Evaluating the Professional Practice of International Social Work vis-à-vis Confronting Obstacles that Limit the Palestine Refugees' Benefit From Social Welfare Services

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the PH.D Degree in Social Work

By:

Qusai A. Ibrahim

Supervised by:

Prof. Dr. Bawab Shaker Ali
Former Dean of Faculty of Social Work
Professor in Fields of Social Work Department
Fayoum University

Prof. Dr. Mostafa Ahmed Hassan
Professor in Fields of Social Work Department
Faculty of Social Work
Fayoum University

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Summary

Firstly: Problem of the Study:

The establishment of “Israel” in 1948 has led to unique human crisis in history. Its most important results were the expulsion of the Palestinians in the wake of the massacres carried out by the Zionist guerillas, turning the Palestinians into refugees in the Arab countries surrounding Palestine, which are Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon. Some of them moved to the West Bank and Gaza that were not occupied then. The largest number of the Palestine refugees lives in UNRWA Agency-mandated region, but large numbers still live in other countries, such as the Gulf countries, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen, or even far away in Australia, Europe or America.

This critical human situation propelled the United Nations General Assembly to establish the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) according to resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949. The Agency began operations on 1 May 1950. Its task was to fulfill the Palestine refugees’ needs until finding out a permanent and just solution for the refugees’ problem. Currently, the Agency is the biggest UN’s program, as the number of the Palestine refugees under its umbrella is 5.271 million people, and its officials are more than 29500.

Accordingly, UNRWA is entitled to provide the Palestine refugees with the social welfare services which are: education, health welfare, relief, social services, small-scale financing, infrastructure and camps development.
Due to the intension of the Professional Practice of International Social Work in the relief and social services department, in comparison to the other programs, Problem of the Study emerged to recognize the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services provided by the UNRWA, and to define the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work in the relief and social services department at UNRWA to confront these obstacles.

**Secondly: Objectives of the Study:**

**The study tries to achieve the following goals:**

1- Defining the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

2- Defining the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work, which limited the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

3- Defining the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

4- Defining the suggestions to confront the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

5- Reaching a proposal for development of the Professional Practice of International Social Work in dealing with the obstacles that limit the Palestine Refugees' benefit from Social Welfare Services.
Thirdly: Questions of the Study:

The study tries to answer the following questions:

1) What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA?

This main question is divided into the following secondary questions:

A. What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting the social obstacles?
B. What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting the economic obstacles?
C. What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting the health obstacles?
D. What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting the obstacles of housing?
E. What are the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work in the relief and social services department at UNRWA?

2) What are the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work which limited the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA?
This main question is divided into the following secondary questions:
A. What are the obstacles related to the goal (the Palestine refugee family)?
B. What are the obstacles related to the influencing factor (the social worker)?
C. What are the obstacles related to the actor (the agency)?
D. What are the obstacles related to the community system?

3) What are the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA?

This main question is divided into the following secondary questions:
A. What are the obstacles related to the client system (the Palestine refugee family)?
B. What are the obstacles related to the change agent system (the social worker)?
C. What are the obstacles related to the action system (the agency)?
D. What are the obstacles related to the community system?

4) What are the suggestions to confront the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from the social welfare services provided by the UNRWA?

This main question is divided into the following secondary questions:
A. What are the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the client system (the Palestine refugee family)?
B. What are the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the change agent system (the social worker)?

C. What are the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the action system (the agency)?

D. What are the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the community system?

**Fourthly: Concepts of the Study:**

1- The international social work.
2- The social welfare.
3- The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.
4- Palestine Refugee.

**Fifthly: Methodology of the Study:**

1) **Type of the Study:**

   This study belongs to the evaluative studies aiming to evaluate the professional practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services. The evaluative studies are considered as objective means to find out the whole or partial effect of a program or project upon its implementation.

2) **The used methodology:**

   The current study depended on the scientific methodology in order to evaluate the professional practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services.
3) **Methods of the Study:**
   A. The researcher depended on the scientific method through the social survey by the comprehensive inventory system of the social workers in order to define the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services.
   B. The researcher depended on the scientific method through the social survey by the probable sample of the Palestine refugees. The social survey is considered as a study of the social circumstances affecting a certain community-whether it was the neighborhood, village, county, state or nation- in order to obtain data and information, of how to use it in preparing and implementing constructional projects for the social reform.

4) **Tools of the Study:**
   A. The researcher applied a certain scale on the social workers in the field of providing the social welfare in the relief and social services department at UNRWA.
   B. According to the kind of study, the used methodology, the researcher depended on the probing method to recognize the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

5) **Fields of the Study:**

   **Firstly: The human field:**
   A. The social workers: The researcher applied a certain scale on the social workers in the field of providing the social welfare in the relief and social services department at
UNRWA, to define the roles of the professional practice specialist for the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services.

B. The Palestine refugees: the researcher applied the current study on improbable sample of the Palestine refugees registered at the UNRWA to recognize the obstacles that limit the Palestine refugees’ benefit from social welfare services provided by the UNRWA.

Secondly: Location of the Study:
A. Concerning the social workers: the researcher applied this study on the relief and social services program affiliated to the UNRWA in the West Bank. That is due to the decrease in the number of the social workers in the field of providing the social welfare at UNRWA.

B. Concerning the Palestine refugees: the researcher applied this study on Nablus governorate in the West Bank in Palestine.

Thirdly: Time of the Study:

It is the period during which the data were collected, 5 months from 1/2/2012- 1/7/2012.

6) Sample of the Study:
A. Concerning the social workers: the researcher applied this study to the social workers on the relief and social services program affiliated to the UNRWA in the West-Bank, with the total number of (121) social workers.
B. Concerning the Palestine refugees: the researcher applied this study to a selected sample chosen in a systematic random manner using the method of proportional distribution. The sample consisted of (600) Palestine refugee families in Nablus of different geographical distributions.

**Results of the Study**

**Firstly: The results according to the questions:**

**Results related to the first question:**

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the roles of the specialists of the professional practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting social obstacles reached high level at 80.35%, with an arithmetic average of 291.68.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the roles of the specialists of the professional practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting economic obstacles reached high level at 83.56%, with an arithmetic average of 303.33.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the roles of the specialists of the professional practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting healthy obstacles reached high level at 78.95%, with an arithmetic average of 286.57.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the roles of the specialists of the professional
practice of the international social work vis-à-vis confronting obstacles of housing reached high level at 81.31%, with an arithmetic average of 295.14.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the roles of the specialists of the professional practice of the international social work in the refugees and social services department at UNRWA reached high level at 83.56%, with an arithmetic average of 303.33.

Results related to the second question:

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work due to the client system (the Palestine refugee families) reached high level at 82.06%, with an arithmetic average of 297.89.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work due to change agent system (the social worker) reached an average level at 60.86%, with an arithmetic average of 220.93.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work due to action system (the agency) reached an average level at 76.86%, with an arithmetic average of 279.

According to the social workers’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the professional practice of the international social work due to the community system
reached a high level at 82.23%, with an arithmetic average of 298.5.

**Results related to the third question:**

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the client system (the Palestine refugee families) reached the average level at 74.33%, with an arithmetic average of 1338.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the change agent system (the social worker) reached the average level at 68.21%, with an arithmetic average of 1227.7.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the action system (the agency) reached high level at 77.95%, with an arithmetic average of 1403.09.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the obstacles related to the community system reached high level at 84.55%, with an arithmetic average of 1521.83.

**Results related to the fourth question:**

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the client system (the Palestine refugee families) reached high level at 93.24%, with an arithmetic average of 1678.4.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to
the change agent system (the social worker) reached high level at 89.74%, with an arithmetic average of 1615.33.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the action system (the agency) reached high level at 88.66%, with an arithmetic average of 1595.8.

According to the Palestine refugees’ responses, the results revealed that, the suggestions to confront the obstacles related to the community system reached high level at 92.71%, with an arithmetic average of 1668.75.