

Investigating Personal-social Progression-specific or Psycho-social or Spherical Competencies: A Study on Professional Social Workers

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Abstract

This research presents an in-depth inquiry of personal social progression-specific or psycho-social or spherical competencies essential for professional social workers. Social workers play a crucial role in problem-solving and development across various levels, from global organizations to local communities and individuals. The study applies a blended methodology integrating qualitative method such as Individual and Social Need analysis and quantitative method as a survey. The study, carried out in Maharashtra State, India, employed a random sampling method to gather insights from 665 social workers. Data collection consisted of an online survey utilizing a seven-point Likert scale, focusing on fifteen identified competencies. Descriptive statistical analysis indicates strong agreement among participants, with mean scores ranging from 5.66 to 5.89 and agreement percentages between 80.86% and 84.14%. The results emphasize the critical importance of these competencies, which are categorized into ten highly, 01 moderately, and 04 lowly agreeable groups. Notably, competencies related to i) Social-awareness & Social-visioning ii) Using Human Skills Properly iii) Team building & Courageously Leading iv) Upholding Appropriate Politico-legal thought & Empathy v) Positive Work Attitude & Developing Related Habits vi) Choosing Proper Medium of Instruction & Effective Communication vii) Self-awareness & Resilience viii) Handling Own & Other's Emotions ix) Observing Proper Low & High Values x) Observing Balanced Local, National, Global & Universal Citizenship receive the highest consensus. Despite the rigorous methodology, limitations such as potential biases and regional focus are acknowledged. The study highlights the universal acknowledgment of these competencies as fundamental pillars for promoting individual-social progression. Recommendations for future research include conducting further exploration of competency clusters using advanced statistical methods like Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis or Structural Equation Modelling. This approach holds promise for advancing our understanding of competency dynamics and informing targeted interventions, educational initiatives, and policy development within the field of social work.

Keywords: *competencies, competency mapping, personal-social progression-specific competencies, psycho-social competencies, Spherical competencies, social workers*

1. Introduction

In 1973, McClelland, D. C., penned a research article titled "Evaluating Competence Over Intelligence," challenging the predominant emphasis on intelligence evaluations and advocating for the assessment of competencies as an alternative approach. His objection is such that, "The key issue is obviously the validity of so-called intelligence

tests. Their use could not be justified unless they are valid" [1]. Nearly two decades later, in October 1991, Barrett, G. V., & Depinet, R. L., published "Reconsidering Testing for Competence Rather Than for Intelligence," critically evaluating competency testing. They emphasized that, "If McClelland's concept of competency is to make a contribution to the field of psychology, he must present empirical data to supporting his contention" [2]. In today's educational landscape, competency-based education

is increasingly embraced worldwide, with organizations integrating competencies into strategic Human Resource Management. Recognizing competencies as pivotal elements shaping both personal and professional performance, competency mapping aligns individual characteristics with job requirements and societal aspirations. Social workers play a crucial role in problem-solving and development across various levels, from global organizations to local communities and individuals. Their responsibilities encompass diagnostic assessments, interventions, and empowerment grounded in methodologies aimed at aiding those they serve. This research aims to understand the fundamental competencies crucial in personal social progression. Its objectives are to identify competencies necessary for personal social progression.

2. Methodology

The research methodology adopted in this study combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to thoroughly explore essential competencies relevant to individuals and society. This method was selected to align with diverse research objectives and data needs. Qualitative techniques, such as personal and social needs analysis, are paired with quantitative survey-based methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of perspectives while gathering significant competency data. The research design encompasses both basic and applied research models to investigate the practical applications of these competencies in individual and social development contexts. Conducted in Maharashtra State, India, the study focuses on social workers, employing a robust random sampling technique to ensure diverse representation. Data collection utilized a researcher-developed scale with a seven-point Likert scale, administered online to enhance accessibility. A sample size of 665 individuals was meticulously determined, with a focus on obtaining informed consent from each participant. Descriptive statistical analyses were employed to analyse the data, calculating mean values and percentage agreement scores to assess levels of agreement among social workers regarding identified competencies. Ethical considerations were of utmost importance throughout

the study, ensuring participant confidentiality, informed consent, and adherence to ethical guidelines in data collection, analysis, and reporting.

3. Result and Discussion:

The comprehensive assessment of Personal-social progression-specific or Psycho-social or Spherical Competencies has unveiled invaluable insights.

Table 3.1: Competencies Showing Agreeableness Mean Scores and Percentages

| Personal-social progression-specific or Psycho-social or Spherical | | | |
|---|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Sr. No. | Name of the Competencies | Mean of Agreeableness out of Seven (7) | Percentage of Agreeableness |
| 1 | Self-awareness & Resilience | 5.77 | 82.43 |
| 2 | Positive Work Attitude & Developing Related Habits | 5.83 | 83.29 |
| 3 | Managing Quality | 5.74 | 82.00 |
| 4 | Setting High Motive | 5.66 | 80.86 |
| 5 | Choosing Proper Medium of Instruction & Effective Communication | 5.78 | 82.57 |
| 6 | Endurance or Developing Physical Stamina | 5.66 | 80.86 |
| 7 | Upholding Appropriate Politico-legal Thought & Empathy | 5.82 | 83.14 |
| 8 | Social-awareness & Social-visioning | 5.89 | 84.14 |
| 9 | Using Human Skills Properly | 5.87 | 83.86 |
| 10 | Team building & Courageously Leading | 5.88 | 84.00 |
| 11 | Observing Proper Low & High Values | 5.71 | 81.57 |
| 12 | Handling Own & Other's Emotions | 5.74 | 82.00 |
| 13 | Applying Continuous Individualization in Group and Community | 5.66 | 80.86 |
| 14 | Balancing | 5.71 | 81.57 |

| | | | |
|----|--|------|-------|
| | Individual Ambitions & Social Norms | | |
| 15 | Observing Balanced Local, National, Global & Universal Citizenship | 5.72 | 81.71 |

3.1 Personal-social progression-specific or Psycho-social or Spherical Competencies: Those competencies have received commendable mean scores, ranging between 5.66 and 5.89, indicative of a unanimous viewpoint among respondents on their significance.

3.1.1 The competencies falling under the Highly Agreeable Group (Mean: 5.89 to 5.72, Percentage: 84.14 to 81.71) are such as: i) Social-awareness & Social-visioning ii) Using Human Skills Properly iii) Team building & Courageously Leading iv) Upholding Appropriate Politico-legal thought & Empathy v) Positive Work Attitude & Developing Related Habits vi) Choosing Proper Medium of Instruction & Effective Communication vii) Self-awareness & Resilience viii) Handling Own & Other’s Emotions ix) Observing Proper Low & High Values x) Observing Balanced Local, National, Global & Universal Citizenship.

3.1.2 The Competency falling under the Moderately Agreeable Group (Mean: 5.74, Percentage: 82.00%) is such as: 1) Managing Quality

3.1.3 The Competencies falling under the Low Agreeable Group Mean: 5.71 to 5.66, Percentage: 81.57 to 80.86) are such as: i) Balancing Individual Ambitions & Social Norms ii) Setting High Motive iii) Developing Endurance or Physical Stamina iv) Applying Continuous Individualization in Group and Community

The data underscores a remarkable consensus among participants regarding the paramount importance of identified competencies for personal-social domains.

4. Conclusion:

The in-depth analysis of Personal-Social Progression-specific Competencies has provided invaluable insights into the essential elements crucial for individual and societal advancement. The

competencies examined in this study have received commendable mean scores, ranging between 5.66 and 5.89, indicating a unanimous viewpoint among respondents on their significance. The competencies falling under the Highly Agreeable Group demonstrate particularly strong consensus among respondents, emphasizing their critical importance. These competencies include Social-awareness & Social-visioning, Using Human Skills Properly, Team building & Courageously Leading, Upholding Appropriate Politico-legal thought & Empathy, Positive Work Attitude & Developing Related Habits, Choosing Proper Medium of Instruction & Effective Communication, Self-awareness & Resilience, Handling Own & Other’s Emotions, Observing Proper Low & High Values, and Observing Balanced Local, National, Global & Universal Citizenship. The Competency falling under the Moderately Agreeable Group, Managing Quality, also underscores its significance, albeit to a slightly lesser degree. Similarly, the competencies falling under the Low Agreeable Group, such as Balancing Individual Ambitions & Social Norms, Setting High Motive, Developing Endurance or Physical Stamina, and Applying Continuous Individualization in Group and Community, are recognized as important. Overall, the data underscores a remarkable consensus among participants regarding the paramount importance of the identified competencies for personal-social domain. These competencies serve as fundamental pillars for personal growth, societal advancement, and the effective practice of social work. Moving forward, it is imperative to continue exploring and refining these competencies, addressing any identified gaps, and further integrating them into educational programs, professional development initiatives, and policy formulations to foster holistic individual and societal progress. Indeed, the competencies identified in this study hold significance not only for social workers but also for professionals across various disciplines. Their universal applicability underscores their importance in fostering individual growth and societal development. As essential pillars for success, these competencies serve as guiding principles for individuals striving to excel in their respective fields, regardless of specialization.

5. References

- 1] McClelland, D. C. (1973). Testing for competence rather than for intelligence. *American Psychologist*, 28(1), 1.
- 2] Barret, G. V., & Depinet, R. L. (1991). Reconsidering of Testing for competence rather than for Intelligence. *American Psychologist*, 46(10), 1020-1021.

