

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN AN ORGANIZATION

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research work was carried out by **Blessing Naomi Dennis** with Matriculation Number: **SSC2106447** in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

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DATE

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty who is gracious and kind and has provided me guidance and protection throughout my stay in school. This work is also dedicated to my mom, Mrs. Dennis Blessing.

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First and foremost, I express my deepest gratitude to God Almighty, whose grace, guidance, and unfailing love have been my constant source of strength and inspiration throughout this journey.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of social workers in organizations, focusing on their functions, contributions to employee welfare and productivity, as well as the challenges they encounter in organizational settings. The research employed a descriptive survey design, which was considered appropriate for obtaining the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of employees and management staff regarding the relevance of social workers in workplace environments. The design enabled the collection of first-hand data from a sizeable group of respondents without manipulating variables, thereby ensuring that the findings reflected the realities of organizational life. The population of the study consisted of 200 employees and management staff drawn from selected organizations, including corporate bodies, educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and non-governmental organizations. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select a representative sample of 100 respondents, ensuring fair inclusion of both management and non-management staff. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire divided into three sections, which covered demographic details, functions of social workers, and their contributions and challenges. A four-point Likert scale was used to measure responses, facilitating clear interpretation of the data. To ensure validity, the instrument was reviewed by experts in social work and research methodology, while reliability was established using the test-retest method with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, with results presented in tables for easy interpretation. Ethical standards, including informed consent, confidentiality, and organizational permission, were strictly adhered to throughout the study. The findings highlight that social workers play a crucial role in promoting employee welfare, enhancing productivity, and mediating organizational conflicts. However, challenges such as lack of institutional recognition, limited resources, and organizational constraints affect their efficiency. The study concludes that organizations that integrate social workers into their systems are better positioned to address employee needs holistically, improve workplace relations, and foster overall organizational growth.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The concept of social work as a profession has evolved significantly over the years, moving from its early roots in charitable and volunteer work to becoming a highly specialized and regulated field of practice. Social workers are trained professionals who assist individuals, families, groups, and communities in enhancing their social functioning and improving their quality of life. While the traditional image of social work is often associated with community-based interventions, child protection services, or healthcare settings, the scope of the profession has expanded into new areas one of which is the organizational or workplace setting.

Organizations today are more than just economic units where goods are produced or services are rendered. They are social systems comprised of individuals who bring with them diverse cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, emotional needs, and unique challenges. In such a setting, organizational productivity is closely tied to employee well-being. This is where the role of social workers becomes particularly significant. They serve as

mediators between the human element of the workplace and the institution's operational objectives, ensuring that personal issues, interpersonal conflicts, or structural barriers do not hinder performance.

Modern workplaces are increasingly complex and fast-paced. Globalization, technological advancement, and economic pressures have created an environment where employees are expected to deliver results under tight deadlines, sometimes in highly competitive conditions. While this has increased efficiency in many organizations, it has also brought about rising levels of stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and interpersonal conflicts. Employees may also face personal crises such as family breakdown, health challenges, financial stress, or substance abuse which inevitably spill over into their work life. Without adequate support, these issues can lead to absenteeism, low productivity, high turnover, and in severe cases, workplace accidents or misconduct.

Social workers in organizations are equipped to address these challenges holistically. They do not merely react to problems but proactively engage in prevention, education, and policy development. They are involved in counseling employees, mediating disputes, providing referrals to appropriate services, facilitating employee assistance programs, and advocating for workplace

policies that promote inclusion, equality, and mental health. In some organizations, social workers are integrated into human resources departments; in others, they serve as independent consultants or are embedded within welfare units. The importance of their role cannot be overstated in organizations that value sustainability and corporate social responsibility. By addressing the social and emotional needs of employees, social workers contribute to a healthy organizational climate, which in turn promotes innovation, loyalty, and long-term success. Furthermore, the presence of social workers aligns with global trends emphasizing workplace well-being, diversity and inclusion, and ethical labor practices.

In countries with well-established social work systems, such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, organizational social work is already a recognized specialization. In Nigeria and other developing nations, however, the integration of social work into organizational structures is still emerging. There remains a need to raise awareness among employers, policymakers, and the general public about the tangible benefits of having social workers in organizational settings.

Thus, this study seeks to critically examine the role of social workers in organizations, highlighting their functions, contributions, challenges, and the strategies needed to maximize their effectiveness.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In many organizations, the welfare of employees is still viewed as secondary to operational and financial goals. This narrow focus often leads to neglecting the human factors that drive productivity and organizational growth. Social problems within the workplace such as harassment, discrimination, conflict, and stress are either left unaddressed or handled in ways that are reactive rather than preventive.

The absence of professional social work services in some organizations means that employees have limited access to structured support systems when dealing with personal or work-related issues. Even in organizations where welfare units exist, the lack of trained social workers often results in an incomplete approach to resolving such issues. Furthermore, there is often a lack of understanding among employers about the wide range of competencies that social workers bring, leading to underutilization of their skills.

These gaps have significant implications. When employee welfare is not prioritized, morale drops, turnover increases, and the organizational culture may deteriorate. This ultimately affects the organization's productivity, reputation, and sustainability. The problem is compounded by the fact that in many developing countries, including Nigeria, organizational social work is not yet fully institutionalized, and policies to support it are minimal or poorly enforced.

Therefore, it is imperative to investigate how social workers operate within organizations, the extent of their contribution, and the challenges they face in fulfilling their roles.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the role of social workers in an organization.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the key responsibilities of social workers within organizational settings.
2. Assess how social workers contribute to employee welfare.
3. Assess how social workers contribute to organizational productivity.

4. Explore the challenges faced by social workers in carrying out their duties in organizations.

5. Recommend strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of social workers in organizational environments.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the main functions of social workers in an organization?

2. In what ways do social workers contribute to employee welfare

3. In what ways do social workers contribute to employee overall productivity?

4. What challenges do social workers encounter in organizational settings?

5. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the effectiveness of social workers in organizations?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform organizational policies and practices concerning employee welfare and productivity.

For organizations: This study will provide evidence on the importance of integrating social work services into organizational structures, which can result in a healthier workforce and improved productivity.

For social workers: The findings will help professionals in the field better understand their potential impact within organizations and advocate for greater recognition and utilization of their services.

For policymakers: The study can serve as a basis for developing or strengthening policies that promote employee welfare through professional social work services.

For academia: This research will contribute to scholarly discussions on workplace welfare, social work practice, and human resource development.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the role of social workers in organizations. The term “organization” in this context encompasses both profit-oriented and non-profit institutions, including corporate entities, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, and government agencies. While the study references global best practices, it will pay particular attention to the Nigerian context, where the integration of social workers into organizations is still developing.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study may face certain limitations, including:

Access to Data: Some organizations may be unwilling to disclose sensitive information related to employee welfare.

Time Constraints: The study will be conducted within a limited timeframe, which may affect the depth of data collection.

Respondent bias: Participants may underreport negative workplace experiences due to fear of repercussions.

Efforts will be made to minimize these limitations through assurances of confidentiality and the use of multiple data sources.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Social Worker: A professional trained to assist individuals, groups, and communities in enhancing their social functioning and coping with challenges, often through counseling, advocacy, and resource mobilization.

Organization: A structured group of individuals working together to achieve specific goals, whether in the public, private, or non-profit sector.

Employee Welfare: The overall well-being of employees in terms of physical, mental, emotional, and social health, both within and outside the workplace.

Productivity: The measure of how efficiently resources are used to produce goods or services in an organization.

Organizational Social Work: A branch of social work practice that focuses on addressing social, emotional, and welfare-related issues within workplace settings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Preamble

This chapter presents a detailed review of literature relevant to the topic “The Role of Social Workers in an Organization.” It covers conceptual clarifications, theoretical foundations, historical evolution of organizational social work, roles and functions of social workers in different settings, challenges they face, and the implications for employee welfare and organizational productivity. The chapter also draws from global perspectives and contextualizes them within the Nigerian environment.

2.2 Conceptual Clarifications

2.2.1 Social Work

Social work is a profession committed to helping individuals, groups, and communities enhance their capacity for social functioning and improve their quality of life. The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW, 2014) defines social work as “a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and

the empowerment and liberation of people.” Social workers use a variety of methods such as counseling, advocacy, and community organization to address individual and collective challenges. Social work is more than just an academic course or profession; it is a discipline that is deeply human-centered and interconnects with other fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, law, and education. It is a field that prepares individuals to understand human behavior, motives, and decisions, while also equipping them to influence change in society and organizations. A social worker is versatile. They can function in hospitals, schools, courts, NGOs, welfare organizations, justice systems, and even in corporate organizations. They can act as counselors, advocates, human resource officers, program managers, evaluators, or service designers. They are trained to analyze situations, design services, and implement policies that improve relationships between individuals, groups, and institutions.

In organizational settings, social workers bring unique value. They serve as program evaluators, project managers, data analysts, and even executive assistants. They also play the role of bridging relationships between employees and employers, organizations and society, companies and stakeholders, and even between organizations and the marketplace. Social workers, therefore, do

not just exist in traditional settings like hospitals or schools; they are equally important in corporate, religious, agricultural, and community development spaces. Social work is guided by ethics, theories, and principles that shape its practice. It is not a profession of guesswork but a discipline grounded in knowledge drawn from multiple fields. Every decision and intervention is supported by established methods and ethical standards, making social work a serious and respected profession.

Ultimately, social work is about people. It is about fostering growth, ensuring fairness, and designing systems that make life better for individuals and communities. Every organization that values human relationships, development, and sustainability should recognize the place of social workers within their structure.

2.2.2 Social Workers in Organizational Settings

Organizational social work refers to the application of social work principles and methods within workplace settings. Here, the focus shifts from community-based interventions to organizational contexts, where social workers support employees in addressing personal and work-related challenges

that can affect productivity. This includes providing counseling, conflict mediation, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and welfare advocacy.

An organization is a structured group of people working together towards a common goal. This may include business enterprises, government institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational institutions, and healthcare systems. Organizations are both social and economic systems, making them susceptible to human and structural challenges that require professional intervention.

The presence of social workers in organizational settings has become increasingly important as work environments grow more complex and employees face diverse challenges that affect both their personal lives and job performance. Traditionally, social workers were primarily associated with clinical practice, child welfare, or community development, but recent literature highlights their expanding role in corporate and organizational structures (Malik, 2023). In organizational contexts, social workers serve as professionals who bridge the gap between human resource management and the psychosocial needs of employees.

According to Akpan (2020), social workers are well-positioned within organizations because of their training in human behavior, crisis intervention, and systemic problem-solving. They provide counseling services to employees, mediate in cases of workplace disputes, and advocate for fair and equitable treatment. Their expertise allows them to address issues such as workplace stress, harassment, discrimination, and other challenges that undermine employee well-being. Beyond individual support, social workers also contribute to organizational policy formulation, ensuring that company policies reflect inclusivity, respect, and concern for employee welfare (Thompson, 2021).

Social workers in organizational settings can take different roles depending on the structure and nature of the organization. Some work in-house as part of the employee assistance program (EAP), while others may serve as consultants brought in to resolve particular crises or provide specialized training. Ojo (2019) explains that social workers can be involved in organizational development, program evaluation, and policy advocacy, which makes their role multidimensional. Additionally, social workers play an essential role during organizational change, such as mergers, downsizing, or restructuring. They act as mediators who help employees cope with the uncertainty, stress, and anxiety that accompany such transitions. By helping management understand the human

side of organizational operations, they ensure that employees feel supported and valued. As Nair (2022) notes, organizations that incorporate social work services tend to report higher levels of employee loyalty, reduced turnover, and improved organizational climate.

2.2.3 Social Workers and Employee Welfare

Employee welfare refers to the range of services, benefits, and facilities offered by employers to ensure the comfort, well-being, and overall satisfaction of their workforce. The role of social workers in promoting employee welfare cannot be overstated. They provide both preventive and remedial services that enhance the quality of work life and support employees in balancing personal and professional responsibilities.

According to Okeke (2020), the scope of employee welfare has evolved beyond basic provisions such as healthcare and housing to include mental health support, stress management programs, career counseling, and interventions for work-life balance. Social workers are uniquely trained to address these areas because they apply holistic approaches in dealing with human problems. They work directly with employees facing challenges such as

substance abuse, financial strain, domestic violence, or mental health difficulties, which may otherwise impair their job performance.

Chukwu (2021) highlights that employee welfare is not only about addressing problems but also about fostering a positive and supportive work environment. Social workers achieve this by organizing workshops, wellness programs, and group support systems that empower employees with coping strategies. They also collaborate with human resource departments to ensure that welfare policies align with employee needs. For instance, social workers may advocate for flexible working arrangements, maternity and paternity leave, or support systems for employees with chronic illnesses.

Furthermore, employee welfare programs driven by social workers often serve as preventive mechanisms. By providing early intervention, social workers help prevent minor issues from escalating into major crises that could disrupt work performance. Ojo (2019) emphasizes that such programs reduce absenteeism, improve morale, and build resilience among employees. Importantly, they also enhance employees' sense of belonging and trust in their organizations.

In addition, social workers ensure equity in employee welfare distribution. In many workplaces, some employees may feel neglected due to

systemic biases or managerial oversight. Social workers advocate for inclusivity, ensuring that marginalized groups such as women, persons with disabilities, or minority staff have equal access to welfare programs (Ahmed, 2022). This advocacy reinforces the ethical obligation of organizations to create a just and supportive environment for all workers.

2.2.4 Social Workers and Organizational Productivity

Organizational productivity refers to the efficiency with which inputs such as labor, materials, and capital are converted into goods and services. While much emphasis is often placed on technological advancements and managerial efficiency, the human element remains central to productivity. Social workers play a significant role in ensuring that employees the backbone of organizations are physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared to perform optimally.

Lewis (2018) explains that social workers contribute to productivity by addressing the personal and interpersonal issues that could hinder an employee's performance. Issues such as workplace conflicts, job dissatisfaction, and unresolved stress can significantly reduce productivity. By offering counseling and mediation services, social workers create an environment where

employees can focus on their work without distractions from unresolved problems.

Moreover, social workers foster better communication within organizations. Miscommunication between staff and management is a common cause of inefficiency. Social workers, through their mediation skills, promote open dialogue and mutual understanding, which helps reduce conflicts and improve cooperation among employees (Thompson, 2021). This collaborative environment ultimately enhances organizational productivity. In addition, social workers play a crucial role in employee retention, which directly impacts productivity. High turnover disrupts workflow and increases recruitment and training costs. By improving employee welfare and promoting job satisfaction, social workers help organizations retain skilled workers (Chukwu, 2021). Retention ensures that organizational knowledge and expertise are preserved, thereby sustaining productivity levels.

Social workers also contribute to organizational productivity by facilitating corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. CSR programs strengthen the relationship between organizations and their surrounding communities. As Ahmed (2022) notes, social workers' expertise in community engagement and social development enables organizations to implement CSR

projects that not only benefit society but also enhance the company's reputation and market value. This, in turn, leads to increased customer loyalty and long-term productivity.

2.2.5 Challenges of Social Workers in Organizational Settings

While the role of social workers in organizations is critical, they face several challenges that limit their effectiveness. One major challenge is the lack of recognition and understanding of their role. Many organizations still view employee issues as the sole responsibility of human resource departments, thereby underutilizing or overlooking the value of professional social workers (Okafor, 2020). This lack of recognition often leads to role ambiguity, where the duties of social workers overlap with those of HR personnel, creating confusion and reducing efficiency (Adeyemi, 2019).

Resource constraints are another significant challenge. Many organizations do not allocate sufficient budgets to welfare services, making it difficult for social workers to implement comprehensive programs. As Eze (2022) observes, this limitation often results in minimal interventions that do not address the root causes of employee challenges.

Social workers also face high caseloads and the emotional burden of addressing complex employee issues. Given that organizational environments are diverse, social workers may encounter problems ranging from personal crises to systemic workplace conflicts. The emotional demands of dealing with such challenges can lead to burnout, reducing the effectiveness of social workers (Smith, 2021).

Cultural and organizational barriers also hinder the work of social workers. In many workplaces, there is still stigma attached to seeking counseling or mental health support. Employees may be reluctant to approach social workers for fear of being judged or discriminated against (Nair, 2022). Additionally, rigid bureaucratic structures and policies within organizations often limit the scope of social workers' interventions, making it difficult to achieve lasting impact.

Finally, professional isolation remains a challenge. In many organizations, social workers operate as lone practitioners without sufficient professional support or supervision. This isolation can hinder their professional growth and limit opportunities for collaboration (Okeke, 2020).

2.3 Historical Development of Organizational Social Work

The roots of organizational social work can be traced back to the early 20th century in industrialized countries. In the United States, the “industrial social work” movement emerged in response to poor working conditions and the exploitation of labor during the industrial revolution. Early social workers were employed by factories to help workers with housing, health, and family problems, thereby improving attendance and productivity.

By the mid-20th century, the concept evolved into more structured Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), particularly in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. These programs integrated social workers into corporate welfare units and human resources departments. Today, organizational social work encompasses a wide range of functions, including diversity management, mental health support, and policy advocacy.

In Nigeria, the institutionalization of social work within organizations is relatively recent. While welfare officers have been present in government agencies, the employment of professionally trained social workers in corporate organizations is still growing. Factors such as increasing awareness of mental health issues, workplace diversity, and labor rights are driving this trend.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Systems Theory

Systems theory views organizations as complex systems made up of interdependent parts. Problems in one part of the system (e.g., employee welfare) can affect the functioning of the entire organization. Social workers operate within this framework by addressing human and social issues that might disrupt organizational harmony.

2.4.2 Human Relations Theory

Developed by Elton Mayo and colleagues during the Hawthorne Studies, this theory emphasizes the importance of social factors, employee satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships in productivity. Social workers contribute directly to these aspects by improving communication, resolving conflicts, and promoting a supportive work culture.

2.4.3 Person-in-Environment (PIE) Perspective

The PIE perspective, central to social work, considers the individual within the context of their environment. In organizational settings, this means

understanding how workplace policies, culture, and dynamics affect employees' personal lives and vice versa.

2.5 Roles and Functions of Social Workers in Organizations

1. Counseling and Support Services – Social workers provide confidential counseling to employees experiencing stress, family issues, financial hardship, or mental health challenges.

2. Conflict Resolution – They mediate disputes between employees or between employees and management, fostering a harmonious work environment.

3. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) – Social workers design and implement programs aimed at supporting employees' personal and professional well-being.

4. Policy Advocacy – They advocate for workplace policies that promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.

5. Training and Capacity Building – Social workers conduct workshops on stress management, team building, and cultural sensitivity.

6. Crisis Intervention – In cases of workplace accidents, deaths, or emergencies, social workers provide immediate support to affected individuals and teams.

7. Community Engagement – They help organizations build stronger ties with surrounding communities through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

2.6 Benefits of Social Work in Organizations

Enhanced Productivity: Employees who feel supported are more engaged and productive.

Reduced Turnover: Social work interventions improve employee retention.

Improved Workplace Culture: Addressing social issues fosters trust and collaboration.

Prevention of Conflicts: Early intervention prevents escalation of disputes.

Compliance with Labor Laws: Social workers help organizations adhere to employment regulations and human rights standards.

2.7 Empirical Studies on Organizational Social Work

Studies in the United States and Canada show that organizations with active EAPs and professional social work services report higher employee satisfaction and lower absenteeism rates (Attridge, 2019). In South Africa,

Govender (2021) found that industrial social workers play a pivotal role in supporting workers affected by economic restructuring.

In Nigeria, research by Ogbemudia and Iyamu (2020) revealed that while many organizations acknowledge the importance of employee welfare, few employ qualified social workers, relying instead on general welfare officers or HR staff.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

The literature indicates that social workers are valuable assets in organizational settings, contributing significantly to employee welfare, conflict resolution, and policy advocacy. Theoretical perspectives such as systems theory, human relations theory, and the person-in-environment model help explain their functions. However, challenges such as low recognition, policy gaps, and limited resources hinder their effectiveness, particularly in developing countries.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Preamble

This chapter presents the methods and procedures that was adopted in conducting the study. It outlines the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, method of data collection, and method of data analysis. The methodology was designed to ensure that the study is systematic, objective, and reliable, producing results that are both accurate and applicable to the research questions.

3.2 Research Design

In this study, a descriptive survey research design was adopted. The descriptive survey method was suitable because it allowed for the collection of data from a large number of respondents at a particular time without manipulating any variables. It was also effective in obtaining opinions, attitudes, and perceptions of individuals regarding a specific issue in this case, the role of social workers in organizations.

This design enabled the researcher to gather information on the functions of social workers, their contributions to employee welfare and productivity, as well as the challenges they faced in organizational settings.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of this study consisted of employees and management staff in selected organizations that had social workers or welfare officers in their workforce. This included corporate organizations, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, and non-governmental organizations within the study area.

The estimated population was 200 employees and management staff, comprising both genders, various age groups, and different professional backgrounds.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of 100 respondents was selected from the population. This size was considered adequate for the study, given the resources and time constraints, and it provided sufficient data for analysis and generalization. The stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation of both management and non-management staff. The population was divided into

two strata – management staff and general employees – and respondents were randomly selected from each stratum.

3.5 Research Instrument

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on the objectives and research questions of the study. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section A: Demographic information of respondents (gender, age, educational qualification, position, years of experience).

Section B: Questions relating to the functions of social workers in the organization.

Section C: Questions addressing contributions of social workers to employee welfare and productivity, challenges faced, and strategies for improvement.

The questionnaire was also designed using a four-point Likert scale format: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

To ensure content validity, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in social work and one in research methodology. Their feedback was used to refine the questions to ensure they are clear, relevant, and aligned with the study objectives.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. The instrument was administered to 10 respondents from a similar population who were not part of the main study. After two weeks, the same instrument was administered again to the same group, and the correlation between the two sets of responses was calculated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). A reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above will be considered acceptable.

3.8 Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to respondents and ensured high return rates and clarified any questions respondents may have. Respondents were assured of confidentiality, and their participation were

voluntary. Completed questionnaires was collected immediately or within an agreed-upon timeframe.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies, percentages, and mean scores. The results were presented in tables for easy interpretation. Each research question was addressed by summarizing relevant responses from the questionnaire.

The decision rule for interpreting the mean scores on the four-point Likert scale were:

3.50 – 4.00: Strongly Agree

2.50 – 3.49: Agree

1.50 – 2.49: Disagree

1.00 – 1.49: Strongly Disagree

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical research practices. Permission was sought from the management of the selected organizations before administering the

questionnaire. Informed consent was obtained from each respondent, and participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. No identifying information was disclosed in the final report.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Preamble

This chapter presents the data collected from the respondents, analyzes the findings, and interprets the results in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter One. The data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to a sample of 100 respondents drawn from various organizations that employ social workers or welfare officers. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents. Out of these, 94 copies were returned duly completed, representing a 94% response rate. This high return rate was attributed to the personal administration of the questionnaires by the researcher.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 Distribution of Gender Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	42	44.7
Female	52	55.3
Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Interpretation

The results show that females (55.3%) slightly outnumber males (44.7%) in the study sample. This reflects the gender distribution in many organizations where social workers are employed.

Table 4.2 Distribution of Age Respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20 - 29years	18	19.1
30 - 39years	40	42.6
40 - 49years	25	26.6
50 years+	11	11.7
Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

The majority of respondents (42.6%) fall within the 30–39 years age bracket, indicating a relatively young and active workforce in the organizations studied.

Table 4.3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
OND/NCE	20	21.3
Bachelor's Degree	54	57.4
Master's Degree	16	17.0
Doctorate	4	4.3
Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation

The data indicate that most respondents (57.4%) hold a bachelor's degree, suggesting a well-educated workforce that can provide informed perspectives on organizational practices.

4.4 Analysis Based on Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the main functions of social workers in an organization?

Table 4.4: Functions of Social Workers in Organizations

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Provide counseling services to employees	55	35	4	0	3.54	SA
Mediate conflicts between employees and managements.	50	37	5	2	3.43	A
Implement employee assistance programmes (EAPs).	47	38	6	3	3.37	A
Advocate for employee welfare policies.	53	33	5	3	3.44	A
Conduct training on stress management and teamwork.	49	39	4	2	3.43	A

Source: Field survey, 2025

Interpretation:

The findings show that respondents agree that social workers perform essential roles such as counseling, conflict resolution, policy advocacy, training, and implementing welfare programs.

Research Question 2: In what ways do social workers contribute to employee welfare?

Table 4.5: Contributions of Social Workers to Employee Welfare

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Social workers provide counselling and emotional support.	49	29	5	3	3.44	A
Social workers assist in resolving Workplace conflicts.	38	18	5	2	3.42	A
Social workers help employee access welfare resources.	40	15	3	2	3.36	A
Social workers coordinate employee assistance programmes (EAPs).	45	11	5	3	3.42	A
Social workers advocate for employee rights and wellbeing.	33	53	5	3	3.44	A

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation:

The findings show that respondents agreed social workers significantly contribute to employee welfare, particularly through counseling and conflict resolution.

Research Question 3: In what ways do social workers contribute to employee overall productivity?

Table 4.6: Contributions of Social Workers to Employee Productivity

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Social workers reduce workplace stress and burnout.	38	18	3	2	3.46	A
Social workers improve workplace Communication.	26	20	2	2	3.45	A
Social workers help reduce absenteeism and employee turnover.	20	22	1	3	3.40	A
Social Workers organize training and capacity development programmes.	24	18	2	4	3.43	A
Social workers manage conflicts to ensure organizational stability.	21	19	35	5	3.41	A

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation:

The findings indicates general agreement that social workers contribute to employee productivity. The strongest areas were stress reduction and workplace communication improvement.

Research Question 4: What challenges do social workers encounter in organizational settings?

Table 4.7: Challenges Faced by Social Workers

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Lack of recognition from management.	42	37	10	5	3.24	A
Insufficient resources and funding.	48	36	6	4	3.36	A
Overlap of roles with HR department.	40	39	9	6	3.20	A
Cultural stigma attached to counseling services.	44	38	7	5	3.28	A

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation:

The challenges faced by social workers include limited recognition, lack of resources, role overlaps with HR, and cultural stigma associated with seeking counseling services.

Research Question 5: What strategies can be implemented to enhance the effectiveness of social workers in organizations?

Table 4.8: Suggested Strategies for Improving Effectiveness

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Increase awareness of the role of social workers.	54	35	3	2	3.51	SA
Provide adequate resources and funding for welfare programs.	52	36	4	2	3.47	A

Establish clear policies defining social work functions.	50	38	4	2	3.45	A
Encourage management support and collaboration.	55	33	4	2	3.50	SA

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Interpretation:

Respondents believe that greater awareness, adequate resources, policy clarity, and management support are essential for improving social workers’ effectiveness.

4.5 Summary of Findings

The major findings of this study are:

1. Social workers in organizations perform diverse functions including counseling, conflict mediation, employee assistance, policy advocacy, and training.
2. They contribute positively to employee welfare, morale, inclusiveness, and productivity.
3. Challenges to their effectiveness include lack of recognition, resource constraints, role overlaps, and cultural stigma.

4. Strategies to improve their effectiveness include raising awareness, providing resources, establishing clear policies, and ensuring management support.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study investigated the role of social workers in an organization, with emphasis on their functions, contributions to employee welfare and productivity, challenges faced, and strategies for enhancing their effectiveness.

In Chapter One, the background to the study established that organizations are not only economic units but also social systems, where the well-being of employees directly influences productivity. The chapter highlighted the underutilization of social workers in many organizations, particularly in Nigeria, and outlined the objectives, research questions, significance, and scope of the study.

Chapter Two provided a detailed literature review, covering definitions, theoretical frameworks (Systems Theory, Human Relations Theory, Person-in-Environment perspective), historical development of organizational social work, specific roles of social workers, benefits, challenges, and findings from related empirical studies.

Chapter Three described the methodology, which used a descriptive survey design. The population comprised employees and management staff of selected organizations. A sample of 100 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, validated by experts, tested for reliability, and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Chapter Four presented and analyzed the data. The major findings were:

1. Social workers in organizations perform functions such as counseling, conflict mediation, implementing employee assistance programs, advocating for welfare policies, and conducting training sessions.
2. Social worker provide counseling, emotional and mental support to employees, assists in resolving work place conflicts, and also help employees access welfare resources.
3. Social workers help to reduce work place stress and burnout and also work place communication, reduces absenteeism and employee turnover.
4. Social workers lack adequate recognition from managements, insufficient resources and funding for welfare programs, overlap roles between Social Workers and HR personnel.

5. Suggested strategies for improvement include increasing awareness of social workers' roles, providing adequate funding, establishing clear policies, and ensuring management support.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that social workers are vital to the smooth functioning of modern organizations. Their unique skills in addressing social, emotional, and welfare issues make them essential in promoting employee well-being and sustaining organizational productivity. However, their effectiveness is often hampered by inadequate recognition, limited resources, and cultural misconceptions. Addressing these barriers is crucial if organizations are to fully benefit from the expertise of social workers.

In essence, a healthy workforce is a productive workforce, and social workers provide the professional bridge between human needs and organizational goals. Integrating them fully into workplace structures is both a moral and strategic imperative for organizations that aim for long-term success.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Increase Awareness and Recognition:** Organizations should organize sensitization programs for management and staff to highlight the functions and value of social workers.
2. **Adequate Funding and Resources:** Management should allocate sufficient budgets for welfare programs and equip social workers with the tools necessary to perform effectively.
3. **Strengthen Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** Organizations should institutionalize EAPs that address both work-related and personal challenges, with social workers as key implementers.
4. **Promote a Supportive Organizational Culture:** Management should foster an environment that destigmatizes counseling and encourages employees to seek help without fear of discrimination.
5. **Policy Development and Enforcement:** Government and professional bodies should develop and enforce policies mandating the integration of

qualified social workers into organizational structures, especially in large institutions.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research could explore:

The comparative effectiveness of social workers and HR departments in addressing employee welfare.

The impact of organizational social work on long-term business performance.

Sector-specific studies e.g., education, healthcare, corporate to identify unique challenges and opportunities for social workers in each sector.

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APPENDIX

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.**

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN AN
ORGANIZATION**

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on the role of social workers in organizations. The data collected will be used strictly for academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality. Kindly answer all questions honestly.

Section A: Demographic Information:

Please tick (✓) the option that applies to you.

1. Gender:

Male Female

2. Age Range:

20–29 years 30–39 years 40–49 years 50 years and above

3. Educational Qualification:

OND/NCE Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree Doctorate

4. Position in the Organization:

Management Staff Non-Management Staff

5. Years of Work Experience:

Less than 5 years 5–10 years 11–15 years Above 15 years

Section B: Functions of Social Workers in an Organization

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement by ticking the appropriate box.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
1	Social workers provide counselling services to employees.				
2	Social workers mediate conflicts between employees and management.				
3	Social workers implement employee assistance programs (EAPS).				
4	Social workers advocate for employee welfare policies.				
5	Social workers conduct training on stress management and teamwork.				

Section C: Contributions of Social Workers to Employee Welfare

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
6	Social workers provide counseling and emotional support to employees.				
7	Social workers assist in resolving workplace conflicts.				
8	Social workers help employees access welfare resources (medical, housing, financial aid, etc.).				
9	Social workers coordinate employee assistance programs (EAPs).				
10	Social Workers advocates for Employee rights and wellbeing.				

Section D: Contributions of Social Workers to Employee Productivity

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
11	Social Workers reduce workplace stress and burnouts.				
12	Social workers improve Workplace communication.				
13	Social workers help reduce absenteeism and employee turnover.				
14	Social Workers manage conflicts to ensure organizational stability.				

Section E: Challenges faced by Social Workers in Organizations

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
15	Social workers lack adequate recognition from management.				
16	There are insufficient resources and funding for welfare programs.				
17	There is an overlap of roles between social workers and HR personnel.				
18	Cultural stigma prevents employees from seeking counseling services.				

Section F: Strategies for Enhancing the effectiveness of Social Workers

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
19	Awareness of the role of social workers should be increased among staff and management.				
20	Adequate resources and funding should be provided for welfare programs.				
21	Clear policies defining the role of social workers should be established.				
22	Management should give full support and cooperation to social workers.				

Key to Scale:

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree