



**THE KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN PRIVATE
PRACTICE REGARDING HUMAN SEXUALITY AND SEX
THERAPY**

by

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SUMMARY

Title: The knowledge of social workers in private practice regarding human sexuality and sex therapy

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Sexual problems or dysfunctions remain one of the prominent reasons for marital and relationship problems, often resulting in divorce. Sexuality is however only one of many components of a marriage or of a committed relationship. Relationship problems and sexual problems are often interlinked. The fact that sexual problems are often only symptoms of deeper relationship issues, makes the social worker the ideal person to treat these sexual problems from a holistic perspective and within a relationship context.

The nature of this research study evolves around the proposed lack of knowledge of social workers in private practice, and who specialise in couple therapy, regarding human sexuality and sex therapy. This research study is valuable for the social work profession as the knowledgebase of social work is extended. Social workers come into close contact with individuals seeking couple therapy. Social workers might often be required to assist individuals or couples with sexual problems, as relationship difficulties and sexual problems often co-exist. This study is further of value because the importance of the integration of sex therapy and couple therapy is shown.

A qualitative research approach is used, and applied research is conducted. An exploratory research design is utilised and a self-constructed, mailed questionnaire is used as method of data collection.

The following conclusions can be drawn and the following recommendations made:

- There exists an interaction between sexual difficulties and relationship problems.
- Sexual dysfunctions do not occur in a vacuum, and must be viewed within the context of the total system of the client.
- The social worker is the ideal person to deal with sexual difficulties, as he or she is well trained in the dynamics of marriage and relationship therapy.
- An integrative, holistic and post-modernistic approach to therapy for sexual difficulties has emerged.
- There is a movement today toward the combination of sex therapy and couple/relationship therapy.
- There are concerns that social workers in private practice specialising in couple therapy, may have a lack of knowledge regarding human sexuality and sex therapy. The respondents in this study answered only 58.53% of the knowledge based questions correctly.

- There is a need for specialised education and training of social workers in the field of human sexuality and sex therapy.
- Training in human sexuality and sex therapy should be included in the undergraduate, post-graduate and continuing education levels of social work-training.
- This research study supplies a basis for future research studies. The content of the study can aid in the development of a course in human sexuality and sex therapy aimed at social workers specifically.

OPSOMMING

**Titel: Die kennis van maatskaplike werkers in privaatpraktyk
rakende menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie**

deur

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Seksuele probleme of disfunksies is steeds van die mees prominente redes vir verhoudingsprobleme. Seksuele probleme is waarskynlik dié enkele faktor wat paartjies finaal laat skei.

Seksualiteit is egter net een van die vele komponente van 'n verhouding. Verhoudingsprobleme en seksuele probleme is dikwels verwant aan mekaar. Die feit dat seksuele probleme dikwels bloot simptome is van dieperliggende verhoudingsprobleme, maak die maatskaplike werker die ideale persoon om hierdie probleme, holisties en vanuit 'n verhoudingskonteks te behandel.

Die aard van die navorsing het gehandel rondom die beweerde gebrek aan kennis van die maatskaplike werker in privaatpraktyk, wat spesialiseer in verhoudingsterapie, rakende menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie.

Die waarde van hierdie navorsing lê daarin dat die professie maatskaplike werk se kennisbasis uitgebrei is. Maatskaplike werkers het dikwels kontak met paartjies wat verhoudingsterapie verlang. Daar mag dus dikwels van die

maatskaplike werker verwag word om paartjies met seksuele probleme by te staan aangesien verhoudingsprobleme en seksueleprobleme nou verwant is.

Toegepaste navorsing, vanuit 'n kwantitatiewe benadering is onderneem en die verkennende navorsingsontwerp is gebruik. 'n Selfontwerpte posvraelys is gebruik as wyse van data insameling.

Die volgende gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings kan gemaak word:

- Daar bestaan 'n wisselwerking tussen seksuele probleme en verhoudingsprobleme.
- Seksuele probleme kom nie in 'n vakuum voor nie, en moet gesien word vanuit 'n verhoudingskonteks en as deel van die kliënt se totale sisteem en funksionering.
- Die maatskaplike werker is 'n ideale persoon om seksuele probleme van kliënte aan te spreek, aangesien hy/sy goed opgelei is in die dinamika van huweliks- en verhoudingsterapie.
- 'n Geïntegreerde, holistiese en post-moderne benadering tot terapie vir seksueleprobleme word vandag gevolg.
- Daar is ook vandag 'n neiging om seksterapie en verhoudingsterapie te kombineer.
- Daar bestaan kommer dat maatskaplike werkers in privaatpraktyk wat in verhoudingsterapie spesialiseer, 'n gebrek aan kennis rakende menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie mag hê, aangesien die respondente net 58.53% van die kennisgebaseerde vrae korrek beantwoord het.
- Daar bestaan 'n behoefte vir gespesialiseerde opleiding van maatskaplike werkers in menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie.

- Opleiding in menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie behoort op voorgraadse, nagraadse en deurlopende ontwikkelingsvlakke te geskied.
- Hierdie studie bied 'n basis waaruit toekomstige navorsingstudies kan vloei om 'n kursus in menslike seksualiteit en seksterapie, vir maatskaplike werkers spesifiek, te ontwikkel.



KEYWORDS

- 1. Sex therapy**
- 2. Human sexuality**
- 3. Sexual health**
- 4. Couple therapy**
- 5. Knowledge**
- 6. Comfort**
- 7. Social work**
- 8. Social worker**
- 9. Private practice**
- 10. Sexual dysfunctions**

SLEUTELTERME

- 1. Seksterapie**
- 2. Menslike seksualiteit**
- 3. Seksuele gesondheid**
- 4. Verhoudingsterapie**
- 5. Kennis**
- 6. Gemaklikheid**
- 7. Maatskaplike werk**
- 8. Maatskaplike werker**
- 9. Privaatpraktyk**
- 10. Seksuele disfunksies**

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