SOCIAL WORK VALUES

Empowerment, organizational values & professional doxa inside the social work field

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This study explores the field of social work values in the social work profession. The aim of the study is to explore how social work values are related to empowerment practices and organizational structures inside the social work field. By using the perspective of empowerment and professional doxa these structures inside the social work field are explored in interviews with nine social workers. These nine interviews show how social workers relate to values inside their profession, how empowerment practices are done, and what kind of organizational conflicts social workers may experience. By using the perspectives of empowerment and professional doxa the interviews been analysed and connected to both local and global concerns for the social work field. Many professional conflicts were found by taking these perspectives that are discussed in this study, as for example role conflicts social workers could experience. Other conflicts were those of structural failures that caused harm to client contacts and economic factors that were deemed more important for organizations than good client outcomes.

Keywords: Doxa, Empowerment, Ethics, Organizational structures, Professional values
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1. INTRODUCTION

In the social work profession, there are multiple trends that effect how social work practice is done. These trends can be anything from local regulations to global guidelines that effect how social work practice is done in any given moment at any given place. With a more connected global world, what was once seen as local practice, can in some sense be seen as international practice today. What happens in one part of the world affect other parts of the world, and social problems in one place may cause effects in other areas (Hare, 2004; Jones & Truell, 2012). According to Welbourne (2009), social work practitioners in the 21st century need to take a more global perspective on social work. For these global trends do make a difference in how a social work practitioner will do their work locally. Examples of this would be greater migration across borders in a more connected global world which make local problems move unto the global arena. This since large migration may bring new social problems with it into areas where risk of marginalizing may occur. This in turn bring new challenges to social workers where they need to be able to handle new social problems they may not be used to in ethical ways. This is just a few of the problem social workers in the 21st century may come to face in this more connected global world (Hare, 2004; Ife, 2000; Nagy & Falk, 2000; Jones & Truell, 2012; Jönsson, 2014; Welbourne, 2009). With this trend of globalization, both in the world and inside the social work profession, a greater focus on global social work ethics and a common value system for social workers have started to develop (Jones & Truell, 2012). In a study focusing on professional social works features across nations, the importance of a global professional code of ethics was brought up (Weiss, 2005). This trend to develop a greater unity in ethical standards on the global scale of the social work profession, could be seen in the light of this global professionalization of social work (Hugman, 1996; Li, Han & Huang, 2012; Svensson, 2011). In this global debate of the social work profession, there are on-going discussion on how to legitimate social work as a global profession. One of the steps taken to make social work a global profession is the creation of global guidelines with purpose to bind social work practices together across borders. This would be done by having social work in the global stage use similar practices, methods and a common value ground to stand on. This would make the social work profession be more connected on the international level, which would give greater legitimacy for the profession on the global scale (Sewpaul, 2004; Midgley, 2001; Weiss, 2005). This work is an on-going process and the current global definition can be found on the international Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) website. Here one can also find global ethical principles that social workers should strive to uphold. IFSW have stated that the global definition can be seen as an evolving definition rather than a clear and static definition that is fixed in time. The latest definition that IFSW (2014) have provided for global social work is as follows:

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social
justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.”

Sweden is one of the countries that have chosen to follow these global guidelines provided by IFSW regarding a global code of ethics for social workers (Weiss, 2005; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008). As can be seen from this definition, social workers have multiple ethical principles that they should uphold while striving towards certain goals. One of these is the usage of empowerment in the liberation of people. This theme of empowerment is seen as an important part of global social work practice, and also as an important part of the Swedish code of conduct and ethical behaviours for social workers provided by SSR (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017). With these different themes inside the social work section that have been discussed, one could ask oneself, how the social worker themselves experience and understand these themes that affect them in their work. And one can also wonder how aware the social workers themselves are of these themes of values that is discussed inside their profession in this global context. It is often common that a professional is not always aware of the doxa that is inside their own field, as it’s often hidden in plain sight or under organizational guises (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006; Diefenbach, 2009; Johansson et al, 2008; Pollitt, 1995; Webb, 2001).

1.1 Aim & Research questions

The aim of this study is to explore how social workers relate to professional values and empowerment practices. This study will thereafter explore what organizational factors may hinder social workers in performing empowering practices in relation to these values inside their roles as professional social workers. This will be done by exploring what values social workers deem to be important, relate these to empowerment practices, and then see what kind of conflicts social workers may encounter in their day-to-day practice in their organizations.

1.1.1 Question formulation:

1. How do social workers relate to professional values?
2. How do social workers use empowerment practices in their work?
3. What professional conflicts do social workers experience in their organizations?

1.3 Conceptual definitions

Professional values: These are the values that social workers should uphold in an ethical sense. These values can be based on multiple factors, such as professional knowledge, theories or ideologies in the professional field. These value grounds are often connected to global aspects of social work, but there are also many locally concerned value grounds that may affect
the social worker, as well as personal factors that may affect this value ground (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005; IFSW 2014; 2018; Sewpaul & Jones, 2004; Svensson, 2011).

**Organizational values**: With organizational values one means the internal functions of organizations that professionals work inside. These aspects could be regulations, guidelines, rules, bureaucratic processes, economical factors and organizational strategies on how the work should be done inside the organization (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005; Svensson, 2011).

**Empowerment**: As a concept, empowerment have a broad meaning in its many ways of usage across different fields. But in the quintessential of social work, the core of empowerment could be seen as an increase in personal autonomy and self-determination through a process of social change (Drury, 2009; Gutierrez, GlenMaye & DeLois, 1995; Leonardsen, 2007).

**Doxa**: With doxa, one means those processes that is often unreflected but acted upon anyways. It’s often seen as a discourse that is natural and normal for individuals in the group that use the doxa, but the members of the group are often not really aware of its effects. A doxa in its usage may seem as self-evident until you reflect on it, as it is often in the form of tacit and silent knowledge (Johansson et al., 2019; Järven, 2002; Keddell, 2016).

**2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH**

This section will look into research on the topics of professionalization, organizational structures and professional values.

**2.1 Professionalization**

Social work as a profession have become more connected into a global profession where it has acquired a greater professional status since it first emerged in the late 19th century. It has developed into a profession on the global stage, but still, there is a great variety between the status of the profession across different regions. Today, there is a strong drive to professionalize the social work profession in its global context. With the many varieties that exist of social work from country to country, one may ask if it’s possible to define social work in its global context since there may be such great regional differences, distinct features and diversity inside the social work profession in different parts of the world. Social work organizations like IFSW are looking into the common features that social work around the globe shares, in order to see if a global definition of social work as a profession is possible. (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2007). Welbourne (2009) explains that social work as a profession have long been seen as a semi-profession, or as an emerging profession rather than a profession in its true sense in its global context. In certain regions around the world the professional autonomy inside the profession may be missing or non-existent as social work is almost completely on a voluntary basis instead of a paid profession. The idea of professionalization can thus be constructed in somehow different terms in different regions due to the diversity that social work has in regards to cultural practices, political context and economical factors. This can make it somewhat troublesome defining social work as a
profession in its global context, even if social work could be seen as professionalised in some regions, in others it may not. In the big picture of things, the social work profession seems to be getting closer to its claim as a global profession, even with these differences that do exist inside its practices. But there is still a lot of work on the global arena for the social work profession before this claim can be fully actualized according to Welbourne (2009).

To give some perspectives on of what professionalization may mean, it's important to know that there are multiple approaches on how to define it. Weiss-Gal & Welbourne (2007) discuss two approaches to this problem of defining professionalization, and look into two competing approaches called the 'attribute' approach, and the 'power' approach. In the 'attribute' approach, the focus is on the function of a profession inside social structures. In this approach, a profession is seen as multiple characteristics inside an occupation that distinguish it from a non-professionalised occupation. This approach looks into core traits that the profession has and operationalise these. The core of the 'attribute' approach could be summarized by operationalise five key aspects, and these being a systematic body of knowledge, professional authority, community sanction, a regulatory code of ethics and a professional culture sustained by formal professional associations. In recent years the category of 'traits' have also been added to this list, meaning a set of esoteric specialist skills that a professional gain by education or training inside the profession. If an occupation has all of these, it's likely to be seen as a profession in it's true sense. The other approach that is discussed is the 'power' approach. In this approach to professionalization, the focus is instead on how an occupation maintains power and control over its established area and status towards other interest. For example; other occupational groups, the government, bureaucratic instances or regulations. In this perspective, professionalization is about a professional occupational struggle to remain in control over its area of interest and to have exclusive right to perform work inside that area. This struggle often leads to conflict with other occupations about the boundaries of what area that profession has in regards to clients, what resources they have, or what kind of licensing the profession has. In this approach, a profession is seen in the light of it having a dominant position in how the division of work inside this area of practice is done by controlling the following aspects; the key components of the work, the choice and development of techniques, selection and training of its members, autonomy in defining the services of the profession and who is entitled to receive these services (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2007). This can cause conflicts between different professions as these boundaries may clash, and cooperation between profession may be difficult at times because of these differences (Breit et al, 2018; Evetts, 2013; Robben et al, 2012).

Another aspect of professionalization that is discussed by Svensson (2011) is the differentiations of organizational aspects of professionalization, and knowledge-based aspects by professionals. Often both of these aspects need to be discussed in how professional practices can be done inside an organisation. With the organizational aspect of professionalization, Svensson means the internal functions of organisations that professionals work inside. These aspects could be regulations, rules, bureaucratic processes and organisational strategies on how the work should be done inside that organisation. The knowledge-based aspects on the other hand are based on professional knowledge and theories in the professional field, ethics, values and ideologies. There can often be clashes between these two professionalization
aspects. One example of this is that organizations aspects is often connected to the market and economic factors in society that affect how work inside that organization is done, instead of the good of the public. The knowledge-based aspects on the other hand are the ground that professionals have to stand on while doing their work from a practical sense. Sometimes these knowledge-based aspects such as practices, values and ideologies are not in interplay with the goal of the market or organization. Then there can be conflicts in this if the organizations strategies are not in accordance with the professional values or theoretical understanding, and often the professional himself have to adjust himself to the organization even if this is in conflict with his professional knowledge. Dellgran & Höjer (2005) have looked into what this can mean for social workers, and how professionalization and privatization may affect their work inside organizations and the field of social work as a whole. They discuss that professionalization is multifaceted, and there are many ways to look at what professionalization may mean. They bring up further aspect of professionalization, and that is the individual professionalization process for practitioners inside the social work field. With this they mean the unique process for individual practitioners in their growth inside the profession. This means skills and competences that individuals gain by working experience, specialisations, supervision and further education inside the field. With this view on professionalization, it could be seen as a continual growth process for the individual practitioner inside their field. A problem with this perspective is that this kind of professionalization is often unbalanced inside the social work profession, since organization factors may have different prerequisites for the possibility of supervision and further education inside its organization. Also, individual factors are a big part of this individual professionalization making it hard to have coherent process in this regard for practitioners across the field, since professional growth may vary greatly from practitioner to practitioner. It's often seen that newly exanimated social workers in Sweden starts out their career in some kind of social office, often as case workers. After a while the social worker starts to increase their competence and status inside the profession by changing work positions or further education inside their professional role, thus starts the process of individual professionalization (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005).

2.1.1 New Public Management, NPM

New public management is an important theme inside the organizational aspects of social work, both locally in Sweden, and on the global arena. NPM started in the 60’s, when greater trends of evaluation, marketization and decentralization started to occur due to global trends inside the social work profession. Since it first emergence, it has become a standard in social work organisations and management all over the world (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006; Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt, 1995). NPM has its roots in neo-liberal trends with a focus on the market, greater results, consumer outcome and decentralizing aspects of management. It was seen as a new rationality on how management inside the public sector should work, a rationality based on the market (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006). Diefenbach (2009) and Pollitt (1995) discuss how NPM was a new way of management which touched on almost all aspects of how the public sector functioned, with focus on cutting cost, disaggregating traditional bureaucratic organizations inside the public sector, decentralization of management authority
in the public sector, making staff working towards performance targets and outcome goals and an increased emphasis on service quality and standardised practice. On paper, many of these goals may seem positive, but the reality of its effects inside the public sector, and social work itself can be discussed. It can be seen somewhat ironic that NPM with its focus on greater evaluation of the public sector, itself is seen as difficult to evaluate since it was so encompassing of the whole public sector. This made it difficult to evaluate its effect for a long time in the public domain. There also seemed to be a great discrepancy of official evaluation on its effect, and independent evaluations of the same effects. The official evaluation often focused on small areas of NPM, for example the cost-reductions it brought into the public sector, which in turn meant it was successful. But independent reviews of NPM brought out many problems that the official evaluation did not, for example; that there could not be seen any quality improvements to the organisations using NPM (Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt, 1995). Diefenbach (2009) brings up many consequences NPMs 'business-liked' and 'market-oriented' focuses have had on the social work profession. He noticed that many of the goals of NPM had outcomes contrary to what it’s purposes actually was on paper, for example; instead of decreasing bureaucratic processes inside management, it actually increased. Instead of greater decentralization, NPM have caused more centralization inside social work management. The same can be said about efficiency and effectiveness. For instead of increasing these, they have decreased due to a greater demand for additional work processes as form filling, report writing and procedure following that takes time and divert the professional attention from its true purpose, service providence (Diefenbach, 2009). This seems to be a general theme of NPM, that many of it intended purposes actually have had reverse effects, or made the problems that it was supposed to solve even greater for social workers working inside the field. This in turn seems to have led to greater workload and stress among social work practitioners inside NPM organizations. Diefenbach also discuss how a value loss inside these organizations have occurred since the focus have changed from service providence to measurable outcome goals, which at times is connected to economical factors instead of a successful outcome for clients.

2.1.2 Evidence-based Practice, EBP

Another theme inside the organizational aspects of social work is that of Evidence-based practice, EBP. Inside the social work field, EBP can be seen as grown out from these trends of greater evaluations and market orientation that NPM is the pinnacle of. EBP is in one way a professional counter to the rationality that NPM brought into the public sector, and social work itself (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006; Tengvald & Anttila, 2010). EBP have its origin in the medical field where it was a bottom-up process from physicians who wanted to have greater certainty in their assessments, but have since then started to grow to other fields (Kullberg & Liedgren, 2020). It’s origin in the social work profession is somehow different than how it started out in the medical field. There it was a bottom-up process from practitioners. Inside the social work section, it can be seen more as a top-down process coming from political decisions with the help of professional organisations in Sweden (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006). EBP started to grow during the 90s, and in Sweden it started to become an established term inside organizations near the end of the 90s. It was seen that social work needed a more concrete science-based basis for it work to be effective that could help measure the effectivity of its practices in a scientifically way. But with this said, EBP also have problems on its own,
that may even increase some of these negative trends that NPM already have started to cause. For example; an even greater loss of professional autonomy due to its focus on scientifically evaluated evidence which makes the work instrumental. From its outset, many professionals in the social work section were sceptical to EBP, but over time, it has become in-grained into the organizational level and accepted by the profession (Bergmark & Lundström, 2006; Sundell et al, 2010) According to McNeece & Thyer (2004), EBP can be defined as "Intervention based on the best available science", and its basic elements provides informed consent for treatment. It relies on efficacy data, uses empirical literature in decision-making and have a systematic hypothesis-testing approach to its treatment. According to Liljegren & Parding (2010), a central part of EBP is to be able to evaluate which effects different kind of interventions have in order to be able to offer the best available one to its clients. In order to do this in an effective way, many instances in social work uses different kind of instrumental tools to be able to measure the effects of various interventions inside its sector. Barfoed (2014) discuss one such instrument that is used in Sweden, which would be the Addiction Severity Index, ASI. ASI is an instrumental tool used in addiction treatment. A tool which is also widely criticized for being structured in a way that make in hard for the social worker to create any kind of relations with his client and place strong restrictions on the professional dialog between the social worker and the client. Even if this tool can make strong measurements that is easy to follow-up on, it also creates strong restrictions on the professional autonomy in social worker’s client contact. Both professionals and clients often have a negative view on the usage of this instrument and questions its use to be able to provide meaningful data (Barfoed, 2014). Webb (2001) discuss how evidence gathered inside EBP have an ideological undertone from a positivist scientific paradigm, that may not always be true to what social work practice should have as a focus. EBP may trap social workers in a framework of instrumental practices as they lose their autonomy in these instrumental tools. Instead of relying on the social workers own competence and experiences, the social worker may have to choose preordained methods that may not work in unique cases. And these methods may have the highest evidence not because they are the most effective in some cases, but because of them being cost-effective (Webb, 2001).

2.2 Professional values

The core values of the social work profession have a great importance inside the social work field. Some may even claim that the values inside social work is of more importance than the knowledge base and methodologies used in the field (Abbott, 2016). As the social work profession is growing on the global arena, there is a need for these values inside the field to be better understood so they can be of usage in this global context in an international way. For this to happen, many agencies on the international arena of social work have worked with the values that the profession should have and adjusted them unto a global context. One of these projects have been the ‘Agenda’, which constitutes of three social work agencies on the global arena; The international Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the International Associations of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW). These three agencies have done a lot of work to define the social work professional value base
and practices in its global context by adjusting them to global concerns (Jones & Truell, 2012). There have been a lot of discussion about the definitions these agencies have provided over the years, for example that the definition hasn't been cultural appropriate for social workers all over the world and have had strong western tendencies for what social work means. In some cases, these global definitions may even be seen as western professional imperialism at worst (Yip, 2004). These critiques have been raised from many authors, researchers and practitioners over the years since the ‘Agenda’ first started their project of a global definition for social work practices and a common value core globally. Due to this critique, the definition has changed and evolved over the years in response to the need to have respect for the diversity inside the social work field. Other changes that have been made discuss regional differences inside the social work practices that may be amplified at a national level. This means that there may still be differences from the global value core of social work compared to the national values of social work. But the goal from the international agencies is at least for nations across the world to base their national values for social workers on the global values provided. Realizing that there may still be some diversity and changes from this global core due to regional, cultural, socio-political, economical or historical reasons. Some authors are questioning if it is possible to have any kind of global definition that will not be seen as imperialistic (Midgley, 2001; Hugman, 1996; Sewpaul & Jones, 2004; Yip, 2004). IFSW (2018) provides this list of global social work ethics that have been discussed on the global arena;

Recognition of the Inherent Dignity of Humanity: Social workers recognize and respect the inherent dignity and worth of all human beings in attitude, word, and deed. We respect all persons, but we challenge beliefs and actions of those persons who devalue or stigmatize themselves or other persons.

Promoting Human Rights: Social workers embrace and promote the fundamental and inalienable rights of all human beings. Social work is based on respect for the inherent worth, dignity of all people and the individual and social /civil rights that follow from this. Social workers often work with people to find an appropriate balance between competing human rights.

Promoting Social Justice: Social workers have a responsibility to engage people in achieving social justice, in relation to society generally, and in relation to the people with whom they work.

Promoting the Right to Self-Determination: Social workers respect and promote people’s rights to make their own choices and decisions, provided this does not threaten the rights and legitimate interests of others.

Promoting the Right to Participation: Social workers work toward building the self-esteem and capabilities of people, promoting their full involvement and participation in all aspects of decisions and actions that affect their lives.

Respect for Confidentiality and Privacy: Social workers respect and work in accordance with people’s rights to confidentiality and privacy unless there is risk of harm to the self or to others or other statutory restrictions.
Treating People as Whole Persons: Social workers recognize the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of people’s lives and understand and treat all people as whole persons. Such recognition is used to formulate holistic assessments and interventions with the full participation of people, organizations, and communities with whom social workers engage.

Ethical Use of Technology and social media: The ethical principles in this Statement apply to all contexts of social work practice, education, and research, whether it involves direct face-to-face contact or through use of digital technology and social media.

Professional Integrity: It is the responsibility of national associations and organizations to develop and regularly update their own codes of ethics or ethical guidelines, to be consistent with this Statement, considering local situations. It is also the responsibility of national organizations to inform social workers and schools of social work about this Statement of Ethical Principles and their own ethical guidelines. Social workers should act in accordance with the current ethical code or guidelines in their country.

Sewpaul & Jones (2004) discuss many standards for the social work profession that may influence the above list, for example; standards for social work education, training, practices and the core purpose of the social work profession in its global context. This core purpose of social work includes factors such as facilitating the inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups of people, challenging injustices that exist inside the society and working towards mobilising and enchanting the well-being of individuals and communities. As can be seen from the above lists, social workers on the global arena seems to have their hands full if they are supposed to strive for all of these goals that is mentioned. According to Kam (2012), the social work profession is moving away from one of the key concepts of social work which would actually help achieving these goals, and that is the ‘social’ aspect of social work. Kam means that the advocacy of social justice which is a key term in many of these global goals is actually decreasing and that the social work profession is moving towards a domination of individual therapies where the focus have moved from the society unto the individual. Kam comments that many of the current used practices inside social work have a greater focus towards individual client outcomes, than these greater societal values that social workers should strive towards. Kam mentions EBP as one of these individual focused methods that instead of promoting communal responses on the macro level to social problems, instead make the practitioner stuck in a clinical practice model on the micro level of individuals. Kam says the social worker may get stuck in an individual focus that neglect the social aspects of social work. If this is the case, there is a need for a greater advocacy for these communal and macro-oriented goals of social work. Solas (2008) discuss the importance of the social justice term in regards to these macro-oriented concerns for social work. He discusses that there may be many different definitions of how social justice may be used and brings up five aspects of it that IFSWs code of ethics discusses in regards to social justice. These are to challenge negative discriminations, recognizing diversity, distributing resources equitably, challenge unjust policies and practices and working in solidarity. He concludes that social justice as a concept in its current usage may need some adjustment for it to be able to achieve the goals it is intended to do.
2.2.1 Social work values in Sweden

In Sweden, the social work ethics and value base is based on the definition provided by IFSW. As previously discussed, there may be some variations from the global guidelines to the national guidelines, and this would also be the case for Sweden (Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008; Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017). I will in this section discuss the ethical code provided by Akademikerförbundet SSR (2017) which was formed by the board of the Swedish Union for Social Sciences Professionals in 2015. In the start of this document, they discuss the importance of ethical guidelines, and how these guidelines in Sweden are based on the international definition provided by IFSW in 2014. They also note that there are national policies and regulations that affect the Swedish version of these global guidelines. In this code of ethics, they start with a discussion about the six general themes of social work in Sweden, and thereafter go more in depth about ethical norms and values inside the social work profession. These six themes are; empowerment, advocacy, community work, norms & guidelines, protection and care & services. Some of these themes I will return to later, but for now we will look deeper into the specific ethical norms that is discussed, and here we get a long list of ethical values that is deemed important inside the social work profession in Sweden (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017);

The principle of Human dignity: A core value norm for social workers that many of the other ethical considerations is based on is the principle of human dignity and that all humans have the same worth as deemed in the United Nations (UN) declaration of human rights.

Human and Civil Rights: This principle deems humans to have the right to basic living conditions and civil rights in a society also based on UN:s declaration of human rights.

Humanity and Solidarity: The humanity norm means that one should take extra care and provide empathy for people that are in vulnerable and difficult life situations. Solidarity means that we should support other people's projects, ambitions and aspirations for a better life in society in a solidarity way.

Welfare, Resources and Security: That all people in society should have access to welfare resources and securities that contribute to a person's wellbeing

Respect and Integrity: That all people should have the right to live a life in dignity with respect for personal integrity. What this mean may vary across some cultural boarders, but the basic meaning could be said to mean that all people should be treated with respect no matter their life choices or circumstances.

Liberty and self-determination: This norm stand for all people's rights to freedom and self-determination as long as it's not a threat to other people rights and wellbeing. A Person should have the right to make his own choices in life and social workers should help with increasing people's freedom of choice to better achieve a dignified life.

Democracy and participation: Social work on the organizational level should have a democratic framework that support people's right to freedom and self-determination. In the extent its possible, people should have a right to participate in their own situation or treatment inside a
social work program. There may be some infringements to this in the cases of an LVM or LVU decision that takes away these rights of freedom and self-determination.

Social Justice: As in the international definitions of ethics inside social work, the social justice term is also something that exist inside the Swedish ethics. But it is discussed that social justice is not as prominent in Sweden as on the international stage. In Sweden the term is somehow shallower with a narrower meaning then in the international definition. But the core is still the same, a striving for a more just society.

Gender equality, equal opportunity and equal treatment: With this statement it meant that all people should be treated in the same way and have the same opportunities for an equal treatment. A social worker should always strive to treat a person they meet as an equal, even if there may be power differences in the meeting that occur due to asymmetry in this relationship between a professional and a client.

Honesty and candour: A social worker should always to the best of his ability be honest and candour and avoid being deceptive against clients. It’s also important that the social worker think about how he communicates with his clients so he do not accidently hurt his clients by being too frank with them. Everything that can be said, does not always necessarily need to be said. This honesty and candour need to have its ground in empathy and understanding.

A non-judgmental approach and pursuit of understanding: To be able to create openness with his clients, a social worker need to have a non-judgemental attitude towards his client’s stories. This means that the social worker should try to understand what is said without distancing himself from the client’s story even when it goes against the social workers own value ethics and by so doing create an atmosphere of openness where ethical norms may be discussed.

Personal accountability: A social worker should always see that his client has their own personal accountability for their decisions in life. It could be seen as important for a social worker to remind the client of this personal responsibility they have to strengthen their integrity. This does not mean that social workers can blame clients for decisions they have made in life in regard to their life situation. It rather means that social workers should help clients take responsibility for their own decisions so an improvement may occur for the client’s wellbeing.

Consequentialist assessment: Social workers should have a consequentialist thinking in their actions. With this it meant that social workers should think of the consequences different actions may lead to in regard to their clients. By following these norms that have previously been covered, it may be seen that the results of a social workers actions should lead to good outcomes for his clients. If a social worker thinks that the actions he takes may lead to bad consequences for his clients, he should not take that action.

As can be seen from this list of ethical value norms, there is a broad range of what social workers need to think about in regards to ethical considerations. There is also a great overlap between the global guidelines and the Swedish guidelines, since the Swedish is based on the global guidelines. But as can be seen, there are some differences in the ways of seeing some of
the terms used. Some of these norms may also have conflicts with each other's in certain situations, and then it may be necessary for the social worker to make a decision in regards to the consequences he think may cause the least harm for his client. This ethical guide also discusses principles of loyalty to the social workers organization they operate inside, and the importance to follow organizational fundamental principles, goals and regulations. Here there may also be conflicts as previously discussed between organizational aspects of professionalization and the professional values and knowledge base. It's discussed that there may not always be obvious which side a social worker should then take when there are conflicts between organisational aspects and ethical considerations. But as Svensson (2011) have previously shown, the social worker often needs to adjust themselves to these organizational policies in the end. A last important part worth mentioning before moving on from these value norms inside the social work profession is the trend of empowerment. In this ethical guide for the social work profession, they discuss empowerment as an important theme, and that social work should be characterized by this theme of empowerment. It could be seen that all of these mentioned norms should have an empowering aspect to them in regards to clients, and I will in the next section of this paper discuss empowerment in greater details (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017).

2.4 Concluding remarks on previous research

As can be seen from this research overview, there are many organizational aspects that social workers may need to adept to in one way or another in their professional practices. It has been shown that organisational factors sometimes may clash with professional values and practices, and often that the professional then need to adjust himself to the organizations policies and regulations in these cases (Svensson, 2011). If this happens in a too large extension, it can even cause a de-professionalization of the social work profession (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005). This makes the social worker having less autonomy in their work, since they instead follow organizational procedures without critical thought against these procedures, making the social worker being under the spell of the fields professional doxa (Johansson et al, 2019; Järviven, 2002). This makes it important for social workers to have a strong value core, so they do not follow these organizational guidelines blindly if they are in contrast to the value grounds that social work should stand on (Hugman, 1996; Gray, 2005; Kam, 2014; Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt, 1995).

3. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

In this section I will discuss the two main theoretical perspectives that will be used for analysis in this study. The perspectives that will be discussed is empowerment and professional doxa. In the final analysis, parts from the previous research section will also be used.
3.1 Empowerment

In recent times inside the social work profession, empowerment have been a growing term inside the profession. It can be seen as a fundamental value inside the social services which have a focus on helping clients to use their own resources to make a change in their life (Eide & Eide, 2006). One can often see that empowerment practices is used in different kind of motivational work (Revstedt, 2014; Eide & Eide, 2006). In some cases, empowerment is seen as a goal, in other cases it may be seen as a process, and in some cases even as a form of intervention. One way to describe empowerment is that it helps developing personal and interpersonal power through a process of self-awareness which lead to an increase of autonomy and self-determination (Gutiérrez, GlenMaye & DeLois 1995; Lindén, 2004; Leonardsen, 2007). Yip (2004) discuss that empowerment can be conceptualized at five levels, and these are at a personal level, interpersonal level, political level, professional level and at an organisational level. Depending on what level of empowerment you are looking at, it may be used somehow differently for different purposes. For example; at the personal level it’s about helping clients making changes in their life, at an interpersonal level it’s about strengthening supportive social network for clients and at political level it’s about collective actions that will influence government decisions and policies. Yip goes on to describe the problems of empowerment in different cultural settings and claims that it may not be appropriate with a western empowerment model for all cultures inside the social work profession. He gives examples of when empowerment practices have failed to achieve results in communities inside Afrocentric and Hispanic cultures in North America, and goes on to discuss different perspectives of empowerment used in China and Asian cultures. He concludes that the empowerment term may need to become more culturally sensitive for it to be effective in different indigenous settings.

Jönsson (2010) looked into an empowerment project done in Southern India and discuss the problems that occurred during this project which used western empowerment methods. She discusses that western models, such as empowerment, is often used in relation to the concept of development which will lead to economic growth and higher consumption in areas of poverty. She says that this is a dominant global western discourse which is also widely criticized by many scholars inside postcolonial debates. She discusses empowerment from the perspective of it been linked to participation, power, control, self-realization, influence and social changes leading people to being able to change both themselves, and the social structures of the society they live inside. She discusses empowerment as a collective social activity, which is in contrast to the more traditional sense of empowerment as an individual process. She links this collective sense of empowerment to the concept of social justice, but says that due to the greater focus on development and economic growth, the usage of empowerment can in some cases become disempowering. This would be the case of the project in India she discusses, were empowerment was used at the micro level of individuals instead of looking into the structural problems that needed to be changed at the macro level for a true empowerment to occur. She means that empowerment processes that focuses only on helping people get more resources, but not changing the structural and political power structures they live inside may be disempowering and lead to greater social problems in the long term. In a study by Sjöberg et al (2015) which was also done in India, they seem to have taken this critique under
consideration and focuses more on collective empowerment instead. In this study they compare the term of collective empowerment of community work between Sweden and India. Here it’s discussed that in both cases, empowerment focuses on strengthening social networks for members inside the communities. In Sweden there was often no aim of empowering social changes inside the communities, while in India there was a goal of helping marginalised groups to achieve social changes inside the community. In this article it’s also discussed that a global trend seems to be the focus of empowerment shifting from combating societal and structural barriers that uphold social problems to a more individual focus instead, and that this is a trend coming from the neoliberal forces of globalisation. It can be seen that empowerment is shifting more and more unto an individual practice focus, instead of combating the problems around the individual that made them disempowered in the first place.

Leonardesen (2005) discuss the importance of differentiating the empowerment term into two categories; individual empowerment and relational empowerment. He means that this more individualistic empowerment practice may cause social workers to become moralising agents rather than facilitators of social change. In worst case, the empowerment term may even be manipulated by different ideologies to lessen its original purpose of helping people becoming independent from systems of help. He says that too often street-level bureaucrats, meaning social workers, may instead become adversaries for their clients instead of allies and partners if the focus become too individualistic. Relational empowerment instead looks to the surrounding social context the empowerment practice occurs in, which means that the social and structural forms an individual operates inside also have importance for the empowerment work. Instead of it just being the individual himself in need of change to achieve an empowered state, the individual is seen in the context that surrounds him, and what social structures there is that uphold these disempowering states. Parson (1991) discuss a project were these more relational aspects of empowerment was in focus, and how it led to both individual and communal changes for its participants. The focus was on empowering client systems, as for example self-help groups, and the target group was single mothers that had children with difficulties in school. By connecting this group of mothers into a collective group, the individual struggles and energies become a collective whole which resulted in empowerment practices that lead to changes for both the mothers, and for the community at large. At first, there were trust issues inside the group, but over time the group started to discuss problems they had both as single parents, but also problems in the community that caused some of the problems they themselves experienced. Over time, this group of mothers became empowered with the help of the social workers who provided educational aspects and a forum of discussion for these mothers, were they now had a platform to take care of the problems they all experienced inside the community they lived. They found new resources both inside themselves, and inside the group that led to communal changes in the long term. Even after the social worker moved on to other projects, the group continued for some years even without the support of the social worker. The social worker helped with facilitation of the group, but over time the group became self-empowered and could continue their work without the support of the social worker (Parson, 1991). With just an individual focus of empowerment, this would never have occurred, and the changes in the community would probably never have happened if the social worker
did not get these mothers to start co-operate inside a group of collective empowerment practices.

Linden (2004) discuss empowerment as a new social work paradigm and the many contrasts this term may have. Since empowerment have such a broad scope, its meaning may become somewhat diffuse and understood differently from practitioner to practitioner. Because of this, Linden claims that the empowerment term needs to be articulated in a clearer theoretical form so a more concrete meaning of it may occur. As can be seen, this meaning seems to lean on a more individualistic focus of empowerment due to global neoliberal trends, which may not always be the best form of its usage when you look into what empowerment may achieve in its more communal and relational aspects. One reason of this more individualistic form of empowerment that Linden discuss, is that it's easier to measure the outcome for individuals, then for group relations or communal aspects.

3.2 Professional doxa

The common way to describe doxa, is that it seen as common-sense knowledge, or as the public opinion on how things should be done (Amossy, 2002). Keddell (2016) describes doxa as a discourse that seems natural and normal in how we should handle individuals and groups in society, and note that the current trends of neoliberalism inside the public sector can be seen as a form of organizational doxa. Johansson et al. (2019) discuss how the doxa inside a professional field is often very evident in its practical sense for the professionals themselves, but hidden from members outside the field. The danger of professional doxa is that it's often unreflected even for the professionals. This makes it hard for the professionals to actually observe this professional doxa inside their own field, even when they follow it. Järviven (2002) describe some of these professional doxas that occur inside the social work field in Denmark, but these doxas can also be recognized here in Sweden or other global contexts. Järviven starts out describing how a doxa can be seen in Bourdieus words as; "That which goes without saying because it comes without saying". What is meant by this, is that doxa is often seen as something that is so self-evident and natural, that it’s often not even discussed. It’s just the way one does things, and it's often a tacit knowledge that is seldom discussed by the professionals. This professional doxa can then maintains itself by the usage of this tacit knowledge that implants itself in different structures in the form of silent knowledge. The professionals then confirm the doxa by using it and teaching others to use it, even if they are not truly aware of the doxa itself. One of these organizational doxas that Järviven (2002) describes exist inside the social work profession, is how the system is creating the client, and not the other way around. What Järviven seems to mean with this is clients inside the social work section is created by the definitions of the system, and not by the need of the clients. The client's troubles are reformed so they can fit inside the organizational structures and regulations. It's the preconceived notions of the organization that define its clients, and whom can become a client, and not the actual need of the clients themselves. In this way, this professional doxa can be seen as a praxis in how one defines a client inside the social work section, and how one relates what kind of help that is offered to these clients. This way of how the system turns clients’
troubles into pre-made service packages is well known inside the social work field, and the troubles this can bring (Dunér & Nordström, 2006; Ekström, 2017; Ponnert & Svensson, 2016). Another kind of doxa that Järviven (2002) discuss, is that of how the social work profession is often seen as having its purpose in helping people, and how the social workers themselves often experience this as their purpose. Here Järviven questions this meaning of help that social workers offer as there may be a hidden aspect of power in this help. According to Järviven, there is a symbolic power aspect that hides itself in the well-meaning of this help that is offered. This, since a client that get professional help is put into a dependent position to the helper, in this case the social worker and the organization that provides this help. This help often comes with an agenda of it being the client that need to adjust themselves into the system that offer the help, in order to gain it. This may not always be in the best interest of the client, even if they are in need of help as Järviven (2002) gives examples of. These aspects of power relations that social workers may encounter is also widely discussed inside social work literature (Revstedt, 2014; Tew, 2006). Garrett (2007) argues for the importance of social workers engaging critically with the doxa inside their field, so this silent knowledge will become more reflected. The gains of this would be a more reflected professional core, that could lead to further development inside the profession. If the social workers became more aware of the current doxas inside their field, especially those of the neoliberal trends, this could work as a counter to these trends that have made social work more instrumental in its practices. Since this instrumental practice may not always be in the best interest of the client as previous discussed (Garrett, 2007; Webb, 2001; Diefenbach, 2009; Barfoed, 2014).

4. METHOD

This study started as a qualitative research method with an inductive research approach on how the process of research was done (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). During the analysis of the gathered data, a deductive methodology was also applied, as a directed content analysis was used for data analysis (Hsueh & Shannon, 2005). The research process was also influenced by hermeneutics principles and the hermeneutic circle was used in reflexivity during the research process. At times, a more dialogical form of questioning during the interviews occurred were a smaller discussion between the researcher and the participant happened around some of the topics in the interview, which is common in hermeneutic research (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018; Debesay et al, 2008; Koskinen & Nyström, 2015; Eriksson et al, 2020).
4.1 Procedure

At first, the researcher set out to do a research overview of his field of interest by reading up on literature related to the topic of professional values inside the social work field. From the outset, the researcher had no clear view over the research questions he was interested in, just that the research field were related to professional values and empowerment practices. This is in concurrence with the researcher's inductive approach to the study (Thomas, 2006). Over time when the researcher become more informed about the topics, some general themes in the literature occurred to the researcher. One of these themes were of the conflicts between professional values and organizational aspects that social workers may encounter in their daily work. Much of the literature at first did not focus on this topic in itself, but these topics of conflicts between professional values and organizational aspects were more a by-product of other research topics that the researcher were reading up on. The researcher found this to be an interesting topic to focus more closely on, and by so doing expanded his research field unto the topic of organizational aspects inside the social work field. Here the main literature showed that there may be conflicting factors between the organizational aspects of social work, and the social work value grounds. This led the researcher into the topic of professional doxa. The researcher then decided to have this as his main topic of research and re-focused his interest unto the topics of how professional values and organisational aspects may affect each other in social work practice related to empowerment. After the researcher had finish with this overview of the topics of interest, a final formulation of research question was done and from this an interview guide was constructed.

4.1.1 Literature overview

Literature was searched for in multiple research and scientific libraries. Key words that were used in gathering the literature data were different forms of combinations of social work with words such as; values, empowerment, doxa, professionalization, organization, ethics, international, global, neoliberal, new public management and evidence-based practice. The researcher also looked into other reference papers inside the material used. To make a systematically overview of all the terms used in the literature gathering is not possible due to this process being in the form of the inductive approach that have been described.

4.2 Sample selection

The sample method that was used was a non-probability sampling methodology with purposive sampling. What makes the sample purposive instead of convenience is the focus of participants being professional social workers with a focus on client work (McCombes, 2019). The researcher started out by contacting multiple different social work agencies by e-mail, where it was asked if there were social workers interested in being interviewed about the topics of professional values and empowerment relating to organizational values, regulations and guidelines. Some of these social work agencies that were contacted answered, some did not. In the end it was four different social work agencies that responded to the researcher and accepted to have social workers from their workplace be interviewed.
4.3 Participants

In total there were nine participants, three of these were males, and six of them were females. The youngest participant was 26, and the oldest was 66 with an average age of 40. There were a great variety in how long they had worked in the social work sector, but all had at least a few years of work experience inside the field of social work. Most of the participants had a sociological exam as educational background, but there were some of the participants with other education backgrounds that were still related to the social work field, as for example; behavioural scientist. All of the participants had as their main focus active client work except for one, as this participant was working as a team leader. The interview recordings varied from 45 to 90 minutes, with an average of 1 hour.

4.4 Interview guide

The interview guide was semi-structural so the researcher could freely ask follow-up questions on the topics that participants were talking about. With a semi-structural interview-guide the researcher has more room to ask questions outside of the interview-guide itself, and also to ask questions more out of order then a fully structural guide would allow for. In a semi-structural interview, the researcher does not always necessarily need to ask all the questions that is in the guide, depending on how the interview goes. Some of the interview questions may be overlapping where the participants may have given answers to themes that the researcher is interested in without needing to ask the questions directly (Bryman & Nilsson, 2018; Kvale & Brinkman, 2014). The interview-guide was divided into three sections; Social Work background, Professional values and Empowerment. The first part was focusing on the social workers background and work experiences, here descriptions of their current work situation were asked and what background they had in social work. The second part was focusing on professional values and had open-ended questions on the meaning of professional values and the social workers understanding of these. The last section was focused on how empowerment practices was done by operationalise the concept of empowerment into smaller building blocks, as for example; self-power, self-determination and participation. In all of these sections the interviewer asked follow-up questions for descriptions of workplace regulations or other topics that may affect the social worker in their different practices.

4.5 Data analysis

The interviews were recorded and then transcribed so the researcher could use proper analyse methods for the data. The researcher started out with reading the transcript multiple times without any specific themes in mind, and by so doing found general data point of interest related to his topics of research. This method of analysing data is in accordance with an inductive research approach, and similar ways of analysing data is found across all sections of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Thomas, 2006; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). After this phase of the research process, the researcher decided to analyse the data by using the method of directed content analysis which is a deductive research tool (Hsueh & Shannon, 2005). This directed content analysis was done by going through the data content by the four
conceptual definitions of; professional values, organizational values, empowerment and professional doxa. The researcher searched for these four themes in the data content from the transcribed data. The theme of doxa then got ingrained into these three primary themes instead of standing on its own in the results section. Two sub-themes were then constructed for each of these three main themes which was related to the three research questions. These sub-themes were created by looking through the data multiple times with the theoretical perspectives used in this study after the three main themes had been created. Similarities in the data points started to generate codes that then lead to the creation of the sub-themes used. The naming of the sub-themes presented was done by the researcher as these represented the content in a descriptive way. In this way, the researcher went through the data multiple times with an inductive and a deductive methodology to analysing the data content in order to create the final themes that is presented (Awuzie & Mcdermott, 2017; Hsueh & Shannon, 2005). The three main themes presented, with its sub-themes are; professional values with sub-themes of being professional and client perspective. The second theme is empowerment with sub-themes of individual empowerment and group empowerment. The third theme is professional conflicts with sub-themes of role conflicts and organizational conflicts.

4.6 Quality criteria

During the research process there have been an active work to increase the validity of the study. This have been done in multiple ways by following scientific methods in the research process. The researcher has thought about topics such as credibility, reliability, validity and transferability during the research process and in analysing the data (Leung, 2015; Golafshani, 2015).

To increase the study credibility the researcher went through the process of gaining a strong theoretical understanding of the field of research before deciding on the research questions or an interview guide. By reading the literature in the research field, the researcher could formulate credible research questions and base his interview guide on a strong theoretical basis inside the literature of his field. A form of methodical triangulation was used by interpreting the data in both deductive and inductive means, while also using hermeneutic principles in this process. It could be seen that many of the results given could be recognized in the theoretical background the researcher had explored earlier in the research process, and this give strong grounds for the results to be credible since these results support earlier research into these topics (Cresswell & Poth, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leung, 2015; Golafshani, 2015). As these results could be seen as credible with prior research supporting them, there may be some transferability of the results to similar settings of client work inside the social work section. Since the social work section have many different organizations and the role of professionals may change in these different organization, the results may not be transferable to all sections of social work, as for example social work administration (Cresswell & Poth, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leung, 2015; Golafshani, 2015; Korstjens & Moser, 2018).
The researcher has during the whole process of analysing tried to the best of his ability be objective in his approach to the data. The researcher has used hermeneutic principles as the hermeneutic circle to become aware of his own biases in analysing the data. The hermeneutic circle use principles of contrasting pre-understanding with new understanding that is gained through the research process, searching for hidden meanings inside the data collected and by having a critical view towards one's own and different sources of interpretation. The researcher has to the utmost of his ability tried to be critical to his own assumptions in this process of interpretation, and tried to see if there could be other interpretations for the same data (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). Okasha (2016) discusses that even if a researcher tries to be objective to the best of one's ability, data is always interpreted with a certain level of subjectivity that can never completely be eliminated. This means that a researcher can never be completely objective in their analysis, since the best a researcher can do is becoming aware of their biases. By doing this, one can try to lessen the effects of biases in analysis by minimizing the effects of this subjectivity that is always ingrained in a subject.

4.7 Ethical considerations

The researcher went through the process of ethical considerations before contacting participants. At first the researcher sent out an e-mail covering the research topic that was of interest for the research, which told the participants about the interview topics. In this letter the researcher attached his e-mail so the participants could contact the researcher if they had any questions about the research, and if they were interested in participation. Before the interviews the researcher went through with the participants that the interview would be recorded, but that the data would be coded so it would be confidential once the researcher started working with the data. The researcher also informed the participants that they could at any time during the interview chose to end it, or if there were any questions they did not want to answer they would not need to do it. No compensation was given for participation except the researcher's thanks for their participation. The researcher also offered to send the research paper to the participants when it was finished.

5. RESULTS

In this section I will discuss the results from the interviews and connect it to my previous research and theoretical perspectives. I will give a short general description of the results for the three main research themes, and then highlight two sub-themes from each of these for further analysis.
5.1 Professional values

When discussing the professional values among social workers, many different values or perspectives of ethics were brought up. Most of them were in-line with the professional values that SSR ethical guidelines bring up, or variations of these. All the social workers had somehow reflected on what professional values meant for them, and how it affected them in their work. Some of them worked with it actively in their workplace to have an ethical practice by the use of collegial support or tuition with team leaders or other roles that supported them in their reflections. I will here highlight two important themes that most of the social workers brought up when discussing professional values and how they related to these.

5.1.1 Being professional

Social workers discussed what it meant to be professional in their line of work. This gave many perspectives on the meaning of being professional, and many skills and abilities of importance was mentioned that was aligned with professional values. For most of the social workers, they mentioned how important it was to follow regulations, guidelines, work methods and the laws that governed there workplace as standard practice for being able to be professional. This is in line with the organisational aspects that have been previously discussed by Svensson (2011), where he brings up the internal functions of an organization such as regulations, rules, bureaucratic processes and organizational strategies. Another factor many of the social workers mentioned was the importance of being able to build relations with clients in different ways, and the importance of this relation being in the nature of a professional relationship. Many social workers spoke of the importance of being able to be personal, but not private;

"Now I don’t want to throw out just some expressions, but for me it is important to be able to be personal but not private [...]. There can be a lot in the personal that can be in favour, and I think it’s good if this shines through. As long as it helps, I think it can be constructive in the meeting." - Male, 28

This social worker meant that if you could use your personal aspects in a positive way in client meetings, this could help build the relation between the social worker and their clients. To show that one is a person even in one’s professional role do not necessarily need to be a negative thing, as long as you do not start to become private while doing it. This shows the importance of being able to be personal but not private in ones contact with clients. What this means in more detail is that social workers may use their own backgrounds, skills, abilities or experiences to connect to the client, but to use it in a professional way so it become a tool for change. To have a professional purpose with what you bring up from your personal life, so it doesn’t become idle chitchat or a distraction from the professional meeting. This way of thinking has support in literature of professional communications and meetings (Eide & Eide, 2006; Revstedt, 2014). It was also seen as important to be able to leave one's private role behind while at work, especially if you had your own personal troubles at home.
"To be able to leave one’s private role behind once you get here. You may have a lot of troubles at home, but when you are here at work, you put on a work suit and pause your own troubles"
- Female, 66

To be able to put on hold your own troubles while at work, was deemed to be a professional act. Other important factors that were mentioned was the ability to be prestigeless, honest, humble, emphatic, curious and being able to invoke hope for the clients. It was also discussed how the importance of having a non-judgemental view and being open-minded was key factors to be able to be professional with clients. These factors are all important items that the SSR ethical guidelines also discusses, so one can see that these professional values that are discussed is also in-grained in social workers real life practice (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017). For these factors to be successful, it was of great importance that the social worker was actively working with self-reflections. This helped social workers with their own personal biases that they may have during meetings, and to see when these biases affected them in different ways in their work. If the social worker succeeded with this, they could see themselves as tools for change for the clients.

"It’s a lot about us working with oneself at all time, since it’s oneself that is the tool, one needs to work with oneself a lot. For me that means to keep track on myself" - Female, 40

This social worker told about the importance to keep track on herself, both in personal biases and judgements about clients, and to think about herself as a tool for the client. By working with oneself and reflecting on the work that was done, a more professional approach to the work could be done.

Some social workers could experience that there was a lot of talk about value grounds, and the importance of these inside their organizations, but said at times this just seemed to be empty words. A few social workers discussed how some concepts were thrown around as important in their line of work, but in practice seemed to mean very little. Here one could see that these social workers had realized some of the professional doxas that Johansson et al. (2019) mentions existed inside the social work section, and realised that what you said, and what you did were two different things at times. Realising this, could in one way be seen as a professional insight.

"During the many years I have worked, I have come across many who talk about such concepts, but feel that there is very little substance to them in the practical life [...] There are some really rubbish concepts. Like what does it mean to have a correct view of people? How do you look at it? How do you know what is a correct people view?" - Male, 53

This social worker experienced that at times some concepts of values were just empty words thrown around without any real practical use in how the work was actually done. As this social worker discusses, what does it mean to have a correct people view? This may become clearer when we look into what it means to have a strong client perspective.
5.1.2 Client perspective

Many of the social workers discussed the importance of having a strong client perspective, as one social worker said; "I return to this with a client perspective, that is the most important thing". Another social worker said; "Yeah, it's the client that is the most important person in the room". These two statements shows that social workers valued the importance of having a strong client perspective, but what does it mean to have a client perspective? By having these skills that was previous discussed in the category of being professional, as for example; being humble and open-minded you use these skills to the benefit of the client. Social workers saw it as important to be able to listen to the client, and be able to motivate the clients in different ways. The social worker needed to see what long term consequences decisions could have in certain cases, and be able to hold the perspective, 'what is best for the client'? These skills and to be able to hold such perspectives are in line with SSR ethical guidelines (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017).

In some cases, the social workers did not meet their clients in person. In these cases, it was often seen as important not to forget about having a strong client perspective. Social workers said it would probably be easier to lose this perspective if they did not work actively with clients in their professional roles. They feared it may be easier to forget this if you were in the section of aid handling, administration or other more authorial instances of social work.

"And then we meet these administrators who may not have much direct contact with clients or users, and then it is noticeable, or I can notice that it is clear the client perspective has faded away" - Male, 28

This social worker explains how he at times met social work administrators whom seemed to have forgotten the client perspective and how this could depend on them not having a real working relation with clients since they were not meeting them except in processing.

The social workers also discussed the importance of meeting the clients where they actually were in the process of aid, and to find out how they could best be of service for the client by meeting them on their level; "You have to meet the client where they are. I cannot just start where I think it's suitable". This can be recognised as an important aspect in empowering work, to be able to start this work from the level of the client (Eide & Eide, 2006; Revstedt, 2014). It can also be seen as ethical to start from the client’s needs, and not from where the professional think it would be suitable. To find out this level for the client, it was important to be able to be curious and ask questions about the problems the clients were having, so the social worker could start working with the motivational parts of their assignments;

"So very much to start from them, and not think that it is in a certain way. To dare to ask, and dare to ask more, what happened? Can you tell me?" - Female, 40

This social worker spoke about the importance of asking clients what had happened in certain situations. And to dare to ask questions to get an understanding of the client's situation, and continued with that it could even be important at times to be able to ask uncomfortable
questions. If you met the client at their level, and proceeded from these grounds, it was often easier to actually gain a good working relation with the client. This can also be seen as good ethical practice when you met the client on their level instead of being 'above' them (Armgard & Ronnyby, 1993; Eide & Eide, 2006). Some social workers did not even like to think about the clients as clients, but saw them as fellow human beings or just another citizen that they were meeting in different circumstances. In this regard, the aspects of respect and human dignity that is discussed in the ethical guidelines was seen as important (Akademikertörbundet SSR, 2017).

"For me, it's about seeing the person, not having to sit and think that it's my client. I see the person I meet, and then you meet this person with respect" - Male, 26

This social worker thought that if you started to think about clients as only clients, this could devalue them as persons in different ways. It was more important for this social worker to think about clients as just another person that you should meet with proper respect, than to get stuck in a professional view of being a social worker with his client. This was something other social workers also told about in relation to meeting clients in certain situations that were more relaxed client meetings, to be able to go out of one’s professional role at times and meet as persons. But it was a fine-grained line to do this in a professional way, and not lose one’s role as a professional social worker.

One of the social workers was working with children that had undergone different form of traumas. For this social worker it was important to always have a strong child perspective, to think about what was best for the child, and to remind the child that the child was the one in control of the situation. This way of reminding the children of their self-determination and liberty to make their own choices, is also seen as an important aspect in the ethical guidelines (Akademikertörbundet SSR, 2017).

"I think this is one of the most important things, that the child should feel that it is the one in control here, and that the child should not feel cheated by me" - Female, 40

This social worker explained that many of these children who had undergone traumatic experiences often could feel cheated by adults, and it could be hard to build trust in these cases. By having a strong client perspective, and letting the child feel it was the one in control, could help with building this trust for a working relationship. Having this strong client perspective was perceived as very important for most of the social workers, and what this meant could be of some variety. But it was often focused on reminding oneself of you as a professional were there for the client, and not the other way around. That you should met the client on their level, and do your best to listen to the stories of the client and what their goals and wishes were, and not try to decide over the client’s head. It could be seen that many of the ethical guidelines and practices were incorporated into this view of a strong client perspective that these social workers had discussed (Akademikertörbundet SSR, 2017).
5.2 Empowerment

Most of the social workers were familiar with the concept of empowerment, but there were a few that said they did not feel familiar with the meaning of the term. But in further discussion of the concept, they recognized the aspects of empowerment that construct the concept and could say that they used it in their work in different ways. As for example the aspect of empowerment focusing on self-power and self-governing for client with the goal of social change. So even when some social workers were not familiar with the theoretical term of empowerment, they all could explain how they used it within their practice with clients in different dimensions of their work. This could have to do with what Linden (2004) discusses about how the empowerment term is so broad that it can somehow become diffuse in its meaning. This could lead to different practitioners having different interpretations of what it means to work with empowerment. The ethical guidelines also discuss empowerment as something that should be ingrained in the social work practices and this could be another reason that some social workers were not familiar with the theoretical concept of empowerment (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017). The two most common themes among the social workers were how they used it differently in individual contacts with clients, or if they met clients in groups. A word of notice is that many of these group works were restricted, cancelled or on-hold during the Covid-19 pandemic, but some still occurred during the time these interviews took place.

5.2.1 Individual empowerment

For many of the social workers, to effectively work with empowerment you also needed these other skills and abilities that have been presented during this results section. You had to be able to meet the client with respect, be able to see what motivated the client, and be able to proceed from the situation that the client already existed in. When you also putted in the aspect of empowerment, the client relation often got a focus on how one should help the client to help themselves. This is in accordance with these individualistic empowerment practices that have been previous brought up, were the focus is for the client to change inside the system and improve so they can handle their life situations better (Gutiérrez et al, 1995; Leonardesen, 2005; Sjöberg et al, 2015). One social worker explained this process of empowerment leading to social change as a ladder with three steps;

"You can see it as three steps in a ladder. I can help the client up to the second step, but there I have to give them the tools to take the third step themselves" - Male, 26

With this, the social worker meant that when they first met the client, they met each other on the first step. Together they take another step on this ladder and do the work, but from this second step, the client then take this last step alone with the tools they have gained from the contact with the social worker. Hopefully, at this time, the client is confident enough to be able to handle the problems that exist in their life without the aid of the social worker. This since one of the goals of successful empowerment practices is to be able to let go of the clients, and hope they have the abilities to continue their life without the aid of the social worker. This way of thinking the social worker had was in accordance with literature on empowerment practices.
(Gutiérrez et al, 1995; Parson, 1991; Leonardsen, 2007). As one social worker said that worked inside the section of addiction treatment;

"To be able to stand on your own, that is what we work with. We give them the tools so they will be able to keep themselves sober, or be able to put up boundaries themselves. That is our jobs" - Female, 66

This social worker meant that she was giving the tools to her client to be able to stand on their own, and how this was the goal of the treatment. To be successful in this, the social workers needed to motivate, and be able to work with the clients’ problems so they could get new insight in how they handled these problems they had. It was often seen as important that the social worker should not give the answers to the clients, but make the client reflect on their own problems so they could find the answers themselves. Even if the social worker was knowledgeable about the problems the clients had, and could offer this knowledge in these reflections to help, they should not give the answers of how the client should handle the problems. For if the social worker gave all the answers, this would not help the client with taking responsibility over their own life which is one of the keystones in empowerment practice. This kind of empowerment practice could be seen to be done on the personal level (Yip, 2004). On this level it’s about helping clients to make personal changes in their life’s.

"Because I ask questions to the client so they can think for themselves. I do not write down the answers. They need to come from the client. That is, they have to think for themselves and formulate these answers themselves" - Female, 66

By helping the client reflect for themselves, this could lead to personal insight for these clients. If the social workers gave these answers, it would not really be empowerment in its true sense. As this social worker said, the client has to formulate these answers themselves for it to be of any real value in this professional contact.

Social workers also discussed the differences they could experience in groups, and individual empowerment. Some of the social worker preferred to have group works, while others preferred individual forms of empowerment practices. For those social workers that preferred individual contact, it was often mentioned it was easier to keep the focus on the unique client;

"I think there are both pros and cons to the individual contact, a pro is there is only one. It is one person, one person’s thoughts, one person’s will, one person’s interest, and it is then steered in one direction. The ideas that come up in the room as we sit, it gets narrower" - Female, 34

As the focus is on one client will and wishes, it gets easier for the social worker to handle the client situation, and keep ones focus on this individual client. A risk of this more individual focus that Leonardesen (2005) brings up is that social workers can become adversaries to their clients in this way. The client may perceive the social worker as a moralising agent with an ideological agenda not in-tune with the clients will or wishes. But if you also looked to the relational aspects around the client to get a more holistic view, as many of these social workers
had discussed by having a good client perspective. This risk of becoming an adversary to the clients diminished (Leonardesen, 2005; Yip, 2004).

"We work with people, and then you have to evaluate different opinions and thoughts that help in our work. To lift up all the aspects that may be needed to be successful in one's work" - Female, 50

As this social worker discuss, it is important to see the client in a holistic sense, and to see the problems these clients had from many different perspectives was deemed to be necessary to be successful in these aspects of empowering clients.

5.2.2 Group empowerment

Most of the social workers had some experience with group works, but it could vary a great deal how much focus they had on this aspect of client work. For some of the social worker, the majority of the client work was done in groups. For others a more individual contact often occurred at the beginning, but could then develop into group forms when the client was ready for it. It was often seen as a great strength to have clients in groups, since the clients could then relate their own experiences to others. This could often lead to a realization for the client that they were not alone with their problems, and that there were other people with similar problems. According to Yip (2004), this would be empowerment practices done on the interpersonal level, where the focus would be on strengthening supportive social network for its clients. Many of the social workers discussed these aspects of gaining support through group work that also have strong grounds in the empowerment literature (Leonardesen, 2005; Parson, 1991; Jônsson, 2010).

"I think a strength in group work is to be able to work with recognition and acceptance, that there is that opportunity for those who participate. To be able to see that there are others who have the same needs as me" - Male, 28

This social worker tells how he experience clients gain recognition from others with similar problems, which can lead to an acceptance of the problematics that the social worker themselves cannot provide. By seeing that other had similar problems as oneself, helped the clients with accepting these problems for themselves also. Multiple social workers mention how results could be seen more clearly when working in groups, and how the group could start to help each other in different ways that the social worker alone would not be able to do. Social workers also mentioned that when they were working in groups, it could often lead to results that they could not predict. This could lead to new ways for the social worker to see the problems clients had, or become aware of different solutions to problems they themselves had not thought about. Social workers often felt they themselves learned new things when working in groups, compared to when they worked more individually. This is in accordance with these more relational forms of empowerment, were the focus shifts from the individual himself into the context the individual lives in (Leonardesen, 2005). One result from one of these group works that a social worker talked about, was how he and his colleague worked with a group of
parents that started to night patrol their neighbourhood to calm down the area at night. This was similar results as Parson (1991) reported when working with empowerment practices for a group of single mothers. The group created its own autonomy, and the social worker described it as;

"On the group's own initiative, they started patrolling at night, and went on night patrolling training. What we did was help them get this forum to meet, talk and discuss about how they can regain power and influence their own situation, and then they created this. It is perhaps a prime example of empowerment" - Male, 26

As this social worker said, this could probably be seen as a prime example of successful empowerment practice as the social worker facilitated the opportunity for this group to change their own situation. This could be seen as how the interpersonal level of empowerment practice started to evolve unto the political level, since this group started to act in collective actions to influence the area they lived in (Yip, 2004). But with that said, there can also be many problems with working in groups, both for the social worker, and for the clients themselves. Some of the social workers discuss how it could often be easier to lose the agenda of the meeting. The group dynamic could draw itself in different directions, and the social worker could at times feel they were losing control over their position in the group. Sometimes this did not need to be a bad thing, but at other times the social worker had to struggle with taking the agenda back. Especially if it turned into a direction that could contradict the purpose of the group works. One social worker whom worked with addiction treatment had this to say;

"I have to be very clear about my role as a group leader, to put a stop when it pulls in the wrong direction. Now you are on your way and is talking very positively about drinking and that is not really what we are supposed to do here, so I would like us to change the subject and talk about this instead" - Female, 66

This social worker was giving an example how to act when the group meeting took a negative turn in directions. This could probably be understood from the client side that the social worker was becoming one of these moralising agents that Leonardesen (2005) discusses. But still, this was done in the purpose of keeping the group agenda on track and not be derailed into something that could be negative for its participants. Other problems that could occur for the clients was that they could be lost in the crowd of other clients whom took more space in the meeting. One social worker said they experienced some clients had trouble sharing their problems in groups because there may be different form of group dynamics going on. There could also occur conflicts between the clients in the group, and the social worker then had to mediate the situation. These problems are described in multiple of these earlier group works, as trust often was needed to be built in the group before any real changes could occur (Parson, 1991; Sjöberg et al, 2015; Jönsson, 2010). Even if there were these kind of problems in group work, most of the time it could be seen as a strength to have clients with similar problems sharing their experiences with each other. It was important to remember that different methods worked differently for different clients, and one should never be forced to participate in groups if one was not comfortable with it.
5.3 Professional conflicts

All the social workers could recognize that there at times were conflicts among the values grounds inside the social work section and its organizations. It could be experienced in a multitude of different ways it affects them in their work and contact with clients. At times, these conflicting values or regulation was not seen as anything of greater concern. But at other times they could experience it as very hindering in their roles, and in the worst case as damaging to their client relations. The most common theme of conflict was of different roles the social workers had to be able to take and uphold, but many also talked about conflicting organization structures and regulations that affected them strongly in their work.

5.3.1 Role conflicts

All of the social workers had at some point experienced conflicting roles in their professional life. It could be both from private concerns, or professional aspects. If the conflict was caused from one's private concerns, it was often caused by different values from one’s private life that was not in line with values, guidelines or regulations that were supposed to be in the workplace.

"I know that I once thought it was something I had to stand for, because I worked in the workplace and needed to keep up the rules that the workplace had. But then I felt that it caused conflicts at time [...]. Yeah, things I could not understand why, or the purpose of. I may be able to understand them from above, that there is a good idea behind it, but it did not feel right when I did it. It did not feel right inside of me" - Female, 33

This social worker discussed an earlier workplace she had been working at, where she had experienced some guidelines as harmful to clients she worked with. This had caused great conflicts when she had to uphold these guidelines that she did not agree with. The social workers could often handle these personal conflicts in different ways, but some of them told that if these values conflicts had been too great, this had led them to change jobs. This goes in-line with what Dellgran & Höjer (2005) discuss about the process of individual professionalization, and how changing one's workplace can lead to a further professionalization process. Many of the social workers said they found better workplaces which were more in line with their own values after changing positions. One can interpret this as the further into the careers these social workers came, the more in-tune they got with the value systems of their workplaces. A danger of this is that these negative structures in professional organizations may not be challenged, as the social worker instead leaves the organization. Others told that it was part of being professional to be able to differentiate one's personal values with those of the workplace as discussed in the category of being professional.

"Because we are subject to a public administration, and then we are expected to follow the laws and guidelines that exist. You simply have to accept that this is how it is at times" - Male, 53
This social worker told how they at times just had to accept following guidelines and regulations that existed in their workplace, and how this was part of being a professional. A risk of this could be that social workers that just follow these guidelines do not reflect the professional doxa that may exist. As Garrett (2007) argues for, it could be important that social workers engage with critical thinking in regards to professional doxa, as this can lead to further development and a better practice, instead of turning off and just following these guidelines blindly. But still, it could be hard to question rules and guidelines that is intrinsic to the workplace and its organization, even if one can see that they at times may do harm. One social worker told about how they experienced that they had woven these different values, guidelines and regulation into their professional role, and how it could cause conflicts if one did not do so;

"My professional values do not come from myself, but I have been forced to discuss with myself if they are something that I agree with. If I think they are important. In some way I think they have been woven together, and if they are not woven together, I think it will be difficult and that they can start to collide with each other" - Female, 33

By having had this ethical discussion with oneself, this social worker experienced they could handle these conflicts when they occurred. But as is also shown, if one did not weave them together, they could start to collide instead. Sometimes these conflicting roles could be caused by workplace regulations that made the social worker have professional conflicts. It could be that different regulations stood in contrast to each other, making the social worker question their actions, or what was the proper action to take in some cases. They could feel pressed to take actions that they did not really think was the best action to take. This is something that Svensson (2011) described when he talked about how professionals may have to adjust themselves unto organizational structures and strategies even when it was in conflict with their professional knowledge. This was clearly described by a social worker whom had worked with family placements for children earlier in his career.

"It may have happened from time to time that I have been pressured to make a placement even when I did not really think it was needed, or to maintain a placement when I thought they should be able to move home" - Male, 53

This social worker tells how they had to act in ways they really did not agree with because they felt pressured to do so. Where this pressure came from was unclear, but one can assume it being from these organizational structures that surrounded the situation as this was one of the parts that was discussed when the social worker talked about this.

Some social workers experienced that in their position they had a certain kind of power, and it was of importance to see how this power was used in their professional roles since it could be used both in positive and negative ways. It was often seen as important that these power aspects in the professional roles were used in a positive way, but it could also lead to role conflicts for social workers when this power aspects were experienced in more negative forms. Järviven (2002) brings up this aspect of power that is ingrained in the helping role of a social
workers, and how it holds a symbolic power aspect over its clients. This can be an unreflected doxa for many social workers, how they actually hold a power position towards their clients. If this don’t become reflected, this position of power could cause unintended damage to the client relation.

"But on the other hand, you have power in a way. On the one hand, you have power over this contact, this relationship, this meeting. But also, some means of power [...]. It is another power we have, it is built into the role itself as well, which can also be something good and positive”
- Female, 33

This social worker had reflected on this power aspects, and had thus become aware of the professional doxa of power in her positions as a social worker (Järvinen, 2002). Multiple social workers spoke about conflicting professional roles when this power aspect came into play in an organizational sense. Some of these social workers had a focus to work towards schools, and to be a bridge between families, schools and the social service. A lot of this work had a focus to de-dramatize the social service in different ways. At times they could experience that the schools tried to use this power aspect in negative ways, which caused some social workers professional conflicts in how they should handle the situation.

"It happens quite often that the school, or certain staff from there, want to use the fear that parents may feel for the social services and then want to use us in a meeting as a means of power […]. Then we must be on our toes that it could be such a meeting we have in front of us, where they think we should be used as a means of power or imminent threat" - Male, 28

This social worker had different methods to handle the situation, and had communicated to the schools that his purpose was not to be used as a threat of power. But still he could experience these conflicting roles from time to time, were the school tried to use him in a way that was not in line with his assignments or professional role. Evetts (2013) brings up how values and ideologies may differ between different professions in regards to professionalism, and this may be seen as one such example how the social services and the schools they at time work with, have different views of how things should be done. Robben et al (2012) discuss how the values between professionals whom work in multidisciplinary teams may have different value grounds, and that this may cause conflicts inside the cooperation.

"One part of my job is to try to de-dramatize the social services, because there are many rumours that the social services take children. One rumour is that there is a list of family homes and that the social services then come and pick up children and send them to Swedish families. So, it would be very counterproductive if the school uses us as a means of power” - Male, 26

As this social worker mention, it would be very counterproductive in their cooperation if the schools used his position as a means of power. He continues to discuss rumours that is often heard from clients he meets, and how there can often be a negative image of the social services in some groups he works with. What this social worker said about rumours of the social service
taking children for family homes, may not be too far from the truth according to another social
workers.

"But then there were some municipalities in Sweden that when it comes to children placed in
foster care, where there was an internal agenda to oppose contact with the biological parents
as far as possible". - Male, 53

This social worker whom had been working inside family placement told that earlier in his
career there had been an agenda in many municipalities to hinder biological parents to meet
their children. This had caused the social worker professional conflicts since his view was that
parents should have a right to meet their children. This topic of how the social services at times
systematically have worked with child placements is discussed by Karlsson (2018) as an
organizational failure in how the social service at times use this as an actual means of power.

5.3.2 Organizational conflicts

In the organizational aspects of social work, many social workers could feel that they were
restricted in there working roles in certain situations. Some social workers said that they could
meet clients with certain kind of problems, but were not allowed to work with those problems
since their professional role was not specialized in that area. It did not matter if the social
worker themselves thought they were capable to handle these problems. If it was not in their
work description, they should hand on the case to another instance. In some cases, this could
be with good purpose, but in other cases this could cause troubles both for the social worker
and the client in question. Especially if the client had so-called multiple-problematics, since it
then could be hard to work with these clients in a holistic sense. In worst case, this could lead
to clients "falling-between-the-cracks", or on the "side-lines" as one social worker expressed it;

"There is a gap between addiction treatment and psychiatry. They are two different worlds,
while many of our clients live in both. In other words, they have both mental illness and
substance abuse problems. If they abuse, they get nothing for their mental state and vice versa.
They end up on the side-lines for treatment" - Female, 33

This social worker explained how many of their clients had multiple-problematics which made
it hard for them to get holistic care, since these problematics could cancel out the different
services packages that was given. Many social workers could experience this was common in
certain clients group they worked with which caused frustrations among the social workers.

"Yes, this is what makes people fall between the cracks, because you do not fit completely in
this small square, and not the next square either. And then it will not be good for the client [...].
That's probably the biggest thing I see, and that's generally the case in the social services. It's
works as a square, it's like a pipeline" - Male, 28

As this social worker noted, if you did not fit into the small square that the social service has
provided, then there will be problems for this client. This is an area Järviven (2002) touch
upon when describing the organizational doxa of how the system create its clients and define
what kind of problems these clients may have. It’s clearly seen that some clients whom have multiple-problematics don’t always suit into the social services package of help. This could make social workers experience that their functions were at times restricted, as they could experience they had more to offer, but were not allowed to do so in their professional roles. This could be seen in the light of what Dellgran & Höjer (2005) discuss about the individual professionalization process, where these social workers had gained the competence of working with these problems from previous experiences, but was not allowed to in their current position due to organizational factors.

"There are certain groups for example, which are a bit forgotten in favour of other groups where I would like to go in and do more things, but cannot. It can be very difficult and frustrating, as I have no power over these parts. It is not part of my work area, although what I would like to do is to get involved" - Female, 50

This social worker experienced that some client groups got more attention than others, even if she saw that the need existed for both groups. She experienced that in her professional role, she could offer services for these groups that were more forgotten, but since this was outside her area of work was not allowed too. This could be frustrating for the social workers that at times felt they had the capacity to actually work with these clients’ problems, but was not allowed since organizational guidelines told differently.

"One thing I often come across is that our function is as a transfer unit. We must act as a transfer unit, and then ensure that families, parents and children end up with the right support effort. I really feel that this function, with the needs these families have, I could personally perform as I have the skills required. But then I still have to pass it on to someone who has this competence on paper within their role" - Male, 28

Some of the social workers worked inside an organization that often was used as a transfer unit. At times, as this social worker told, he could handle the problems that clients had without the need to actually send them to another instance, but were in many cases not allowed to do this. This could in one way be seen as an organizational failure when the social workers have the competence to work with clients’ problems, but due to organizational regulations still were not allowed too (Dellgran & Höjer, 2005; Diefenbach, 2009; Svensson, 2011). This function as a transfer unit did have some benefits for clients, since the social worker could help clients with finding directions, instead of the client being forced to find this information on their own. For this transfer unit to function properly, it was important that there was a good cooperation between different social instances and organizations. This cooperation could vary to a great degree. This was not just a problem for this organization that was working as a transfer unit, but seemed to be a general theme inside the social work section. At times, there were good working cooperation between different social work organizations, but there could also be times when organizations did not have working protocols that was actually needed for a good cooperation. Especially between functions that were in different areas of the public section. Cooperation between different public services could at times be very difficult since they were based on different values and regulations, and social workers could then often become
restricted in their professional autonomy. These problems of cooperation between different services and organizations are something multiple authors have brought up (Breit et al, 2018; Evetts, 2013; Robben et al, 2012). This caused problems for both the social worker and the clients when this cooperation did not work in its proper ways.

"But there we have something that we must work with from outside actors, which requires that we cooperate with the police and other authorities. But the conditions do not really exist for us to succeed completely in this assignment" - Female, 50

This social worker explained how they were supposed to work with a function in which they needed to have contact with other authorities in the public sector, but this function had no proper protocols in how this cooperation should work. The guidelines for the cooperation were unclear, and this made this function not work in its intended way. A reason for why cooperation did not work as intended, could be how the organizations was structured. But another factor that many social workers brought up, was that of economic aspects, and how economy could affect the guidelines inside their organization.

"I think this has a lot to do with economy. Economy and priorities, then it can also sometimes be the organization, and how we organize ourselves. But a lot has to do with the economy" - Female, 50

This factor of economy is something multiple authors have brought up could cause professionals conflicts inside an organization, since it could often be that this economical factor had a greater worth then good services in the eyes of organizational structures (Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt, 1995; Webb, 2001). This could lead clients not getting the correct treatment in some cases, as a few social workers discussed;

"But precisely in this job, I can feel that finances are such a part. You may see a need for a treatment because the client wants to go to a special treatment, have applied for the treatment, and you have helped them with this process. But then they get rejected for economical reasons" - Female, 33

As this social worker explains, she could see how client got rejected treatments that was needed even when she herself had tried to help the client with gaining the treatment. This due to it being economical factors inside the organization that made the client not gain the treatment that was actually needed. If this is the case, this should be of great concerns for professionals when following these values that have been previous discussed, as this would be in conflict with what many of them said while discussing the importance of having a strong client perspective. It can clearly be seen that this client perspective would be difficult to uphold when one can see that the right treatment is not offered. This could even be damaging for clients that is placed inside a service package due to economic reasons, that is not suited for the concerns the client has. Jönsson (2010) brings up how economical factors could be seen as disempowering in some sense when the focus is put on development and economic growth instead of the need of the client, which would clearly be the case here.
5.4 Concluding remarks on results

As these three themes of professional values, empowerment and professional conflicts shows, social workers had much to say on these topics. They lifted up both positive and negative aspects on these topics, and a broad range of perspectives were given in regards to what it meant to be a professional social worker inside different kinds of organizations. Some of these perspectives seemed more reflected than others, but all of the social workers had in some way struggled with the questions about values and ethics in their professional roles. Many of the social workers could see there was structural problems inside their organizations which at times could cause harm to clients, but often felt powerless in regard to these structural failures. What social workers could focus on instead was doing the best they could do inside the professional role they had, and try to lessen the effects of these structural failures that could be experienced by having a strong client perspective.

6. DISCUSSION

This section contains a result discussion which continues into a method and ethical discussion, thereafter concluding this research paper with my own reflections and learnings from writing this paper.

6.1 Result discussion

In this section the results are connected back to the research questions and related to the social work profession at both a local and global level in regards to professional doxa.

6.1.1 Professional Values

"How do social workers relate to professional values?"

As could be seen, social workers had many ways to relate to different kind of professional values, and how they construe them. It was often seen that some of these values came from the organizations they worked inside, some from professional knowledge and experiences, and some from their personal life that they had ingrained into their professional role. The result shows that to be professional meant to be able to use one's personal skills in a way that did not become private in their professional roles. The values the social workers brought up, were often in-line with the different ethical guidelines that existed inside the profession, and many of these values were focused on being able to give the best available action for the clients, meaning having a strong client perspective. The social workers discussed difficulties they had experienced in upholding some of these values, as for example how some organizational
structures made it hard to work in a holistic sense with clients. The social workers in these cases did their best with the limitations they had in their professional roles, and saw it as important working with the clients at the level they were able. Results shows that although the social workers worked in different organizations, they had similar views on values and practices with clients. It was seen that the ethical guidelines often represented what social workers valued in their work, even if there could be some differentiations from professional to professional. In the overall picture of things, these ethical guidelines were something that most social workers recognized themselves in strongly, and was mostly how they practiced their work from an ethical standpoint (Akademikerförbundet SSR, 2017). If you lift these values up unto their origins from these global value grounds discussed early in this study, you could see that these Swedish social workers unwittingly followed many of these global values, even if they were not aware of them being seen as global professional values (Weiss, 2005; Sewpaul & Jones, 2004; IFSW, 2018). In regards to this, it can be seen that these global values of the social work profession have become ingrained into the practices of Swedish social workers through different ethical and professional standards that have been developed on the global stage. Even if these social workers were not aware themselves of how connected these values were to these global guidelines, as they construed these values as just professional practices. This could be seen in the light of the perspective of professional doxa, were these social workers unknowingly use a value system based on global practices without being aware of where these values came from. As many authors points out, a doxa may be used without it being know to its practitioners (Keddell, 2016; Johansson et al, 2019). With that said, it doesn’t necessarily need to be a negative thing that these social workers did not seem aware of how closely these values they discussed were connected to global practices, but it’s an indication of how this work for a global social work profession with similar practices and value systems seems to be arriving at some success in this global context (Jones & Truell, 2012; Sewpaul & Jones, 2004; Weiss, 2005; Weiss-Gal & Welbourne, 2008).

6.1.2 Empowerment

"How do social workers use empowerment practices in their work?"

The two primary ways to work with empowerment was either in groups, or with individual clients. These two empowerment practices were done somewhat differently, and the social workers had to adjust themselves to these different practices. Some of the social workers preferred to work individually, while others preferred group work situation, but most of them had experiences from both types of client contact. The main goal of these empowerment practices was often seen as helping the clients to be able to help themselves, and the professional was seen as the tool for this social change to be able to occur. Results shows that many empowerment practices had a focus on the individual aspects of empowerment, meaning to have clients be able to manage disempowering situations they exist inside. But at times there was also great work towards these other levels of empowerment practices of a more relational nature, as in the group works with disempowered or marginalized groups. Sjöberg (2015) discusses that much of empowerment practices in Sweden don’t seem to have a focus on strengthen social network for members in vulnerable communities. But from the results in this
study there seemed to be great work in this direction of communal work inside vulnerable communities. There was still a general focus on individualistic empowerment practice, but there was also a lot of work towards the relational aspects of empowerment done in different kind of communities or groups. If you look into Yips (2004) five levels of empowerment practice, it could be seen that most of the empowerment practices was done either on the personal or interpersonal level. But in some cases, this interpersonal level could also grow into the political level as with the group with parents mentioned in the results who started to organize themselves in the area they lived in. At the professional level, one could see that empowerment occurred in the way of collegial support or tuition, where the social workers helped each other in different ways to reflect on their work. The level that seemed to be the weakest level was that of organizations, as there could be many organizational structures that actually were experienced as disempowering for both social workers and clients. It could be seen that the professional doxa of an individualized focus of empowerment which have grown in recent years, in concurrence with the neoliberal trends inside the social work profession, was the one that seemed to hold strongest (Sjöberg et al, 2015; Leonardsen, 2007; Keddell, 2016; Kam, 2012). This seems to be in accordance with the global trends of how empowerment is usually done at the individualistic level, instead of the relational or structural levels. Even if some work in these areas were done as have been discussed, now during the covid-19 pandemic, this individualistic approach seemed to be the main way to work as many of the group-oriented works were either cancelled or on-hold.

6.1.3 Professional conflicts

"What professional conflicts do social workers experience in their organizations?"

The social workers could experience multiple different professional conflicts in their organizations, some could be from personal grounds, others from professional or structural context. Many social workers had at times experienced some kind of role conflict, it could be that they had to act in way they really did not want to, or hold a position they were not comfortable with. This could lead to them acting in ways they knew was not in the best interest for clients, especially when it was organizational structures they had to uphold in different ways. Many social workers had found methods to handle these conflicts, and in some cases, it could even lead them to changing work places if these conflicts did not settle. Social workers talked about the position of power they at times felt in their contact with clients, and the importance to be aware of this power position they had. Järviven (2002) discuss this intrinsic power position as a doxa which is unreflected inside the social work field, but in these interviews this aspect seemed reflected by most of the social workers, as they were aware of the position of power they had in contact with clients. This doxa of power did not seem as unreflected as a doxa usually is, even if some social workers seemed more aware of this than others. Many structural problems inside the organizations were brought up by social workers, as for example how there could be a gap in cooperation between different instances. At times, cooperation worked well, but at other times it would not work in optimal ways, and social workers could then see how this affected their clients. In worst case, it could be that they saw how clients "fell-between-the-cracks" when cooperation did not work in intended ways. Even
if social workers saw these problems in their organizations, they often felt powerless to do anything about it. It was often seen as above their level to handle, which in a way could make the social worker themselves feel powerless in these situations. It was often that social workers just had to adjust themselves unto the organizational structures, which is something that is discussed by Svensson (2011) as common when professional knowledge stands in contrast to organizational structures and regulations. Many social workers experienced that they often had a greater competence to work with clients then their organizations allowed for. They saw how they could work with certain client groups in more effective ways, or improve upon some area of work they had, but was in many cases not allowed to go outside the box of their positions. This was not the case for every social worker in their current position, but most had experienced this in different positions across their careers. This could cause frustrations for these social workers that saw how they had greater capacity then they were allowed to practice in their current positions. Here one can see that social workers felt restricted in some of these global guidelines that have been discussed, as for example in the work towards social justice that Solas (2008) brings up. The social workers were not in a position to challenge many of these unjust policies and practices even when they were aware of them. The last aspect that many social workers brought up as a problem inside their organizations was how they at times could see that economic factors had a greater worth then client outcome. Multiple social workers expressed how they saw clients could need certain treatments but due to economic reasons were not allowed to. These economical factors inside the social work profession are something multiple authors have brought up, and it is clearly shown this may affect clients in negative ways (Diefenbach, 2009; Pollitt, 1995, Webb, 2005). What I see as a great concern in reflecting on these results, is the professional value of following organizational guidelines, even when these guidelines may be seen as unethical. This seems to be one of the more common professional doxas that social workers apply due to restrictions in their professional autonomy.

6.1.4 Personal learnings

By writing this paper, I myself have gained a great insight into this debate of value grounds that is at the core of the social work profession, and learned how it relate to global concerns. After the interviews, many social workers expressed they had gained new perspectives and reflections about things inside their organizations. I’m personally glad that this research process has been able to provide some of these social workers insight into these professional doxas they may have experienced, but may have been unreflected until it got discussed. As Garrett (2007) brings up about the importance of reflecting on different kind of doxas, I think this is an important way to work with these problems. To get social workers to reflect on what they already know as these answers and concerns came from them. These reflections may make social workers more aware of negative aspects of organizational structures they work inside, which hopefully make them start to question these structures when they see them do harm to clients. After all, the client is the most important person in a professional sense according to most of these social workers, and then we as professionals should try to act in a way so this is shown.
6.2 Methodological discussion

In reflection on the methodological approach of this study, I will highlight three sections I experienced have been of concerns for the research process. The first is how the study started out as an inductive approach, but during the process evolved into using deductive means (Thomas, 2006; Hsueh & Shannon, 2005; Awuzie & Mcdermott, 2017). Due to the researcher's inexperience in combing these two approaches an unsureness of methodological concerns appeared during the result analysis. This may not have been of a concern if the researcher had been more decisive in his approach from the outset.

This leads us into the second concerns of analysis methodology. It was decided early in the process that the analysis would be some form of content analysis of the research data, but it was late in the research process the method of directed content analysis was chosen as the main approach to analysing the results (Hsueh & Shannon, 2005). A more coherent research analyse could probably have been done if the researcher had made this decision of analyse method early in the process as Kvale & Brinkman (2014) recommends as an important factor in the design of research projects.

The last concern leads us into the topic of ethics in analysing the content of the data gathered from participants. As this study translated the quotes from social workers, it would have strengthened the validity of the translations by contacting the social workers whom made the quotes to validate them (Kvale & Brinkman, 2014). It was decided not to do this due to time constraints for the researcher. The translations were instead validated by the research supervisor, and some minor adjustment was made in regards to his recommendations.

6.2.1 Ethics

During the research I have tried to uphold ethical principles and have a non-judgemental view on the way I have approached this process. But still I know it’s not possible to be completely objective, and that my subjectivity has affected the results I present in this study (Okasha, 2016). My leanings on hermeneutic principles helped me in this regard as this gave me a map of my own way of interpretations. By applying these principles, I have hopefully upheld a critical view on the data, and myself as I have been interpreting it (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018). But as I have upheld a critical view on the data and myself, this may also have made me highlight the critical aspects of what is not functioning inside social work organizations. There were many positive aspects of organizational structures that did function well that social workers spoke about, but this was not the focus of this study. The focus has been an approach of looking into conflicts of interest that social workers experience inside their field of work in relations to values, empowerment and organizational structures. I have tried to lift some positive aspects in regards to professional values and different empowerment methods that social workers have been using in their practices, but in regards to the structures of organizations I have held a more critical view in the result analysis. This may make it seem as the social workers in this study don't see many positive aspects of organizational structures, which would not be completely true as this just have not been the focus of this study.
6.3 Conclusions

This study has shown that the topic of professional values inside the social work section is a vast subject with many different forms of interpretations. We have looked into these values from perspectives of empowerment, organizational structures and the way doxa is used to construe these values. What can be seen is that these values have a key role in how social work is done inside organizations. It could be seen that these values often have connection to global trends inside the profession which the social workers themselves may not be aware of, as there have been much work done in the global arena to build a strong value core for a global social work profession. There are still differences between these global guidelines, and the specific ones used by social workers in their local context. However, the results shows that many of these value grounds in the global debate seems to go hand in hand with the local ones, as they have been influenced by projects on the global arena. It was common for social workers to experience different kind of conflicts when relating to these values, and how they worked in a practical sense as some organizational structures was not intoned with the values of the professionals. Social workers seemed to be aware of these conflicts, but were in many situations not capable to challenge these organizational structures when they were in contrast to professional values. For many of the social workers it seemed that even if they wanted to improve these organizational structures, they had no possibility to act upon them. I would personally recommend exploring these topics in a deeper sense in regards to dysfunctional organizational structures and how they are upheld by different forms of professionals doxas that may cause harm to the integrity of the social work profession.
REFERENCES


