Professional Identity Development in

Graduate Level Social Work Students:

An Efficacy Test of the Social Work Identity Workshop

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Millersville University of Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Social Work

By: Sylvia A. Bekele

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2/18/2020
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Abstract of the Dissertation

Professional Identity Development in Graduate Level Social Work Students:

An Efficacy Test of the Social Work Identity Workshop

By

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Millersville University, 2020

Millersville Pennsylvania

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Without an in-depth understanding of the essence of the social work identity, which is identified as an outcome of the professional socialization of social workers, and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession and social work education, the profession and the social work education process is not adequately prepared to aid in the facilitation of the development of the social work professional identity. The literature supports that professional identity exploration in social work curriculum can strengthen and contribute to social work practice and the growth and success of the social work profession. Through a mixed methods approach, this research implemented the Social Work Identity Workshop as an intervention to address salient components of professional identity development with an intended purpose of improving student outcomes. In turn, utilizing this intentional change strategy will lead to the preparation of professional social workers ready and able to embrace the role in their professional endeavors.

Keywords: social work profession, history of social work, professional identity development, professional socialization, social work education, social work curriculum, intervention research, transformational learning

Signature of Investigator   Sylvia Bekele   Date   2/18/2020

Dedication

Dream small.

To my legacy: my husband, Bruck and my son, Joachim.

Acknowledgements

"None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, or walk, or speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other human beings in order to be human. I am because other people are. A person is entitled to a stable community life, and the first of these communities is the family." –Desmund Tutu

Glory be to God, who knew exactly what I needed throughout this journey, in every moment, and that was my family. Thank you to my selfless husband, Bruck, who is continuously a portrait of sacrificial and unconditional love. Thank you to my mother, Eziz and my father, Adel, who somehow made something from nothing by sacrificing all that they knew and all that they were comfortable with for a greater opportunity for their family. You are the core of who I am today, and my accomplishments are an inspiration of who you raised me to be.

I have an insurmountable level of gratitude for my sisters Sandy and Bemnet. You have walked along side me throughout this doctoral experience and more importantly through my journey into motherhood. Joachim truly has a tribe because of two phenomenal women, and that is worth more than I can ever imagine. You are forever honorable in my eyes. Thank you.

To my social work mentors in this journey, Drs. Karen Rice, Barth Yeboah, and Wanja Ogongi, thank you. Dr. Rice, for the past decade you have inspired my growth as a social worker and in turn contributed to my growth as a person; thank you for your commitment and dedication. Dr. Yeboah, thank you for constantly challenging me to think and for your commitment as my mentor all the way through; I have such a great appreciation for all the knowledge you have to offer and for the transformational learning opportunities you made possible for me. Dr. Ogongi, your loving and joyful spirit is contagious; you brighten up any room you enter. Thank you for being a part of my team. You all have genuinely inspired me in

so many ways. I am looking forward to collaborating with you as colleagues and friends as we continue to share a similar passion for the profession both locally and globally.

Thank you to Lisa, my first and most influential social work supervisor. I am so appreciative of my experiences with you, both professional and personal. And to Cindy, a true social worker at heart, thank you for leading by example and modeling what sincere compassion and care looks like. Thank you to our church family for your unconditional love and support throughout this process.

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Chapter One: Introduction

To explore the professional identity development among social work students, it is relevant to begin with a cognizance of professional socialization and its relevance to social work as a profession throughout history. Understanding professional socialization as an overarching representation of the phenomenon allows for a focus on one essential outcome of the professional socialization process, the development of a professional identity. Without a professional identity a profession will lack the fundamental elements to claiming professionalism (Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Clark, 2006; Barretti, 2004; Bisno, 1956; Flexner, 1915; Leighninger, 1987; Mariet, 2016; Miller, 2010; Patchner, Gullerud, Downing, Donaldson, & Leunberger, 1987). A profession without an identity cannot maintain professional status as it lacks a foundational body of knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, values, and ethical standards to guide professionals through practice in all settings (Adams et al., 2006; Barretti, 2004; Bisno, 1956; Flexner, 1915; Leighninger, 1987; Mariet, 2016; Miller, 2010; Patchner et al., 1987).

A clear mission and vision is essential for any profession seeking professional status; without a professional identity, or efforts to preserve an already existing professional identity, individuals will not have an understanding of what it means to be a professional in that specified field of practice (Adams et al., 2006; Barretti, 2004; Bisno, 1956; Flexner, 1915; Hill, Fogel, Donaldson, & Erickson, 2017; Leighninger, 1987; Mariet, 2016; Miller, 2010; NSW, 2018; Patchner et al., 1987; Stainforth, Fouche, & O'Brien, 2011). In social work, the development and preservation of a professional identity has been a predominant focus due to the profession's historical struggle with identity development (Ehrenreich, 1985; Leighninger, 1987; Lubove, 1965; Popple & Leighninger, 1999; Specht & Courtney, 1994). This phenomenon continues to be an essential attribute of the profession deemed worthy of further exploration.

The Importance of Professional Identity

Professional identity is a continual process in professional growth relating to the process of internalizing a professional community's values and norms, and an indicative outcome of the overall process of professional socialization (Adams et al., 2006; Bell, Bissen, & Vindegg, 2017; Bolin, Crews, Countryman-Roswurm, & Grant, 2014; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Miller, 2013; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016). This phenomenon has been conceptualized in the literature as an element of social identity through the person-in-environment framework (Forenza & Eckert, 2017). The interconnectedness between personal and professional values contributes to this conceptualization; the alignment between personal and professional values and ethics can be classified as the highest level of development in professional identity (Bolin et al., 2014). Professional identity development, in any profession, requires time and space to obtain experience, form and internalize values, principles, ethical standards, competencies, continual reflection, and ongoing change (Bell et al., 2017; Forenza & Eckert, 2017). To address this phenomenon within this research, professional identity will be explicated as a concept that can be understood as an interactional accomplishment of continual "being" or "becoming" through the influence of the profession's set of values, competencies, ethics, and understanding of roles within the context of social work practice, in any environment, developed throughout time in transformational learning environments and professional development settings (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Bell et al., 2017; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Freire, 1970; Wiles, 2017).

The specific principles presented in the literature that contribute to the professional identity development of a social worker have been contested due to different missions identified throughout the profession's history. The changing mission of the profession is often dictated in history based on economic, social, and political crises or as an overall response to the contextual

climate of the time period (Bisno, 1965; Ehrenreich, 1985; Specht & Courtney, 1994). The start

of the profession presents two pillars, the Charity Organization Societies and the Settlement

Houses, illustrating social work's focus on the individual and social casework, and also its focus

on social problems presented based on community needs (Dawes, 1984; Lubove, 1965; Specht &

Courtney, 1994). Social work's identity has at times been structured around social reformation

and social change endeavors, and at other times manifests a response to individual needs related

to psychiatric approaches to practice (Lubove, 1965; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Throughout

time, regardless of these shifts in focus and struggle to remain consistent, professional identity

persists as a necessary endeavor for the social work profession (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Miller,

2010).

Establishing Professional Identity Through the Professional Socialization Process

Professions can be viewed as cultural entities in which students and professionals

continue to partake in the process of socialization throughout their educational and professional

careers (West, Miller, & Leitch, 2016). Socialization is considered to be a dynamic process that

is continuous throughout the life course in which individuals learn to participate in the different

social contexts they are associated with throughout the life cycle (Bolin et al., 2014; Pullen

Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Specht, 1988). Like socialization, professional socialization of social

workers has been identified throughout the literature as ongoing, throughout time, and beginning

even before any formal education or training (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Miller, 2010).

Professional socialization in the profession of social work, encompasses a continuous, complex

process of development through which education and professional development are critical

contributive factors (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Miller, 2010). When focusing on professional

socialization among social work students, this phenomenon is also known as a formal and

informal means by which students internalize knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, values, and ethical standards which in turn cultivates their professional identity and fosters the development of an understanding of what it means to be a professional in the field (Adams et al., 2006; Barretti, 2004; Mariet, 2016; Patchner et al., 1987). Nuttman-Schwartz (2017) supplements this explication of professional socialization with relevance to the involvement of the acquisition of a specialized knowledge base and being able to integrate competence-based knowledge and values to apply in practice. To address this phenomenon within this research, the researcher will be referring to professional socialization as the complex process by which a person, in the educational realm of the field of social work, acquires knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, principles, and ethical standards to formulate a professional identity that is distinctive to the profession of social work and internalized into the individual's own behavior and self-conception; not only does professional socialization involve the acquisition of these elements, it also encompasses the ability to apply and integrate these components in professional practice (Adams et al., 2006; Mariet, 2016; Patchner et al., 1987; Nuttman-Schwartz, 2017; Specht, 1988; Valutis, Rubin, & Bell, 2012).

Social Work's Struggle with Professional Socialization

"Professions have a uniquely important place in our culture and their functioning has a vital impact on the entire society" (Bisno, 1956, p. 13). Like other professions, the emergence of the social work profession has a dominant historical narrative, and a manifestation of social work's history reveals how a profession in search of its identity ultimately shaped and continues to shape its growth (Popple & Leighninger, 1999). Before the establishment of the social work profession, the field of applied philanthropy encountered oppositional challenges with the development of a professional identity (Ehrenreich, 1985; Leighninger, 1987; Lubove, 1965;

Popple & Leighninger, 1999; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Several pioneering accounts of social work history attribute the emergence of a social work profession to the late 1800s and early 1900s with the establishment of two salient movements: The Charity Organization Societies and the Settlement House Movement (Dawes, 1894; Leighninger, 1987; Lubove, 1965; Popple & Leighninger, 1999). At the time of these movements, economic, social, and political crises had seized American society, and what was known of social work and social policy was in response to this contextual climate (Ehrenreich, 1985). In the historical literature on the phenomenon, social work's struggle with professional socialization is often attributed to a statement made in 1915 by Abraham Flexner (Ehrenreich, 1985; Flexner; 1915; Leighninger, 1987; Leighninger, 2000; Lubove, 1965; Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Is social work a profession? Based on what Flexner classified as the earmarks of a profession, 1) intellectual activities with individual responsibilities, 2) knowledge base derived from science and learning, 3) the knowledge derived can be worked up to a practical and definite end, 4) the professionals possess an educationally communicable technique, 5) they tend to self-organize, and 6) they are becoming increasingly altruistic in motivation (Flexner, 1915), he declared the profession of social work lacking in several of these designations, and therefore, not essentially a profession. His perspective emphasized social work was work in many fields and could not be classified as a profession represented independently; he claimed social work lacked a specific skill applied to a specific function, and no supportive theoretical foundation (Lubove, 1965). Because of social work's deficient systematic body of knowledge and theory, at that time in history, it could not be classified as a profession, and individuals could not be socialized into a profession that was not deemed a profession by society (Ehrenreich, 1985; Leighninger, 1987; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Flexner's statement led to a change in the profession which in turn

shifted the profession's focus and work towards establishing a strong professional identity. Because of this, the development of a specialization in psychiatric social work was arguably an effort that contributed to social work's continued struggle with professional socialization (Ehrenreich, 1985; Lubove, 1965; Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Psychiatric social work. In an effort to Flexner's conclusions, one of the profession's major attempts was integrating psychiatric work, an area of specialization, into the social work arena. Developing work based on psychiatry fostered a sense of valuable service which required specialized skill and training, while others believed this quest and desire for inclusion in the field of psychiatry resulted in an obscurity rather than clarification of the social worker's distinctive function (Lubove, 1965; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Social work shifted from an understanding of social change in society to bring about community reform, to a focus on individual human behavior and personality based conceptual frameworks (Ehrenreich, 1985; Lubove, 1965). This focus "undermined their (social workers') capacity to promote institutional change and deal effectively with problems of mass deprivation in an urban society" (Lubove, 1965, p. 117). Despite its original appeal, this paradigmatic shift made short term occurences through social work's history, and later became known as clinical social work practice with an emergence of the specialization in social work education programs throughout the country (Specht, 1988). This attempt at inclusion among the field of psychiatry came along with continued need to justify social work's relevance in the field (Lubove, 1965), and continues to have an effect on the professional evolution of social work today.

"Macro Matters! Now More Than Ever!" movement. Another important aspect worthy of emphasis is the profession's current professional evolution and identity formation. The Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work's (SCAMPSW) has embarked

on an effort in advancing the development of macro social work practice. The SCAMPSW is a

commission that functions under the Association for Community Organization and Social

Administration (ACOSA). The goal of the commission is to engage the Council on Social Work

Education (CSWE) in an effort to address the imbalance between micro and macro level social

work practice, encouraging the importance of socializing social work students and practitioners

in the realm of macro social work practice (Baily & Mizrahi, 2015). The SCAMPSW aims to

promote social work, as a value-based profession, with a salient commitment to social justice,

human dignity, and human rights and to socialize social workers into the profession accordingly

(Reisch, 2017).

The SCAMPSW believes the social work profession steers far from the essence of the

profession's intended professional identity if it fails to recognize the significance of "organizing

and advocating for these values at the community, organizational, societal, and global levels and

of playing a leadership role in formulating and implementing policies and programs that reflect

them" (Reisch, 2017, p. 8), and accepts responsibility as a major professional organization

committed to addressing this concern. The SCAMPSW seeks to encourage schools of social

work that educate the future social work workforce to contribute to the development and

enhancement of macro social work practice. The SCAMPSW reports that the potential areas of

influence social workers presently have is critically salient in the current context related to

economic inequality and poverty, police-community relations, institutional racism, sexual

violence, and environmental degradation (Baily & Mizrahi, 2015). Overall, the attempt at

inclusion in the field of psychiatry as a means towards a professional identity early in social

work's history has had repercussions on the profession's socialization process, leading the

profession towards efforts such as SCAMPSW's work to refocus social workers' attention on

their original and intended professional identity.

Professional Identity Development Through Social Work Values, Principles, and Standards

Important indicators of professional identity among any profession is a universal set of core values, principles, and standards. Core values, principles, and standards are essential to the practice of social work and are the elements that differentiate the profession of social work from other helping professions (Mackay & Zuffery, 2015; Valutis, et al., 2012). The development of the social work identity is evident through the embodiment of social work values and ethics presented the Code of Ethics established by the NASW (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). The values and ethical principles and standards presented in the NASW Code of Ethics are notably the driving force behind the purpose and mission of the social work profession (Mackay & Zuffery, 2015).

The specific values and accompanying principles that are identified and contribute to social work identity development are: 1) service: social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems, 2) social justice: social workers challenge social justice, 3) dignity and worth of the person: social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person, 4) importance of human relationships: social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships, 5) integrity: social workers behave in a trustworthy manner, and 6) competence: social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). The ethical standards that contribute to the development of social work identity development are: 1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, 2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, 3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, 4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, 5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and 6)

social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017).

While all ethical standards are imperative to social work identity development, Ethical Standards

four, five, and six, are most critical when exploring and operationalizing variables of the

phenomenon of professional identity among social workers.

Professional Identity Development Through Social Work Curricula and Professional

Associations

Both implicit and explicit curriculum efforts have the potential to contribute positively to

professional socialization process among social workers. There are nine social work

competencies identified in EPAS that are in alignment with the NASW Code of Ethics values,

principles and standards: 1) demonstrate ethical and professional behavior, 2) engage diversity

and difference in practice, 3) advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental

justice, 4) engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice, 5) engage in

policy practice, 6) engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, 7)

assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, 8) intervene with

individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, and 9) evaluate practice with

individuals, families groups, organizations, and communities (EPAS, 2015). While all

competencies are important to the social work implicit and explicit curriculum processes and

social work practice, competencies one, two, and three can be most critical to the understanding

of the development of the professional social work identity. The educational policies presented in

the EPAS illustrate the importance of program development in relation to curriculum which

ultimately leads to the process of professional identity development among students. The

educational standards in EPAS encompass the following policies: 1) program mission and goals,

2) generalist practice, 3) diversity, and 4) assessment of student learning outcomes (EPAS,

2015). Overall, social work education's primary mission is oriented with the process of professional identity development among social workers; through the utilization and application of the profession's signature pedagogy, field placement, and other transformational learning approaches such as experiential learning opportunities, the profession's curriculum strongly contributes to the development of social work identity (Moorhead, Boetto, & Bell, 2014).

Professional associations. Similar to the importance of establishing social work training and education programs, social workers found it necessary, in continued efforts towards professionalization, to initiate the establishment of professional associations with the purpose of raising and maintaining standards of the profession (Lubove, 1965). "The professionalization of social work was associated not only with the quest for a differentiating skill, but also with the establishment of a subculture or community whose members shared a group identity and values which were maintained and perpetuated by institutional agencies of control such as associations and schools" (Lubove, 1965, p. 118). As a reaction to the discrepancies of social workers' perspective of the profession and the image held by the public of the profession, social workers claimed it was time to organize and unite within these professional associations to assert and enforce standards and a code of ethics in hopes to solidify a secure and influential identity to the public (Leighninger, 1987; Lubove, 1965).

There were several professional organizations that emerged to accomplish this mission throughout social work's history, however, the most salient organization was formed by a merge in between six social work professional associations in1955, which came together to form the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). The initial ambitions of NASW were to define the function and scope of the social work profession, contribute to the development of social work programs of education and social work research, the study and further expansion of

practice, the promotion of professional standards, and the pursuit of effective social action programs (Leighninger, 1987). Major accomplishments of NASW during its beginning stages include the creation of the Code of Ethics in the late 1950s and work towards certification and licensure across the United States. Current responsibilities of NASW include strengthening and unifying the profession, promoting the development of social work practice, and advancing well-grounded social policies (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017).

Prevalence of the Phenomenon

There is a need to strengthen social work education programs in such a way that highlights and promotes the professional socialization of social workers through the application and practice of social work values and ethics with a particular focus on the social work identity and the historical evolution of the social work profession. This phenomenon is a present concern and research has been conducted in small scales across the globe to explore this concept (Crisp, 2017; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Higgins, 2016; Levy, Shlomo, & Izhaky, 2014; Moorhead et al., 2014; Nuttman-Shwartz, 2017; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo, Levy, & Itzhaky, 2012; Valutis et al., 2012). It is necessary to further investigate this area of interest as the professional socialization of social workers is parallel to social work curriculum development, a primary focus among social work education programs. As an outcome of the professional socialization of social workers, the social work identity is a necessary apotheosis to the field of social work; a strong sense of identity and focus on professional identity development is critical to furthering professional growth among social workers and holistically as a profession, and leads to a stronger presence among the communities in which social workers practice (Bolin et al., 2014). Without a social work identity, the profession will endure substantially unwelcoming repercussions, exposing the profession to several dilemmas. If there is no social work identity

development among social work students, and if this is not incorporated as essential to the social work curriculum offered in social work programs, the profession lends itself to questioning whether the services rendered align with the values of social work, and if social workers are not aligning the services provided with values, the commitment and responsibility to society is assuredly compromised. Without a social work identity, the profession and those practicing as social workers are at a risk of various ethical dilemmas and violations.

Professional Identity and Its Relevance to Social Work

The phenomenon of social work identity development among social work students, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, is predominantly relevant for the social work profession, and therefore, influences social work practice, specifically regarding social work leadership and education. A vast majority of social work education programs have shifted focus to expand and develop social work leaders to practice in the future of the social work profession; to accomplish this vision, they have considered implications and revisions that can be applied to implicit and explicit educational strategies through the utilization of curriculum based knowledge, experiential learning opportunities, and professional field experience. Questions regarding which factors of developing a strong, foundational social work identity are most essential and contributive to the development of implicit curriculum to support this paradigm shift (Miller, 2013), and have been supported and identified in the literature as essential in advancing as a profession seeking to demonstrate leadership throughout society and influence social change.

Social work education is encouraged to investigate and perceive how students envision their relationship to the social work profession and how this perception will lead to ways in which identity development advances throughout their social work education and professional career progression (Miller, 2013); an acknowledgement of the predictive indicators of a strong

professional identity are salient components of professional progression. Overall, the relevance of this phenomenon to social work leadership and education is pronounced, and uniquely focuses on a comprehension of the historical evolution of the profession and its search for an identity in an effort to fortify social work education curriculum locally and globally.

Not only is understanding how to enhance social work curriculum so that it aids in the facilitation of social work identity development an important component of social work education and professionalization, it can also provide relevant information in determining how to contribute to recruitment and retention efforts in social work education and the profession, a common phenomenon of interest in the realm of higher education (Miller, 2010). There should be an unequivocal approach to fostering identity development to maintain professional socialization processes in a unified manner (Miller, 2010). In terms of explicit and implicit curriculum generation, interest in this phenomenon has the potential to promote the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work education programs in influencing the development of social work identity among social work students. There are also opportunities for the emergence of interventions that address this phenomenon that could potentially lead to evidenced-based intervention models that can be implemented in social work programs locally and globally (Locklear, 2017). Such contributions to the social work education curriculum can positively influence a unified approach to addressing the development of professional identity among all social work students and eliminate the uncertainty and ambiguity of who social workers are intended to personify; these contributions would also aid in the process of professional socialization. Further research in this domain will lead to a more advanced ability to explicate the contested and complex process of the professional socialization of social workers.

At both the graduate and undergraduate levels, the development of professional identity

can be linked to curricula that reflect social work's historical evolution and mission (Bisno, 1956; Specht & Courtney, 1994). Without an in-depth understanding of the essence of the social work identity, which is identified as an outcome of the professional socialization of social workers, and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession and social work education development through implicit and explicit curriculum, the profession and the social work education process is not adequately prepared to aid in the facilitation of the development of the social work professional identity.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks, particularly around the concepts of student identity development and adult learning theories, and application of such theories is paramount to understanding the phenomenon and how it emerges and persists amid social work students. To understand the professional identity development, one of the outcomes of professional socialization, among undergraduate and graduate students in the field of social work, theoretical frameworks based on student identity development can be utilized in the process of interpretation of the phenomenon. Through the application of ecological systems theory, social identity theory, and Chickering's theory of student development to understand professional identity development, and through the application of Mezirow's transformational learning theory and Freire's theory on learning, a theoretical basis and claim can be forged and applied to the development of social work identity through influences of curriculum development in the profession of social work. A visual representation of these theoretical frameworks and key concepts of predictive factors is presented in Figure 1.

Theoretical frameworks for professional identity development. Understanding theory related to identity development is imperative in the process of understanding the phenomenon of

professional identity development in its relation to the social work profession. The following

theories are presented as a means to conceptualize the complex process of professional identity

development among undergraduate and graduate level students.

Ecological systems perspective. The ecological perspective can be utilized to help

describe the process of identity development rather than the outcomes of identity development

among students in relation to their environmental contexts; the purpose of this theoretical

perspective's inception can be attributed to a desire to understand how environmental and

ecological realities influence developmental progress of individuals, a person-in-environment

method to understanding human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Perron, 2017). "An

ecological approach accounts for individual differences in multifaceted contexts in holistic

student development" (Patton, Renn, Guido, Quaye, & Forney, 2016, p. 51). These contexts that

converge to formulate and influence a student's environment are categorized in systems:

microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner,

1977; Patton et al., 2016; Perron, 2017). The ecological perspective describes development based

on complex interactions between a changing biopsychological human being and the immediate

dynamic environment in which that individual exists, a concept identified as proximal processes;

these proximal processes are dependent on the developing individual, the changing environment,

and the developmental factors being considered (Perron, 2017). Bronfenbrenner's theory of

developmental ecology proposes four domains contributing to a person-environment theory of

development: 1) process, 2) person, 3) context, and 4) time (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Patton et al.,

2016; Perron, 2017). The interconnection between these components facilitate the student's

developmental environment (Patton et al., 2016). Overall, ecology theory provides a means to

understand how early experiences guide current development and can be applied to the establishment and growth of the professional identity.

   Social identity theory. The social identity theoretical framework connects the individual self to the groups the individual associates with and feels connected to in an effort to understand self in society (Maniss, 2017; Patton et al., 2016). The social identity is made up of individual, relational, collective, and material domains (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). The theory highlights the importance of value construction at this stage in identity development, and the constant transformational process of forming a world view in alignment with an individual's values, beliefs, and ethical standards (Maniss, 2017). Social identity theory's focal point is an individual's formation of a self-definition, or statement of purpose, through stages of increased complexity with an attention to identity formation (Patton et al., 2016). Understanding the phenomenon and its relation to the notion of social identity, provides the researcher with a comprehensive overview of the whole individual with no separation between personal and professional identity.

   Chickering's theory of student development. Chickering developed a theory on student development based on what he categorized as seven vectors and presented it in his seminal work, *Education and Identity* first published in 1969, and then revised and co-authored with Reisser in 1993. The seven vectors, which can be utilized for intentional design and activities in curriculum to contribute to student development, are: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) moving through autonomy toward interdependence, 4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, 5) establishing identity, 6) developing purpose, and 7) developing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Garfield & David, 1986; Wise, 2017). These categories are described in a cyclical format, and he proposed that while there is some sense of a linear

progression among the vectors, students often revisit certain vectors due to the fluidity and evolutionary role of student development (Wise, 2017). It is evident that these seven domains are applicable to the development of professional identity among social work students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Understanding a student's progression through the domains and how curriculum can be developed in relation to the domains will enhance the ability to create an evidence-based intervention that contributes to strengthening the establishment of professional identity among social work students.

Theoretical frameworks for transformational learning. Understanding educational theory and its historical evolution, particularly in the field of social work, is imperative with the intention of comprehensively applying best practices in social work education in relation to the formation of a social work intervention to target the phenomenon of social work identity development among social work students.

Mezirow's transformational learning theory. Transformational learning theory is classified a reconstructive theory and is essentially a means of explaining how adults learn to reason for themselves. Transformational learning theory is can be defined as "learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 2009, p. 22). There are two main perspectives, or conceptual lenses, to view transformational learning theory, through a focus on personal transformation and growth and/or through a focus on social change and personal transformation as inherently linked factors (Freire, 1970; Mezirow, 2009; Taylor, 2009). Regardless of the conceptual lens, transformational learning "often requires intentional action, personal risk, a genuine concern for the learners' betterment, and the ability to draw on a variety of methods and techniques to help create a classroom environment that supports growth and, for

others, social change" (Taylor, 2009, p. 14). Transformative learning approaches seek to transform an individual's perspective utilizing critical assessment and reflection of an individual's held values and worldview (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow, Belenky, Cohen, Cranton, Parks Daloz, Elias, Kasi, Kegan, Heads, Marsick, Piper, Stanton, Taylor, Taylor, Wiessner & York, 2000; Taylor, 2009). They highlight student-centered and communicative learning efforts. The theory proposes that transformational learning occurs through four methods: elaborating existing meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, transforming meaning schemes, and transforming meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 2009). Overall, the transformational learning theory presents a conceptual framework for understanding how an individual reasons through meaning making, and ultimately makes judgements and decisions based on this reasoning process (Mezirow et al., 2000; Mezirow, 2009).

Individual experience, critical reflection, dialogue, holistic orientation, awareness of contexts, and authentic relationships are the critical elements that form transformative learning, an effort of teaching for change in the field of adult learning (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). The element of individual experiences involves identifying what each student brings to the learning environment and acknowledging these experiences as starting points; understanding a student's frame of reference upon entering a learning environment is necessary to cultivating a transformational learning environment. The practice of critical reflection is crucial in learning according to the transformational learning theory; critical reflection encourages students to question the integrity of assumptions, biases, and long held beliefs based on prior experiences. Types of critical reflections identified in the transformational learning theory are content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection (Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). Written format of reflection is encouraged because of its ability to

potentially strengthen the reflective experience by creating artifacts of ideas of the mind through an externalization of their reflective experience (Taylor, 2009). Dialogue is an arena for experience and critical reflection to manifest; transformational learning theory highlights a need for self-respect, respect for others, acceptance of the common good, and willingness to participate and connect with diversity (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). Through a holistic orientation approach, full comprehension of the whole person's psycho and social dynamics, the learning process institutes an environment for transformational learning. Holistic orientation, along with the other mentioned elements of transformational learning, contribute to the importance of the awareness of context, "developing a deeper appreciation and understanding of the personal and socio-cultural factors that play an influencing role in the process of transformative learning" (Taylor, 2009, p. 11). And lastly, authentic relationship is identified as the most vital component of transformative learning theory.

   Freire's theory of learning. Freire has contributed a seminal pedagogical approach that has been deemed necessary and utilized in social work education and relates to Meizirow's theory of transformational learning. Freire's theory of learning manifests a unique process to education as a path towards liberation which can be influential to an intervention related to the development of professional identity among social work students. Freire suggests "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (1970, p. 58). Freire's theoretical framework cultivates a salient foundation and highlights the opportunities to partake in a growth process through transformational change that can be applicable to the development of an intervention focused on identity.

   Freire presumes that educational experiences are capable of manifesting transformational

change. In his thinking, he emphasizes that "students move toward a fuller and richer life individually and collectivity when they are encouraged to act on and thereby transform their world" (Fox, 2013, p. 14). His view and approach to education involves the concept of liberation, a theme particularly highlighted in his work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2009). In this literary work, he describes the concept of "banking." "Banking" involves teachers depositing information into students, as if students have no necessary or impactful contributions to provide to their own learning process (Fischer, 2015; Freire, 1970/2009). Freire reasons that teaching utilizing the concept of "banking" is indeed a form of oppression, whereas he asserts an idea that education should be conceptualized as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1970/2009). Freire insists "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry, human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other" (Freire, 1970/2009, p. 164). Teachers must involve their students in critical thinking and emphasize a humanistic approach to learning; in this manner both teachers and students have a responsibility to contribute to a learning process in which everyone grows (Freire, 1970/2009). Overall, both Meizrow and Freire's pedagogies underscore learning and education as an ongoing transformative process (Freire, 1970/2009; Meizirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000), and the concepts identified in their theories of learning can be utilized in the development of an intervention that would be most influential for social work student and professional identity development.

Predictive Indicators

Ecological Systems Perspective
- Identity development as a process
- Student's identity development based on environmental context/influences (person-in-environment approach)
- Consideration of early experiences on current development

- **Professional Identity Development**

Social Identity Theory
- Understanding self through associated groups (which groups do I belong to, as a student, or as a professional)
- Value construction
- Worldview formation and reformation
- Statement of purpose (mission/vision) of the individual
- Holistic approach to understanding the individual (both personal and professional identity interconnected)

- **Professional Identity Development**
- **Value acquisition**
- **Self-differentiation**
- **Sense of Coherence**
- **Importance of relationships and belonging**

Chickering's Theory of Student Development
- Steps of student development (developing competence, managing emotions, moving towards autonomy, developing mature relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, developing integrity)
- Cyclical rather than linear progression

- **Professional Identity Development**
- **Empathic ability**
- **Importance of relationships and belonging**

Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory
- Personal transformation through the learning process
- Utilize a variety of methods and techniques to create a transformational learning environment
- Elements of transformational learning: individual experience sharing, critical reflection, dialogue, holistic orientation, awareness of contexts, authentic relationships
- Student-centered learning

- **Professional Identity Development**
- **Self-differentiation**
- **Sense of Coherence**
- **Importance of relationships and belonging**

Freire's Theory of Learning
- Personal transformation and social change
- Relating transformational learning to social change and contributing to the development of a professional identity in social work
- Transformational change beyond personal change
- Student and teacher contributive learning
- Critical thinking

- **Professional Identity Development**
- **Empathic ability**
- **Value acquisition**
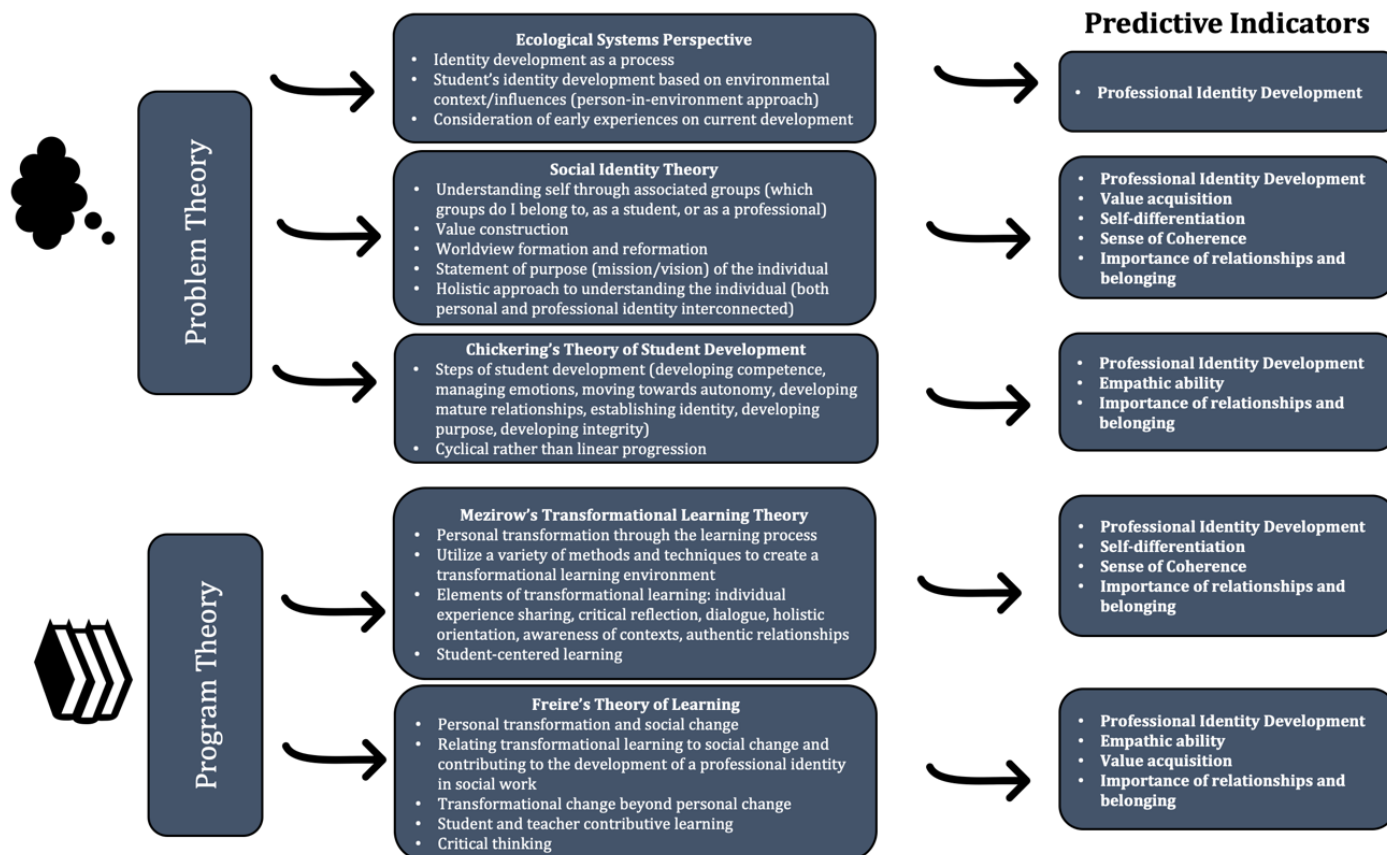- **Importance of relationships and belonging**

Figure 1. *Problem and Program Theory for Professional Identity Development*

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature on the phenomenon of professional identity development in social work presents several qualitative and quantitative research studies, particularly from exploratory, descriptive, and correlational research designs, and with a primary focus on identifying and measuring predictive indicators of social work identity development (Bell et al., 2017; Bogo, 2010; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Hantman & Ben-Oz, 2014; Levy et al., 2014; Mackay & Zuffery, 2015; Miller, 2013; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Roulston, Cleak, Vreugdenhil, 2018; Shlomo et al., 2012; Tack & Carney, 2018). When measuring the level of professional socialization and identifying outcome variables related to the phenomenon of professional identity development among social work students, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research methods, there are several factors identified in the literature. The most dominant and recurring predictive factors of professional identity development among social work students presented in the literature are empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, values, and satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship (Barretti, 2009; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Miller, 2013; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012; Tack & Carney, 2018). A higher prevalence of these predictive indicators, measured through the use of surveys and/or in-depth interviews, indicates an increased likelihood of a social work identity rooted in ethics, values, attitudes, and perceptions of the social work profession (Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Miller, 2010; Wiles, 2013). Studies that examine the phenomenon present these variables as positive contributors to the level of professional socialization among social workers because they represent a social worker's ability to function and cope in complex situations and to differentiate between the worker's feelings and thoughts and the client's feelings and thoughts, and therefore are contributive factors in the professional identity development of social work

students (Barretti, 2009; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Miller, 2013; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012; Tack & Carney, 2018

Empathic Ability

Empathic ability is a quality typically evident in social work professionals. It can be defined as a multidimensional variable that encompasses a social worker's ability to acknowledge and accurately reflect emotions and experiences of an individual without having necessarily lived that same experience; empathic listening is also a skill emphasizing a social worker's commitment to caring for all individuals (Forenza &Eckert, 2017; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Levy et al., 2014). Researchers categorize empathic behavior as personal resource when measuring its relation to the development of social work identity (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Shlomo et al., 2012), and report its direct and positive association with professional identity (Levy et al., 2014). The more an individual manifests empathy, or experiences empathic encounters, the more positive their professional identity will be (Levy et al., 2014). Specifically, in the literature, when social workers are asked to describe their desire to practice social work and reflect on their professional identity, research has often distinctly highlighted social workers' reflection on the humanitarian empathic qualities they perceive as critical in the process of becoming a social worker (Levy et al., 2014; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015). Among these positive links to professional identity development, empathic ability is linked to high levels of self-differentiation and sense of coherence, two other outcome variables utilized to measure the level of professional identity development among social workers (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016, Shlomo et al., 2012).

Self-Differentiation

Similar to empathic ability, self-differentiation is a concept which is categorized as a

personal resource. Self-differentiation can be defined as an ability to recognize

the feelings of other individuals, therefore, closely relating the concept to empathic ability

(Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al.,

2012). The conceptualization of self-differentiation also "relates to the ability to differentiate

between emotional and intellectual aspects, and the ability to integrate those aspects into one's

personality" (Shlomo et al., 2012, p. 243). When social workers have higher levels of self-

differentiation they are able to adequately express feelings and cope in critical situations through

a flexible means while remaining emotionally regulated, contributing to and increased ability to

learn and internalize the knowledge and skills necessary to function as a social work professional

(Levy et al., 2014). A higher level of self-differentiation also suggests a level of independent

functioning rather than dependence on supervisor for constant regulation and guidance (Shlomo

et al., 2012); this leads to a stronger sense of identity through the fostering and encouragement of

autonomy in social work practice and decision making (Hantman & Ben-Oz, 2014). Overall,

"individuals with relatively high levels of differentiation of self possess a solid sense of self and

are able to remain objective in, and therefore cope more effectively with, emotionally charged

situations and are more resilient in the face of stress than are individuals who display lower

levels of differentiation " (Drake, Murdock, Marszalek, & Barber, 2015, p. 102).

Sense of Coherence

Sense of coherence, similar to the variables of empathic ability and self-differentiation, is

categorized as a personal resource (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon

& Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012). This outcome variable is related to an individual's

expectations and reality. Aaron Antonovsky (1987), a prominent scholar in the study of sense of

coherence, defined the outcome as:

a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring

through dynamic feeling of confidence that (1) the stimuli deriving from one's internal

and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and

explicable; (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posted by these

stimuli; and (3) these demands are challenges worthy of investment and engagement

(p. 19).

In other terms, a sense of coherence is explicated by "the ability to anticipate processes in the

environment; the ability to comprehend those processes; and the ability to apply them toward

better functioning" (Levy et al., 2014, p. 746). This refers to the ability of applying knowledge,

resources, and skills "toward managing various situations, and the ability to view even the most

difficult life events as a challenge rather than as a threat" (Levy et al., 2014, p. 746). Social

workers who exhibit a high sense of coherence are better equipped and more inclined to

positively react and utilize effective coping skills in stressful situations; individuals with a high

level of sense of coherence typically present with higher levels of emotional well-being (Shlomo

et al., 2012). "Therefore, it can be expected that students with a high sense of coherence will

perceive social work tasks as challenging, and that they will be able to experience a process of

professional growth and develop a clear identity" (Shlomo, et al., 2012, p. 243). A high level of a

sense of coherence also indicates an enhanced ability to apply values and professional skills, and

to realize one's abilities, expectations, and values (Antonovsky, 1993). The literature

hypothesizes a relationship between the two variables, levels of self-differentiation and levels of

sense of coherence to professional identity, however, there is minimal empirical evidence to

support any type of relationship exclusively between the two variables themselves.

Satisfaction with Supervision and/or Mentor Relationships

An organizational resource which plays a central role in the development of professional

identity among social workers and identified in the literature as an indicative factor of a strong

sense of professional identity among social workers is satisfaction with supervision (Hantman &

Ben-Oz, 2014; Levy et al., 2014; Roulston et al., 2018). The compatibility between students'

expectations of the supervision process and the reality of the supervision provided to social work

students is measured to assess satisfaction with supervision and its contribution to the

development of professional identity among students (Levy et al., 2014; Shlomo et al., 2012).

Satisfaction with supervision can also indicate how a student will implement values in their

professional work (Levy et al. 2014). According to the literature, satisfaction with supervision is

a direct contributive factor when measuring professional identity because supervisors and/or

mentors aid in the evolution of critical components of social work identity development

including self-differentiation and sense of coherence (Barretti, 2009; Bogo, 2010; Levy et al.,

2014; Shlomo et al., 2012).

Supervision and mentorship relationships facilitate the development of professional

identity through building relationships to enhance and encourage a professional personality,

which in turn contributes to identity development by providing students with the essential

knowledge and skills necessary to practice social work (Shlomo et al., 2012). This type of

relationship formation provides an environment of personal and professional growth that

transcends the typical expectations of the role of supervision (Levy et al., 2014). Feedback from

supervisors is another component of the supervisory relationship which positively aligns with

social work identity development (Roulston et al., 2018). Overall, students who experience

positive relationships with their supervisors and/or mentors in the field of social work, are

essentially better able to mature in their professional identity development (Levy et al., 2014), and therefore the literature suggests an emphasis on relationships with supervisors or social work mentors should be central in the development of social work training and education programs aimed at targeting professional identity development (Shlomo et al., 2012).

Values

Personal and social values are categorized as environmental resources and considered to be predictive indicators of professional identity development (Shlomo et al., 2012). According to the literature, personal values are a direct contributive factor when measuring professional identity (Barretti, 2009; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012); understanding and being able to identify personal values leads to application of those values in professional practice and decision making (Bogo, 2010; Shlomo et al., 2012). Findings in the literature also indicate a higher level of professional identity development among students who are aware and able to identify their personal values (Bogo, 2010; Shlomo et al., 2012). Being able to make recognize these personal values enables students to integrate them with social work values, creating a merge of values utilized in the development of professional identity (Bogo, 2010; Shlomo et al., 2012). Another study revealed that students who reported a focus on social work values in the classroom had an increased connection with the profession than students who reported less centrality on social work values in the classroom (Miller, 2013). Because of its direct and positive association with professional identity development, value acquisition in the classroom environment and in the field of social work is an essential and signature pedagogy to be considered in the development of social work curriculum and training (Levy et al., 2014; Miller, 2013). Therefore, the literature suggests an emphasis on values should be another centrality of focus in the development of social work training and education programs

aimed at targeting professional identity development (Shlomo et al., 2012).

Curriculum Development for Social Work Identity

It is evident that the phenomenon of professional identity development and socialization among the social work profession remains to be a domain of extensive interest with continual requests for further research. Researchers attribute this need for further research to the profession's ongoing advancement. The need is also historically rooted in an endeavor to vitalize social work identity development among students through the utilization of evidence-informed theory and practices proven to positively contribute to social work identity development through implicit and explicit methods. Since the professional socialization of social work is a dynamic process, it is necessary to acknowledge the evolution of the professional identity to apprehend how these variables can be utilized to ensure professional socialization (Bell et al., 2017; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012; Wiles, 2013). Therefore, researchers suggest further pursuit of how to relate these factors to curriculum development in social work education programs (Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016). Understanding the effectiveness of the applicability of these indicators social work curriculum and training programs contributes to a strong outcome of professional identity (Levy et al., 2014). With a path toward intentional contribution to social work identity development, social work leaders and educators are capable of facilitating and fostering a means to a stronger sense of social work identity among social work students.

Developing an Intervention for Research

It is evident that when social work practice is informed by research, outcomes are usually improved, and research informed by practice is often accompanied by enhanced program development (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, & Day, 2009). Because of the criticality of

professional identity development in furthering professional growth among social workers and holistically as a profession, further exploration primarily focusing on applicable, evidence-based interventions to engage social work students in the development of professional identity will lead to inherently notable opportunities to contribute to social work education in terms of curriculum development locally and globally; successively, these contributions will strengthen and positively influence the development of the profession. Intervention research, leading to an evidence-based practice approach, will encourage the utilization of the best strategy for change by identifying, adapting, and implementing an intervention proven to be effective and efficacious (Fraser et al., 2009). While related studies have focused specifically on what outcome variables are to be measured to assess the outcome of professional identity development among social work students, intervention research provides an opportunity for purposive action intended to improve these measured outcome variables, not just identify them (Fraser et al., 2009).

The researcher has chosen to conduct intervention research through the development of a workshop to foster social work identity development in an effort to positively affect the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, and value development among undergraduate and graduate level social work students. This intervention research approach affords possibilities to focus on both program outcomes and on hypothesized change processes operating within an established intervention to pursue the phenomenon of social work identity development using concepts that apply to both problem theory and program theory (Fraser et al., 2009; Gitlin & Czaja, 2016). The researcher proposes that the implementation of such a workshop in the early stages of the undergraduate and graduate level social work curriculum will yield positive results and contributions towards the professional identity development of social work students. The main research question to be

studied seeks to answer if participating in a workshop designed to foster social work identity

development result in increased level of professional identity.

Chapter Three: Methods

Through the use and application of intervention research as a strategy for change, an intervention was developed to address the phenomenon of social work identity development. This intervention was intended to function as an intentional change strategy and was implemented in the efficacy testing phase of intervention research (Fraser et al., 2009). The intervention was originally piloted and reviewed by experts in the field to obtain feedback on the content of the intervention manual and to ensure the intervention would meet the intended goals and objectives. While this study particularly focused on an initial efficacy trial of the developed intervention, the researcher's long-term objective is to produce an evidence-based intervention to address the phenomenon of social work identity development. The intended purpose of this intervention was to improve outcomes of social work identity development among students through the implementation of a Social Work Identity Workshop (SWIW) developed by the researcher. The Institutional Review Board of the researcher's university approved this research study.

The Social Work Identity Workshop (SWIW)

The SWIW is a six-hour workshop designed to focus on social work identity development among social work students at the undergraduate and graduate level to aid in the facilitation and cultivation of a professional social work identity while providing an environment for transformational learning. Topics incorporated in the workshop include professional identity and professional socialization, the role of the social work code of ethics, the historical evolution of the social work profession, core values, and mission and vision statement writing. There are four main parts incorporated in the workshop, Part I: Welcome, Introduction to Social Work Identity, and Icebreaker, Part II: The Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession, Part III:

Values, Vision, & Mission, Part IV: My Social Work Identity Development & Next Steps.

Figure 2 highlights the main functions of the workshop by providing the goal and objectives of

each part of the SWIW. Activities in the workshop were developed utilizing Mezirow's theory of

transformational learning and Freire's theory of learning as foundational program theories

(Freire 1970; Mezirow, 2009). Concepts that reflect the basis of the intervention's theoretical

framework are inclusive of activities that highlight critical reflection, holistic orientation,

awareness of contexts, authentic relationship building, dialogue, and student-centered learning

(Freire 1970; Mezirow, 2009). The SWIW Intervention Manual utilized in this research study is

provided in Appendix A.

Figure 2. *The Social Work Identity Workshop: Goals & Objectives*

Design

Because of the complexity of the social process of professional identity development, a solely quantitative approach could not capture the essence of what the researcher was interested in measuring due to the lack of depth needed to answer some of the proposed research questions, and a solely qualitative approach could not contribute rigorous and epistemically sound data and results (Rubin & Babbie, 2017; Watkins & Gioia, 2015). An mixed methods research design was chosen and utilized for this research study because it was able to yield a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon through qualitative inquiry and quantitative evaluation despite the small sample size (Rubin & Babbie, 2017; Watkins & Gioia, 2015), and resulted in an exploratory and descriptive evaluation applicable to practical social work, which can essentially provide opportunities to advance in the intervention research process, towards continued pilot testing, efficacy trials, and effectiveness testing. This approach also suggested an increased level of validity due to triangulation of methods, opportunity to utilize strengths of both research methods, and emphasized the nature of social work to view phenomena holistically (Watkins & Gioia, 2015).

Variables. The independent variable in the research study was the SWIW, and the dependent variables (outcome variables) were level of empathic ability, level of self-differentiation, level of sense of coherence, satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, value development, and level of professional identity. The main outcome variable investigated was the level of professional identity with a focus on three domains: knowledge of the profession, professional roles and expertise, and attitude.

Quantitative research questions. Does participating in a workshop designed to foster social work identity development affect the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation,

sense of coherence, satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, and value development among graduate level social work students? Does participation in the SWIW result in increased level of professional identity?

Hypotheses. 1) If graduate level social work students participate in a workshop designed to foster social work identity, then levels of empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, and value development will be positively affected. 2) If graduate level social work students participate in a workshop designed to address the phenomenon of social work identity, then these students who participate in the workshop are likely to have an increased level of professional identity.

The purpose of the quantitative aspects of the study identified the relationship between the implementation of a workshop designed around the phenomenon of social work identity, and the outcome variables associated with measuring professional identity development among graduate level social work students. A quantitative method also provided an ability to test the intervention across multiple independent groups in the future. Through the use of a quantitative approach the researcher pursued an exploratory or descriptive evaluation of the intervention to answer the research questions. The researcher utilized pre-post quasi-experimental design for the quantitative method because it allowed for a comparison group where the participants were not randomly assigned to groups (Rubin & Babbie, 2017).

Qualitative research questions. How does participation in a workshop designed around the phenomenon of social work identity development affect the professional identity development of graduate level social work students? What do students think should be emphasized in a workshop to enhance their professional identity development and professional socialization into the social work profession at the graduate level?

The purpose of the qualitative aspects of the study was to understand how a workshop designed around the phenomenon of social work identity development affects the professional identity development of graduate level social work students. This qualitative study also described areas of focus that should be emphasized in the design and revision of the workshop to enhance students' professional identity development and professional socialization into the social work profession. Through the use of a qualitative approach the researcher was able to understand the human experience to the phenomenon of interest, and as a social worker, the researcher essentially aligned with this approach to understand the student experience holistically through an iterative and emergent process (Rubin & Babbie, 2017; Watkins & Gioia, 2015). The researcher focused on concepts of a phenomenological design for the qualitative aspects of the study, however, the design was modified as the results were collected through survey responses; follow up interviews and other means of data collection were not utilized in this research study (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Padgett, 2017).

Setting

The researcher was interested in implementing the SWIW with graduate level social work students. The researcher utilized a connection with a public institution in South Central Pennsylvania that offers both undergraduate and graduate social work programs and had expressed an interest in enhancing its students' professional social work identity. The graduate program offers an advanced generalist specialization, and the undergraduate program seeks to prepare students to achieve entry level professional competence as generalist social work practitioners.

Study Participants

The professors of the first course in the graduate level (MSW) social work

program agreed to implement the SWIW in their curriculum as part of the School of Social Work's interest in enhancing its students' professional social work identity. Students were identified based on their status in the MSW Program; they were either MSW Regular Admission or MSW Advanced Standing. The School of Social Work (SSW) collected data utilizing a pre and post assessment tool. The SWIW was implemented in one of the courses, and the other graduate level group was utilized as a comparison group. The comparison group only completed the pre-assessment and did not participate in the intervention. The study participants were assigned to two groups based on the following criteria.

In May of 2019, an incoming graduate level cohort began their graduate studies in social work. The SWIW was incorporated into the first foundation social work course. Twenty-four students were invited to participate in the workshop and complete the pre and post assessment by the professor of the course. Information about the workshop was provided to students via email, and students were informed that their participation in the workshop and completion of the pre and post assessment were voluntary. Prior to the workshop, the students were asked, via email by the professor, to complete the pre-assessment. Students were informed that their participation in the pre-assessment was voluntary and would not negatively affect their course grade. All 24 students completed the pre-assessment prior to receiving the intervention. The students then completed the SWIW workshop and were asked, via email by the professor of the course, to complete the post assessment. Again, students were informed that their participation in the post assessment was voluntary and would not negatively affect their course grade. Twelve students completed the post assessment.

The SSW was interested in comparing outcomes of the results from the incoming graduate level cohort with those who did not receive the SWIW but have a social work

undergraduate degree. Incoming students in the advanced standing MSW program who were

enrolled in the first "bridge" course were invited by the professor of the course to complete the

pre-assessment. Forty-six students were invited by the professor via email and face to face

communication during their course. The professor communicated to students that completion of

the pre-assessment was voluntary. The professor offered five points towards the student's course

grade as an incentive to complete the pre-assessment; the professor awarded points to all students

to avoid any negative effect on the course grade for any student who chose not to participate in

the pre-assessment. A total of 38 students completed the post assessment.

Table 1 provides information on the demographics of the intervention and comparison

groups. When reviewing age range, gender, and race of participants in the intervention group, a

majority of participants were in the age range of 21-26 years old ($n = 5$, 62.5%), were women (n

$= 7$, 87.5%), and were white ($n = 7$, 87.5%). When reviewing age range, gender, and race of

participants in the comparison group, a majority of participants were in the age range of 21-26

years old (n=17, 68%), were women ($n = 23$, 92%), and were white ($n = 23$, 92%).

When reviewing educational history and employment status, in the intervention group,

12.5% ($n = 1$) of participants reportedly had obtained a Bachelor's in Social Work Degree, and

87.5% ($n = 7$) indicated they had obtained other degrees. Other degrees reported by the

participants in the intervention group were: Bachelor's in Psychology ($n = 1$, 12.5%), Bachelor's

in Elementary Education ($n = 1$, 12.5%), Bachelor's in Anthropology/Sociology ($n = 1$, 12.5%),

Bachelor's in Criminology ($n = 1$, 12.5%), Bachelor's in Fine Arts ($n = 1$, 12.5%), Bachelor's in

Human Services ($n = 1$, 12.5%), and Bachelor's in Educational Studies ($n = 1$, 12.5%). When

asked about employment status, 37.5% ($n = 3$) of participants in the intervention group reported

that they were currently employed as social workers, 25% ($n = 2$) reported being a student as one

of their employment options, and 50% ($n = 4$) reported other employment outside of the field of

social work. Examples of other employment included, employment as a TSS, employment at a

restaurant, employment through Federal Service Agency (AmeriCorps), and full-time

employment in the education field. In the comparison group, 92% ($n = 23$) of participants

reportedly had obtained a Bachelor's in Social Work Degree. When asked about employment

status, 52% ($n = 13$) of participants in the comparison group reported being a student as one of

their employment options.

Table 1. *Study Participant Demographics: MSW Students*

		Intervention Group ($n = 8$) n%	Comparison Group ($n = 25$) n%
Age (years)	21-26	62.5% ($n = 5$)	68% ($n = 17$)
	26-31	0% ($n = 0$)	8% ($n = 2$)
	31-36	0% ($n = 0$)	12% ($n = 3$)
	36-40	25% ($n = 2$)	4% ($n = 1$)
	40+	12.5% ($n = 1$)	8% ($n = 2$)
Gender	Woman	87.5% ($n = 7$)	92% ($n = 23$)
	Man	12.5% ($n = 1$)	8% ($n = 2$)
Race	White	87.5% ($n = 7$)	92% ($n = 23$)
	Black or African American	12.5% ($n = 1$)	0%
	Other- Hispanic	0%	8% ($n = 2$)

Current Social Work Program Level	MSW Advanced Standing	100% ($n = 8$)	0%
	MSW Regular Admission	0%	100% ($n = 8$)
Education (Degrees) Completed	Bachelor's in Social Work	12.5% ($n = 1$)	92% ($n = 23$)
		0%	2% ($n = 8$)
	Master's in Social Work		
		87.5% ($n = 7$)	12% ($n = 3$)
	Other		
Employment	Currently Employed as a Social Worker	37.5% ($n = 3$)	40% ($n = 10$)
	Currently a student	25% ($n = 2$)	52% ($n = 13$)
	Currently unemployed	0%	8% ($n = 2$)
	Other Employment	50% ($n = 4$)	28% ($n = 7$)

Data Collection

The data were collected utilizing a pre and post assessment format. The data were collected as part of the first efficacy trial of the SWIW in part to assess the intervention's immediate outcomes, and also to gather data on the predictive indicators of the professional identity of incoming graduate level social work students. Students in the MSW program enrolled in the 60-credit (regular) program were in their foundation year of studies (intervention group) and participated in the pre-assessment, the intervention, and the post assessment. Students enrolled in the MSW advanced standing program (comparison group) were beginning their specialization year of studies and participated in the pre-assessment. The researcher hypothesized the comparison group would have higher scores than the intervention group because the

researcher assumed participants in the comparison group enter the program with a stronger sense of professional identity due to their education and experience in the field of social work.

Measures

To measure the outcome variables of professional identity, sense of coherence, empathic ability, sense of differentiation, the researcher utilized the following scales: Professional Identity Scale in Counseling (PISC) (Woo & Henfield, 2015), the Sense of Coherence/Orientation to Life Questionnaire (SOC-29) (Antonovsky, 1987), the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) (Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, & Levine, 2009), Differentiation of Self Inventory- Short Form (DSI-SF) (Drake et al., 2015; Skowron & Friedlander, 1998) to collect data quantitatively. The pre and post assessment tool was developed by the researcher utilizing the scales and organized in Survey Monkey. The survey was utilized by the SSW to collect data from students, which the researcher then gained access to for data analysis.

PISC. The PISC was developed by Woo and Henfield (2013) after completing a systematic review of the literature on professional identity development in the field of counseling. The purpose of the instrument is to measure professional identity development among counseling professionals. The PISC utilizes a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not at all in agreement) to 6 (totally in agreement); it is scored utilizing a composite score method (Woo, 2013). The scale comprises six subscales: A) Knowledge of the Profession B) Philosophy of the Profession, C) Professional Roles & Expertise, D) Attitude, E) Engagement Behaviors, and F) Interaction. For the purposes of this research the following subscales were utilized: A) Knowledge of the Profession (10 items), C) Professional Roles and Expertise (11 items), and D) Attitude (12 items). The Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the scale, including all subscales was reported to be .80 (Healey, 2009); Subscale A has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.879

(Woo, 2013). Subscale C has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.804. Subscale D has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.813; two items on this subscale utilize reverse coding. In this research study, the Cronbach's alpha for Subscale A was .850, for Subscale B was .748, and for Subscale C was .614. The Cronbach's alpha for all three subscales was .825.

In 2014, a study was conducted to test for relevance, reliability, and validity of the PISC (Woo, Henfield, & Choi, 2014). Findings indicated that the scale was internally reliable and assessed its intended outcome, professional identity among diverse counseling professionals in the field (Woo & Henfield, 2015). The literature suggests that the study also provided evidence to support convergent validity (Woo & Henfield, 2015). Another study was completed in 2018 to conduct exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses in an effort to design a shorter measurement tool (Woo, Lu, & Bang, 2018). For the purposes of this study, the researcher obtained permission from Woo to utilize the PISC in this research, and permission to alter terms such as "counseling" and "mental health profession" to "social work" or "helping profession," as necessary for the study.

SOC-29. This is a 29-item questionnaire developed by Antonovsky (1987), based on Guttman's facet theory and comprises 3 subscales: Comprehensibility (11 items), Manageability (10 items), and Meaningfulness (8 items) (Antonvosky, 1993; Soderhamn, Sundsli, Cliffordson, & Dale, 2015). The SOC-29 utilizes a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7 with each item having 2 anchoring phrases (Soderhamn et al., 2015). The total score ranges from 29 to 203 with a higher score reflecting a higher level of a sense of coherence (Soderhamn et al., 2015).

Antonovsky was in search of understanding how resources such as wealth, ego, strength, cultural stability, and social support promoted health and well-being. He highlighted that these resources contribute to life experiences, which ultimately influenced one's sense of coherence.

This instrument measures constructs such as global orientation to oneself and one's environment, stressors, health, illness, well-being, attitudes, and behavior . Antonovsky published results measuring feasibility, reliability, and validity of the scale. During this stage of testing, there were twenty-six studies utilizing the SOC-29, which resulted in Cronbach alpha measures of internal consistency ranging from 0.82 to 0.95. These results and more current testing of validity and reliability of this scale indicate high levels of content, face, consensual, and construct validity (Antonovsky, 1993; Eriksson & Mittelmark, 2017; Shlomo et al., 2012). In this research study the Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .833.

TEQ. This 16-item instrument was developed by Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, and Levine (2009) to specifically measure empathy as a primarily emotional process. Their work contributes to an effort to develop a unidimensional, short, and clear scale with strong psychometric properties to measure empathic ability. Their initial validation methods indicate strong convergent validity, high internal consistency, and high reliability concluding that the TEQ is a valid and reliable instrument that can be utilized to measure empathic ability (Spreng et al., 2009). The instrument has been utilized in several different countries around the world and has been proven to be a reliable measure across different age groups (Kourmousi, Amanaki, Tzavara, Merakou, Barbouni, & Koutras, 2017). The scale is scored on a 5-point-Likert scale as follows: 0 (never), 1 (rarely), 2 (sometimes), 3 (often), and 4 (always). The items are related to the following categories: emotional contagion, emotion comprehension, sympathetic psychological arousal, and con-specific altruism (Kourmousi et al., 2017). The scores are summed for total, which can range from 0-64, with high scores indicating higher levels of empathy. Eight items (2, 4,7,10,11,12,14,15) on the scale are reversed coded prior to totaling the responses. The TEQ scale was reported with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.72. In this research study the Cronbach's alpha

for this scale was .735.

DSI-SF. The original DSI was developed by Skowron and Friedlander (1998) in an effort to measure self-differentiation. The DSI-Revised was later developed because of the need for more empirical validation, psychometric revisions, and problematic results of the original DSI (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). The DSI-SF, in which the number of items in each subscale in the DSI were reduced while maintaining psychometric properties of the original scale, was developed to alleviate research participant fatigue, attrition, time, and energy burden on participants (Drake et al., 2015). Studies were completed with college aged samples to ensure DSI-SF subscale reliability and to confirm the structure of the DSI-SF. Evidence was provided to support strong concurrent criterion validity and convergent validity for the DSI-SF.

The DSI-SF comprises 20 items and 4 subscales: Emotional Cutoff (EC) with 3 items, Emotional Reactivity (ER) with 6 items, Fusion with Others (FO) with 5 items, and I-Position (IP) with 6 items. The scale is scored on a 6-point-Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all characteristic of me) to 6 (very characteristic of me). The scale is scored using a composite score method, with higher scores indicating a higher level of self-differentiation. A study was competed to test for validity at two different times and the following results were reported: Cronbach's alpha for EC is reported as 0.78 and 0.81; Cronbach's alpha for ER 0.79 and 0.83; Cronbach's alpha for FO is reported as 0.56 and 0.58, and for IP is reported as 0.68 and 0.71. The DSI-SF Cronbach's alpha, representing the overall scale's internal reliability consistency was reported as 0.87. In this research study the Cronbach's alpha was .836.

Satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship. To measure the outcome variables of satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship the researcher utilized the following open-ended question to collect data qualitatively: *Satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship*

relationships is a predictive factor of professional identity development in social work. Describe your experience with supervision and/or mentor relationships that have positively contributed to the development of your professional identity as a social worker.

Value acquisition. To measure the outcome variable of value acquisition the researcher asked the following statement to collect data qualitatively: *Below is a list of value-based terms. Review the list and mark the top eight that closely represent principles, standards, or qualities that you consider are essential to your identity (personal and/or professional). The value-based terms listed to choose from will be: achievement/ accomplishment, advancement, autonomy, belonging to a group, building something, challenge, compassion, competence, creativity, creating change (i.e. social change), creating information, decision-making, dignity and worth of the individual, entrepreneurship, equality, excitement/risk, fame, family happiness, financial security, fun, happiness, health, importance of human relationships, influencing people, independence, integrity, leadership, learning/gaining wisdom, leisure, listening, mastering a technique/field, personal development, receiving recognition/impressing people, respect, risk taking, safety/security, service, self-expression, social justice, spirituality, stability, status, teamwork, wealth, and other (please specify).*

Intervention research data collection. The researcher was interested in collecting data regarding the SWIW, as this was an efficacy test for the intervention and a significant part of the research study. Therefore, the researcher included the following questions in the post assessment to gather information related to the efficacy testing of the intervention.

1. *From your perspective, what is the goal(s) of the workshop?*

2. *Is the goal(s) you identified aligned with the intended goal of the workshop? (The intended purpose of this workshop is to help students cultivate and contribute to their*

development and growth of a professional social work identity by providing a

transformative learning environment in which to do so).

3.   Is the length of the topics covered in the workshop optimal and effective? (If no,

please explain your response.)

4.   Is the sequencing of the topics in the workshop optimal and effective? (If no, please

explain your response.)

5.   Do you think MSW Regular Admission Students are appropriate recipients of the

workshop? (If no, please explain your response).

6.   What particular activities and/or information presented in the workshop are more

appropriate in meeting the intended goals of the workshop than others?

7.   Should some content in the workshop be revised? (If yes, please specify.)

8.   Should some content in the workshop be omitted? (If yes, please specify.)

9.   Should any new content be developed to meet the needs of the recipients of the

workshop? (If yes, please specify.)

10. Did the workshop increase your knowledge of the historical evolution of the social

work profession?

11. Did the workshop increase your knowledge of how the historical evolution of the

social work profession relates to professional identity development?

12. Did the workshop provide you with an understanding of the importance of a

professional identity in social work?

13. Did the workshop provide you with an understanding of professional identity

development's influence on the profession of social work now and in the future?

14. Does the workshop provide a space for you to apply the Social Work Code of Ethics to your personal and professional identity?

15. Does the workshop provide a space for you to apply the Social Work Core Values to your personal and professional identity?

16. Does the workshop discuss considerations of the infusion of a personal and professional identity in social work?

17. Does the workshop encourage you to increase your desire to cultivate a professional identity in the profession of social work?

18. Please provide any additional insight or feedback on how to improve this workshop for future sessions.

The pre and post assessment was distributed by the SSW to the research participants electronically using Survey Monkey. A paper version of the assessments was also available to participants, however, was not requested for use by participants. The pre-assessment had an estimated completion time of twenty-three minutes, and the post assessment had an estimated completion time of thirty-five minutes. Students were asked to complete the pre-assessment up to one week prior to participation in the SWIW; students were asked to complete the post assessment up to two weeks upon completion of the SWIW. All students who were enrolled in the two sections of courses identified as either the intervention (received SWIW) or comparison group) received an email from the researcher asking permission to utilize the data as part of her dissertation. A copy of consent form utilized can be found in Appendix B. Upon receipt of the signed consent forms, the researcher received the data collected by SSW de-identified and conducted a secondary data analysis to answer the research questions. All data were stored on a

password protected computer and only the researcher and School of Social Work Chairperson had access to the data throughout the research process.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analyses were utilized. To analyze the quantitative data, the researcher used IBM SPSS Software (SPSS), and to analyze qualitative data the researcher used NVivo 12 Software (NVivo). A description of the data analysis procedure is presented below. Table 2 provides each research question noting sample size, group(s), scale/data collection, and type of analysis utilized.

Quantitative purpose and logic of analysis. The results collected from the pre and post assessment were analyzed using nonparametric statistical tests. Due to the nature of intervention research, the researcher had a small sample size and could not assume a normal distribution of outcome variables (Field, 2018; Siebert & Siebert, 2018). Table 2 provides an overview of the nonparametric tests utilized to answer each research question. Quantitative research questions 1 and 2 were analyzed utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test because it is the nonparametric alternative to the paired t-test and the groups being compared are related or dependent groups (Field, 2018; Siebert & Siebert, 2018). Quantitative research question 4 was analyzed utilizing the Mann-Whitney U Test because it is the nonparametric alternative to an independent sample t-test and the groups being compared are independent groups (Field, 2018; Siebert, 2018).

Qualitative purpose and logic of analysis. There are logical steps suggested to complete data analysis such as organizing data, becoming familiar with the data, memoing, coding, identifying themes, developing and assessing interpretations, and representing and visualizing the data (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Padgett, 2017; Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The researcher utilized the concept of the data analysis spiral presented by Creswell and Poth (2018)

as a foundation for the data analysis process in this research project. For research questions 3, 5, and 6 represented in Table 2, coding and thematic development, the researcher organized the data collected in NVivo and identified categories among the data (Padgett, 2017). Memo writing was utilized throughout the data analysis processes to record the strategies and logic of the content analysis.

    Efficacy testing purpose and logic of analysis. The process of intervention research involves developing intentional change strategies (Fraser, et al., 2009). The intervention research process involves several efficacy trials, and as the first efficacy trial of the SWIW, the researcher assessed the extent to which the intervention did more good than harm when delivered (Fraser et al., 2009). To do this, the researcher asked questions in the post assessment (intended to be administered to those who participated in the SWIW) related to the intended proximal outcomes of the SWIW. For research question 7 represented in Table 2, the researcher utilized a frequency count to determine if the proximal outcomes of the SWIW were satisfied.

Table 2. *Data Analysis Table*

Research Question	Sample	Group (s)	Data Collection	Analysis
1. Does implementing the SWIW affect the level of empathic ability, self- differentiation, or sense of coherence among graduate level social work students?	$n = 8$	Intervention (pre/post score) *Related Groups*	TEQ DSI-SF SOC-29	Wilcoxon Signed Rank

2. Does participation in the SWIW result in an increased level of professional identity for graduate level social work students?	$n = 8$ $n = 8$	Intervention (pre/post score) *Related Groups*	PISC	Wilcoxon Signed Rank
3. What are students' experiences with supervision and/or mentorship upon entering a social work graduate program?	$n = 8$ $n = 8$ $n = 25$	Intervention (responses) Comparison (responses)	Open ended questions	Coding and thematic development/ Content Analysis
4A. Is there a difference between the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)? 4B. Is there a difference between level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission) after those students participate in SWIW?	$n = 25$ $n = 8$	Comparison (pre score) Intervention (pre/post score) *Independent Groups*	TEQ DSI-SF SOC-29	Mann-Whitney U Test

4C. Is there a difference between the level of professional identity between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)? 4D. Is there a difference between level of professional identity between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission) after those students participate in SWIW?				
5. Is there a difference between the satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, or value development among students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)?	$n = 25$ $n = 8$	Comparison (responses) Intervention (responses)	Open ended questions	Coding and thematic development/ Content analysis
6. What do students think should be emphasized in a workshop to enhance their professional identity development and professional socialization into the social work profession at the undergraduate and graduate level?	$n = 8$	Intervention (post responses)	Open ended questions, responses collected in post assessment	Coding and thematic development

7. Does the SWIW have the intended proximal outcomes: 1) to help students cultivate and contribute to their development and growth of a professional social work identity by providing a transformative learning environment in which to do so, 2) to increase knowledge of the historical evolution of the social work profession and how the historical evolution of the social work profession relates to professional identity development, 3) to provide the participant with an understanding of the importance of a professional identity in social work, and an understanding of professional identity development's influence on the profession of social work now and in the future, 4) to provide a space for the participant to apply the Social Work Code of Ethics and Social Work Core Values to personal and professional identity, 5) to discuss considerations of the infusion of a personal and professional identity in social work, and 6) to encourage the participant to increase their desire to cultivate a professional identity in the profession of social work	$n = 8$	Intervention (post responses)	Efficacy Questions in post assessment	Frequency

Researcher's Statement of Reflexivity

As a social work scholar and practitioner, reflexivity offers an opportunity of critical examination and reflection. As a reflexive writer, I find it necessary to understand and critically examine how my research, whether quantitative or qualitative, is interconnected to myself, because understanding how I am positioned in my research influences everything about my

research (Watkins & Gioia, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary that I am mindful of the biases, values, and experiences I will potentially contribute to all aspects of this proposed research study (Creswell & Poth 2018; Padgett, 2017).

I am a social worker who is middle class, first generation born in America, and of Egyptian descent. I am also the first generation to pursue higher education at the undergraduate and graduate level of academia. My cultural heritage, educational, and professional experiences are integral to my identity, and I do not separate my personal and professional identity. As a social worker myself, I commenced the research study with the following assumptions and biases: 1) the professional identity of social workers can be diverse and dependent on the location of social work practice, 2) despite the professional identity of the social work profession, there has to be a commonality among all social workers across the globe regardless of the location of practice, 3) professional identity is a complex, ongoing developmental process, and I need to be mindful of my own presence in that process through the entirety of my career 4) professional identity development can and should be understood through a historical perspective with cognizance of the profession's history, 5) there are people who identify as social workers who are not social workers, and social workers who are social workers but do not want to identify as social workers, 6) both implicit and explicit curriculum have a significant influence on the development of the social work professional identity, 7) international service learning opportunities can enhance the development of social work professional identity among students, and 8) there are predictive indicators that can be incorporated into a social work curriculum that influence the development of the social work identity. My passion for the social work profession is the attribute that has initiated this interest in the phenomenon of social work identity development among social work students and through this research, I hope to mindfully

contribute a meaningful intervention that illustrates the inherent passion and dedication social

workers are capable of contributing to the profession's future.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Data utilized in this study were collected by the SSW utilizing a pre and post assessment format administered through SurveyMonkey. The SSW was interested in comparing outcomes of the results from the incoming graduate level cohort, MSW Regular Admission Students (intervention group), with those who did not receive the SWIW but have a social work undergraduate degree, MSW Advanced Standing Students (comparison group). The data in this research study were obtained from an intervention group, those who participated in the SWIW and completed the pre and post assessment, and a comparison group, those who did not participate in the SWIW but completed a pre-assessment survey. Data were also gathered as part of the first efficacy trial of the SWIW to assess the intervention's immediate outcomes. The researcher utilized these data through secondary data analyses and has presented the analyses based on quantitative research findings, qualitative research findings, and efficacy trial research findings.

In the intervention group a total of 24 students completed the pre-assessment and participated in the SWIW; 12 of the 24 students completed the pre-assessment, participated in the SWIW, and completed the post assessment. However, one participant was not included due to status in the program, and three participant responses were not utilized due to missing responses in the PISC. The researcher utilized a total of 8 responses (33 %) in the intervention group. In the comparison group a total of 46 students were invited to complete the pre-assessment, and 38 (insert percentage) of those students completed the pre-assessment. However, 25 of the 38 students authorized permission of this researcher to utilize their responses in this research study, and therefore those 25 responses (insert percentage) were utilized in the comparison group.

Due to the nature of intervention research, a small sample size was anticipated, therefore the assumption of normal distribution was not met (Field, 2018; Siebert & Siebert, 2018). Table 2 presents an overview of the investigated research questions and the method of analysis utilized. Research questions 1 and 2 were analyzed utilizing the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, and research question 4 was analyzed utilizing the Mann-Whitney Test. Research questions 3, 5, and 6 were analyzed through the use of coding, thematic development, and content analysis. Research question 7 was analyzed through the use of a frequency count to determine if the proximal outcomes of the SWIW were satisfied.

Quantitative Research Findings

In the following section the results from the quantitative analyses will be presented. This includes findings from Research Questions 1, 2, and 4.

Research Question One

Does participating in SWIW affect the level of empathic ability, self- differentiation, or sense of coherence among graduate level social work students? The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was utilized to compare the pre scores of the TEQ, DSI-SF, and the SOC-29 of each participant before the SWIW, to the post scores of the TEQ, DSI-SF, and SOC-29 after the SWIW. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test is a non-parametric statistical test that is based on ranking the differences between scores in two related groups, therefore the *Mdn* is reported (Field, 2018).

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test indicated that the post scores of the TEQ (*Mdn* = 54.50) were not significantly higher than the pre scores of the TEQ (*Mdn* = 50.5), $T = 25$, $p = .061$, $r = .47$. A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test also indicated that the post scores of the DSI-SF (*Mdn* = 4.58) were not significantly higher than the DSI-SF pre scores (*Mdn* = 4.16), $T = 25$, $p = .327$, r

= .25. A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test indicated that the post scores of the SOC-29 (*Mdn* = 142.5) were not significantly higher than the SOC-29 pre scores (*Mdn* = 144.5), *T* =18, *p* = 1.00, *r* = 0.

Table 3. *SWIW Effect on Empathic Ability, Self-differentiation, Sense of Coherence (n = 8)*

Scales	*Mdn*	T	*p* value	*r*
TEQ				
Pre	50.5			
		25	.061	.47
Post	54.5			
DSI-SF				
Pre	4.16			
		25	.327	.25
Post	4.58			
SOC-29				
Pre	144.5			
		18	1.00	0
Post	142.5			

Research Question Two

Does participation in the SWIW result in an increased level of professional identity for graduate level social work students? The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was utilized to compare the pre scores of the three PISC Subscales (Knowledge of the Profession, Professional Roles and Expertise, and Attitude) of each participant before the SWIW, to the post score of the three PISC Subscales of each participant after the SWIW.

A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test indicated that the post scores of the PISC Subscale-Knowledge of the Profession (*Mdn* = 4.7), was significantly higher than the PISC Subscale-Knowledge of the Profession pre scores (*Mdn* = 4), *T* = 32, *p* = .05, *r* = .05. A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test also indicated that the post scores of the PISC Subscale- Professional Roles and Expertise (*Mdn* = 5.09), were not significantly higher than the PISC Subscale-Professional Roles

and Expertise pre scores (*Mdn* = 5.41), *T* = 11, *p* = .611, *r* = -.13. A Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

indicated that the post scores of the PISC Subscale- Attitude (*Mdn* = 4.71), were not significantly

higher than the PISC Subscale- Attitude pre scores (*Mdn* = 4.75), *T* = 20.5, *p* = .725, *r* = .09.

Table 4. *SWIW Effect on Main Outcome Variable: Professional Identity (n = 8)*

PISC Subscales	*Mdn*	T	*p* value	*r*
Knowledge of the Profession				
Pre	4			
		32	.05	.05
Post	4.7			
Professional Roles & Expertise				
Pre	5.41			
		11	.611	-.13
Post	5.09			
Attitude				
Pre	4.75			
		20.5	.725	.09
Post	4.71			

Research Question 4A

Is there a difference between the level of empathic ability, self- differentiation, and sense

of coherence between students admitted into the MSW Advanced Standing Program and students

who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)? The Mann-

Whitney Test was utilized to compare the MSW Regular Admission TEQ, DSI-SF, and SOC-29

pre scores (before completion of the SWIW) to the MSW Advanced Standing TEQ, DSI-SF, and

SOC-29 scores.

A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission TEQ pre scores (*Mdn*

= 50.5) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing TEQ scores (*Mdn* = 52),

U = 111, *z* = .46, *p* = .665, *r* = .08. A Mann-Whitney Test also indicated that the MSW Regular

Admission DSI-SF pre scores (*Mdn* = 4.16) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced

Standing DSI-SF scores (*Mdn* = 4), $U = 94$, $z = -.25$, $p = .821$, $r = -.04$. A Mann-Whitney Test

indicated that the MSW Regular Admission SOC-29 pre scores (*Mdn* = 144.5) did not differ

significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing SOC-29 scores (*Mdn* = 142), $U = 78$, $z = -.93$, p

$= .374$, $r = -.16$.

Table 5. *Difference in Level of Empathic Ability, Self-differentiation, and Sense of Coherence Between the Groups*

Scales	N	*Mdn*	Mann-Whitney (*U*)	z	*p* value*	r
TEQ						
Intervention	8	50.5				
			111	.46	.665	.08
Comparison	25	52				
DSI- SF						
Intervention	8	4.16				
			94	-.25	.821	-.04
Comparison	25	4				
SOC-29						
Intervention	8	144.5				
			78	-.93	.374	-.16
Comparison	25	142				

Exact significance is displayed for this test

Research Question 4B

Is there a difference between level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of

coherence between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students

who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission) after those

students completed the SWIW? The Mann-Whitney Test was utilized to compare the MSW

Regular Admission TEQ, DSI-SF, and SOC-29 post scores (after completing the SWIW) to the

MSW Advanced Standing TEQ, DSI-SF, and SOC-29 scores.

A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission TEQ post scores

(*Mdn* = 54.50) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing TEQ scores (*Mdn*

= 52), $U = 83$, $z = -.77$, $p = .496$, $r = -.12$. A Mann-Whitney Test also indicated that the MSW

Regular Admission DSI-SF post scores (*Mdn* = 4.58) did not differ significantly from the MSW

Advanced Standing DSI-SF scores (Mdn = 4), $U = 87$, $z = -.55$, $p = .606$, $r = -.1$. A Mann-

Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission SOC-29 post scores (*Mdn* = 142.5) did

not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing SOC-29 scores (*Mdn* = 142), $U =$

85.5, $z = -.61$, $p = .55$, r = -.11.

Table 6. *Difference in Level of Empathic Ability, Self-differentiation, and Sense of Coherence Between the Groups Post Intervention*

Scales	N	*Mdn*	Mann-Whitney (*U*)	*z*	*p* value*	*r*
TEQ						
Intervention	8	54.50				
			83	-.77	.496	-.12
Comparison	25	52				
DSI- SF						
Intervention	8	4.58				
			87	-.55	.606	-.1
Comparison	25	4				
SOC-29						
Intervention	8	142.5				
			85.5	-.61	.55	-.11
Comparison	25	142				

*Exact significance is displayed for this test

Research Question 4C

Is there a difference between the level of professional identity between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)? The Mann-Whitney Test was utilized to compare the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscales (Knowledge of the Profession, Professional Roles and Expertise, and Attitude pre scores (before completing the SWIW) to the MSW Advanced Standing scores of the three PISC Subscales.

A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale-Knowledge of the Profession pre scores (*Mdn* = 4) were significantly different from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Knowledge of the Profession scores (*Mdn* = 4.8), *U* = 169, *z* = 2.91, *p* = .003, *r* = .51. The comparison group had a higher score on the PISC Subscale-Knowledge of the Profession.

A Mann-Whitney Test also indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale-Professional Roles & Expertise pre scores (*Mdn* = 5.41) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Professional Roles & Expertise scores (*Mdn* = 5.45), *U* = 120, *z* = .85, *p* = .42, *r* = .15. A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale- Attitude pre scores (*Mdn* = 4.75) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Attitude scores (*Mdn* = 4.67), *U* = 103.5, *z* = .15, *p* = .885, *r* = .03.

Table 7. *Difference in Main Outcome Variable, Professional Identity, Between the Groups*

PISC Subscales	N	*Mdn*	Mann-Whitney (*U*)	*z*	*p* value*	*r*
Knowledge of the Profession						
Intervention	8	4				
			169	2.91	.003	.51
Comparison	25	4.8				

	n		U	z	p	r
Professional Roles & Expertise						
Intervention	8	5.41				
			120	.85	.42	.15
Comparison	25	5.45				
Attitude						
Intervention	8	4.75				
			103.5	.15	.885	.03
Comparison	25	4.67				

Exact significance is displayed for this test

Research Question 4D

Is there a difference between level of professional identity between students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission) after those students participate in the SWIW? The Mann-Whitney Test was utilized to compare the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale scores (Knowledge of the Profession, Professional Roles and Expertise, and Attitude) (after participation in the SWIW) to the MSW Advanced Standing PISC subscale scores.

A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale-Knowledge of the Profession post scores (*Mdn* = 4.7) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Knowledge of the Profession scores (*Mdn* = 4.8), U = 121, z = .89, p = .397, r = .15. A Mann-Whitney Test also indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale- Professional Roles & Expertise post scores (*Mdn* = 5.09) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Professional Roles & Expertise scores (*Mdn* = 5.45), U = 134, z = 1.44, p = .16, r = .25. A Mann-Whitney Test indicated that the MSW Regular Admission PISC Subscale- Attitude post scores (*Mdn* = 4.71) did not differ significantly from the MSW Advanced Standing PISC Subscale- Attitude scores (*Mdn* = 4.67), U = 98.5, z = -.06, p = .95, r = -.01.

Table 8. *Difference in Main Outcome Variable, Professional Identity, Between the Groups Post Intervention*

PISC Subscales	N	Mdn	Mann-Whitney (U)	z	p value*	r
Knowledge of the Profession						
Intervention	8	4.7				
			121	.89	.397	.15
Comparison	25	4.8				
Professional Roles & Expertise						
Intervention	8	5.09				
			134	1.44	.16	.25
Comparison	25	5.45				
Attitude						
Intervention	8	4.71				
			98.5	-.06	.95	-.01
Comparison	25	4.67				

Exact significance is displayed for this test

Qualitative Research Findings

For research questions 3, 5, and 6 represented in Table 2, coding, thematic development, and content analysis strategies were utilized. Research question 3 utilized a coding and thematic identification approach. Research question 5 utilized a coding and frequency percentage approach to analysis, and research question 6 utilized content analysis and response reporting. The qualitative research findings are reported, below.

Research Question Three

What are students' experiences with supervision and/or mentorship upon entering a social work graduate program? To answer this research question, the researcher coded the participants responses to the following question presented in the pre and post assessment: Satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship relationships is a predictive factor of professional identity development in social work. Describe your experiences with supervision and/or mentor relationships that have positively contributed to the development of your

professional identity as a social worker. The researcher utilized the data analysis spiral presented

by Creswell & Poth (2018). The researcher utilized the following steps to code and analyze the

data: managing and organizing the data, reading and memoing emergent ideas, describing and

classifying codes into themes, developing and assessing interpretations, and representing and

visualizing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). MSW Regular Admission (intervention group)

students were given two opportunities to answer this question, once during the pre-assessment

and once during the post assessment. A total of 16 responses were coded for this group. The

MSW Advanced Standing Students (comparison group) had one opportunity to answer this

question when taking the pre-assessment, and a total of 25 responses were coded for this group.

The following themes emerged: reflective supervision, building confidence, and guidance and

support. The frequency count for each incidence the theme was represented is visually

represented in Figure 3.

     Reflective supervision. Students identified that they valued open communication and

that they often found it most helpful when their supervisor was knowledgeable about social work

practice and ethics and able to share that knowledge with them. Below are some responses that

represent this theme:

> My supervision experiences have been very positive for my professional identity and development and social work. These relationships have positively impacted how I will … do my job currently and in the future. Supervision is super important to me because it allows me to have a communication with someone who has been in my shoes and has more experience. These relationships have positively impacted me.

> Being able to ask questions and learn from their experiences and advice is incredibly helpful. I take what they say and apply it to my skills.

> My undergrad internship supervisor was very knowledgeable while maintaining a light and relaxed manner which reminded me that we do not always have to be serious to get what we need done

Building confidence. From the responses gathered, a majority of participants reported the importance of building confidence through building a relationship with their supervisor, and also the importance of motivation from their supervisor which led to an increased sense of confidence in their roles as social workers. In their responses, students reported experiences with supervision that left them feeling confident and motivated in their role as social work professionals. Below are some responses that represent this theme:

> This past year at my internship, I had extremely positive experiences with my Field Instructor and am confident in saying that I have learned an immense amount about myself as a social work professional and have gained a lot of confidence in my professional abilities.

> She made all of us interns feel empowered, intelligent, and important to the profession. She really made me believe in myself as a social worker, and it was nice to relay ideas to her and ask her questions when I had concerns about something.

> Receiving constructive criticism and/or help during a problem helps to become adjusted to an environment.

> I value supervision when it's met with education and feedback. So providing me with things I did well on but also teaching me what I could improve upon. I also value a relational aspect to the supervision.

Guidance and support. From the responses gathered, a supervisory or mentorship type relationship that offers guidance and support related to personal growth was identified by several participants. Students acknowledged their appreciation of professional guidance and support, but also mentioned experiences related to guidance and support they received related to personal situations that may or may not have affected their professional role as social workers. Students valued having someone to check in with and communicate with in relation to feelings and professional and personal decision making. Below are some responses that represent this theme:

> She [supervisor for my BSW] not only supported me at my placement, but she was always there for mental health support and decision making for my future. She was open to talking to me about her past and how she got to where she is today.

My supervisor for my MSW internship has been very forward about always expressing that she is here for me if I need to talk or if I feel overwhelmed about something. Knowing that she is there to help or offer support motivates me to want to be a better social worker.

My current supervisor takes time to mentor me, encourage me, and guide me in my job and career goals. Her support has helped shape my identity as a social worker.
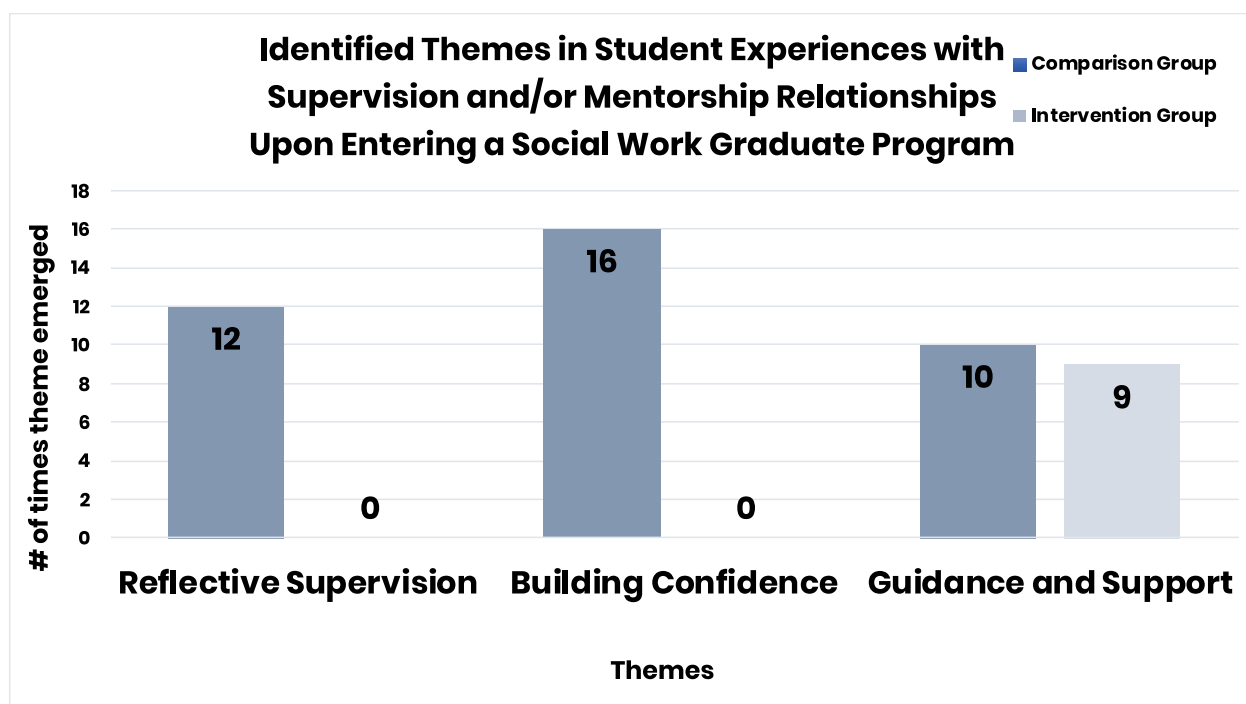

Figure 3. *Identified Themes in Student Experiences with Supervision and/or Mentorship Relationships Upon entering a Social Work Graduate Program*

Research Question Five

Is there a difference between the satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship, or value development among students admitted into the advanced standing MSW program and students who are generally new to the social work profession (MSW Regular Admission)? To answer this research question, the researcher coded the participants responses to the following questions presented in the pre and post assessment: 1) Satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship relationships is a predictive factor of professional identity development in social

work. Describe your experiences with supervision and/or mentor relationships that have positively contributed to the development of your professional identity as a social worker, and 2) Below is a list of value-based terms. Review the list and mark the top eight that closely represent principles, standards, or qualities that you consider are essential to your identity (personal and/or professional). The value-based terms listed to choose from will be: achievement/ accomplishment, advancement, autonomy, belonging to a group, building something, challenge, compassion, competence, creativity, creating change (i.e. social change), creating information, decision-making, dignity and worth of the individual, entrepreneurship, equality, excitement/risk, fame, family happiness, financial security, fun, happiness, health, importance of human relationships, influencing people, independence, integrity, leadership, learning/gaining wisdom, leisure, listening, mastering a technique/field, personal development, receiving recognition/impressing people, respect, risk taking, safety/security, service, self-expression, social justice, spirituality, stability, status, teamwork, wealth, and other (please specify).

The MSW Regular Admission (intervention group) were given two opportunities to answer this question, once during the pre-assessment and once during the post assessment; a total of 8 responses were coded for this group. The MSW Advanced Standing Students (comparison group) had one opportunity to answer this question when taking the pre-assessment; a total of 25 responses were coded for this group. To answer this question the researcher reviewed responses related to satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship and utilized content analysis in relation to the themes identified in the previous research question. To answer this research question in relation to value identification the researcher reviewed responses to the question related to value acquisition and presented the findings in Table 9.

Difference in satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship. As described above, Figure 3 presents identified themes based on student experiences with supervision and or mentorship relationships upon entering a social work graduate program. The themes identified across all responses were reflective supervision, building confidence, and guidance and support. From this information, specifically the frequency of responses that were coded for each theme, the researcher can conclude that MSW Advanced Standing students had more to share about their experiences in supervision and mentorship than MSW Regular Admission students.

Difference in value development. Table 9 presents the values across both groups, which represented at least 50% response from students in each group. In the comparison group (MSW Advanced Standing Students), the values of compassion, dignity and worth of the individual, and equality were selected by more than 50% of the students (*n = 25*). In the intervention group (MSW Regular Admission Students) the values of compassion, dignity and worth of the individual, and importance of human relationships were selected by at least 50% of the students (*n = 16*).

Table 9. *Self-Reported Values in MSW Students Entering a Social Work Graduate Program (comparison group responses and intervention group responses)*

Value	Comparison Group Responses (25 responses)	Intervention Group Responses (8 responses)
Compassion**	68%	75%
Dignity and Worth of the Individual*	60%	50%
Equality**	56%	25%
Importance of Human Relationships*	44%	56%

*Social work value
**Other value

Research Question Six

What do students think should be emphasized in a workshop to enhance their

professional identity development and professional socialization into the social work profession

at graduate level? When participants were asked to identify what parts of the workshop enhanced

their professional identity development and professional socialization into the profession, they

identified the following:

Discussing our goals and values as a group and hearing from others

Values portion and history [history of the profession]

Writing [our] own mission and values was valuable…

I loved the journals! It made what I was learning very personal and applicable

I thought picking the 8 values really helped assisting me in developing my own
personal/professional identity

I liked the activity where we developed a vision and mission statement through our
examination of our own values. I had not really thought about that before the workshop

Efficacy Trial Research Findings

Research question 7 was related to the intervention research process of completing an

efficacy trial of the SWIW. As the first efficacy trial of the SWIW, the researcher sought to

collect and analyze data to assess if the intended proximal outcomes of the SWIW were satisfied.

The efficacy trial research findings are reported below.

Research Question Seven.

Does the SWIW have the intended proximal outcomes: 1) to help students cultivate and

contribute to their development and growth of a professional social work identity by providing a

transformative learning environment in which to do so, 2) to increase knowledge of the historical

evolution of the social work profession and how the historical evolution of the social work

profession relates to professional identity development, 3) to provide the participant with an understanding of the importance of a professional identity in social work, and an understanding of professional identity development's influence on the profession of social work now and in the future, 4) to provide a space for the participant to apply the Social Work Code of Ethics and Social Work Core Values to personal and professional identity, 5) to discuss considerations of the infusion of a personal and professional identity in social work, and 6) to encourage the participant.

In the post assessment, administered to those who completed the SWIW, participants were asked 9 questions related to the intended proximal outcomes of the SWIW. Table 10 displays each efficacy trial question and the frequency of the response for each question. Participant responses indicate positive responses to 100% of the questions related to the intended proximal outcomes. According to participants, all intended proximal outcomes were satisfied. Respondents were also able to provide other responses or additional comments. Participants included comments such as:

I enjoyed the workshop and enjoyed learning about SW history.

I think the workshop was great and really got me thinking about my own values and beliefs

I learned a lot…made learning applicable to me.

All participants were asked to share what they thought the intended goal of the workshop was and responses included:

To develop a sense of who we are as professionals

To learn more about the identity and history of Social Work

Basic of understanding the beginning of Social Work

To teach new and old social workers the history of the profession and to help us develop an identity in the field. It also focused on the code of ethics and the values it [the code of ethics] brings to the profession, especially in vision and mission statements

To introduce the origins of social work and help us as social workers start to identify our values (professional/personal) in order to develop mission/vision statements

The goal of the workshop was to help new MSW students narrow down their values professional and personal, and see how they help us frame our identity as a social worker. This was aided by a history lesson into all of the accomplishments and work of social workers before us to allow a better understanding of where social work came from.

To learn about the social work career and history and learn how to evaluate yourself based on social work concepts

Table 10. *Efficacy Trial Responses*

Efficacy Trial Question	Frequency (n = 8)	
	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
Is the goal(s) you identified aligned with the intended goal of the workshop? (The intended purpose of this workshop is to help students cultivate and contribute to their development and growth of a professional social work identity by providing a transformative learning environment in which to do so.)	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Did the workshop increase your knowledge of the historical evolution of the social work profession?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Did the workshop increase your knowledge of how the historical evolution of the social work profession relates to professional identity development?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Did the workshop provide you with an understanding of the importance of a professional identity in social work?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Did the workshop provide you with an understanding of professional identity development's influence on the profession of social work now and in the future?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Does the workshop provide a space for you to apply the Social Work Code of Ethics to your personal and professional identity?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)

Does the workshop provide a space for you to apply the Social Work Core Values to your personal and professional identity?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Does the workshop discuss considerations of the infusion of a personal and professional identity in social work?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)
Does the workshop encourage you to increase your desire to cultivate a professional identity in the profession of social work?	8 (100%)	0 (0%)

Chapter Five: Discussion

This intervention research study was conducted as an initial efficacy trial of the SWIW. The research allowed for the creation and implementation of a professional identity workshop intended for undergraduate and graduate level social work students, which was centralized around in-depth understanding of the essence of the social work identity and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession. The literature around the phenomenon of professional identity development in the field of social work suggests that the development and exploration of one's professional identity within social work curriculum can strengthen and positively contribute to the social work profession in several capacities, including growth and success in the social work profession (Adams et al., 2006; Barretti, 2004; Bisno, 1956; Flexner, 1915; Hill et al., 2017; Leighninger, 1987; Mariet, 2016; Miller, 2010; Moorhead et al., 2014; NSW, 2018; Patchner et al., 1987; Stainforth et al., 2011). The primary purpose of this study was to assess whether the intentional implementation of an intervention, like the SWIW, would have an effect on the predictive indicators of the professional identity development or the overall level of professional identity development in graduate level social work students. The study was also utilized to conduct an efficacy trial of the SWIW by assessing of the degree to which the proximal outcomes of the SWIW were realized.

Interpretation of Quantitative Findings

The literature presented empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence as predictive indicators of professional identity development among social work students (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012). The results of the data analyses revealed that there was no significant difference in the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, or sense of coherence among

graduate level social work students (intervention group) after completing the SWIW. These results suggest that students entered the program with levels of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence that were higher than the median threshold for each measure.

The results of the data analyses also suggested important findings when comparing the incoming MSW Regular Admission Students (intervention group) who completed the SWIW intervention and the incoming MSW Advanced Standing Students (comparison group) who did not receive the SWIW intervention. When investigating the difference between the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence, the researcher was interested in knowing if there was a difference between incoming MSW Advanced Standing Students and incoming MSW Regular Admission students, without any intervention given. The results indicated that there was no significant difference among these variables between the two groups. When investigating the difference between the level of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence, the researcher was interested in knowing if there was a difference between incoming MSW Advanced Standings Students and MSW Regular Admission Students, after the intervention (SWIW) was provided. The results indicated that there was no significant difference among these variables between the two groups after students in the intervention group participated in the SWIW.

A thorough understanding of these variables suggests that it is unlikely that empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence would be immediately affected by an intervention. Rather, these variables have the potential to be positively influenced in a transformational learning environment and have the potential of changing over time (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Bell et al., 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Freire, 1970;

Mezirow et al., 2000; Mezirow, 2009; Wiles, 2017). A more thorough review of the scores for

each of these scales across the two groups indicates that the scores for level of empathic ability,

self-differentiation, and sense of coherence were generally higher for both groups of students

(meaning that students scored above the median threshold for each measure) Overall, because

there was no significant difference between the two groups, the researcher can conclude that both

incoming MSW Advanced Standing Students and MSW Regular Admission Students have

similar levels of empathic ability, self-differentiation, and sense of coherence. There may be

other contributing factors that explain these scores prior to an intervention, and these are

discussed further in this chapter under social work practice research implications.

The PISC was utilized to measure the main outcome variable, professional identity, based

on three subscales: PISC-Knowledge of the Profession, PISC- Professional Roles and Expertise,

and PISC- Attitude. The results of the data analyses revealed that there was a significant

difference in the PISC- Knowledge of the Profession subscale scores, however, there was no

significant difference in the PISC- Professional Roles and Expertise subscale scores or the PISC-

Attitude subscale scores among the students who completed the SWIW. The researcher

anticipated these results. The SWIW offered knowledge, specifically related to the historical

evolution of the social work profession and the profession's societal contributions throughout

time, and an immediate statistically significant outcome was an increase of knowledge among

those students who completed the SWIW. Based on the literature, when examining professional

roles and expertise and attitude towards the profession, the researcher considered that these

variables were more likely to occur through transformational change over time as the

individual's professional identity evolved with more experience and professional practice (Bell

et al., 2017; Brott & Myers, 1999; Miller, 2010; Miller, 2013; West et al., 2016; Woo et al., 2015).

When investigating the difference between the level of professional identity, the researcher was interested in knowing if there was a difference between incoming MSW Advanced Standings Students and MSW Regular Admission Students, without any intervention given. Based on the results the researcher concluded that there was a significant difference on the PISC- Knowledge of the Profession subscale between incoming MSW Advanced Standing Students and incoming MSW Regular Admission Students before the intervention group received the intervention (SWIW). The other two PISC subscales, PISC- Professional Roles and Expertise and PISC- Attitude subscales, indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups. When investigating the difference between the level of professional identity, the researcher was interested in knowing if there was a difference between incoming MSW Advanced Standing Students and MSW Regular Admission Students, after the intervention (SWIW) was provided. The results indicated that after the students participated in the SWIW there was no significant difference in any of the PISC subscales; this indicated that the intervention subscale scores for PISC- Knowledge of the Profession subscale increased to indicate no difference between the intervention and comparison groups anymore.

A thorough understanding of the main outcome variable, level of professional identity, indicates that it is unlikely that professional roles and expertise and attitude towards the profession would significantly change immediately after an intervention. Rather, professional roles and expertise and attitude towards a profession do have the potential to be positively influenced in a transformational learning environment and have the potential of changing over time (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Bell et al., 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Brott & Myers, 1999;

Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Freire, 1970; Mezirow et al., 2000; Mezirow, 2009; Miller, 2010;

Miller, 2013; Wiles, 2017; Woo et al., 2015). Despite a lack of an immediate measured

significant difference within these subscales, there was a significant difference when comparing

incoming scores for the PISC- Knowledge of the Profession subscale between MSW Advanced

Standing Students to MSW Regular Admission Students before and after the SWIW was

provided to the MSW Regular Admission Students. The researcher anticipated that the MSW

Advanced Standing Students, because of their prior background and experience in the field of

social work, would have a higher score for the PISC- Knowledge of the Profession Subscale,

than the MSW Regular Admission Students, who were admitted into the graduate program with

no, or very limited, social work experience. After the MSW Regular Admission Students were

provided the SWIW, there was significant change in their scores for the PISC-Knowledge of the

Profession Subscale, indicating that the workshop satisfied proximal outcomes related to

knowledge of the profession, including topic areas such as the historical overview of the social

work profession and the profession's progression and societal influence overtime.

Interpretation of Qualitative Findings

Satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship relationships and value acquisition are

two other variables identified in the literature as predictive indicators of professional identity

development among social work students (Barretti, 2009; Bogo, 2010; Hantman & Ben-Oz,

2014; Levy et al., 2014; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Roulston et al., 2018; Shlomo et al.,

2012). In the survey, students were asked to answer one question related to each of these

variables. For satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship relationships the following themes

emerged across the comparison group responses: reflective supervision, building confidence, and

guidance and support. The following themes emerged for the intervention group responses:

guidance and support. These results indicated that when asked about satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship the MSW Advanced Standing Students were more likely to share about their prior experiences. This could be because they had more prior experiences, or because of their prior experience in social work had opportunities to interact in these ways with mentors and supervisors. The MSW Regular Admission Students had limited information to provide in relation to satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship and this could potentially be related to their experiences in other fields that were not necessarily social work related.

According to the literature, satisfaction with supervision is a direct contributive factor when measuring professional identity because supervisors and/or mentors aid in the evolution of critical components of social work identity development including self-differentiation and sense of coherence (Barretti, 2009; Bogo, 2010; Levy et al., 2014; Shlomo et al., 2012). Students identified that critical components for them included reflective supervision; they valued a supervisor or mentor who was able to effectively communicate and contribute knowledge and experience to their own professional and personal growth and experiences. Other important components that are related to self-differentiation and sense of coherence is students' interest in a supervisor/mentor that would help them build confidence and motivate them by providing feedback and building genuine relationships with them. Lastly, students reported that they valued the guidance and support offered by their supervisor/mentor that existed beyond their professional role as student or social worker. Essentially, the themes that emerged contribute to the knowledge and understanding of how satisfaction with supervision and/or mentorship relationship plays a central role in the development of a strong professional identity among social workers.

In the survey, students were asked to rank their top eight values. The MSW Advanced Standings Students responded to this question once during the pre-assessment (no post assessment was given to this group), and the MSW Regular Admission Students responded to this question twice, during the pre and post assessments. For the MSW Advanced Standing Students, the values of compassion, dignity and worth of the individual, and equality were identified in more than 50% of the responses as self-reported values. Only one of these values, dignity and worth of the individual, are one of the six social work core values (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). For the MSW Regular Admission Students, compassion, dignity and worth of the individual, and importance of human relationships were identified in 50% of the responses as self-reported values. Two of these values, dignity and worth of the individual and importance of human relationships, are part of the six social work core values (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). The researcher had anticipated that the MSW Advanced Standing Students were more likely to report values from the six core social work values (service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence) because of their exposure to these values in their prior experience with social work education and professionally in the field of social work. However, according to the results, this was not the outcome. The researcher had anticipated that the MSW Regular Admission Students were less likely to report values from the six core social work values because of their limited knowledge of the profession's six core values, and limited experience with social work education and professionally in the field of social work.

It is important to understand the connection between values and professional practice, because values are a direct contributive factor when measuring professional identity, and being able to identify values leads to application of those values in professional practice and decision

making (Bogo, 2010; Barretti, 2009; Levy et al., 2014; Maniss, 2017; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo et al., 2012). According to the literature, there is evidence that a focus on social work values in the curriculum can increase the connection with the profession than when there is limited focus on social work values in the curriculum (Miller, 2013). The results in this study indicated that there may be a disconnect between social work student professional and personal values due to a lack of identification with a majority of the core social work values. Cause for this lack of identification with social work values could be attributed to several reasons and would require further exploration into the social work educational curriculum experienced by the incoming social work students. This implication is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

Interpretation of Efficacy Trial Findings

The SWIW was developed based on two program theories: Meizrow's Theory of Transformational Learning and Freire's Theory of Learning. Transformational learning theory suggests that transformational learning approaches seek to transform an individual's perspective utilizing critical assessment and reflection of an individual's held values and worldview with a focus on learning strategies that highlight student-centered and communicative efforts (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). Freire's Theory of Learning views education as a path towards liberation, and highlights opportunities to partake in a growth process through transformational change that can be applicable to the development of an intervention focused on identity. Both theories highlight transformational change which takes time. The logic model of the SWIW presented in Appendix A presents proximal, primary, and distal outcomes of the SWIW. Based on the efficacy trial findings (which have a purpose of assessing proximal outcomes) students who participated in the SWIW workshop identified that those proximal outcomes of the SWIW were satisfied. Essentially, it is important to understand and consider the

transformational learning theories that contributed to the development of the SWIW, especially in relation to time, an essential contributor to the holistic understanding of how a professional identity is developed in graduate level social work students. As the researcher precedes through the intervention research process through continued efficacy trials and effectiveness testing in an attempt to contribute an evidence-based approach, further research would be required to assess the satisfaction of primary and distal outcomes. This implication is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

Limitations and Strengths

There are limitations that need to be considered when reviewing this research study. Initially the researcher had intended on a larger sample size for both the comparison and intervention groups and had intended on including undergraduate level social work students since the SWIW was developed for both undergraduate and graduate level social work students. Due to the nature and time frame of this doctoral dissertation, some of those initial intentions to obtain a larger sample size were sacrificed. Therefore, in this study the sample size is small and normal distribution could not be assumed. However, in the process of intervention research, efficacy trials are intended to be done with a smaller population often based on convenience sampling (Fraser et al., 2009). The small sample size could have also contributed to the uneven representation based on gender and race.

Any research conducted based solely on self-report faces its limitations; and because this research was based solely on self-report, that may also be considered a limitation. There were open ended questions and opportunities for students to elaborate on their responses to some questions. This strategy was utilized to help gain more comprehensive responses from participants, but it was not required.

In relation to the variables being measured, time was a substantial limitation. The researcher understood the nature of transformational change and the role of time and expected limited change in the variables described above which had a potential to be influenced over time through a transformational learning environment. Therefore, it is important to consider the findings accordingly based on this limitation. Results may yield more significant conclusions if measured over a period of time (i.e. upon entering the MSW program and then again at completion of the program). Despite this limitation, there were immediate changes that could be measured specifically changes in the level of knowledge of the social work profession after completing the SWIW and change related to students' opinion of being offered a SWIW at the beginning of their social work educational experience. Also, another strength of this study is its replicability in other social work educational settings, which is connected to the future goal of moving towards making the SWIW an evidence-based intervention.

Implications for Social Work Education

This research study provides a foundation for further research that will contribute to social work education. It also provides content worthy of consideration when developing social work curriculum with an intent to socialize students into the profession by focusing on professional identity development. The SWIW was developed as a change strategy, an intentional intervention to be applied in undergraduate and graduate level social work curriculum to strengthen the outcome of professional identity development among social work students. As the SWIW continues through the intervention research process, there is potential for the SWIW to have powerful implications in social work education. If the SWIW becomes and evidenced based intervention, it will be an applicable and meaningful tool in all social work education programs, at both the undergraduate and graduate level. The SWIW can be implemented in

social work educational settings as an introduction to the profession for students with limited knowledge (i.e. at the graduate level for MSW Regular Admission students) and experience in social work, or it can be utilized as reinforcement to current curriculum. It is also easily adaptable to different geographical settings, and once adapted to the setting in which it will be administered, can have similar outcomes.

Implications for Social Work Practice

In the field of social work, the development and preservation of a professional identity has been a predominant focus due to the profession's historical struggle with identity development (Ehrenreich, 1985; Leighninger, 1987; Lubove, 1965; Popple & Leighninger, 1999; Specht & Courtney, 1994). This study reinforces the importance of continual focus on this concept. Going beyond understanding the factors that contribute to the development of professional identity will lead to the establishment of evidence-based interventions related to the subject matter; this will essentially contribute to the preservation of professional identity development. Applying the SWIW at the educational level provides a unique opportunity to influence students by participating in a conscious effort to offer time and space to obtain experience, form and internalize values, principles, ethical standards, competencies, continual reflection, and ongoing change (Bell et al., 2017; Forenza & Eckert, 2017). While the profession's historical struggle may never be wholly eliminated, implementing more intentional change strategies at the educational level, like adapting the SWIW, can lead to a positive change among social workers at the practice level.

Implications for Social Work Research

The interconnectedness between personal and professional values contributes is a part of the process of developing a strong professional identity; the alignment between personal and

professional values and ethics can be classified as the highest level of development in professional identity (Bolin et al., 2014). The results in this study indicated that there may be a disconnect between social work student professional and personal values due to a lack of identification with a majority of the core social work values. Cause for this lack of identification with social work values could be attributed to several reasons and requires further exploration through research into the social work educational curriculum experienced by the incoming social work students. Further qualitative research could potentially explore the reasons attributed to these differences.

The results in this study also indicated that variables such as empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, professional roles and expertise, and attitude towards the profession are not likely immediately affected by an intervention. Both groups had similar scores for these attributes even prior to participation in the intervention. There are several factors that could have contributed to this. Educational background and informal experiences with the field of social work could be considered. In the intervention group, 87.5% of participants did not have a social work background, and 75% of the participants had a background in the field of education or social sciences. This suggests that attributes such as empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, professional roles and expertise, and attitude towards the social work profession, could have been gained in their prior educational, professional, or personal experiences even though they were not formally in the field of social work (Bogo, Lee, McKee, Baird, & Ramjattan, 2016; GlenMaye & Oaks, 2002; Seipel, Johnson, & Walton, 2011). The literature suggests that qualities such as competence and confidence are desired attributes of social work students even prior to their entry into a social work graduate program (Bogo et al., 2016; GlenMaye & Oaks, 2002; Seipel et al., 2011). While some students were not in the field of

social work, they reported working with or around social workers in their professional practice or through their personal experiences, and this could also be a contributing factor to their scores on these attributes. Due to a deficit in the literature on if those who enter into the field of social work (with no formal social work education or professional social work experience) are more likely to have higher ratings of the above-mentioned attributes, the researcher identifies this as a need for further exploration.

The theoretical framework presented in this research study supports potential change in variables such as empathic ability, self-differentiation, sense of coherence, professional roles and expertise, and attitude towards the profession over time in a transformational learning environment (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Bell et al., 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Freire, 1970; Mezirow et al., 2000; Mezirow, 2009; Wiles, 2017). The literature also supports that attributes such as these result from an evolutionary process that takes time through exposure, experience, and professional practice (Bell et al., 2017; Brott & Myers, 1999; Miller, 2010; Miller, 2013; West et al., 2016; Woo et al., 2015). To gain a genuine understanding of the interventions effect on these variables longitudinal research of these attributes would be beneficial to the measurement of these variables over time.

In part, this research study was an initial efficacy test of the SWIW. The results suggest that further exploration of the SWIW is necessary to continue towards developing the intervention as an evidence-based intervention which can be implemented and adapted to different social work educational settings, both locally and globally. Due to the small sample size of the initial efficacy trial, the researcher recommends continued efficacy trials with both graduate and undergraduate level social work students with a goal of refining and confirming program components and ensuring proximal outcomes are satisfied in each trial with each

population (Fraser et al., 2009). After efficacy trials with both groups are successfully completed, the implementation model of the program needs to be tested, and this will be achieved through effectiveness testing (Fraser et al., 2009). This will ensure that the intervention is adaptable under more broad practice conditions (i.e. other social work education settings outside the immediate geographical regions).

Conclusion

It is essential to have an in-depth understanding of the essence of the professional identity of social workers, and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession and social work education. The social work education process should be adequately prepared, through the use of evidence-based interventions, to aid in the facilitation of the development of the social work professional identity for all social work students and future social work professionals. This research supports other research endeavors that identify the importance of professional identity exploration and development in social work curriculum, not just for social work students and social work professionals, but for the present and future growth and success of the social work profession. Evidence-based interventions have the potential to address salient components of professional identity development with an intended purpose of improving student outcomes. The SWIW is an intentional change strategy that has the potential to lead to the preparation of professional social workers ready and able to confidently embrace the role of the social worker in their future professional endeavors.

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Appendix A

Social Work Identity Workshop: Link to Manual

SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY WORKSHOP
Intervention Manual

A WORKSHOP FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

"Men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection." - Paulo Freire

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NATURE & SCOPE OF THE PHENOMENON

Definition of the Phenomenon

The professional socialization of social workers is an area of contested knowledge and has been presented in the literature since the inception of the social work profession; the phenomenon is explored in both seminal and modern literature throughout history, both locally and globally, with implications on the profession of social work and social work education. The concept of professional socialization of the social work profession in the United States has historically been a challenged phenomenon, alongside the presentation of a unified mission of social work, and a definition of social work as a profession. There has been a scarcity of compelling objective verities regarding a lucid method towards professional socialization reliant on a foundational theoretical framework. While there are several components represented that align to cultivate and contribute to the concept of professional socialization, the development of a professional identity among social work students is the primary focus of the presented phenomenon.

The development of professional identity among social work students, at the undergraduate and graduate level, is directly linked to curriculum development, which can most effectively be conceptualized through the understanding of the historical evolution of the social work profession, with a primary focus of the profession's original and intended mission to help the poor and oppressed and build communality (Specht & Courtney, 1994). Without an in-depth understanding of the essence of the social work identity, which is identified as an outcome of the professional socialization of social workers, and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession and social work education development in implicit and explicit curriculum, the profession and the social work education process is not adequately prepared to aid in the facilitation of the development of the social work professional identity among students.

Prevalence of the Phenomenon

There is a need to strengthen social work education programs in such a way that highlights and promotes the professional socialization of social workers through the application and practice of social work values and ethics with a particular focus on the social work identity and the historical evolution of the social work profession. This phenomenon is a present concern locally and globally, and research has been conducted in small pockets across the globe to explore this concept (Crisp, 2017; Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Higgins, 2016; Levy, Shlomo, & Izhaky, 2014; Moorhead, Boetto, & Bell, 2014; Nuttman-Shwartz, 2017; Pullen Sansfacon & Crete, 2016; Shlomo, Levy, & Itzhaky, 2012; Valutis, Rubin, & Bell, 2012). It is necessary to further investigate this area of interest as the professional socialization of social workers is parallel to social work curriculum development, a primary focus among social work education programs. As an outcome of the professional socialization of social workers, the social work identity is a necessary apotheosis to the field of social work. Without a social work identity, the profession will endure substantially unwelcoming repercussions, exposing the profession to many dilemmas. If there is no social work identity development among social work students, and if this is not incorporated as

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essential to the social work curriculum offered in social work programs, the profession lends itself to questioning whether the services rendered align with the values of social work, and if social workers are not aligning the services provided with values, the commitment and responsibility to society is assuredly compromised. Without a social work identity, the profession and those practicing as social workers are at a risk of ethical dilemmas.

Components of Professional Socialization

To explore the professional identity development among social work students, it is relevant to begin with a cognizance of professional socialization and its relevance to social work as a profession. Understanding professional socialization as an overarching representation of the phenomenon allows for the ability to focus on one essential outcome, the development of the social work identity. While there are several elements that correlate to further the process of socialization in the profession of social work, the development of an identity among social workers has been a predominant focus of the social work profession, locally and globally. Despite the controversy of several of these components, such as a unified definition of the profession or an explication of the social work identity across the profession, (Mackay & Zufferey, 2015; Miller, 2010), the professionalization of social work continues to be categorized as an essential function of the profession and therefore worthy of further exploration within the literature (Miller, 2010).

Defining Professional Socialization

Professions can be viewed as cultural entities in which students and professionals continue to partake in the process of socialization throughout their educational and professional careers (West, Miller, & Leitch, 2016). Socialization is considered to be a dynamic process that is continuous throughout the life course in which individuals learn to participate in the different social contexts they are associated with throughout the life cycle (Specht, 1988); like socialization, professional socialization of social workers has been identified throughout the literature as ongoing, throughout time, and beginning even before any formal education or training (Miller, 2010). Professional socialization, in the profession of social work, encompasses a continuous, complex process of development through which education and professional development are critical contributive factors. When focusing on professional socialization among social work students, this phenomenon is also known as a formal and informal means by which students internalize knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, values, and ethical standards which in turn cultivates their professional identity and fosters the development of an understanding of what it means to be a professional in the field (Barretti, 2004; Adams, Hean, Sturgis, & Clark, 2006; Mariet, 2016; Patchner, Gullerud, Downing, Donaldson, & Leunberger, 1987). Nuttman-Schwartz (2017) supplements this explication of professional socialization with relevance to the involvement of the acquisition of a specialized knowledge base and being able to integrate competence-based knowledge and values to apply in practice. To address this phenomenon within this research, professional socialization will be explicated as the complex process by which a person, in the educational realm of the field of social work, acquires knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, principles, and ethical standards to formulate a professional identity that is distinctive to the profession of social work and internalized into the individual's own behavior and self-conception; not only does professional socialization involve the acquisition of this elements, it also encompasses the ability to apply and integrate these components in professional practice (Adams et al., 2006; Mariet, 2016; Patchner et al., 1987; Nuttman-Schwartz, 2017; Specht, 1988).

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Explicating Social Work Identity: An Outcome of Professional Socialization

Similar to professional socialization, professional identity is a continual process in professional growth relating to the process of internalizing a professional community's values and norms, and an indicative outcome of the overall process professional socialization (Adams et al., 2006; Bell, Bissen, & Vindegg, 2017; Bolin, Crews, Countryman-Roswurm, & Grant, 2014; Forenza & Eckert, 2017). Professional identity has been conceptualized in the literature as an element of social identity through the person-in-environment framework (Forenza & Eckert, 2017); interconnectedness between personal and professional values contribute to this conceptualization, and in reference to the literature, the alignment between personal and professional values and ethics can be classified as the highest level of development in professional identity (Bolin et al., 2014). The specific principles that are presented in the literature that distinctively contribute to the professional identity development of a social worker are contested due to the vast, and at times questionable mission and definition of the social work profession, particularly in relation to micro and macro social work practice; however, regardless of the environment in which a social worker is practicing, professional identity persists as a necessity among the profession of social work (Forenza & Eckert, 2017; Miller, 2010).

Professional identity development, in any profession, requires time and space to obtain experience, form and internalize values, principles, ethical standards, and competencies, continual reflection and ongoing change (Bell et al., 2017). To address this phenomenon within this research, professional identity will be explicated as a concept that can only be understood as an interactional accomplishment of continual "being" or "becoming" through the influence of the profession's set of values, competencies, ethics, and understanding of roles within the context of social work practice, in any environment, developed throughout time in transformational learning environments and professional development settings (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Bell et al., 2017; Freire, 1970; Wiles, 2013).

Values, Principles, and Standards Embodied in the Professional Identity of Social Workers

The development of the social work identity is evident through the embodiment of social work values and ethics presented the Code of Ethics established by the NASW. The NASW Code of Ethics services six purposes: 1) identifies core values on which social work's mission is based, 2) summarizes broad ethical principles that reflect the profession's core values and establishes when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise, 3) designed to help social workers identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise, 4) provides ethical standards to which the general public can hold the social work profession accountable, 5) socializes practitioners new to the field to social work's mission, values, ethical principles, and ethical standards, 6) articulates standards that the social work profession itself can use to assess whether social workers have engaged in unethical complaints filed against its members (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). The NASW Code of Ethics is a reference and tool to be utilized in the development of social work identity (2017).

The values and accompanying principles that are identified and contribute to social work identity development are: 1) service: social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems, 2) social justice: social workers challenge social justice, 3)

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dignity and worth of the person: social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person, 4) importance of human relationships: social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships, 5) integrity: social workers behave in a trustworthy manner, and 6) competence: social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). The ethical standards that contribute to the development of social work identity development are: 1) social workers' ethical responsibilities to clients, 2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, 3) social workers' ethical responsibilities in practice settings, 4) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals, 5) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and 6) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the broader society (NASW Code of Ethics, 2017). While all ethical standards are imperative to social work identity development, Ethical Standards four, five, and six, are most critical when exploring and operationalizing variables of the phenomenon of professional identity among social workers.

CSWE's EPAS: Curriculum and Social Work Identity Development
Curriculum is a foundational structure implemented in the development of social work identity, specifically among social work students. "CSWE is a national association of social work education programs and individuals that ensures and enhances the quality of social work education for a professional practice… by setting and maintaining national accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's degree programs in social work, by promoting faculty development, by engaging in interprofessional and international collaborations, and by advocating for social work education and research" (CSWE, 2019). The current Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), updated in 2015 by CSWE, is a competency-based approach that has a purpose of focusing on assessing ability through student learning outcomes.

There are nine social work competencies identified in EPAS that are in alignment with the NASW Code of Ethics values, principles and standards: 1) demonstrate ethical and professional behavior, 2) engage diversity and difference in practice, 3) advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice, 4) engage in practice-informed research and research-informed practice, 5) engage in policy practice, 6) engage with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, 7) assess individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities, 8) intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities, and 9) evaluate practice with individuals, families groups, organizations, and communities (EPAS, 2015). While all competencies are important to the social work implicit and explicit curriculum processes and social work practice, competencies one, two, and three can be most critical to the understanding of the development of the professional social work identity. The educational policies presented in the EPAS illustrate the importance of program development in relation to curriculum which ultimately leads to the process of professional identity development among students. The educational standards in EPAS encompass the following policies: 1) program mission and goals, 2) generalist practice, 3) diversity, and 4) assessment of student learning outcomes (EPAS, 2015). Overall, social work education's primary mission is oriented with the process of professional identity development among social workers; through the utilization and application of the profession's signature pedagogy, field placement, and other transformational learning approaches such as experiential learning opportunities, the profession's curriculum strongly contributes to the development of social work identity (Moorhead et al., 2014).

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Social Work Professional Identity in the Era of Globalization
In recent decades, another inevitable, salient component presented in the literature connected to the development of professional identity, locally and globally, is the era of globalization and its influence on the development of professional identity among social workers; the era of globalization is associated with professional identity development because of its notable influence on higher education, curriculum development, and the interconnectedness of the professional world, and its effort to enhance connection throughout the global world through experiences (Brydon, 2011; Moorhead et al., 2014). "Globalization can be defined as a process of intensifying global social inter-relatedness whereby space and time are compressed and previously separated locations are brought closer" (Brydon, 2011, p. 382). The era of globalization has challenged the profession of social work, leading towards a paradigm shift in social work curriculum, and encouraging a human rights perspective in curriculum and social policy development (Nadkarni & Joseph, 2014). Globalization and its effects on the process of internationalizing student learning and development has been evident in the literature and discussed often (Lyons, 2006; Moorhead, 2014). Some literature suggests the globalizing social work is no longer optional, and that the social work education process and professional practice needs to be prepared to socialize students effectively into the era of globalization as it will relate to their future and identities as social workers (Moorhead, 2014). There is a paramount role, both in western and non-western societies of globalization and its influence on social work identity development (Nuttman-Schwartz, 2017). Therefore, "there is a need to identify the conditions that are essential for the development of a professional identity that is consistent with the vision of the social work profession today...there is also a need to enhance understanding of the concepts of globalization, universalism, localism, and professional identity" (Nuttman-Schwartz, 2017, p. 7).

Target Population
Social work students at enrolled in accredited social work programs across the United States, in both undergraduate and graduate level education programs, are identified as the target population in which the intervention is most warranted. Regardless of the institution of study, this intervention would be beneficial for social work students in accredited social work programs across the United States because of their placement in the social work profession, at these critical stages in their educational careers, and the pursuit of developing a foundational social work identity throughout their education and professional careers as social workers.

Theoretical Framework
Theoretical framework, particularly around the concept of student identity development, and application of theory is paramount to understanding the phenomenon and how it emerges and persists amid social work students. To understand the professional identity development, one of the outcomes of professional socialization, among undergraduate and graduate students in the field of social work, theoretical frameworks based on student identity development can be utilized in the process of interpretation of the phenomenon. Through the application of ecological systems theory, social identity theory, and Chickering's theory of student development, a theoretical basis and claim can be forged and applied to the development of social work identity through influences of curriculum development in the profession of social work.

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Problem Theory: Ecological Systems Perspective.
The ecological perspective can be utilized to help describe the process of identity development rather than the outcomes of identity development among students in relation to their environmental contexts; the purpose of this theoretical perspective's inception can be attributed to a desire to understand how environmental and ecological realities influence developmental progress of individuals, a person-in-environment method to understanding human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Perron, 2017). "An ecological approach accounts for individual differences in multifaceted contexts in holistic student development" (Patton, Renn, Guido, Quaye, & Forney, 2016, p. 51). These contexts that converge to formulate and influence a student's environment are categorized in systems: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macrosystems, and chronosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Patton et al., 2016; Perron, 2017). The ecological perspective describes development based on complex interactions between a changing biopsychological human being and the immediate dynamic environment in which that individual exists, a concept identified as proximal processes; these proximal processes are dependent on the developing individual, the changing environment, and the developmental factors being considered (Perron, 2017). Bronfenbrenner's theory of developmental ecology proposes four domains contributing to a person-environment theory of development: 1) process, 2) person, 3) context, and 4) time (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Patton et al., 2016; Perron, 2017). The interconnection between these components facilitate the student's developmental environment (Patton et al., 2016). Overall, ecology theory provides a means to understand how early experiences guide current development and can be applied to the establishment and growth of the professional identity.

Problem Theory: Social Identity Theory
The social identity theoretical framework connects the individual self to the groups the individual associates with and feels connected to in an effort to understand self in society (Maniss, 2017; Patton et al., 2016). The social identity is made up of individual, relational, collective, and material domains (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). The theory highlights the importance of value construction at this stage in identity development, and the constant transformational process of forming a world view in alignment with an individual's values, beliefs, and ethical standards (Maniss, 2017). Social identity theory's focal point is an individual's formation of a self-definition, or statement of purpose, through stages of increased complexity with an attention to identity formation (Patton, et al., 2016). Understanding the phenomenon and its relation to the notion of social identity, provides the researcher with a comprehensive overview of the whole individual with no separation between personal and professional identity.

Problem Theory: Chickering's Theory of Student Development
Chickering developed a theory on student development based on what he categorized as seven vectors and presented it in his seminal work, *Education and Identity* first published in 1969, and then revised and co-authored with Reisser in 1993. The seven vectors, which can be utilized for intentional design and activities in curriculum to contribute to student development, are: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) moving through autonomy towards interdependence, 4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, 5) establishing identity, 6) developing purpose, and 7) developing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Garfield & David, 1986; Wise, 2017). These categories are described in a cyclical format, and he proposed that while there is some sense of a linear progression among the vectors, students often revisit certain vectors due to the fluidity and

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evolutionary role of student development (Wise, 2017). It is evident that these seven domains are applicable to the development of professional identity among social work students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Understanding a student's progression through the domains and how curriculum can be developed in relation to the domains will enhance the ability to create an evidence-based intervention that contributes to strengthening the establishment of professional identity among social work students.

Program Theory: Mezirow's Theory of Transformational Learning
Transformational learning theory is classified a reconstructive theory and is essentially a means of explaining how adults learn to reason for themselves. Transformational learning theory is can be defined as "learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 2009, p. 22). There are two main perspectives, or conceptual lenses, to view transformational learning theory, through a focus on personal transformation and growth and/or through a focus on social change and personal transformation as inherently linked factors (Freire, 1970; Mezirow, 2009; Taylor, 2009). Regardless of the conceptual lens, transformational learning "often requires intentional action, personal risk, a genuine concern for the learners' betterment, and the ability to draw on a variety of methods and techniques to help create a classroom environment that supports growth and, for others, social change" (Taylor, 2009, p. 14). Transformative learning approaches seek to transform an individual's perspective utilizing critical assessment and reflection of an individual's held values and worldview (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow, Belenky, Cohen, Cranton, Parks Daloz, Elias, Kasi, Kegan, Heads, Marsick, Piper, Stanton, Taylor, Taylor, Wiessner & York, 2000; Taylor, 2009). They highlight student-centered and communicative learning efforts. The theory proposes that transformational learning occurs through four methods: elaborating existing meaning schemes, learning new meaning schemes, transforming meaning schemes, and transforming meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 2009). Overall, the transformational learning theory presents a conceptual framework for understanding how an individual reasons through meaning making, and ultimately makes judgements and decisions based on this reasoning process (Mezirow et al., 2000; Mezirow, 2009).

Individual experience, critical reflection, dialogue, holistic orientation, awareness of contexts, and authentic relationships are the critical elements that form transformative learning, an effort of teaching for change in the field of adult learning (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). The element of individual experiences involves identifying what each student brings to the learning environment and acknowledging these experiences as starting points; understanding a student's frame of reference upon entering a learning environment is necessary to cultivating a transformational learning environment. The practice of critical reflection is crucial in learning according to the transformational learning theory; critical reflection encourages students to question the integrity of assumptions, biases, and long held beliefs based on prior experiences. Types of critical reflections identified in the transformational learning theory are content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection (Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). Written format of reflection is encouraged because of its ability to potentially strengthen the reflective experience by creating artifacts of ideas of the mind through an externalization of their reflective experience (Taylor, 2009). Dialogue is an arena for experience and critical reflection to manifest; transformational learning theory highlights a need for self-respect, respect for others, acceptance of the common good, and willingness to participate and connect with diversity (Mezirow, 2009; Mezirow et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009). Through a

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holistic orientation approach, full comprehension of the whole person's psycho and social dynamics, the learning process institutes an environment for transformational learning. Holistic orientation, along with the other mentioned elements of transformational learning, contribute to the importance of the awareness of context, "developing a deeper appreciation and understanding of the personal and socio-cultural factors that play an influencing role in the process of transformative learning" (Taylor, 2009, p. 11). And lastly, authentic relationship is identified as the most vital component of transformative learning theory.

Program Theory: Freire's Theory of Learning
Understanding educational theory and its historical evolution, particularly in the field of social work, is imperative with the intention of comprehensively applying best practices in social work education in relation to the formation of a social work intervention to target the phenomenon of social work identity development among social work students. Freire has contributed a seminal pedagogical approach that has been deemed necessary and utilized in social work education. Freire's theory of learning manifests a unique process to education as a path towards liberation which can be influential to an intervention related to the development of professional identity among social work students. Freire suggests "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (1970, p. 58). Freire's theoretical framework cultivates a salient foundation and highlights the opportunities to partake in a growth process through transformational change that can be applicable to the development of an intervention focused on identity.

Freire presumes that educational experiences are capable of manifesting transformational change. In his thinking, he emphasizes that "students move toward a fuller and richer life individually and collectivity when they are encouraged to act on and thereby transform their world" (Fox, 2013, p. 14). His view and approach to education involves the concept of liberation, a theme particularly highlighted in his work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2009). In this literary work, he describes the concept of "banking." "Banking" involves teachers depositing information into students, as if students have no necessary or impactful contributions to provide to their own learning process (Fischer, 2015; Freire, 1970/2009). Freire reasons that teaching utilizing the concept of "banking" is indeed a form of oppression, whereas he asserts an idea that education should be conceptualized as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1970/2009). Freire insists "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry, human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other" (Freire, 1970/2009, p. 164). Teachers must involve their students in critical thinking and emphasize a humanistic approach to learning; in this manner both teachers and students have a responsibility to contribute to a learning process in which everyone grows (Freire, 1970/2009). Overall, Freire's work underscores, education as an ongoing transformative process (Freire, 1970/2009) and the concepts identified in his theory of learning can be utilized in the development of an intervention that would be most influential for social work student and professional identity development.

Outcomes of the Intervention
The proximal, or immediate outcomes, of the intervention are identified as: 1) increased knowledge of the historical evolution of the social work profession and its relation to professional identity development, 2) understanding of the importance of professional

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identity in social work and its influence on the profession of social work now and in the future, 3) an ability to apply the Code of Ethics and social work values to personal and professional identity, 4) considerations of the infusion of personal and professional identity in social work, and 5) an increased desire to cultivate professional identity in the profession of social work. The primary, or short-term outcomes, are identified as: 1) reduced questionability of the profession of social work, 2) increased awareness of the role and identity of social workers throughout society, 3) increased collaboration and unification of social workers working in different employment settings, and 4) enhanced implicit and explicit social work curriculum related to social work identity development. The distal, or impact outcome, of the intervention is the transformational and continuous development of the social work identity among current and future social workers that is evidently incorporated in all Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited social work education programs, locally and globally.

Expected Effect Size
The expected effect size of the implementation of this intervention among the target population identified in this initial stage of intervention research can be classified as small. If the intervention is adapted and applied in other social work programs, locally and globally, there is an opportunity for an anticipated large and influential effect size. Literature suggests that this type of intervention focused on the phenomenon of professional identity has the potential to influence the social work profession as a whole.

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LOGIC MODEL

### PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

Problem Statement: Without an in-depth understanding of the essence of the social work identity and its relation to the historical evolution of the social work profession and social work education development in implicit and explicit curriculum, the profession and the social work education process is not adequately prepared to aid in the facilitation of the development of the social work professional identity among students. The implementation of a workshop that particularly focuses on this phenomenon among social work freshman, graduate level foundational year students, and graduate level academic year students can cultivate and encourage the development of professional identity.

Assumptions/Theory of Change: Identity development among students is an ongoing and transformative process. Early experiences, particularly in educational programs, guide current professional development and the establishment of a professional identity among social work students. Through the utilization of a humanistic approach to learning and knowledge accumulation, a variety of educational experiences related to the development of a professional identity in social work can manifest transformational growth in professional identity.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Quality Outputs	Outcomes: Proximal	Outcomes: Primary	Outcomes: Distal
Pre and post assessment tools	Meet with key stakeholders to gain insight on topics to be included in workshop	Number of students who attended and completed the intervention	Level of quality of intervention	Increased knowledge of the historical evolution of the social work profession and its relation to professional identity development	Reduced questionability of the profession of social work	Transformational and continuous development of social work identity among current and future social workers that is clearly incorporated in all CSWE accredited social work education programs, locally and globally
Workshop facilitator			Level of satisfaction with intervention		Increased awareness of the role and identity of social workers throughout society	
Workshop manual		Number of completed pre and post assessments	Pre and post assessment results			
Workshop materials/supplies/handouts	Create intervention manual		Information from focus groups after implementation of intervention	Understanding of the importance of a professional identity in social work and its influence on the profession of social work now and in the future	Increased collaboration and unification of social workers working in different employment settings	
Technology Equipment	Create and/or modify pre and post assessment tools to be	Number of students interested in consenting to participate in focus group after implementation of the				Ethical social work practice applying social work values, principles, and standards embodied
Location for workshop						

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| Interview guide for follow up focus groups (optional) | administered by course instructors

Seek approval from course instructors to provide intervention

Solidify dates to administer assessments and dates to provide intervention

Implement intervention (6-hour workshop)

Collect follow up data through post assessment tool; student focus groups and course instructor feedback (optional, as needed) | intervention (optional) | | Ability to apply the Code of Ethics and Social Work Values to personal and professional identity

Considerations of the infusion of personal and professional identity in social work

Increased desire to cultivate professional identity in the profession of social work

Understanding of CSWE's EPAS core competencies and its relevance to the development of social work identity

Increased use and reference to the Social Work Code of Ethics as a tool | Enhanced implicit and explicit social work curriculum related to social work identity development | in the social work identity |

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FACILITATOR & PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS

Facilitator Qualifications:
The facilitator of this workshop must be a licensed social worker with an MSW degree.
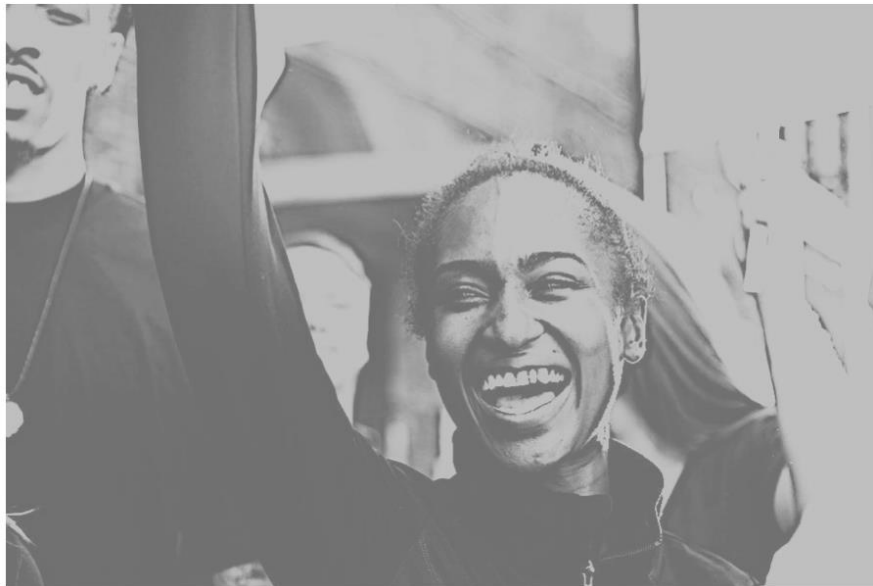
Participant Qualifications:
Participants must be enrolled in a social work undergraduate or graduate level program.

WORKSHOP GOAL

Workshop Goal:
- Through the implementation of this workshop, that particularly focuses on social work identity development among social work students at the undergraduate and graduate level, students will be able to cultivate and contribute, through a transformative learning process, to their development and growth of a professional social work identity.

COMPLETE LIST OF WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES & MATERIALS

ACTIVITIES:

Activity 1: Icebreaker Options

Activity 2: Reflection Journal Prompt #1

Activity 3: The Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession Timeline

Activity 4: The History of NASW Group Work & Short Group Presentation

Activity 5: Reflection Journal Prompt #2

Activity 6: My Core Values Worksheet

Activity 7: Vision & Mission Statement Writing

Activity 8: Social Work Identity Collage

Activity 9: Reflection Journal Prompt #3

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS:

- History Posters
- Reflection journals
- NASW Code of Ethics (one copy per student)
- Magazines
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Poster paper/construction paper
- Sticky Flip Chart (optional)
- Blank paper
- Colored pencils
- Markers

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PRE-& POST ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Pre-Assessment:
The pre-assessment will be administered and completed electronically by the instructor of the course during the first week of the course. The pre-assessment is administered before the workshop.

Post-Assessment
The post-assessment will be administered and completed electronically by the instructor of the course within the same week of the implementation of the workshop. The post-assessment is administered after the workshop.

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PART I: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT & ICEBREAKER

Part I Goal:
- The goal of this part of the workshop is to build group cohesion and establish a sense of community among facilitator and participants. In the introduction of the workshop, students will be welcomed and introduced to the phenomenon of social work identity development.

Part I Objectives:
1. Students will participate in one icebreaker to build group cohesion and initiate the group learning process.
2. Students will be able to explicate professional social work identity by identifying the importance of role of the Code of Ethics and curriculum development to social work identity development.
3. Students will begin processing what it means to be a social worker through the utilization of reflection journaling.

Part I Flow:
1. Icebreaker (15 minutes)
2. Welcome and Intro Lecture to Social Work Identity Development (20 minutes)
3. Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance (20 minutes)

Part I Activities:
- Activity 1: Icebreaker Options
- Activity 2: Reflection Journal Prompt #1

Part I Time: 1 Hour

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PART I: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part I Flow: Icebreaker (15 minutes)

- **Option 1: Logo Love Icebreaker**
  - Participants choose a brand logo or slogan they identify with and explain why. Have participants write their name and draw the logo or write the slogan they most identify with; take turns sharing.
- **Option 2: The Social Media Icebreaker**
  - Participants will be asked to choose an image or photo on their social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that they identify with; take turns sharing.
- **Option 3: One-Word Icebreaker**
  - Each participant will introduce themselves and share which word comes to mind when they think of "social work identity."

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PART I: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part I Flow: Welcome and Intro Lecture to Social Work Identity Development (20 minutes)
- What is Professional Socialization?
- Defining Professional Identity
- The Role of the Code of Ethics (Values, Principles, and Ethical Standards) and Social Work Curriculum in Social Work Identity
- Who am I as a social worker and why do I care about social work identity?

Introduction to Social Work Identity Development Presentation

PART I: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part I Flow: Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance (20 minutes minutes)

Directions:
Facilitator will facilitate a group circle and ask the following questions:
1. What could be important about developing a social work identity?
2. Do you think there is a difference between your personal and professional identity as a social worker? Explain.

*Note: The purpose of this discussion is to get students to process information together in a group about the content's significance and relevance to their own experiences and thoughts. The facilitator is expected to allow students to respond with their thoughts and should avoid leading or steering the conversation in any particular direction (unless the conversation is off task). *

Reflection Journal Prompt 1:
- Students will spend about 5 minutes independently writing in their reflection journals answering the following questions:
  - Define what it means to be a social worker.
  - List important parts of your identity that you consider essential.

Materials:
- Reflection Journals
  - Distribute reflection journals and explain the purpose of the reflection journals.
    - These reflection journals will be utilized throughout the day and are a means to help promote and encourage reflexivity throughout the workshop. Students are encouraged to be sincere in their writings and encouraged to continue utilizing this approach to reflect on their social work identity development beyond the scope of the workshop.

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PART II: OVERVIEW
THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF
THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

Part II Goal:
- Through this part of the workshop, students will develop an increased knowledge of the historical evolution of the social work profession and its relation to professional identity.

Part II Objectives:
1. Students will learn about the historical evolution of social work and be able to identify at least 9 key happenings that contributed to the development of the profession.
2. Students will learn about the history of the NASW and be able to present particular information on a specific time period of the NASW's historical development.
3. Students will reflect on the interconnectedness between the historical evolution of the social work profession and its relation to the development of professional identity.

Part II Flow:
1. Lecture on the Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession & Timeline Handout (40 minutes)
2. The History of NASW Group Work (30 minutes) and Short Group Presentations (30 minutes)
3. Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance (20 minutes)

Part II Activities:
- Activity 3: The Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession Timeline
- Activity 4: The History of NASW Group Work & Short Group Presentation
- Activity 5: Reflection Journal Prompt #2

Part II Time: 2 Hours

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PART II: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part II Flow: Lecture on the Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession & Timeline Handout (40 minutes)

- Social Work's Emergence, Professionalization, and Search for Professional Identity
- The Role of Charity Organization Societies & Settlement Houses in the Establishment of the Social Work Profession
- Applied Philanthropy Becomes Social Work
- "Is Social Work a Profession?"- Abraham Flexner
- Specializations in Social Work
- History of Social Work Education and Training Programs
- Social Work Professional Associations: From Fragmentation to Unification
- A Continued Journey Towards Professionalization
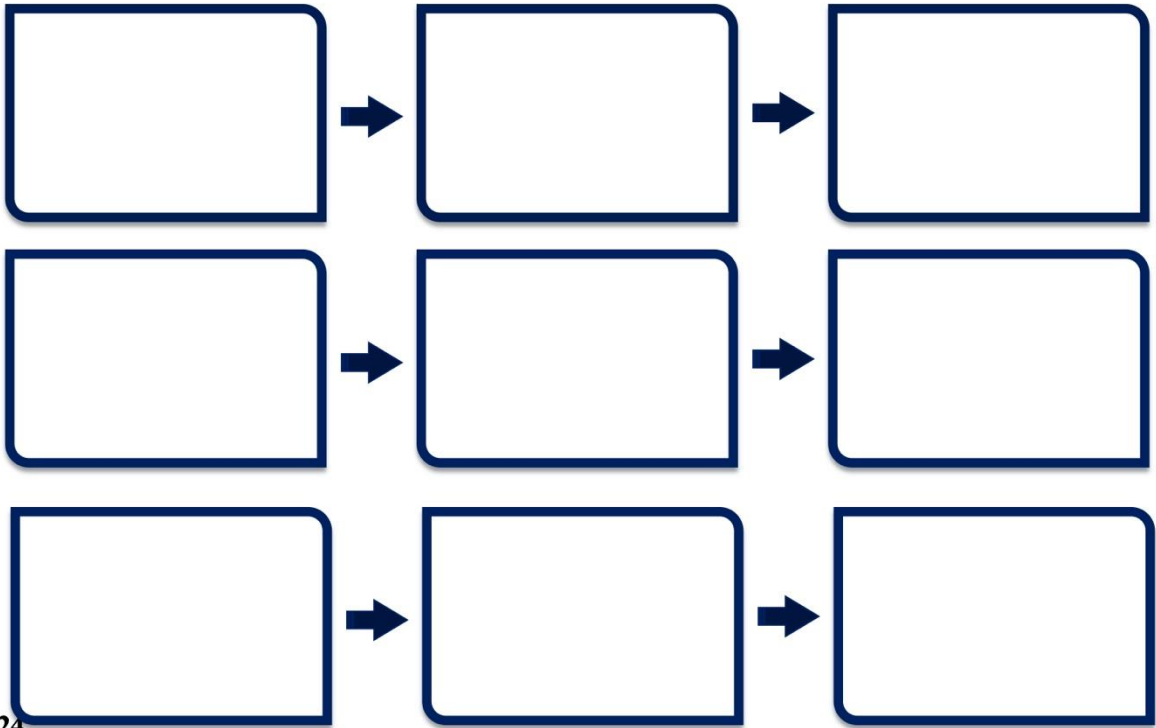- Defining Social Work Today

The Historical Evolution of Social Work Presentation

The Historical Evolution of Social Work Timeline

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The Historical Evolution of the Social Work Profession Timeline

NAME		DATE	

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PART II: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part II Flow: The History of NASW Group Work (30 minutes) and Short Group Presentations (30 minutes)

Directions:
Students will be divided into 7 groups (this can be changed based on class size). Each group will receive 1 NASW History Poster highlighting some of NASW's monumental moments. Each group will work collaboratively to prepare a brief 5 minute overview of what is represented in their poster and present it to the class. Brief presentations can utilize whatever modality the students are interested in. Encourage students to consider time when they are working on their brief presentations. Students are encouraged to utilize other sources via the web, information from the previous lecture, and any handouts provided by the workshop facilitator. At the completion of the group work, each group will be given about 4-5 minutes to present their findings to the students.

Materials:
- Posters:
  - 7 into 1: The Merger
  - Getting Started: 1955-1965
  - Getting Involved: 1966-1975
  - Political Activism: 1976-1985
  - Moving Forward: 1986-1995
  - Continuing Tradition: 1996-2005
  - Looking Ahead: 2006-2010
    *Posters can be purchased from *NASW Press* if needed.*

- NASW Timeline Handout (or link to interactive timeline)
  - *Link to NASW Timeline Handout- Printable*
  - *Link to NASW Timeline Interactive Version*

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PART II: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part II Flow: Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance (20 minutes minutes)

Directions:
Facilitator will facilitate a group circle and ask the following questions:

1. What's one thing about the history of the profession of social work that you learned today?
2. Do you think understanding the historical evolution of the profession will contribute to the development of your professional identity? If so, in what way(s)?

*Note: The purpose of this discussion is to get students to process information together in a group about the content's significance and relevance to their own experiences and thoughts. The facilitator is expected to allow students to respond with their thoughts and should avoid leading or steering the conversation in any particular direction (unless the conversation is off task). *

Reflection Journal Prompt 2:
- Students will spend about 5 minutes independently writing in their reflection journals about how understanding the historical evolution of the social work profession is related to the development of professional identity. Students should also process how this knowledge impacts their social work identity. Allot more time if necessary.

Materials:
- Reflection Journals

*Note: Optional break time (15 minutes) *

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PART III: OVERVIEW
VALUES, VISION, & MISSION

Part III Goal:
- Students will have a better understanding of their own personal and professional values, vision, and mission.

Part III Objectives:
1. Students will be able to identify a list of their top eight values and learn if they apply both the in their professional and personal identities.
2. Students will produce a personal/professional vision statement.
3. Students will produce a personal/professional mission statement.

Part III Flow:
1. Discussion & Presentation on The Importance of Values in Relation to Professional Identity & What is a Vision and Mission Statement (20 minutes)
2. My Core Values Worksheet (15 minutes)
3. Vision & Mission Statement Writing (35 minutes)
4. Whole Group Sharing/Reflection (20 minutes)

Part III Activities:
- Activity 6: My Core Values Worksheet
- Activity 7: Vision & Mission Statement Writing

Part III Time: 1.5 hours

PART III: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part III Flow: Discussion & Presentation on The Importance of Values in Relation to Identity & What is a Vision and Mission Statement and (20 minutes)

- What are values and why is it relevant to understand how the values you categorize as important are essential and contribute to the development of your professional identity as a social worker?
  - o Social work values
  - o Code of Ethics (provide hard copies to students)
  - o Alignment of professional and personal values
- What is a vision statement and why is it significant when addressing professional identity?
  - o Examples of vision statements
- What is a mission statement and why is it significant when addressing professional identity?
  - o Examples of mission statements

Values, Vision, & Mission Presentation

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PART III: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part III Flow: My Core Values Worksheet (15 minutes)
- Students will complete the My Core Values Worksheet during this part of the workshop. Results of the worksheet can be discussed during the whole group sharing/reflection at the conclusion of Part III of the workshop.

My Core Values Worksheet

MY CORE VALUES
STEP 1

Below is a list of value-based terms. Review the list and mark the top eight terms that closely represent principles, standards, or qualities that you consider are essential to your identity (personal and/or professional). If you go through the list once, and have marked more than eight terms, review those you have marked and narrow it down to eight values. Remember, you are marking those that best capture your personal and/or professional identity.

Achievement/ Accomplishment	Advancement	Autonomy	Belonging to a group
Building something	Challenge	Compassion	Competence
Creativity	Creating something new	Creating beauty	Creating change (i.e. social change)
Creating information	Decision-making	Dignity and worth of the individual	Entrepreneurship
Equality	Excitement/risk	Fame	Family happiness

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Financial security	Fun	Happiness	Health
Importance of human relationships	Influencing people	Independence	Integrity
Leadership	Learning/ gaining wisdom	Leisure	Listening
Mastering a technique/ field	Personal development	Receiving recognition/ impressing people	Respect
Risk taking	Safety/ Security	Service	Self-expression
Social justice	Spirituality	Stability	Status
Teamwork	Wealth	Other:_____	Other:_____
Other:_____	Other:_____	Other:_____	Other:_____

MY CORE VALUES
STEP 2

Complete the table below to document the top eight values identified that closely represent principles, standards, or qualities that you consider are essential to your identity (personal and/or professional). Utilize the space below to briefly explain why each value is important to you.

RANK	VALUE & WHY
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

PART III: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part III Flow: Vision & Mission Statement Writing (35 minutes)
- Show Video
    - *How Does the WHY Relate to Vision?*
- Provide students with the Vision & Mission Statement Writing Guidelines Handout and provide the remainder of the time for students to work individually on writing their own vision and mission statements. Students should utilize space in their reflection journal to record their ideas.
    - *Vision & Mission Statement Writing Guidelines*

Part III Flow: Whole Group Sharing/Reflection (20 minutes)
- The facilitator will lead a whole group sharing and reflection. Each student will share how they utilized their values when writing their vision and mission statement. The facilitator will also provide an opportunity for students to reflect on personal and professional values. The facilitator should ask if personal and professional values are different, or if they should be the same.

***Note:** The purpose of this discussion is to get students to process information together in a group about the content's significance and relevance to their own experiences and thoughts. The facilitator is expected to allow students to respond with their thoughts and should avoid leading or steering the conversation in any particular direction (unless the conversation is off task). *

***Note:** Optional break time
(15 minutes) *

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1

Vision Statement

What is my desired end state?

Vision Statement Questions to Consider Before Writing:

- ⚙ What needs to be changed?

- ⚙ What am I working to accomplish?

- ⚙ What are my strengths and assets?

- ⚙ What is my ultimate end state? In a perfect world, what would my accomplishment look like?

- ⚙ What does success look like for me?

Vision Statement Check to Consider After Writing:

↪ Clear and simple (easy to understand)

↪ Avoids elaborate language (short and to the point)

↪ Easily explained to those interested

↪ Not to be confused with mission statement

Use your reflection journal to brainstorm ideas for your vision statement.

2

Mission Statement

Why do I exist?

Mission Statement Questions to Consider Before Writing:

- 💡 Why do I exist?

- 💡 What is the broadest way to describe my purpose?

- 💡 What impact or change do I hope to make in the world?

- 💡 What value do I bring?

Vision Statement Check to Consider After Writing:

⟶ Clear and simple (easy to understand)

⟶ Avoids elaborate language (short and to the point)

⟶ Easily explained by others

⟶ Not to be confused with vision statement

⟶ Useful (Inform. Focus. Guide)

Use your reflection journal to brainstorm ideas for your mission statement.

PART IV: OVERVIEW
MY SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT & NEXT STEPS

Part IV Goal:
- During this part of the workshop students will apply what they have learned to their own development of a social work identity.

Part IV Objectives:
1. Students will create a collage (or other form of visual representation) representing their professional identity as social workers based on the information gleaned from the workshop and the activities completed.
2. Students will identify at least three ways what they have learned in the workshop will contribute to the development of the social work identity.

Part IV Flow:
1. Social Work Identity Collage (40 minutes)
2. Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance and Wrap Up (20 minutes)

Part IV Activities:
- Activity 8: Social Work Identity Collage
- Activity 9: Reflection Journal Prompt #3

Part IV Time: 1 hour

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PART IV: INFORMATION/HANDOUTS

Part IV Flow: Social Work Identity Collage (40 minutes)
- Collage Prompt: After all the information discussed today and after your own reflection on your values, vision, and mission, create a visual representation (collage, drawing, etc.) of your social work identity. This could be a present representation of your social work identity or a future representation of your social work identity.

Part IV Flow: Discussion/Reflection on Significance & Relevance and Wrap Up (20 minutes)

Reflection Journal Prompt 3:
- Students will spend about 5 minutes independently writing in their reflection journals answering the following questions:
  - If you were to envision the future of the social work profession, what would you describe? Reflect your thoughts in a few sentences.

Directions: Facilitator will facilitate a group circle and ask the following questions:
1. What is important about developing a social work identity?
2. How do you envision your social work identity in the future?
3. How is understanding your social work identity (through understanding your values, vision, and mission) beneficial for your growth as a professional social worker?

*Note: The purpose of this discussion is to get students to process information together in a group about the content's significance and relevance to their own experiences and thoughts. The facilitator is expected to allow students to respond with their thoughts and should avoid leading or steering the conversation in any particular direction (unless the conversation is off task). *

At the conclusion of this section, the workshop is over. Thank students for their participation. If willing, and appropriate, the facilitator can share professional contact information with students. Students keep their reflection journals, and all other processing materials utilized throughout the workshop.

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FEEDBACK FOCUS GROUP INTEREST FORM- INSTRUCTIONS [OPTIONAL]

At the end of the workshop, the facilitator will share information with the participants about an opportunity to participate in a feedback focus group. This focus group will provide an opportunity for participants to offer feedback on the workshop by identifying strengths and areas of improvement for future workshop development. Participation in the feedback focus group is completely voluntary.

The feedback focus group interest form can be completed electronically or the form on the following page can be completed and submitted to the workshop facilitator upon completion of the workshop.

Feedback Focus Group Interest Form

FEEDBACK FOCUS GROUP INTEREST FORM

First & Last Name: _____

Date of Workshop: _____

Course:

Availability (check all that apply):
☐ Weekday Morning
☐ Weekday Afternoon
☐ Weekday Evenings
☐ Weekend Mornings
☐ Weekend Afternoons
☐ Other (Please specify): _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____
☐ Permission to text

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SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY WORKSHOP
Intervention Manual
A WORKSHOP FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Title of the Study
Professional Identity Development in Graduate Level Social Work Students: An Efficacy Test of the Social Work Identity Workshop

Purpose
The School of Social Work at Millersville University (MU SSW) is interested in assessing students' attainment of professional identity. MU SSW piloted the Social Work Identity Workshop with students enrolled in SOWK 501 in the Summer 2019 semester. The workshop was intended to positively contribute to social work student professional identity development, in turn, cultivating professional social workers. MU SSW administered a pre and post survey to students enrolled in SOWK 501. MU SSW administered a pre survey to students enrolled in SOWK 601 during the Summer 2019 semester. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on professional identity development among social work students. Utilizing the data gathered by the MU SSW from graduate level participants, the DSW Student will utilize secondary data analysis to complete the dissertation.

This study is being conducted by Sylvia Bekele, a candidate in the Doctor of Social Work Program at Millersville University.

Participation
You will be asked to consent to the release of your survey responses completed in Summer 2019 while you were enrolled in SOWK 501 or SOWK 601.

Voluntary Participation: While the survey you completed was a part of the course in which you are enrolled for self- assessment of course and program content, participation was voluntary, and choosing to release your survey responses for the purposes of this research study is also voluntary. You can choose to remove yourself from this assessment at any time and choosing not to participate will not have any negative affect on your status in the program or grade within the course. By allowing the DSW Student to utilize your survey response(s), you agree to allow the DSW Student to use the responses collected as part of the dissertation study to assess professional identity development among social work students.

Confidentiality: MU SSW will de-identify the survey responses to ensure confidentiality prior to releasing the data to the DSW Student; your M# will be replaced with a random ID. The data will be stored on a password protected computer and only the DSW Student and School of Social Work Chairperson will have access to it.

Potential Risks
You can choose to remove yourself from this study at any time and choosing not to participate will not and did not have any negative affect on your status in the program or grade within this course.
Potential Benefits

This study will assess how the SWIW can be a positive contribution to the development of professional identity among current and future social work students at MU SSW. Students are offered the workshop free of charge, and receive all materials associated with the activities of the workshop, and overall gain knowledge on the topics presented to enhance their social work professional identity development. In general, the workshop aims as an educational tool to contribute to the social work curriculum being implemented in the undergraduate and graduate social work programs at Millersville University. Participation in this stage of efficacy testing also contributes to the development of the evidence-based intervention process.

Compensation for Participation
Compensation will not be provided for participation in this study.

Alternatives to Participation
You can choose not to allow your survey responses to be released to the DSW Student for the purposes of this research study. You can choose to remove yourself from this study at any time and choosing not to participate will not have any negative affect on your status in the program or grade within the course.

Information Withheld
There will not be any information purposefully withheld from participants in this study.

Debriefing
The contact information of the DSW Student and Faculty Mentor is on this consent form below. Participants can contact the DSW Student and/or Faculty Mentor for further information or questions at any point in time.

For more information on participation in this research, please contact:
- Sylvia Bekele, DSW Student (Researcher): 610-301-3948; sabekele@millersville.edu
- Dr. Karen Rice, Faculty Mentor: 717-871-5297; karen.rice@millersville.edu
- Dr. René Muñoz, Director of Research Administration: 717-871-4457; rene.munoz@millersville.edu

Consent
I understand this information and agree to participate fully under the conditions stated above. I also acknowledge that I am 18 years of age or older.

Participant name: _____

Participant signature: _____

Date: _____
This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study