

Historical Evolution and Contextual Dynamics of Social Work in Kenya

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Abstract

Social work has a significant role in addressing social and economic challenges in Kenya. Despite this importance, there is limited research on the historical and philosophical foundations of social work in Kenya, particularly in response to the country's social, economic, and political context. This study aimed to conduct a historical analysis of the development of social work in Kenya, examining the evolution of social work theory and practice in response to the country's social, economic, and political context. The study utilized document analysis and interviews with social work practitioners, educators, and policymakers in Kenya. The data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis. The study found that social work in Kenya had evolved in response to the country's social, economic, and political context, with key milestones including the establishment of social work education programs and the development of social work policies and guidelines. Major challenges facing social work practitioners in Kenya were identified, including limited resources and a lack of public understanding of the role of social work. The study recommends the need for continued investment in social work education and training, as well as the development of policies and programs that support the growth and development of social work in Kenya. It also recommends increased public awareness of the role of social work in addressing social and economic challenges. This study provides a comprehensive historical analysis of the development of social work in Kenya, contributing to a better understanding of the foundations and evolution of social work theory and practice in the country. It also highlights the challenges and opportunities facing social work practitioners, educators, and policymakers in Kenya, providing insights for future research and policy development.

Key words: Social work, evolution, development, theory, practice, policies, challenges, opportunities, education, practitioners, stakeholders, ethics, community, vulnerable populations.