work together to overcome their challenges together"* *(social worker 3)*
Protecting the rights of the children	*"My role is firstly to talk to the children, getting to understand their views, getting to understand their wishes and feelings, and protecting them if they're being exposed to any harm within the family. Then I also do assessments, to assess the needs of the children, to see how best we can support these children" (social worker 1).*

Table 4: social work intervention

Themes and subtheme	**quotations**
Thematic category: social work intervention	
Individual or family casework	
Social group work	*"…social group work method is applicable when assisting substance and alcohol abusers and abused children and youth of frontline workers in groups so that they will be able to share and talk about what is happening to them* "(Social worker 5).
Community development	*"….government and international organization policy makers not only focus on one group of children and youth but impose rules, laws and policies that will govern the wellbeing of every child during the pandemic no matter his/her background because everyone is affected by the pandemic" (Social worker 1).* "*…frontline workers and other working parents during this time of Covid-19 had to considered by the government of England to ensure their protection and more time with their children and youth and better working schedule*" *(social worker 2)*
Macro practice	"*…the macro practices because it focuses on the entire community as a whole every children and youth, including children and youth of*

	frontline workers" (social worker 1).
Micro practice	"*… micro practice that deals with individuals or family which is a direct to ensure the wellbeing of these children and youth which has a one on one interaction and intervention of tackling the problem for a particular family depending with the challenge and finding the best solution to solve their problem"* *(Social worker 3).*
Problem solving model	"*…Problem solving model is appropriate where l will assist the family on how best they can find solution that concern their child's challenges and involving them all the way during the process"(social worker 1).*